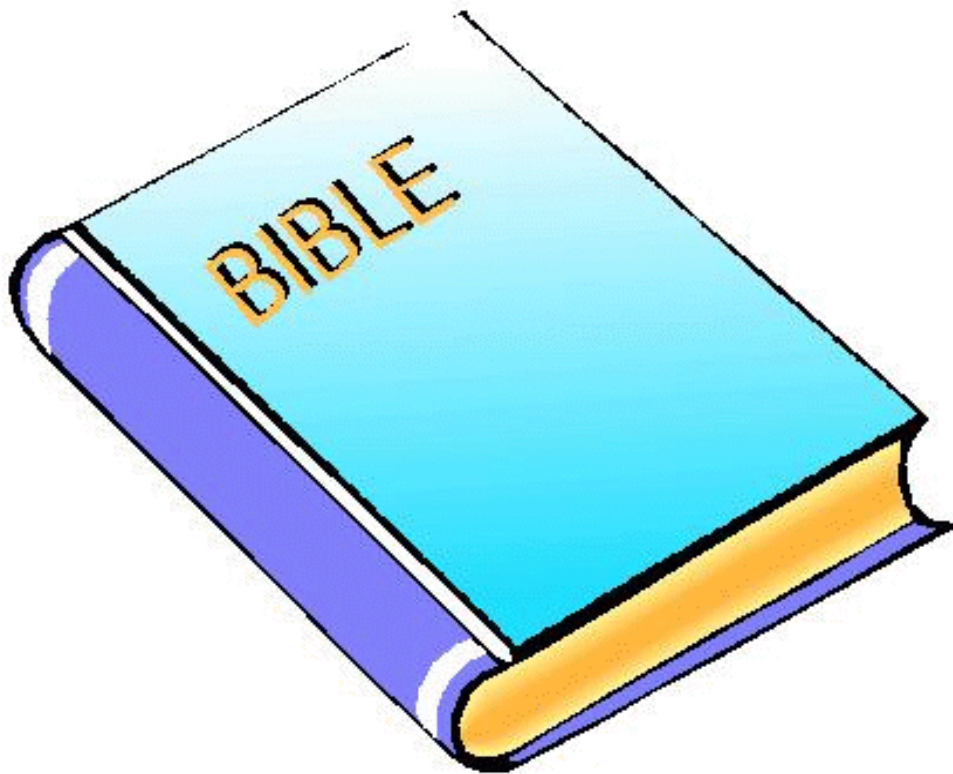


THE BIBLE

God's Message To Man



By Gaston Cogdell

Welcome

We are glad you have chosen to study the word of God and to delve into the depths of His Word. By studying His word, one can grow in knowledge and in maturity and understanding of what is required by God in living our daily lives and our journey towards heaven.

These lessons were written by Gaston Cogdell, a faithful Christian dedicated in his service to God and in helping children and teenagers who attend Fort Hill Christian Youth Camp, Hillsboro, Ohio.

These lessons may be used for classroom instruction or as resource material. Permission to reprint is granted IF NO PORTION of this lesson book or other lesson books in this 6 year study cycle are changed, edited or adapted in any form. This page must remain a part of this book when reprinting.

We pray you will enjoy your study of God's Word.

**Board of Trustees
Fort Hill Christian Youth Camp
Hillsboro, Ohio**

THE BIBLE – GOD'S MESSAGE TO MAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LESSON I

Introduction

- I. The Bible Is One Book
- II. The Bible Is One Story
- III. The Bible Is the Spiritual Drama of Human History
- IV. The Recurrent Themes and Lessons of the Bible
 - The Seven Component Elements of the Bible
 - Important Passages To Be Read and Discussed
 - In the Old Testament
 - In the New Testament
 - God's Design and Purposes In Giving Man His Word
 - What the Bible Does and Is
 - The Ten Commandments
 - The Twenty-Third Psalm
 - The Beatitudes

LESSON II

The Bible - What It Is, What It Does, and Why It is Preeminently Important

- I. The Bible Is God's Book . . . Of God, From God, and About God . . . Filled With His Spirit, and Communicating That Spirit and the Divine Nature To all Who Receive the Word
- II. The Bible Is A Book of Divine Law and Authority, and Is the Means By Which God's Government and Kingdom Is Established and Expanded On Earth
- III. The Bible Is A Book of Divine Love and Redemption, Of Atonement and Salvation
- IV. The Bible Is A Living Force, A Divine Power, Emanating From God and Operating With the Human Heart and In Human History, Transforming the Life and Character of Man, and Changing the Social Order; The Bible Is The "Living Word of the Living God"
- V. The Bible Is a Supernatural Book, Having a Supernatural Origin, and Revealing On Almost Every Page the Supernatural Dimension of Reality As the Source of Ultimate Causation of All Things
- VI. The Bible Is the Sole Repository of Divinely Revealed Spiritual Truth, and Is Therefore the Only Source of Authority for the True Religion
- VII. The Bible Is the Foundation of Civilization and of the Moral Order, the Fountain of Our Freedoms, and the Real Source of Our Material

Prosperity

Christian Love is "Super-Love"

The "Golden Text" of the Bible (John 3:16)

The Subject of Leading Thoughts of Each Book of the Bible

The Bible and You

LESSON III

The Bible – What Is It All About?

- I. The Theme and Subject of the Bible Is "The Rule of God and the Redemption of Man, Consummated In and Accomplished By One Divine Person -- Jesus Christ, Who Is Both Ruler and Redeemer, Savior and Lord."
- II. What the Bible Says About Itself
It Is Divine Inspired – It Endures Forever – It Is Food for the Soul – It Purifies the Life
It Is A: Crushing Hammer; A Life-Giving Force
A Saving Power; A Defensive Weapon
A Probing Instrument; A Devouring Flame
A Light That Shines – It Was Written To: (Four Reasons Cited)

The Tree of Knowledge
The Bible (A Poem)
- III. Those Who Build Their Lives On "The Word" of God Will Live Forever
- IV. The Word of Christ, Which Is the Word of God, Will Be the Basis of the Final Judgment of Our Souls

Notable Sayings About the Bible

LESSON IV

- I. The Bible Was Written for No Other Purpose
- II. To Present Christ To Us, and To Bring Us To God In and Through Christ
- III. Why Jesus Christ Came Into the World
- IV. Jesus Christ, Our Savior and Lord
- V. Christ Is the Center and Heart of the Bible
- VI. Old Testament Prophecies of the Coming Christ
- VII. Names and Titles Given To Christ In the Scriptures
- VIII. "If Jesus Came To Your House" (Poem)

LESSON V

- I. God's Kingdom -- the Church
- II. The Church -- God's Kingdom and Family
- III. The Church's One Foundation
- IV. The Church in the Bible

LESSON 1

THE BIBLE-GOD'S MESSAGE TO MAN INTRODUCTION

The Bible is a one-volume library of 66 books, written over a period of 1500 years by about 45 different authors, beginning with Moses who wrote the first five books (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), about 1400 years before Christ, and ending with the apostle John, who penned the words of the last book of the Bible - Revelation - in about A.D. 96. With one or two possible exceptions, all the men through whom God wrote the Bible were descendants of Abraham. All the action of the Biblical narrative takes place in the Middle East – the lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea . . . most of it in Palestine – except for the opening twelve chapters of Genesis, the creation and flood stories, and the grand finale of the Bible - the book of Revelation, in which the action described is global and cosmic and includes all realms, physical and metaphysical in its scope. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek.

THE BIBLE IS ONE BOOK

The Bible begins with God's creation of the physical universe and all that is in it, in six consecutive periods or days of creation, He ends with His creation of a wholly new and eternal cosmic order – a flawless realm where there is no more sin, sorrow, pain or death. During the interim between the first and the second and the final creations . . . the period in which we now live and upon which the Bible focuses . . . God is selecting and preparing the souls who will be given an inheritance in that final divine and heavenly realm. In the beginning God created all things perfect. The ultimate new and heavenly order will simply be a restoration of what God intended from the first, but which became corrupted by sin and the rebellion of angels and men against God's law and authority. It can be said, then, that the Biblical record of God's involvement in human history is the record of a great restoration movement . . . a movement to restore man and all things to their original perfection and relationship to God and to each other. The great English poet, John Milton expressed it in his two epic works, as Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained. This fall or departure from perfection of men and angels was made possible by the fact that God gave them freedom – his chief blessing.

THE BIBLE IS ONE STORY

The last part of the last book of the Bible is inextricably related to the first part of the first book of the Bible, and fittingly concludes the story begun in Genesis. The opening words of the Bible are, "*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth*" (Gen. 1:1). Among the last words of the last book of the Bible is the statement, "*I saw a new heaven and a new earth*" (Rev. 21:1).

A Comparison of the First Book of the Bible To the Last Book of The Bible

GENESIS SAYS:

"The darkness, he called night" (Gen. 1:5).

"The gathering together of waters he called Seas" (Gen. 1:10).

"God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night" (Gen. 1:16).

"In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17).

"I will greatly multiply thy pain . . ." (Gen. 3:16).

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake . . ." (Gen. 3:17).

Genesis reveals Satan as the arch-deceiver of mankind, who brings about the fall of man from his perfect state and relationship with God (Gen. 3).

Genesis tells how man was driven from the Tree of Life, as a result of his disobedience to God (Gen. 3:22-24).

REVELATION SAYS:

"There shall be no night there" (Rev. 21:5).

"The sea is no more" (Rev. 21:1).

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it . . ." (Rev. 21:4).

"There shall be no more death" (Rev. 21:4).

"Neither shall there be any more pain . . ." (Rev. 21:4).

"There shall be no more curse" (Rev. 22:3).

Revelation reveals the final end of Satan, and his disappearance forever in the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev. 20:10).

Revelation tells of redeemed mankind again being given access to the Tree of Life (Rev. 22:2).

And so we see how, again and again, the story begun in the opening pages of the Holy Scriptures is brought to its conclusion in the final pages of the Bible. Although it has many parts, the Bible is one narrative from Genesis to Revelation. The many books of the Bible really constitute but one book, emanating from one mind, with one subject, one theme, one final goal and objective of all the action within it. The Bible expresses one viewpoint of God and man, one perspective of human history, one set of supreme priorities and one moral and spiritual value-system, from beginning to end – and it is the viewpoint, perspective, priority and value-system of God, not of man.

THE BIBLE IS THE SPIRITUAL DRAMA OF HUMAN HISTORY

The Bible is the spiritual drama of human history. Its author is God, and only He could have written it . . . dictated it to holy men who acted as his "secretaries" who wrote what God through the Spirit gave them to write. The Bible has one hero – Jesus Christ; one heroine – God's people and family . . . fleshly and spiritual Israel; one villain – Satan. There is one plot and numerous sub-plots. The plot is the working out of the conflict between Christ the Lamb, and between the Devil, the Dragon, with all the hosts of men and angels arrayed on each side in the true war of the worlds, the conflict of the ages . . . the battle between light and darkness, good and evil, truth and falsehood, order and chaos. This world is the battleground as the forces of heaven and hell are locked in combat. It is a struggle taking place within every human heart, and everywhere Satan, the villain, sets out to destroy the rightful heirs of all things at the very beginning of the Bible (Genesis 2), and to bring them into rebellion against God, the Creator and owner of all things, and into subjection unto himself, the Prince of Darkness, who has taken control of the world. The Bible is the story of the overthrow and final destruction of the villain and his human and angelic followers, and the return of the possession and rulership over all things to the Lamb, the Son of God, and His Bride, the Church . . . his people, God's family. With the villain and his armies finally defeated and incarcerated forever in a place of awesome punishment, the Priest-King Jesus assumes total control, to reign forever with His Bride, His people, over a redeemed and purified and perfected new creation. The scriptures end thus with the hero and heroine living happily ever afterward throughout all eternity. The divine drama of human history has been written. It is a drama in three acts or ages or dispensations of history – the Patriarchal Age, the Mosaic Age, and the Christian Age. We are now in the third and last act – the Christian Age. Each person is allowed to choose what part he shall play. Once he chooses his identity . . . his own role in the drama . . . his lines are predetermined, for when we decide what we shall BE, it is predetermined what we shall do and say in this great drama. The followers of the hero, Jesus the Lamb, speak and act in one way, and the followers of the villain, the Serpent, Satan, act and speak in an opposite fashion.

Like a great symphony, with one harmonic theme developed in all its parts as it moves toward a grand climax at the end, a smashing conclusion, so the dominant motifs or ideas of the Bible appear and reappear, again and again like recurrent melodies. Eight of these constantly repeated lessons or motifs of the Bible are set forth below:

1. **Disobedience to God, invariably brings punishment – suffering, sorrow, separation, from God and man, and death and destruction, here and hereafter, now and forever.** Obedience to God, on the other hand, invariably and inevitably, brings rich reward – joy, peace, prosperity, security, life eternal, power, riches, and glory . . . fellowship with God and with the righteous and the redeemed of all ages. The obedient to God are blessed forever; the disobedient to God are accursed forever. This theme of certain reward for obedience to God, and inescapable punishment for disobedience to God appears on almost every page of Holy Writ.
2. **Guilt for sin is universal, for "all have sinned . . ." (Rom. 3:23).** Only one sinless person has ever lived on this earth – Jesus Christ, the Righteous. The need for pardon and redemption, so that one might escape the eternal consequences of sin, is universal. Every character of the Bible, no matter how great they were, appears as a sinner, except Jesus.

3. **God's grace and forgiveness is as universal as man's sin.** Although that grace is unmerited and undeserved, it is not unconditional, but is granted only to those who obey God. Faith in God and His Word, and love for God and His people, are the primary acts of that obedience to God which is the absolute prerequisite to the obtaining of His blessings and favor and the maintenance of a relationship with Him. This is taught everywhere in the Bible, and in every incident recorded there. God's grace and pardon for sin is received only by those who repent and undergo a change of heart, character and life.

4. **Atonement for sin can only be made by a blood sacrifice.** A scarlet thread runs through the entire Bible, a trail of blood – the blood of atoning sacrifices, beginning with that of Abel (Gen. 4:4), and ending with that final perfect and all-sufficient sacrifice at Calvary, where the inestimably precious blood of the Lamb of God was shed for the sins of the world (Jn. 1:29). The whole religion of the Bible, as set forth in both the Old and New Testaments, centers in and revolves around the doctrine of blood atonement. This is the heart and core of the scriptures.

5. **God and His Word are absolutely dependable.** His power is omnipotent. His knowledge is omniscient. His love is unfailing, His promises sure, His justice is certain. God is God, and His Will, will be done. Jesus said, *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall never pass away"* (Matt. 24:35).

6. **God has a special people in the world, who belong to Him in a special way.** These people are His family, His flock, His most precious possessions. They love God with all their being, and doing His will is their highest priority in their lives. The glories of heaven belong to them, and to them alone, and they will inherit *"all things"* (Lk. 12:23; Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 21:7). The Bible is the story of God's people, God's family, in time and in eternity. Those who are not a part of God's people have no relationship with God, and their lives have no ultimate purpose or meaning. They are potentially of infinite importance, but their potential is only realized when they bring themselves into fellowship and union with God and His purposes as set forth in the scriptures.

7. **God works by stages, and progressively within time and human history, in the achievement of His ends – one day at a time, one dispensation at a time, one episode at a time.** The sowing of the seed must precede the fruit. It is *"For precept upon precept; line upon line; here a little, and there a little"* (Isa. 28:10). We must learn to *"wait upon the Lord,"* and not grow discouraged when He does not move as fast as we would like for Him to move or think He should move in carrying out His purposes.

8. **God is a "Covenant God," working in human history and in our lives in accordance with covenants, contractual agreements, binding both Him and those who enter into the covenant with Him, to do certain things, and to refrain from doing certain other things.** All the action in the Bible and all the relationships with God set forth there, are based upon and revolve around the following Covenants:

The NOAHIC Genesis 9:12-16

The ABRAHAMIC	Genesis 17:1-21
The MOSAIC	Exodus 34:27-35
The DAVIDIC	Psalms 89:3-34
The CHRISTIAN	Hebrews 8:6-10

It is only by entering the covenant that we become the people of God – the "Covenant People" of the "Covenant God."

THE SEVEN COMPONENT ELEMENTS OF THE BIBLE

- FACTS:** To be believed – narratives, stories, biographies, the drama of human history.
- PROMISES:** To be received – the wondrous promises of God to His people.
- WARNINGS:** To be heeded – sin will bring suffering, separation, death and hell.
- PROPHECIES:** To be studied – "history written before it happens."
- COMMANDMENTS:** To be obeyed – the Bible is a "Rule Book" as well as a "Love Story."
- PRINCIPLES & CONCEPTS:** To be applied and to be accepted. God's thoughts and viewpoints.
- PRAYERS, PSALMS, SONGS, UTTERANCES OF PRAISE AND DEVOTION:** To be models for us.

IMPORTANT PASSAGES TO BE READ & DISCUSSED

THE OLD TESTAMENT

- God's Covenant With Noah, and With "All Flesh," Forever **Gen. 9:1-17.**
- God's Call Of Abraham, and Covenant With Him and His Seed After Him: **Gen. 12:1-3; 17:1-8; 22:16-18.**
- The Ten Commandments: **Ex. 20:1-17.**

4. The *23rd Psalm*.
5. The *53rd Chapter of Isaiah*.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. **The Sermon On The Mount**
 - a. The Beatitudes: *Matt. 5:1-12*.
 - b. The Lord's Prayer: *Matt. 6:9-15*.
 - c. Putting First Things First (priorities): *Matt. 6:33*.
 - d. The Golden Rule: *Matt. 7:12*.
 - e. The Two Kinds Of Builders: *Matt. 7:24-28*.
2. **The Two Greatest Commandments, And The Parable Of The Good Samaritan:** Lk. 10:25-37.
3. **Jesus' Conversation With Nicodemus:**
 - a. The Necessity Of A New Birth: *Jn. 3:1-7*.
 - b. The "Golden Text" Of The Bible: *Jn. 3:16*.
4. **The Establishment Of The Lord's Supper:** *I Cor. 11:23-30*.
5. **The Great Commission:** *Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16*.
6. **The Establishment Of The Church:** *Acts 2:36-42*.
7. **The Conversion of Saul of Tarsus**, the Jewish leader who led the opposition to the newly established church of Christ among the Jews, who became Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, and who wrote half the books of the New Testament: *Acts 22:1-16*.
8. **The Seven "Ones" Of The New Covenant:** *Eph. 4:4-6*.
9. **The New Heavens And The New Earth . . . The World To Come:** *Rev. 21:1-8*.
10. **The Chapters Which Deal With Important Christian Doctrines Of FAITH, LOVE, THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY:** *Faith: Heb. 11; Love: I Cor. 13; The Holy Spirit: Rom. 8:1-18; The Resurrection of the Body: I Cor. 15:12-58*.

THE BIBLE - GOD'S HOLY WORD

"This Book, which we call the Bible, contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here paradise is restored, heaven opened and the gates of hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgment, and will be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibilities, rewards the greatest labors, and condemns all who trifle with its

contents. *"It is the Word of the living God, and is –*

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1. Indestructible: | Matt. 24:35 | 4. Infallible: | Matt. 5:18 |
| 2. Incorruptible: | I Pet. 1:23-25 | 5. Inexhaustible: | Psa. 92:5 |
| 3. Indispensable: | Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; Job 23:12 | | |

SUBJECT OF THE BIBLE: Redemption: Eph. 1:3-14

1. Purposed and planned by the Father: I Jn. 4:9, 10
2. Accomplished by the Son: Matt. 20:28; I Cor. 15:3,4
3. Revealed by the Spirit: Jn. 16:7-9,13,14
"God thought it, Christ wrought it, the Holy Spirit brought it, the devil fought it, but I got it!"

PURPOSE OF THE BIBLE:

1. To provide a foundation for our faith: Rom. 10:17
2. To make us wise unto salvation: II Tim. 3:15
3. *"For doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"* II Tim. 3:16,17

THE SCRIPTURES WERE DESIGNED BY GOD TO:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Testify of Christ: Jn. 5:39 | 19. Produce hope: Psa. 119:49; Rom. 15:4 |
| 2. Search the heart: Heb. 4:12 | 20. Comfort: Psa. 119:82 |
| 3. Illuminate: Psa. 119:105,130 | 21. Rejoice the heart: Psa. 19:8; 119:111 |
| 4. Hear and apply: Jas. 1:22; Lk. 11:28 | 22. Study daily and meditate upon: Psa. 1:2; Acts 17:11; II Tim. 2:15 |
| 5. Make one wise unto salvation: II Tim. 3:15 | 23. Keep us straight doctrinally: II Tim. 3:16 |
| 6. Produce faith: Rom. 10:17; Jn. 20:31 | 24. Keep the believer from sinning: Psa. 119: 11; I Jn. 2:1 |
| 7. Quicken: Psa. 119:50, 93; Heb. 4:12 | 25. Try everything by them: Isa. 8:19, 20; Acts 17:11 |
| 8. Regenerate: Jas. 1:18; I Pet. 1:23; Psa. 19:7a | 26. Win souls: Psa. 126:6 with Lk. 8:11-15 |
| 9. Cleanse the heart and our ways: Jn. 15:3; Psa. 119:9 | 27. Bear fruit: Jn. 15:3,5,7 |
| 10. Make wise the simple: Psa. 19:7b | 28. Perfect the man of God: II Tim. 3:17; Col.3:16 |
| 11. Promote growth: I Pet. 2:2; Matt. 4:4; Heb. 5:12-14 | 29. Give victory over Satan: Matt. 4:1-10; Eph. 6:11,17 |
| 12. Build up the faith: Acts 20:32; Jude 20a | 30. Accomplish its purpose: Isa. 55:11 |
| 13. Admonish: Psa. 19:9-11; I Cor. 10:11; II Tim. 3:16 | 31. Be judged by: Jn. 12:48 |
| 14. Produce obedience: Deut. 17:19,20 | 32. Give assurance of heaven: Jn. 14:1-3 |
| 15. Keep from destructive ways: Psa. 17:4 | 33. Endure forever: Psa. 119:89; Matt. 24: 35; I Pet. 1:25 |
| 16. Support life: Deut. 8:3; Jer. 15:16 | |
| 17. Sanctify (set apart): Jn. 17:17; Eph. 5:26 | |
| 18. Work effectively in the believer: I Thess. 2:13; Col. 3:16 | |

WHAT THE BIBLE DOES AND IS

By: William Magill

The Bible is the book for humanity, not only because it contains all necessary truth and a perfect moral code – things of which all other religions are destitute – but because there is a resistless energy in it to renew and purify the moral nature of our species, an energy which it has proved on a thousand fields of fame, over thirty centuries of time, in every variety of human condition, and in open conflict with all the power of the earth and hell. Employing as its only weapon, truth, it repudiates the force and despotism of other religions. It presents God in all the radiance of an infinitely holy love; and this suits the heart of man. It sheds light on morals, on men, on salvation, on the life to come – a clear and certain light; and this fits into his reason. It reveals an absolution from sin, which, founded on the loving self-sacrifice of a Divine substitute, does not compromise perfect rectitude or blot the Divine character and law, and that suits all the requirements of conscience. It imparts from its Divine author a new life which, consisting in love, lifts its possessor into the fellowship of the Absolute One; and, embracing eternity in its provisions, runs up the road of perfection, scattering every gift that can make existence a blessing – thus fitting divinely into the needs of his immortal essence. For forty centuries and more, this tree of life has been wafting holiness, life and happiness through this sinful world; and its saving odor is still exhaustless. It has taught men all that time how to live; it has enabled them to die. It has brought real happiness into the world; and wherever it has been received, it has drained the fountains of human misery. It has saved the felon in his cell, the savage in his war-paint, Paul in his harness of hate, and Augustine in his vice. It has been the pillow of the martyr's peace – the parent of humility, self-sacrifice and hope, It has beautified whatever it touched, quickened souls innumerable, and imparted consummate finish to ideas, to taste, and to genius. The purest comfort of each drops from its word into hearts broken by bereavement or indigence. It is the key of knowledge. It has conducted pilgrims innumerable to the celestial mansions; for it alone possesses the secret of salvation.

This holy book is the manna of the world. It is the map of a river in which whosoever washes is healed of the leprosy of sin; and in the radiant

bloom of health he comes forth to a life which soars above the highest seraph, and is ever stretching towards God. Milton grandly described the Archangel Uriel as descending to the earth in a sunbeam. The revelation of the Bible is a beam on which the Father of lights descends into men to dwell with them. Sweeter than the dews of six thousand summers is the living bread which the Bible brings to a perishing world. What though it rained gold, pears, and king's crowns on a guilty race, it were better to give them the Bible. Salvation! Weight it against all created things. Measure it by eternity. Lay the plummet of infinity to its blessings. Appeal to Him who weighs the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance to teach you its worth. Climb to the throne of the Eternal, where the universe collects her glories to decorate the palace of our King, and thence survey all things that are made. Salvation excels all you know and see; for it makes God Himself your everlasting portion.

And if the time should ever come when it will rain infidels there is a truth which no science can impeach, no learning undermine, no hate can annihilate; and that truth is – oh that I could carry it round the world! – that they are a happy people who know the joyful sound, and whose God Jehovah is. Give the revelation of the Bible in its simplicity, holiness and majestic – the inspired Word of God – to the mind and heart of the human race, till they taste and see its grace and truth, its light and life; and soon the red dawn of that day of applied redemption for the whole world, to which seers and saints look forward, will be seen on the mountains; for very joy the wilderness shall rejoice and blossoms as the rose; the sigh for renewing which this groaning creation has emitted, shall find its response in the bloom of a new heavens and a new earth, in which as a mountain-lake, heaven will mirror itself; man shall replace on his brow the crown of fine gold, undimmed, that had long since fallen from his head; this perturbed world shall become a Beulah of beauty, the calm home of peace, the Goshen of abundance, the worthy avenue of an immortal paradise; and from the throne of His triumphant Mediatorship, He who has the keys of hell and of death shall look down in complacency, and the light of His countenance beam forth upon it.

LESSON II

THE BIBLE - WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT DOES, AND WHY IT IS PREEMINENTLY IMPORTANT - GOD'S MESSAGE TO MAN

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S BOOK . . . OF GOD, FROM GOD, AND ABOUT GOD . . . FILLED WITH HIS SPIRIT, AND COMMUNICATING THAT SPIRIT AND THE DIVINE NATURE TO ALL WHO RECEIVE THE WORD

The Bible is God, working in the world. As in the beginning, when we are told, ". . . *the Word was God*" (*Jn. 1:1*), so the Word is still God. In the Word of God, the Spirit of God, of Christ, resides, so that through that Word, eternal life is transmitted and conferred, as Jesus said, "*The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life*" (*Jn. 6:63*).

Everything in the Bible has to do in some way with God – His plans, purposes and will for man, man's relationship to Him, man's obedience or disobedience to Him. A missionary told how the natives of a certain South Sea Island called the Bible "The Jesus Book," and would ask him . . . "Could you give me one of those Jesus books?" And indeed, that is what the Bible is, for Jesus is God's Word in the flesh.

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S WORD

Through His Word, the Bible, God speaks to each one of us individually, and discloses Himself and His plans and purposes for us, and to us. Obviously, He says the same thing to each one of us, so that He shows no partiality at all. He will tell us as much as we are willing to hear.

Through the Bible, we get to know God and are enabled to enter into a personal fellowship with Him in His divine spiritual family, the Church, in which we become partners and co-workers with him in carrying out His plans for us and for all mankind. Only through the Bible can we get to know God, and His Son, Jesus Christ, because there is no other source of information at all about them. Since knowing God and Christ is essential to salvation and the obtaining of eternal life, it becomes apparent how important the Bible is to each one of us. Jesus said, "*and this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*" (*Jn. 17:3*).

The entire purpose of this course of study of the Bible is to bring each student to a saving knowledge of God and Christ. There is only one proof that we do know God, and that is that we obey His commandments which are found in the Bible and nowhere else. We are told – "*And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keeps not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him*" (*1 Jn. 2:3-5; and also read Jn. 14:21-24*).

Although the physical realm about us, with its wondrous beauty and evidence of intelligent design and direction, tells us that "God Is," it does not tell us WHO God is, or what He wants us to do or to be, or how we can establish a personal relationship with Him. The Bible is our only source of information concerning these matters. Through it alone, God divulges to us His true nature, character, and personality, and makes Himself accessible to us.

Science and secular knowledge tell us "all about it" – that is, all about the physical universe in which we live. But only the Bible tells us "what it's all about," or gives us any information about the spiritual reality. The Bible gives us all the knowledge we possess or can have about the source of our being and our destiny – about God Almighty, the Creator, Sustainer, Ruler, Savior, and Judge of all.

THE BIBLE IS A BOOK OF DIVINE LAW AND AUTHORITY, AND IS THE MEANS BY WHICH GOD'S GOVERNMENT AND KINGDOM IS ESTABLISHED AND EXPANDED ON EARTH

The Bible contains God's commandments to man, and sets forth God's authority over man and man's responsibility and final answerability to God for all that he says and does. The eternal destiny of every individual depends entirely upon his obedience to God, whose will has been communicated to us in this Dispensation through Christ and the gospel, (i.e., through that part of the Bible called the New Testament. Heb. 5:8,9; II Thess. 1:7-9)

The Bible is the instrument of God's moral and spiritual authority and dominion over man. The subject of the Bible is, "The King and the Kingdom." Christ is the divine King and the Church is His spiritual kingdom, having its beginning and present existence in time and in this world, and its fulfillment and perfection in eternity and the world to come. The Old Testament is a record of God's creation of a special people through whom He would send the King into the world, and establish the kingdom, and the message of the Old Testament is, "The King is coming, to establish the moral and spiritual rule of God over the earth." The message of the New Testament is, "The King has come and has established God's government, the Church, and now sits enthroned at God's right hand, ruling and reigning over all things until every enemy and opponent has been brought into submission to Him.

THE BIBLE IS A BOOK OF DIVINE LOVE AND REDEMPTION, OF ATONEMENT AND SALVATION

Only the Bible tells us that "*God is love*" (I Jn. 4:8); that He loves us so much that He sacrificed His only begotten Son to make atonement for our sins (Jn. 3:1); that the more we show love in our hearts and lives, the more we are like Him who died for us and whose disciples we are (Jn. 13:35). "Jesus loves me, this I know . . . for the Bible tells me so" is the gospel message in brief. Were it not for the Bible and its message of love, truth, and life, triumphant in the end, one would conclude that death is triumphant, and evil on the throne, and falsehood and injustice victorious, for Satan is the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4; Jn. 14:30). Those who do not know God through Christ and the Bible, and who know only the realm of the natural order and the physical reality, might easily conclude that Satan is God.

Through the Word, God has disclosed Himself and His love for us. How much does God love us?....So much that He created all things for us, and created us for Himself and wants us to be a part of Him. He makes Himself and His power constantly available to us.

The Bible tells the story of God's redeeming love, and His involvement in human history and in every human life – an involvement finally consummated by God becoming one of us in the person of His son. Through Christ Jesus, God clothed Himself in humanity

and mortality in order that we might be clothed with divinity and eternity. God loved us enough that He became one of us in order that we might become one with Him! By the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, the penalty for our sins was paid, and our guilt, which is the cause of our alienation from God was removed (Isa. 59:1-3)

In the agony and humiliation of the cross, God delivered to us the wondrous message of His mercy and forgiveness, and wrote to each member of our fallen race with His own precious blood, the words, "I love YOU!" And now, having finished His glorious work of redemption, He awaits the personal response of each individual soul.

THE BIBLE IS A LIVING FORCE, A DIVINE POWER, EMANATING FROM GOD AND OPERATING WITHIN THE HUMAN HEART AND IN HUMAN HISTORY, TRANSFORMING THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF MAN, AND CHANGING THE SOCIAL ORDER; THE BIBLE IS THE "LIVING WORD OF THE LIVING GOD"

Just as every seed contains within it the life of the organism from which it came, and is able to reproduce that life, so the Word of God is God's seed coming forth from Him, and containing the Spirit and life of God within it, in a mysterious way. The Bible contains the genetic code of the eternal and divine spiritual order, and is "*the seed of the Kingdom*" (Lk. 8:11). Eternal life, the life of God, is transmitted to us through the Word of God, the seed of the divine kingdom which shall endure forever. The Word of God is the means by which the world to come is brought into being in embryonic form in the here-and-now.

Our primary relationship in the heavenly kingdom is with a man . . . a person . . . Jesus Christ . . . not with a book, or a code of ethics or law, or a set of printed documents. Yet, the Bible, which is a book, a code of ethics and law, and a set of printed documents, contains within it the essence, the will, the personality, the life of Christ. It is a living extension of Him from whom it came, through the spirit. It possesses a life and living power that no other book even begins to possess. (Read Jn. 6:63; 8:31,32; 15:3, 7-10; Matt. 24:35; Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20; 20:32; Heb. 4:12; I Pet. 1:22-25; Isa. 55:8-11)

THE BIBLE IS A SUPERNATURAL BOOK, HAVING A SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN, AND REVEALING ON ALMOST EVERY PAGE THE SUPERNATURAL DIMENSION OF REALTY AS THE SOURCE OF ULTIMATE CAUSATION OF ALL THINGS

The Bible reveals an infinite unseen world of resplendent angels, principalities and powers, as well as a demonic realm of evil, presided over by the Prince of Darkness and of this present evil world . . . whom Christ came to bind and to cast into the lake of eternal fire, along with all his angels and all whom he has deceived into following him. Through the Bible, we are enabled to see beyond the veil of physical reality, into the realm of the supernatural, where all issues are finally decided.

Through the Bible, we are able to perceive the vast scope of the gigantic struggle for the control of all things – a struggle, not against human adversaries, but against "the world rulers of this resent darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" – which rages all about us as well as within us. All men and angels are drawn into this struggle, on one side or the other, and there is no neutral ground. By the light of the

Word, we are able to see the issues clearly, and to take our own combat-stations in the struggle. The Word is itself our God-given invincible weapon by which we can win certain victory in this spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10-18)

In a way radically different from anything else in this world, the Bible came into being, not as a product of natural causes, but of a supernatural cause – God Himself, whose mind and spirit, working through holy and inspired men, produced it (II Pet. 1:21) In its origin, preservation, integrity, power, life, and subject matter, the Bible is a supernatural book – a miracle. It is the **POWER OF GOD**, working among men (Rom. 1:16)

THE BIBLE IS THE SOLE REPOSITORY OF DIVINELY REVEALED SPIRITUAL TRUTH, AND IS THEREFORE THE ONLY SOURCE OF AUTHORITY FOR THE TRUE RELIGION

Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit, which He would send to them, would guide them *"into ALL truth"* (Jn. 16:13). We know, therefore, that no further spiritual truth remains to be revealed. The apostle Peter was able to say, before His death, that *"... his divine power has given unto us ALL things that pertain to life and godliness"* (II Pet. 1:3). It needs to be pointed out that scientific truth is relative truth, pertaining to the temporal and natural realm. Religious truth is absolute truth, and pertains to the eternal and supernatural order. The Bible is the finished and final revelation by God of Himself and of His divine will and purposes (Jude 3; Gal. 1:8,9)

The Bible is the truth, and all the truth that we have or can have, about God and man, about Christ and Satan, about the death of the body, and the death of the soul which is the second death; about the resurrection of the dead; about the final judgment of all souls; about Heaven, Hell, and the world to come. The Bible is a spiritual light, disclosing a world of spiritual realities which otherwise would be totally unknown, as David said, *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my pathway"* (Psa. 119: 105). And again, *"The entrance of thy word giveth light, O Lord."* As the old hymn says, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in His excellent word! What more can He say than to you He has said, You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

Jesus said that those who worship God, *"must worship Him in spirit and in truth"* (Jn. 4:24). This means that in order for our worship of God to be acceptable to Him, it must be offered according to the simple instructions set forth in His word, the Bible which contains the Spirit, and is the truth (Jn. 17:17; 6:63)

THE BIBLE IS THE FOUNDATION OF CIVILIZATION AND OF THE MORAL ORDER, THE FOUNTAIN OF OUR FREEDOMS, AND THE REAL SOURCE OF OUR MATERIAL PROSPERITY

Jesus said, *"If ye continue in my word, then ye are my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."* He said further, *"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free, indeed"* (Jn. 8:31-36).

Freedom from sin is the tap-root of all other freedoms. It is sin that sends men to prison, and it is sin in society that makes it necessary for society to erect prisons. Criminals cannot be free men, and for the same reason, a wicked people cannot be a free people. Criminal nations inevitably become police-states and dictatorships, so that the whole country becomes one great big prison. Only a just, righteous, and God-

fearing nation can remain free for very long.

Freedom and democracy are by-products of the gospel of Christ, which makes men free from sin, and from all the many kinds of enslavement that sin brings in its wake, including political enslavement. The political, economic, social, and religious freedom which the world enjoys and takes for granted today began with the Protestant Reformation Movement, which was simply a return to the Bible as the sole authority in religion. Because we in America have gotten closer to the Bible than any other people, we are freer, and God has blessed us more with material abundance, than any other people who were ever on the face of the earth.

It is impossible to enslave or for long tyrannize a Bible-believing people, and the closer any people get to the Word of God, the freer, happier, more prosperous, and better and more blessed by God in every way they will be.

The concepts of righteousness, justice, and the equality of all men, which are expressed in our Constitution and laws, were derived from the Bible and its teaching of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. The essence of the philosophy shaping the moral and ethical standards of our civilization is summed up in Jesus' commandment--*"All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, for this is the law and the prophets"* (Matt. 7:12).

The infinite value of human life and the transcendent value of human liberty and property, are Biblical concepts, rooted in the teaching that man is not a mere animal, but is a god-like being, with the spark of divinity within his soul . . . made in the spiritual image and likeness of God Almighty, Himself. It is wrong, therefore, to harm, or to kill, or to eat a human being. It is not wrong to slaughter and eat an animal, fish, or fowl, because they do not bear the stamp of the divine upon their spirits. **Without the Bible, the moral and ethical values of our civilization could not have come into being, and without the Bible, they could not continue to exist.**

CHRISTIAN LOVE IS "SUPER-LOVE"

Through Christ, God gave to man a new kind of love – "AGAPE" love ("Agape" being the Greek word used for Christian love--the love Christ has for us and the love we are supposed to have for Him and for each other in His Church and Kingdom). Agape love . . . Christian love . . . is bigger, better, different in quality, strength, and endurance from any other love the world knows or has ever known. The gospel gives the word "love" a new content, a new definition, a new meaning.

Christian love is Christ's love, dwelling in us and manifesting itself through us. It is "super-love" – more selfless, more intense, more responsive, more sensitive, more sacrificial, more GIVING and more FORGIVING, more powerful and more compelling than any other love ever was or is. It is DIVINE LOVE – forming and transforming our own lives and characters, shaping our conduct, and powerfully influencing all those with whom we come into contact.

That "super-love" is transmitted to us only through the Word of God, and is the essence of God's Word, God's Son, and God's Spirit. *"GOD IS LOVE"* (1 Jn. 4:8).

THE "GOLDEN TEXT" OF THE BIBLE

"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE" (Jn. 3:16)

The above statement expresses the basis of our Christian Faith, Hope, and Love. Apart from the Bible, we would not know of this infinite love of God for us . . . we would not know of Christ and the pardon that was purchased for us at Calvary. It is because of this revelation of the GOOD NEWS of God's grace and the redemption He made available to us by the gift of His Son, that the Bible is the greatest treasure and blessing that we have from God.

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD

FOR GOD, the Lord of earth and heaven,
SO LOVED, and longed to see forgiven,
THE WORLD, in sin and pleasure mad,
THAT HE GAVE the greatest gift he had—
HIS ONLY SON — to take our place,
THAT WHOSOEVER — oh, what grace!--
BELIEVETH — placing simple trust
IN HIM, the righteous and the just,
SHOULD NOT PERISH, lost in sin,
BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE in Him.
GOD — the Greatest Lover
SO LOVED — the Greatest Degree
THE WORLD — the Greatest Company
THAT HE GAVE — the Greatest Act
HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON — the Greatest Gift
THAT WHOSOEVER — the Greatest Opportunity

BELIEVETH — the Greatest Simplicity
IN HIM — the Greatest Attraction
SHOULD NOT PERISH — the Greatest Promise
BUT — the Greatest Difference
HAVE — the Greatest Certainty
EVERLASTING LIFE — the Greatest Possession
the agony and humiliation of the cross, God delivered the awesome message of man's sin and alienation, and the wonderful message of His love, mercy and compassion. Through the gospel, God has given us the simple terms and conditions of the plan of salvation, by which we identify and unite ourselves with the crucified and resurrected Lord Jesus, and receive full pardon for our sins, membership in His spiritual body, the Church, and the gift of His divine spirit of holiness.

THE SUBJECT OR LEADING THOUGHTS OF EACH BOOK OF THE BIBLE

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE PENTATEUCH (5 BOOKS OF MOSES).

- GENESIS** The creation and beginning of all things; the fall, the flood, the call of Abraham, through whom God founded the Hebrew nation.
- EXODUS** Israel's bondage in Egypt; and escape and deliverance; the giving of the Law at Sinai through Moses, and the making of the Covenant with Israel.

- LEVITICUS** Rules for worship and for living; laws concerning morals, ritual cleanliness, and access to God through sacrifices offered by priests.
- NUMBERS** Israel's wanderings in the wilderness for forty years, and journey to the promised land.
- DEUTERONOMY** A repetition of the Laws given at Sinai, and Moses' final exhortation to the people.

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS (12 BOOKS).

- JOSHUA** The conquest of the land of Canaan under Joshua, and the division of the land among the 12 Tribes of Israel.
- JUDGES** History of the first 300 years of Israel's stay in the promised land, and deliverance under 15 Judges or leaders.
- RUTH** The story of Ruth, ancestress of David and of Christ; the beginning of the Messianic family of David.
- I & II SAMUEL** History of the Prophet, Samuel, and the reign of Saul and David, the first two kings of Israel.
- I & II KINGS** Early history of the Kingdom of Israel; its division; Elijah & Elisha.
- I & II CHRONICLES** The reigns of David & Solomon; and of the kings of Judah, up to the Babylonian captivity.
- EZRA** The return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity; the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.
- NEHEMIAH** An account of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem; the establishment of worship after the return from Babylonian captivity.
- ESTHER** Queen Esther's deliverance of the Jews from the plot of Haman to exterminate.

THE POETICAL BOOKS (5 BOOKS)

- JOB** The problem of human suffering; showing Satan's role; and the final deliverance of the sufferer.
- PSALMS** Israel's hymnal . . . 150 songs, poems, and prayers praising God, His goodness and truth.
- PROVERBS** The wisdom of Solomon – a collection of moral and religious maxims.

ECCLESIASTES The vanity of earthly life, and the supreme duty of man's obligation to God.

SONG OF SOLOMON A glorification of wedded love, symbolizing the love of Christ and His Church, in the opinion of many.

THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS (17 IN NUMBER – 5 MAJOR & 12 MINOR)

THE MAJOR PROPHETS (5 BOOKS)

ISAIAH The Messianic Prophet; Israel a Messianic nation; woes pronounced on sinful nations.

JEREMIAH The weeping Prophet; the backsliding, bondage and restoration of the Jews.

LAMENTATIONS Jeremiah's funeral dirge over the desolation of Jerusalem and her afflictions.

EZEKIEL The fall of Jerusalem; judgments on surrounding nations; the restoration of Israel.

DANIEL Biography of a Hebrew prophet in Babylon; apocalyptic visions of events down to the end of time.

THE MINOR PROPHETS (12 BOOKS)

HOSEA The apostasy of Israel and her unfaithfulness to God characterized as spiritual adultery.

JOEL The "Day of the Lord" is coming; predictions of the Holy Spirit age . . . quoted on Pentecost.

AMOS Five visions; the wickedness and certain doom of Israel; Israel's ultimate restoration; the future glory of the rule of David and his kingdom.

OBADIAH The doom of Edom and the final deliverance of Israel.

JONAH A reluctant missionary's errand to Nineveh; her repentance and deliverance.

MICAH The wickedness and impending fall of Israel & Judah. The Messiah to be born at Bethlehem.

NAHUM The doom of Nineveh; Judah is promised deliverance from Syria.

HABAKKUK	Invasion of Judah; doom of the Chaldeans; "The just shall live by faith."
ZEPHANIAH	The day of God is at hand; the coming of a "pure language"; the future glory of Israel.
HAGGAI	Rebuilding the temple; forecast of a more glorious temple yet to be.
ZECHARIAH	Rebuilding the temple; eight visions of the coming Messiah and His universal rule.
MALACHI	God's final message to a disobedient nation; the necessity of national reforms.

**MORE THAN 400 YEARS ELAPSED BETWEEN THE WRITING OF
MALACHI AND OF MATTHEW . . . IN OTHER WORDS, BETWEEN THE
END OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW**

THE NEW TESTAMENT (27 BOOKS)

BIOGRAPHIES OF CHRIST (4 BOOKS)

MATTHEW	Jesus the Messiah; especially adapted to Jews, showing Jesus to be the Kingly Messiah of Jewish prophecy.
MARK	Jesus the wonderful man of action and power – emphasizes what Jesus DID.
LUKE	Jesus the Son of Man, the perfect man and representative of mankind – emphasizes Jesus' compassion for the poor, the sinful, the outcast.
JOHN	Jesus the Son of God – emphasizes the deity of Jesus. Tells what he said, rather than what he did.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH (1 BOOK)

ACTS	Establishment of the Church in Jerusalem on Pentecost, and its spread into the Gentile world; life and missionary journeys of Paul.
-------------	---

SPECIAL LETTERS WRITTEN BY PAUL (14 BOOKS)

ROMANS	The need for and nature of salvation; general exhortations concerning Christian duties.
I CORINTHIANS	Instructions concerning certain Church disorders at Corinth; doctrinal instructions.
II CORINTHIANS	Paul's vindication of his apostleship, and account of the long martyrdom of his life.
GALATIANS	We are saved by grace, not by law. Finality of the gospel.
EPHESIANS	Unity and preeminent important of the Church. Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ.
PHILIPPIANS	A love letter from Paul to the Church at Philippi.
COLOSSIANS	The Deity and all-sufficiency of Christ as the Head of the Church and the ruler of all things.
I & II THESSALONIANS	The Lord's second coming; Further instructions concerning the Lord's second coming.
I TIMOTHY	Instructions of Paul to the young preacher, Timothy, concerning care for the Church at Ephesus.
II TIMOTHY	Paul's final word, written shortly before his death; his shout of triumph.
TITUS	Instructions to an evangelist by Paul, concerning the work among the churches of Crete.
PHILEMON	A private letter to Philemon, beseeching him to receive back Onesimus, a runaway slave.
HEBREWS	(May not have been written by Paul) The superiority of the New Covenant to the Old; and the transcendent glory of Christ.

GENERAL LETTERS WRITTEN BY JAMES, PETER, JOHN, JUDE (7 BOOKS)

JAMES	The necessity of good works, as contrasted with a mere profession of faith.
I PETER	Words of comfort to a persecuted Church; the honor and privilege of Christians to suffer for Christ.

II PETER	Warnings against false teachers; predictions of apostasy.
I JOHN	The duty to live righteously; the believer's spiritual knowledge. "God is love."
II JOHN	A warning against heresy and false teachers.
III JOHN	A rejection of John's helpers. Character sketches of certain people in the Church.
JUDE	Imminent apostasy; historical examples of divine judgments upon sinners.

PROPHECY (1 BOOK)

REVELATION	The ultimate triumph of Christ; the last judgment; the new and eternal divine order; heaven and hell. CHRIST WILL WIN!
-------------------	---

THREE AGES OF BIBLICAL HISTORY

<u>PATRIARCHAL AGE</u>	God dealt with man through the Patriarchs, (i.e., Heads of families).
<u>MOSAIC AGE</u>	God dealt with man through the Mosaic Law which He gave to Moses at Mt. Sinai. It contained 613 commandments, at the heart of which was the Ten Commandments written by the finger of God on two tablets of stone.
<u>CHRISTIAN AGE</u>	God deals with man through Jesus Christ and the gospel He gave. This is the age in which we now live, and which will last until the end of time.

THE BIBLE AND YOU

The Bible tells us that there is something dreadfully, awfully wrong with the world – and that there is something very wrong with ourselves. Of course, we would know that things are not what they ought to be, both with ourselves and with everyone else, even if the Bible did not tell us. We know that we are not perfect, and the world is not a perfect place inhabited by perfect people.

What the Bible does is not only tell us that something is wrong, but it tells us **WHAT** is wrong . . . and what we can do to correct that flawed condition which characterizes both ourselves and everyone else. *"By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy" (Heb. 10:14).*

The root of the flawed and imperfect condition of man and the world . . . of ourselves and everyone else . . . is **SIN**. *"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).* Christ and His sacrifice as an atonement for our sins at calvary, is God's solution

for our sin-problem.

The Bible tells us how, through repentance and baptism into the death of Christ, we can receive the remission (removal) of sin, and membership in Christ and in the church of Christ which is his embodiment (I Cor. 12:13; Rom. 6:3,4). By doing this in obedience to the gospel, we are not only united with Christ, but with God, the Father, and are through the blood of Christ, sanctified and made holy.

The Bible gives rational, coherent, and satisfactory solutions and answers to all of man's ultimate problems and questions. Reject those answers and solutions which are given in the Scriptures, and there are no answers or solutions to the sin problem, the death problem, the "Where am I going to spend eternity?" problem, the "Who is God and what does He want?" problem, the "What is wrong?" problem, the "How can I find God and obtain a family relationship and union with Him?" problem . . . and many other basic problems and questions to which the Bible gives clear and sure answers and solutions. It's the Bible or nothing . . . accept its light . . . or walk in darkness!

The Bible is God's only revelation of Himself, His divine nature, and His eternal plans and purposes for man and the universe. The whole creation speaks of a Creator – the design apparent everywhere we look in the natural order of the physical world tells us there is a Creator, a designer – tells us "There IS a God!" But, while it speaks of His majesty, power and glory – His wisdom and intelligence – all are attributes of God. They tell us "GOD IS," but they don't tell us "WHO GOD IS." Only the Bible, in which God reveals Himself to us through Jesus Christ, tells us truly WHO God is. In Christ, God lays Himself bare to the eyes of mortal man . . . humbles Himself before us, so to speak . . . strips himself of the impenetrable veils of mystery and transcendence which hide Him from human eyes . . . and dies as the substitute victim for our sins, thus establishing that indeed and in truth – "GOD IS LOVE!" (I Jn. 4:7,8).

"WE LOVE HIM BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US" (I Jn. 4:19). Only through the Word can we "know God," and "this is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou didst send." The Bible gives us God's "plan of salvation," and tells us how we can become a part of and obtain the salvation He offers through that plan.

**GOD'S WORD IS GOD'S WILL . . . FOR YOU, FOR ME, FOR EVERY PERSON
GOD'S WORD IS GOD'S PLAN . . . FOR YOUR LIFE, HERE AND HEREAFTER.
IT IS A BEAUTIFUL PLAN FOR A SURPASSINGLY BEAUTIFUL LIFE AND
DESTINY.**

HAVE YOU ACCEPTED IT AND CONFORMED YOUR LIFE TO IT?

LESSON III

THE BIBLE – WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

THE THEME AND SUBJECT OF THE BIBLE IS "THE RULE OF GOD AND THE REDEMPTION OF MAN, CONSUMMATED IN AND ACCOMPLISHED BY ONE DIVINE PERSON – JESUS CHRIST, WHO IS BOTH RULER AND REDEEMER, SAVIOR AND LORD."

The "Rule of God" means the establishment of the kingdom of God, the government of God, over His creation, a government which God intends shall be administered by redeemed men who have been given eternal life by and are ruled by His Son, Jesus Christ.

The "purpose of God" is the establishment of a final and eternal perfect divine order, a celestial realm, without flaw of any kind, and inhabited by perfected beings who have voluntarily accepted the yoke of Christ's authority over their lives, and have assumed a divine and heavenly identity by being united with Christ and His Church here on earth. All that is taking place on earth here and now is a preparation for that coming final and eternal heavenly order. Just as the Patriarchal Age was a preparation for the Mosaic Age, the Mosaic Age was a preparation for the Christian Age, so is this, the Christian Age a preparation for the ultimate and everlasting heavenly order of being.

The "redemption of man" means the deliverance or salvation of man from Sin – its guilt, its dominion, and its ultimate awful consequences, the most terrible of which is Death . . . the death of the soul. "Death" means "separation," not "extinction, annihilation, or cessation of existence." The death of the body is the separation of the spirit or soul from the body – the spirit being the source of its life has departed, but it exists in a disintegrated and powerless condition . . . it is a "thing," rather than a person and personality. The death of the soul is the separation and severance of the soul from God, who is the source of the life of the soul. The soul continues to exist forever, but in darkness and chaos – in hell, and eternal torment and damnation. It is sin, and that alone, which separates man from God, here and hereafter (Isa. 59:1,2)

Jesus Christ came into the world to remove the sin-barrier between man and God by atoning death on the cross, and to establish the spiritual government of God on earth. That spiritual government, and kingdom of God, is the Church, which is made up of all those who will accept the great salvation purchased by Christ through His substitutionary death on the cross by repenting of their sins, confessing with their mouths their acceptance of Him as the resurrected Lord and Savior, and by being baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20), for the removal of their sins into His Church and Kingdom, and by remaining as faithful members of His spiritual body, the Church, for the rest of their lives on this earth.

God's purpose in giving us the Bible was to reveal Himself – His holiness, His love, His law, His will and purposes for time and eternity, to us, and through Christ to bring us to repentance and obedience to His Word and into a union with Himself. Our purpose in giving us the Bible – to bring each person involved in this study to Christ . . . to make Christians out of all who aren't already, and to make better Christians out of all who are.

It has been well said, "The Bible is to us what the star was to the wise men; but if we

spend all our time in gazing upon it, observing its motions, and admiring its splendor, without being led to Christ by it, the use of it will be lost to us." We pray that this study will lead you to repent of your sins and accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord.

ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?

**"ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS NAME! LET ANGELS PROSTRATE FALL.
BRING FORTH THE ROYAL DIADEM, AND CROWN HIM LORD OF ALL!!**

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT ITSELF: (Read Deut. 6:4-12; Psa. 19:7-11; Lk. 8:11; Jn. 15:3)

IT IS DIVINELY INSPIRED:

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

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Pet. 1:21).

IT ENDURES FOREVER:

"Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in Heaven" (Psa. 119:89).

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever" (Isa. 40:8).

"For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:18).

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35).

"But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Pet. 1:25).

IT IS FOOD FOR THE SOUL:

"And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (Deut. 8:3).

"How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Psa. 119:103).

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: For I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts" (Jer. 15:16).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Pet. 2:2).

IT PURIFIES THE LIFE:

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psa. 119:9).

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (Jn. 15:3).

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17).

"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:26).

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (I Pet. 1:22).

IT IS

A CRUSHING HAMMER – Jer. 23:29: *"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"*

A LIFE-GIVING FORCE – Ezek. 37:7: *"So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone."*

A SAVING POWER – Rom. 1:16: *"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believeth; to the Jew first, and also the Greek."*

A DEFENSIVE WEAPON – Eph. 6:17: *"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God."*

A PROBING INSTRUMENT – Heb. 4:12: *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

A DEVOURING FLAME – Jer. 5:14: *"Wherefore thus saith the Lord God of Hosts, because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them."*

THE LIGHT THAT SHINES – Psa. 119:105: *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."*

Psa. 119:130: *"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."*

Prov. 6:23: *"For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."*

I Pet. 1:19: *"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."*

IT WAS WRITTEN TO:

To Authenticate the Divinity of Christ – Jn. 20:31: *"But these are written, that he might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life"*

through His name."

To Give Hope to Man – Rom. 15:4: *"For whosoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."*

To Relate Human Experience As A Warning – I Cor. 10:11: *"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."*

To Give Knowledge of Eternal Life – I Jn. 5:13: *"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."*

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

The Bible contains 3,556,480 letters, 310,697 words, 31,175 verses, 1,189 chapters, and 66 Books. The longest chapter is the 119th Psalm. The shortest and middle chapter the 117th Psalm. The middle verse is the 8th of the 118th Psalm. The longest word is in the 8th chapter of Isaiah. The word "and" occurs 46,600 times. The "Lord" occurs 1,885 times. The 37th chapter of Isaiah and 19th chapter of the second book of Kings are alike. The longest verse is the 19th of the 8th chapter of Esther, the shortest is the 35th of the 11 chapter of John. In the 21st verse of the 7th chapter of Ezra is the alphabet. The finest piece of reading is the 26th chapter of Acts. God's name is not mentioned in the book of Esther.

It contains Knowledge, Wisdom, Holiness, and Love.

THE BIBLE

**This Book unfolds Jehovah's mind,
This Word salutes in accents kind,
This Friend will all our needs supply,
This Fount will always satisfy.**

**This Mind affords us boundless wealth,
This Good Physician gives us health,
This Sun renews and warms the soul,
This Sword wounds and makes us whole.**

**This Letter shows our sins forgiven,
This Guide conducts us safe to Heaven,
This Charter has been sealed with blood,
This Volume is the Word of God.**

"This Bible is for the Government OF the People, BY the people, and FOR the people." (General Prologue, Wycliffe Translation of the Bible, 1384). (Few people know that Abraham Lincoln got the phrase, "OF the people, BY the people, and FOR the people", used in the Gettysburg Address, from the Wycliffe Bible, in all probability).

THOSE WHO BUILD THEIR LIVES ON "THE WORD" OF GOD WILL LIVE FOREVER

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: And great was the fall of it" (Matt. 7:24-27).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn. 6:68).

THE WORD OF CHRIST, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD, WILL BE THE BASIS OF THE FINAL ETERNAL JUDGMENT OF OUR SOULS

"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:47-50).

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1,2).

**THE BIBLE IS THE LIVING WORD OF THE LIVING GOD.
IT IS A ROAD MAP TO HEAVEN.**

"God's sacred Word is that inestimable treasure, which excellet all the riches of the earth; because the fruit thereof extendeth itself, not only to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that eternal happiness which is above, in Heaven."

THE TRANSLATORS – The King James Bible

NOTABLE SAYINGS ABOUT THE BIBLE

John Quincy Adams: "So great is my veneration for the Bible that the earlier my children begin to read it the more confident will be my hope that they will prove useful citizens of their country and respectable members of Society. I have for many years made it a practice to read through the Bible once every year."

Immanuel Kant: "The existence of the Bible, as a book for the people, is the greatest benefit which the human race has ever experienced. Every attempt to belittle it is a crime against humanity."

Charles Dickens: "The New Testament is the very best book that ever was or ever will be known in the world."

Sir William Herschel: "All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths contained in the Sacred Scriptures."

Sir Isaac Newton: "There are more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history."

Goethe: "Let mental culture go on advancing, let the natural sciences progress in ever greater extent and depth, and the human mind widen itself as much as it desires; beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity, as it shines forth in the gospels, it will not go."

Henry Van Dyke: "Born in the East and clothed in Oriental form and imagery, the Bible walks the ways of all the world with familiar feet and enters land after land to find its own everywhere. It has learned to speak in hundreds of languages to the heart of man. Children listen to its stories with wonder and delight, and wise men ponder them as parables of life. The wicked and the proud tremble at its warnings, but to the wounded and

penitent it has a mother's voice. It has woven itself into our dearest dreams; so that love, friendship, sympathy, devotion, memory, hope, put on the beautiful garments of its treasured speech. No man is poor or desolate who has this treasure for his own. When the landscape darkens, and the trembling pilgrim comes to the valley of the shadow of death, he is not afraid to enter; he takes the rod and staff of Scripture in his hand; he says to friend and comrade, 'Goodbye; we shall meet again' and, confronted by that support, he goes toward the lonely pass as one who walks through darkness into light." (From Companionable Books, by Henry Van Dyke, through courtesy of its publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons).

Henry Ward Beecher: "The Bible is God's chart for you to steer by, to keep you from the bottom of the sea, and to show you where the harbor is, and how to reach it without running on rocks or bars."

Theodore Roosevelt: "A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education."

Abraham Lincoln: "I believe the bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated to us through this book."

W. E. Gladstone: "I have known ninety-five of the world's great men in my time and of these, eighty-seven were followers of the Bible. The Bible is stamped with a Specialty of Origin, and an immeasurable distance separates it from all competitors."

George Washington: "That book accounts for the supremacy of England."

Queen Victoria: "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."

Napoleon: "The Bible is no mere book, but a living creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it."

Daniel Webster: "If there is anything in my thoughts or style to commend, the credit is due to my parents for instilling in me an early love of the Scriptures. If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our Country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity."

Thomas Carlyle: "The Bible is the truest utterance that ever came by alphabetic letters from the soul of man, through which, as through a window divinely opened, all men can look into the stillness of eternity, and discern in glimpses their far-distant, long-forgotten home."

John Ruskin: "Whatever merit there is in anything that I have written is simply due to the fact that when I was a child my mother daily read me a part of the Bible and daily made me a part of it by heart."

Charles A. Dana: "The Grand Old Book still stands; and this old Earth, the more its leaves are turned and pondered, the more it will sustain and illustrate the pages of the sacred Word."

Thomas Huxley: "The Bible has been the Magna Charta of the poor and oppressed. The human race is not in a position to dispense with it."

W. H. Seward: "The whole hope of human progress is suspended on the ever growing influence of the Bible."

Patrick Henry: "The Bible is worth all other books which have ever been printed."

U. S. Grant: "The Bible is the sheet-anchor of our liberties."

Horace Greeley: "It is impossible to enslave mentally or socially a Bible-reading people. the principles of the Bible are the ground-work of human freedom."

Andrew Jackson: "That book, sir, is the rock on which our republic rests."

Robert E. Lee: "In all my perplexities and distresses, the Bible has never failed to give me light and strength."

Lord Tennyson: "Bible reading is an education in itself."

Mark Twain: "Most people are bothered by those passages in scripture which they cannot understand; but as for me, I always noticed that the passages in scripture which trouble me most are those which I do understand."

Voltaire: "If we would destroy the Christian religion, we must first of all destroy man's belief in the Bible."

Izaak Walton: "Every hour I read you kills a sin, or lets a virtue in to fight against it."

Susan Bogert Warner: "Jesus love me – this I know. For the Bible tells me so."

Isaac Watts: "How glad the heathens would have been, That worship idols, wood and stone, If they the book of God had seen." "Dear Lord, this book of thine informs me where to go, For grace to pardon all my sin, And make me holy too." "The stars, that in their courses roll, Have much instruction given; But thy good Word informs my soul, How I may climb to heaven."

The Defender: "Other books were given for our information, the Bible was given for our transformation."

Cecil B. DeMille: "The greatest source of material for motion pictures is the Bible, and almost any chapter in the Bible would serve as a basic idea for a motion picture...After more than sixty years of almost daily reading of the Bible, I never fail to find it always new and marvelously in tune with the changing needs of everyday."

Ernest Von Dobschutz: "There is a small book; one can put it in one's pocket, and yet all the libraries of America, numerous as they are, would hardly be large enough to hold all the books which have been inspired by this one little volume. The reader will know what I am speaking of; it is the Bible, as we are used to call it -- the Book, the book of

mankind, as it has properly been called.

Robert Payne Smith: "The books of men have their day and grow obsolete. God's Word is like Himself, 'the same yesterday, today and forever.'"

Wallace C. Speers: "Democracy is nothing but an attempt to apply the principles of the Bible to a human society."

Gardiner Spring: "Never, with the Bible in our hands, can we deny rights to another, which, under the same circumstances, we could claim for ourselves."

Samuel Spring: "In God's word we have a perfect standard both of duty and character, that by the influence of both, appealing to the best principles of our nature, we may be roused to the noblest and best efforts."

Charles Haddon Spurgeon: "Nobody ever outgrows scripture; the Book widens and deepens with our years."

Sir Richard Steele: "Even the style of the scriptures is more than human."

Augustus H. Strong: "The Bible is a telescope between man and God; it is the rending of a veil."

J. Carter Swaim: "The real influence of the Bible cannot be measured; it is reckoned only in terms of hearts that have been lifted up, decisions that have been changed, the men and women have done justice and loved kindness and walked humbly with God."

Kenyon A. Palmer: "God's Road Map – the Bible."

Theodore Parker: "The Bible goes equally to the cottage of the peasant, and the palace of the king. It is woven into literature, and colors the talk of the street. The bark of the merchant cannot sail without it; and no ship of war goes to the conflict but it is there. It enters men's closets; directs their conduct, and mingles in all the grief and cheerfulness of life."

Robert Pollok: "Most wondrous book! Bright candle of the Lord! Star of eternity! The only star by which the bark of man could navigate the sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss securely."

John Greenleaf Whittier: "We search the world for truth; we cull the good, the pure, the beautiful, from all old flower fields of the soul; and, weary seekers of the best, we come back laden from our quest, to find that all the sages said is in the Book our mothers read."

Ibid: "Whence, but from heaven could men, unskilled in arts, in several ages born, in several parts, weave such agreeing truths? Or how, or why, should all conspire to cheat us with a lie? Unmasked their pains, ungrateful their advice, starving their gain, and martyrdom their price."

Timothy Dwight: "The Bible is a window in this prison world, through which we may look

into eternity."

Dwight L. Moody: "Sin will keep you from this Book. This Book will keep you from sin . . . I know the Bible is inspired because it inspires me."

Frank W. Moyle: "The question of the authority of the Bible need not trouble the humblest reader. It is not a code which fell from the sky, guaranteed by an ecclesiastical imprimatur, but a collection of writing which breathes upon us the only authority that is worth regarding – the authority of the power of the spirit."

Cardinal John Henry Newman: "I read my Bible to know what people ought to do, and my newspaper to know what they are doing."

Toyohiko Kagawa: "When you start a Bible movement, it means revolution – a quiet revolution against darkness and crime."

Immanuel Kant: "The Bible is the greatest benefit which the human race has ever experienced . . . A single line in the Bible has consoled me more than all the books I ever read besides."

Ulysses S. Grant: "Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet-anchor of your liberties; write its precepts in your hearts, and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this book we are indebted for all the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future. 'Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people'."

John Jay Chapman: "The New Testament is the thesaurus of sacred wisdom compared to which there is no book or monument that deserves to be named."

Andre' Gide: "There's a big difference between the books that men make and the Book that makes man."

An Indian Brahman to a Missionary: "If you Christians in India, in Britain, or in America, were like your book, we would conquer India in five years."

Jean Jacques Rousseau: "I must confess to you that the majesty of the Scriptures astonishes me; the holiness of the Evangelists speaks to my heart and has such striking features of truth, and is, moreover, so perfectly inimitable, that if it had been the invention of men, the inventors would be greater than the greatest heroes."

Heinrich Heine: "Strange, after having passed the whole of my life in gliding about the dancing floors of philosophy, and abandoning myself to all the orgies of the intellect, and dallying with systems without ever being satisfied--I have suddenly arrived at the same point of view as Uncle Tom, taking my stand on the Bible and kneeling beside my black brother in prayer in the same act of devotion."

Frederic William Farrar: "No student can historically understand the Bible until he is ready to lay aside all prior considerations, and examine it analytically, arriving by induction at a real knowledge as to its claims and character . . . We must never lose sight of the fact that the Bible is not a single nor even a homogeneous book. The Bible is, strictly

speaking, not a book, but a library."

Walter Scott: "The most learned, acute, and diligent student cannot, in the longest life, obtain an entire knowledge of this one volume. The more deeply he works the mine, the richer and more abundant he finds the ore; new light continually beams from this source of heavenly knowledge, to direct the conduct and illustrate the work of God and the ways of men; and he will at last leave the world confessing that the more he studied the scriptures, the fuller conviction he had of his own ignorance, and of their inestimable value."

Channing: "The incongruity of the Bible with the age of its birth; its freedom from earthly mixtures; its original, unborrowed, solitary greatness; the suddenness with which it broke forth amidst the general gloom; these, to me, are strong indications of its Divine descent: I cannot reconcile them with a human race."

Daniel Webster: "I believe that the Bible is to be understood and received in the plain and obvious meaning of its passages; for I cannot persuade myself that a book intended for the instruction and conversion of the whole world should cover its true meaning in any such mystery and doubt that none but critics and philosophers can discover it."

Napoleon: "The gospel is not merely a book – it is a living power – a book surpassing others. I never omit to read it, and every day with the same pleasure. Nowhere is there to be found such a series of beautiful ideas, and admirable moral maxims, which pass before us like the battalions of a celestial army . . . The soul can never go astray with this book for its guide."

Woodrow Wilson: "When you have read the Bible, you will know it is the word of God, because you will have found it the key to your own heart, your own happiness and your own duty."

B. P. Jewell: "Cities fall, empires come to nothing, kingdoms fade away as smoke. Where is Numa, Minos, Lycurgus? Where are their books? And what has become of their laws? But that this book no tyrant should have been able to consume, no tradition to choke, no heretic maliciously to corrupt; that it should stand to this day, amid the wreck of all that was human, without the alteration of one sentence so as to change the doctrine taught therein – surely there is a very singular providence, claiming our attention in a most remarkable manner."

Bunsen: "The Bible is the only cement of nations, and the only cement that can bind religious heart together."

Herschel: "All human discoveries seem to be made only for the purpose of confirming more and more strongly the truths that come from on high and are contained in the sacred writings."

C. D. Meigs: "What is home without a Bible? 'Tis a home where daily bread for the body is provided, but the soul is never fed."

Coleridge: "I know the Bible is inspired because it finds me at greater depths of my being

than any other book."

Daniel Webster: "The Bible is a book of faith, and a book of doctrine, and a book of special revelation from God; but it is also a book which teaches man his own individual responsibility, his own dignity, and his equality with his fellow man."

Scott: "Within that awful volume lies the mystery of mysteries! Happiest they of human race, to whom God has granted grace to read, to fear, to hope, to pray, to lift the latch and force the way; and better had they ne'er been born, who read to doubt, or read to scorn."

John Burton: "Holy Bible, book divine, precious treasure, thou art mine; mine to teach me whence I came, mine to teach me what I am."

Gregory the Great: "Holy Scriptures a stream of running water, where alike the elephant may swim, and the lamb may walk without losing its feet."

Cowper: "A glory gilds the sacred page, majestic like the sun, it gives a light to ev'ry age, it gives, but borrows none."

Carlyle: "What built St. Paul's Cathedral? Look at the heart of the matter, it was that divine Hebrew Book, the word partly of the man Moses, an outlaw tending his Midianitish herds, four thousand years ago, in the wilderness of Sinai! It is the strangest of things, yet nothing is truer."

F. W. Faber: "The music of the gospel leads us home."

Heine: "It is a plain old book, modest in nature itself and as simple, too. A book of an unpretending work-day appearance, like the sun that warms or the bread that nourishes us . . . And the name of this book is simply – the Bible."

John Q. Adams: "I speak as a man of the world to men of the world; and I say to you, search the Scriptures! The Bible is the book of all others, to be read at all ages, and in all conditions of human life; not to be read once or twice or thrice through, and then laid aside, but to be read in small portions of one or two chapters every day, and never to be intermitted, unless by some overruling necessity."

Peter Taylor Forsyth: "The Word of God is in the Bible as the soul is in the body."

Joseph Cook: "Do you know a book that you are willing to put under your head for a pillow when you lie dying? That is the book you want to study while you are living. There is but one such book in the world."

Garibaldi: "This is the cannon that will make Italy free."

H. W. Beecher: "Sink the Bible to the bottom of the ocean, and still man's obligations to God would be unchanged. He would have the same path to tread, only his lamp and his guide would be gone; the same voyage to make, but his chart and compass would be overboard."

Sir M. Hale: "The Bible is the only source of all Christian truth; the only rule for the Christian life; the only book that unfolds to us the realities of eternity."

Tryon Edwards: "The philosophers, A Varro tells us, counted up three hundred and twenty answers to the question, 'What is the supreme good?' How needful then is a divine revelation to make plain what is the true end of our being?"

Bacon: "There never was found, in any age of the world, either religion or law that did so highly exalt the public good as the Bible."

Sir William Jones: "The Bible is the light of my understanding, the joy of my heart, the fullness of my hope, the clarifier of my affections, the mirror of my thoughts, the consoler of my sorrows, the guide of my soul through this gloomy labyrinth of time, the telescope sent from heaven to reveal to the eye of man the amazing glories of the far distant world. The Bible contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written."

Flavel: "Bad men or devils would not have written the Bible, for it condemns them and their works – good men or angels could not have written it, for in saying it was from God when it was but their own invention, they would have been guilty of falsehood, and thus could not have been good. The only remaining being who could have written it is God – its real author. The Scriptures teach us the best way of living, the noblest way of suffering, and the most comfortable way of dying."

Romaine: "The longer you read the Bible, the more you will like it; it will grow sweeter and sweeter; and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ."

Thomas Jefferson: "I have always said, I always will say, that the studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands."

E. Nott: "Men cannot be well educated without the Bible. It ought, therefore, to hold the chief place in every seat of learning throughout Christendom; and I do not know of a higher service that could be rendered to this republic than the bringing about of this desirable result."

Chancellor Kent: "The general diffusion of the Bible is the most effectual way to civilize and humanize mankind: to purify and exalt the general system of public morals; to give efficacy to the just precepts of international and municipal law; to enforce the observance of prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude; and to improve all the relations of social and domestic life."

John Locke: "The Bible is one of the greatest blessings bestowed by God on the children of men. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture for its matter. It is all pure, all sincere, nothing too much, nothing too wanting."

Everett: "All the distinctive features and superiority of our republican institutions are derived from the teachings of the Scripture."

Helen Keller: "Just as all things upon earth represent and image forth all the realities of another world, so the Bible is one mighty representative of the whole spiritual life of humanity."

John Wanamaker: "I cannot too greatly emphasize the importance and value of Bible study more important than ever before in these days of uncertainties, when men and women are apt to decide questions from the standpoint of expediency rather than on the eternal principles laid down by God, Himself."

William Lyon Phelps: "I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without a Bible."

Rousseau: "Peruse the works of our philosophers; with all their pomp of diction, how mean, how contemptible are they compared with the Scriptures! Is it possible that a book at once so simple and sublime should be merely the work of man? The Jewish authors were incapable of diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of those truths are so striking and inimitable that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero."

Bruce Burton: "The Bible rose to the place it now occupies because it deserved to rise to that place, and not because God sent anybody with a box of tricks to prove its divine authority."

F. Wayland: "That the truths of the Bible have the power of awakening an intense moral feeling in every human being; that they make bad men good, and send a pulse of healthful feeling through all the domestic, civil, and social relations; that they teach men to love right, and hate wrong, and seek each other's welfare as children of a common parent; that they control the baleful passions of the heart, and thus make men proficient in self-government; and finally that they teach man to aspire after conformity to a being of infinite holiness, and fill him with hopes more purifying, exalted, and suited to his nature than any other book the world has ever known – these are the facts as incontrovertible as the laws of philosophy, or the demonstrations of mathematics."

Daniel Webster: "Philosophical argument, especially that drawn from the vastness of the universe, in comparison with the apparent insignificance of the this globe, has sometimes shaken my reason for the faith that is in me; but my heart has always assured and reassured me that the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be a divine reality."

Carlyle: "A noble book! All men's book! It is our first, oldest statement of the never-ending problem -- man's destiny, and God's ways with him here on earth; and all in such free-flowing outlines – grand in its sincerity; in its simplicity and its epic melody."

Payson: "One monarch to obey, one creed to own – that monarch God – that creed His word alone. If there is any one fact or doctrine, or command, or promise that the Bible which has produced no practical effect on your temper, or heart, or conduct, be assured you do not truly believe it."

THE BIBLE

The Bible,
inerrant in statement,
immeasurable in influence,
inexhaustive in its adequacy,
personal in application,
regenerative in power,
inspired in totality,
is the miracle Book of diversity in unity,
of harmony in infinite complexity --
the God-breathed Book that travels
more highways,
walks more bypaths,
knocks at more doors,
and speaks to more people
in their mother tongue
than any book the world
has ever known,
can ever know, or
will ever know.

Robert G. Lee

THE BOOK MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD

Though the cover is worn,
And the pages are torn,
And though places bear traces of tears,
Yet more precious than gold
Is the Book worn and old,
That can shatter and scatter my fears.
When I prayerfully look
In the precious old Book,
As my eyes scan the pages I see
Many tokens of love
From the Father above,
Who is nearest and dearest to me.
This old Book is my guide,
'Tis a friend by my side,
It will lighten and brighten my way;
And each promise I find
Soothes and gladdens my mind
As I read it and heed it today.

THE WORLD'S BIBLE

Christ has no hands but our hands
To do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet
To lead men in His way;
He has no tongue but our tongues
To tell men how He died;
He has no help but our help
To bring them to His side.
We are the only Bible
The careless world will read;
We are the sinner's Gospel,
We are the scoffer's creed.
We are the Lord's last message
Given in deed and word --
What if the line is crooked?
What if the type is blurred?
What if our hands are busy
With other work than His?
What if our feet are walking
Where sin's allurements are?
What if our tongues are speaking
Of things His lips would spurn?
How can we hope to help Him
Unless from Him we learn?

Annie Johnson Flint

**KNOW THE BIBLE IN YOUR MIND
KEEP IT IN YOUR HEART;
LIVE IT IN YOUR LIFE;
SHARE IT WITH THE WORLD.
TO KNOW IT IS TO LOVE IT.
TO LOVE IT IS TO ACCEPT IT.
TO ACCEPT IT MEANS LIFE ETERNAL.**

**HOW TO USE THE BIBLE:
READ IT THROUGH.
PRAY IN IT.
WORK IT OUT.
NOTE IT DOWN.
PASS IT ON.**

IN CONCLUSION:

- ☞ The reason men do not believe the Bible is not that it contradicts itself, but that it contradicts them. Not error in the Bible, but error and sin in man is the greatest obstacle to its acceptance.**
- ☞ Men don't believe the Bible because they don't want to believe it – for moral and not intellectual reasons. It condemns what they are doing, and they don't want to repent.**
- ☞ The key to understanding the Bible is to know the Author. He who does not know God cannot truly understand His Word, as we read . . .**

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: For they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14

INTRODUCTION TO LESSON IV & V

THE KING AND THE KINGDOM

The whole Bible can be summarized as an exposition and actualization of The King, Jesus Christ – ruler over all realms, spiritual and material, temporal and external, earthly and heavenly – and his kingdom – which is also God's kingdom, and is the church of Christ . . . that body of redeemed souls who wear His name alone, and listen to His voice alone, follow His teachings and obey His commandment alone, and who have been born again of water and the Spirit into that kingdom.

The message of the Old Testament can be summed up in one short sentence: The King and the Kingdom Are Coming – Get Ready!

The Old Testament sets forth the Divine King and His heavenly kingdom brought-down-to-earth in prospect and promise, in prophecy and pre-figurement. An almighty divine person, God's Son Himself, would come down to the earth from heaven above and establish the eternal spiritual government of God among men. Hundreds of prophecies were given to God's ancient people, Israel, concerning every aspect and facet of the King's birth, life, teachings, and atoning death for the sins of His people, as well as His resurrection, ascension to infinite glory and power as He sits at the right hand of God – ruling and reigning until every foe shall be subjugated and every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess that "*Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.*" (*Psa. 110:1-7; Matt. 26:64; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Cor. 15:25; Phil. 2:10,11*).

The exact time and place and circumstances concerning first – the coming of the King and second – the establishment of His kingdom, are set forth in detail in the prophecies of the Old Testament.

The New Testament begins by announcing "The King Has Arrived!" The angel of the Lord announced to the shepherds on the hills of Bethlehem: ". . . *Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people, for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord*" (*Lk. 2:10,11*).

The first four books of the New Testament tell of the miraculous birth of the divine King, Jesus, relates the details of his life, teachings, marvelous and miraculous works, death for our sins, resurrection from the grave and ascension into heaven where we see His enthronement and coronation as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The epistles (letters) of the New Testament (Romans through Jude) are the instructions given by Christ through His apostles and the writers He inspired through His Holy Spirit to the church. The entire New Testament contains the divinely given laws and precepts given by the King to His kingdom, both then and now and forever.

The book of Revelation is a prophetic preview of the history of mankind and the world, as it pertains to Christ and His kingdom, and ends with the final judgment of all souls, the separation of the wicked from the righteous, and the inauguration of the perfected and eternal divine order and kingdom, in a "*new heavens and new earth, wherein dwell righteousness*" (*Rev. 21:1-8; II Pet. 3:13*).

LESSON IV

JESUS CHRIST – THE KING

The Bible was written for no other purpose than to present Christ to us, and to bring us to God in and through Christ.

Jesus Christ . . . King and King of kings, Lord and Lord of lords . . . Prophet, High Priest, Savior and Redeemer . . . hero of the Bible and of human history . . . Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, Ruler, and Judge of the universe and all that is in it . . . the only bridge between heaven and earth and the only link and mediator between God and man. We know Him only through the Bible and we know God only through Him . . . God communicates with us only through Christ and those whom Christ has designated, and we can communicate with God only through Him.

Memory Verse: *"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (Jn. 5:39).*

Other important passages to read and discuss: Jn. 1:1-14; Jn. 14:6; Matt. 28:18-20; Col. 1:12-20; Heb. 1:1-4; I Cor. 15:1-28; Rom. 1:16.

"Jesus love me this I know, for the Bible tells me so" is the only basis for our hope of victory over sin and death, hell and the grave.

WHY JESUS CHRIST CAME INTO THE WORLD

- I. **To seek and save the lost – to give His life as a ransom for many:** Lk. 19:10; Lk. 9:56; Matt. 20:28; Matt. 18:11; Jn. 3:17; Jn. 10:18; I. Tim. 1:15; Mk. 10:45; Jn. 12:27
- II. **To fulfill the law and the prophets – to take away the first (covenant), that He might establish the second:** Heb. 10:7-9; Matt. 5:17
- III. **To do God's will and work:** Jn. 9:4; Jn. 6:38; Heb. 10:7-9
- IV. **To preach the gospel of the kingdom of God and to bear witness to the truth:** Lk. 4:43; Jn. 18:37
- V. **To give sight to the blind, and light to those in darkness:** Jn. 9:39; Jn. 12:46-47
- VI. **To call sinners to repentance:** Mk. 2:17; Lk. 5:32
- VII. **To destroy the works of the devil – to bring the sword of conflict, enmity, division, and destruction to the earth – to send fire upon the earth, and to blind those who thought they "saw", but were blind leaders of the blind:** I Jn. 3:8; Matt. 10:34; Lk. 12:49-51; Jn. 9:39

JESUS CHRIST, OUR SAVIOR AND OUR LORD

In His LIFE, Christ is our perfect example, showing us how to live.

In His TEACHINGS, Christ is our leader and lawgiver . . . His words are our commandments. He became the author of eternal salvation only to those *"that obey him"* (Heb. 5:8-9).

In His DEATH, Christ is the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins, fully satisfying the demands of God's moral and spiritual law that *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die"* (Ezek. 18:4,20; Heb. 10:41).

In His RESURRECTION, Christ is the divine conqueror, triumphing over death and the grave, setting us free from sin and its eternal penalty and consequences.

In His ASCENSION and ENTHRONEMENT, Christ is the King of the universe, possessing *"all authority in heaven and on earth"* (Matt. 28:18-20).

In His constant INTERCESSION for us, Christ is our great High Priest.

In His SECOND COMING, Christ will be our judge and justifier, who will say to those whom he has sanctified by his blood . . . *"Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"* (Matt. 25:34).

The ages have a solemn testimony to give about Jesus Christ, and that testimony is that His claims were true. Lo, He has done what the prophets said the Messiah would do. He has accomplished, by Himself, the work God assigned to the whole people of Israel. He has destroyed the idols. He and He alone has communicated to mankind God's message of love and redemption, of justice and truth. He has called-out of the world a people to be like Himself, *"holy, harmless and undefiled."*

He came into a world which was without hope, and without God, and He gave it a divine hope, and by Himself, reconciled it to God.

Behold, *"The stone that the builder's rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing. It is marvelous in our eyes"* (Psa. 118:22,23). *"For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ"* (I Cor. 3:11).

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES AND PREDICTIONS OF THE COMING OF CHRIST

It has been estimated that approximately 27% of the Bible is prophetic and predictive of things to come, directly or indirectly. (Of 31,124 verses in the Bible, 8,532 verses either contain predictions concerning the future, or are related to such predictions). One writer on the subject has counted 1,817 predictions on 55 different subjects ... 737 separate events predicted.

Most of these prophecies have been fulfilled; the rest are in the process of being fulfilled. In Deuteronomy 18:21,22, God's requirements for a true prophet are set forth. The Prophet of God must be totally correct and accurate.

Prophecies concerning the world and the nations of the earth, concerning the Jews and concerning the Messiah, the Christ, our Lord and Savior, whose coming was the central event of the Bible and human history.

Halley's Bible Handbook, pages 387-401, contain an excellent compendium of the

Messianic prophecies and foreshadowing of the Old Testament, a portion of which is reproduced below, and on the following pages. (Halley's Bible Handbook, by Henry H. Halley, Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, Michigan; 24th Edition, 1965).

CHRIST is the CENTER and HEART of the BIBLE

The Old Testament is an account of a NATION.

The New Testament is an account of a MAN.

The Nation was founded and nurtured of God to bring the Man into the world.

God Himself became a Man, to give mankind a concrete, definite tangible idea of what kind of Person to think of when we think of God. God is like Jesus. Jesus was God incarnate in human form.

His appearance on the earth is the central event of all history. The Old Testament sets the stage for it. The New Testament describes it.

As a Man, He lived the most strangely beautiful life ever known. He was the kindest, tenderest, gentlest, most patient, most sympathetic man that ever lived. He loved to forgive. He loved to help. He wrought marvelous miracles to feed hungry people. For relieving the suffering He forgot to take food for Himself. Multitudes, weary, pain-ridden, and heart-sick, came to Him, and found healing and relief. It is said of Him, and of no other, that if all the deeds of kindness that He did were written, the world would not contain the books. That is the kind of man Jesus was. That is the kind of person that God is.

Then: He died on the cross, to take away the sin of the world, to become the Redeemer and Savior of men.

Then: He rose from the dead: is alive now: not merely an historical character, but a living person: the most important fact of history, and most vital force in the world today.

The whole Bible is built around the beautiful story of Christ, and His promise of life eternal to those who accept Him. The Bible was written only that men might believe, and understand, and know, and love, and follow CHRIST.

Christ, the center and heart of the Bible, the center and heart of history, is the center and heart of our Lives. Our eternal destiny is in His hand. Our acceptance or rejection of Him determines, for each of us, eternal glory or eternal ruin; heaven or hell: one or the other.

The most important decision any one is ever called on to make is to settle, in his heart once and for all, the matter of his attitude toward Christ. On that depends everything.

It is a glorious thing to be a Christian, most exalted privilege of mankind. To accept Christ as Saviour, Lord, and Master, and to strive sincerely and devotedly to follow in the way of life which He taught is certainly, and by far, the most reasonable and most satisfactory way to live. It means peace, peace of mind, contentment of heart, forgiveness, happiness, hope, life, life here and now, life abundant, LIFE THAT SHALL NEVER END.

How can anyone be so blind, or so dumb, as to go through life and face death without the Christian hope? Apart from Christ, what is there, what can there be, either for this world or the next to make it worthwhile? We all have to die. Why try to laugh it off? It seems like every human being would welcome Christ with open arms and consider it the proudest privilege of his life to wear the Christian name.

In the last analysis, the dearest, sweetest thing in life is to have consciousness in the inner depths of our motives that we live for Christ; and though our efforts be ever so feeble, we toil at our daily tasks in hope of, in the final roundup, having done something to lay in humble gratitude and adoration as an offering at His feet.

- Halley's Handbook, pps. 20-21 -

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

Here is a young man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He traveled 200 miles from the place where He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself.

While He was still a young man, the tide of public opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While He was dying, His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth, and that was His coat. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today He is the central figure of the human race and the leader of the column of progress. I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected

MESSIANIC STRAIN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Fore-Shadows and Predictions of the Coming Messiah

The Old Testament was written to create an anticipation of, and pave the way for, the coming of Christ. It is the story of the Hebrew nation, dealing largely with events and exigencies of its own times. But all through the story there runs unceasing expectancy and provision of the coming of ONE MAJESTIC PERSON, who will rule and bless the whole world. This person, long before He arrived, came to be known as the Messiah.

The predictions and fore-gleams of His coming constitute the Messianic strain of the Old Testament. They form the golden thread extending through and binding together its many and diverse books into one amazing unity.

Starting with vague hints, there soon begin to appear specific, definite predictions, which as the story sweeps onward, become more specific, more definite and more abundant.

And as definite predictions multiply, accompanying symbols, pictures, types and indirect fore-gleams also increase.

So that by the time we come to the end of the Old Testament, the entire story of Christ has been pre-written and pre-figured in language and symbol, which taken as a whole, cannot refer to any other person in history.

In addition to predictions and types which are most evident, there may be many hidden Messianic imitations which are not clearly visible on the surface.

And some incidents or passages may have meaning or bearing on later developments not noticeable till after the later developments come to pass.

However, we think it best not to overdo the matter of types, except they are so explained in the scripture, or are so apparent as to be unmistakable.

Our purpose here is to give, in their own order, a brief outline of Old Testament passages which most plainly point forward to the coming of Christ.

Genesis 3:15 Seed of the Woman

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

This seems to say that God is determined, in spite of man's sin, to bring His creation of man to a successful issue. As through woman man fell, so through woman shall man be redeemed. It will be by a man, "His," who will be of the seed of the woman, that is, born of woman without the agency of man. It seems like a primeval hint of the virgin birth of Christ. For there has been only ONE descendant of Eve who was born of woman without being begotten by man.

Genesis 4:3-5 Abel's Offering

"Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord. And Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock . . . And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering. But unto Cain and his offering he had not respect."

This looks like the institution of blood sacrifice, right at the start, as the condition of man's acceptance with God – a primal hint, and the beginning of a long line of pictures and predictions of Christ's atoning death for human sin.

Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 22:18 Call of Abraham

"In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Here is a clear, definite statement repeated three times to Abraham that in him God was founding a nation for the express purpose of, through the nation, of blessing all nations. By and by it came to be called The Messianic Nation.

Genesis 14:18-20 Melchizedek

Melchizedek, King of Salem, Priest of God, brought bread and wine and blessed Abraham. And Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek. In Psalm 110:4, it is said of the coming Messiah, *"Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."* In Hebrews 7, Melchizedek, as a King-Priest, is called a type of Jesus. So, here we have a sort of historical shadow-picture of the coming super-human PERSON whom Abraham's nation was being formed to bring into the world as Savior of mankind. And it was in Salem, that is, Jerusalem, same city where Jesus was crucified. And the bread and wine: what a beautiful primeval picture of the Lord's Supper and all that it means!

Genesis 22:1-19 Abraham Offers Isaac

1) A father offering his son. 2) For three days in the father's mind as good as dead (22:4). 3) a substitutionary sacrifice (22:13). 4) It was on Mount Moriah (22:2), same mount on which Jesus was crucified, same place where Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek (14:18). 5) Salem being on Mount Moriah.

As Melchizedek seems to have been a primeval shadow, in Abraham's life, of the PERSON Abraham's nation would bring into the world, so here seems to be a shadow of the EVENT in the coming person's life by which He would do His work. What an apt picture of the death and resurrection of Jesus!

Genesis 49:10,11 Shiloh

"The scepter shall not depart from Judah till Shiloh come. And unto Him shall the gathering of the people be. He washed his garments in the blood of grapes."

Here is the first clear, definite prediction that ONE PERSON would arise in Abraham's nation to rule all nations, Shiloh. He whose right it is. He must be the one of whom Melchizedek was a shadow. He would appear in the tribe of Judah. His garments washed in the blood of grapes may be a metaphorical fore-hint of His crucifixion.

Exodus 12 Institution of the Passover

1) Israel's deliverance out of Egypt. 2) Death of Egypt's firstborn. 3) Israel's houses marked with the blood of a lamb. 4) The Lord passed over those so marked. 5) The feast to be kept annually throughout all their generations. 6) It became Israel's principal feast. 7) Observed in memory of deliverance from Egypt. 8) Kept for 1400 years as the very heart of the Hebrew nation. 9) Unmistakably it was designed of God to be a gigantic historical fore-picture of the basic event of human redemption, the death of Christ, the LAMB OF GOD, who expired on the cross, at a Passover Feast, bringing eternal deliverance from sin for those marked with His blood even as the first Passover brought deliverance from Egypt for Israel. It shows how much God's mind was on the coming of Christ long before He came.

Leviticus 16 The Day of Atonement

1) Once a year, 10th day of the 7th month. 2) Two Goats. 3) One killed as a sin-offering. 4) High Priest laid hands on head of other, called a scapegoat, confessing over him the people's sins. 5) Then scapegoat was led away and let go in the wilderness.

This, and the whole system of Levitical sacrifices as continuing features of Hebrew life, are clear historical fore-pictures of the atoning death of the coming Messiah.

Number 21:6-9 The Fiery Serpent

1) In the wilderness, serpents bit the people. 2) Many died. 3) Moses made a serpent of brass. 4) Whoever looked at it lived.

Jesus took this to be a picture of Himself being lifted up on the cross (Jn. 3:14). Mankind, bitten with sin in the Garden of Eden may look to Him and live.

Numbers 24:17,19 The Star

"There shall come a star out of Jacob. A scepter shall rise out of Israel. He shall have dominion."

Here is another definite prediction of a PERSON, a brilliant ruler, evidently, meaning the same person as the Shiloh of Genesis 49:10, who is to rule the nations.

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 A Prophet Like Unto Moses

God would raise up a prophet like unto Moses through whom God would speak to mankind, evidently, another characterization of the Shiloh and the star aforementioned.

Thus, in the first five books of the Old Testament there is a specific prediction repeated five times that the Hebrew nation was being launched into the world for the one express purpose of blessing all nations.

And also specific predictions that there would arise in the nation ONE PERSON called Shiloh, a Star, a Prophet, with rather plain imitations that it would be through this ONE PERSON that the nation would fulfill its mission.

Also, there are various hints about the nature of this person's work, especially featuring His sacrificial death. Thus early, 1400 years before Christ came, there were drawn in fairly distinct lines some leading characteristics of Christ's life.

Joshua

This book seems to have no direct prediction of the Messiah though Joshua himself is thought, in a sense, to have been type of Jesus. The names are the same, "Jesus" being the Greek form of the Hebrew "Joshua." As Joshua led Israel into the promised land, so Jesus will lead His people into heaven.

Ruth

Ruth was the great grandmother of David, beginning of the family in which the Messiah would come. (See page 175).

Boaz was of Bethlehem. Jesus was born in Bethlehem. An old tradition has it that Boaz took Ruth to be his bride, and started the family which was to bring Christ into the world in the very same room in which, 1100 years later, Christ was born.

I Samuel 16 David

1) David anointed King over Israel. 2) From here on David is the central figure of Old Testament history. 3) The most specific and most abundant of all Messianic prophecies cluster around his name. 4) Abraham, founder of the Messianic nation. 5) David, founder of the Messianic family within the nation.

II Samuel 7:16 David Promised An Eternal Throne

"Thy throne shall be established FOREVER." Here begins a long line of promises that David's family should reign forever over God's people. (See page 184).

This promise is repeated over and over throughout the rest of the Old Testament, with an ever increasing mass of detail and specific explanations, that the promise will find its ultimate fulfillment in ONE GREAT KING, who will Himself personally live forever and establish a kingdom of endless duration.

This Eternal King, evidently, is the same person previously spoken of as Priest after the order of Melchizedek, Shiloh, Star, and Prophet like unto Moses.

I Kings 9:5 The Promise Repeated To Solomon

"I will establish the throne of thy kingdom forever." Repeated over and over to David and Solomon.

However, the books of Kings and Chronicles relate the story of the fall of David's kingdom and captivity of the Hebrew nation apparently bringing to naught God's promise to David's family of an eternal throne.

But in the period covered by these books many prophets arose crying out that the promise would yet be fulfilled.

The books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther relate the story of the return of the fallen and scattered Hebrew nation without direct Messianic predictions. However, the re-

establishment of the nation in its own land was a necessary antecedent to the fulfillment of promises about David's throne.

Job 19:25-27

The book is a discussion of the problem of suffering, without much direct bearing, as far as we can see on the Messianic mission of the Hebrew nation except it be in Job's exultant outburst of faith,

"I know that my redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."

Psalms

The book of Psalms, written mostly by David himself, is brim full of predictions and fore-shadowing of the Eternal King to arise in David's family. Some of them, in a limited and secondary sense, may refer to David himself. But in the main, they are inapplicable to any person in history other than Christ: written 1000 years before Christ came.

Psalms 2 The Lord's Anointed

"The Lord's anointed (2) . . . I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion (6) . . . Thou art my son (7) . . . I shall give thee the nations for thine inheritance (8) . . . kiss the Son (12) . . . Blessed are they that put their trust in Him."

Evidently meaning the Eternal King to arise in David's family. A very positive statement as to His Deity, His universal reign, and the blessedness of those who trust Him.

Psalm 16:10 His Resurrection

"Thou wilt not . . . suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." This is quoted in Acts 2:27, 31 as referring to the resurrection of Christ. There had been many hints of the coming Messiah's death. Here is a clear-cut prediction of His victory over death, and life evermore.

Psalm 22 A Fore-Picture of the Crucifixion

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Even his dying words foretold (Matt. 27:46).

"All that see me laugh me to scorn, saying . . . he trusted in God, let God deliver Him" (7,8). Sneers of His enemies in their exact words (Matt. 27:43).

"They pierced my hands and feet" (16). This indicates crucifixion as the manner of His death (Jn. 20:20,25).

"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture" (18). Even this detail is forecast (Matt. 27:35). What can all this refer to except the crucifixion of Jesus? Yet it was written a thousand years before it happened.

Psalm 41:9 To Be Betrayed By a Friend

"My own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, who did eat my bread, lifted up his heel against me."

Apparently, David is referring to his own friend, Ahithophel (II Sam. 15:12). But Jesus quoted it as a picture-prophecy of His own betrayal by Judas (Jn. 13:18-27; Lk. 22:47,48).

Psalm 45 Reign of God's Anointed

"Thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (7). "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever" (6). "In majesty ride on prosperously" (4). "All generations . . . shall praise thee forever and ever" (17).

Here is depicted the glorious reign of a King, bearing the name of God, seated on an eternal throne. It can refer to no other than the Eternal King to arise in David's family. A nuptial song of Christ and His Bride, the Church.

Psalm 69:21 Gall and Vinegar

"They gave me gall for my food; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

Another incident in the fore-picture of the coming Messiah's sufferings (Matt. 27:34, 48).

Psalm 72 His Glorious Reign

"In His days the Righteous shall flourish (7). He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth (8). All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him (11). Blessed be His glorious name forever. Let the whole earth be filled with his glory" (19).

This Psalm seems, in part, to have been a description of the reign of Solomon. Some statements and general tenor, surely refer to one greater than Solomon.

Psalm 78:2 To Speak in Parables

"I will open my mouth in parables." Another detail of the Messiah's life; His method of teaching in parables. (Quoted in Matt. 13:34,35 as fulfilling this verse).

Psalm 89 Endlessness of David's Throne

"I have made a covenant with David (3). I will build up thy throne unto all generations (4). I will make Him, my first born, higher than the kings of the earth (27). And my covenant shall stand (28). By my holiness I have sworn . . . David's throne . . . shall endure forever" (35-37).

God's oath, repeated over and over, for the endlessness of David's throne, under God's firstborn.

Psalm 110 Messiah To Be King and Priest

"The Lord said to my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool (1). Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (4).

Eternal dominion and eternal priesthood of the coming King. Jesus quoted this as referring to Himself (Matt. 2:42-44).

Psalm 118:22 Messiah To Be Rejected By Rulers

"The stone the builders rejected is become head of corner." Jesus quoted this as referring to Himself (Mat. 21:42-44).

Isaiah 2:2-4 Magnificent Pre-Vision of Messianic Age

"In the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains . . . And all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall say, Come let us go up . . . the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths."

"The word of the Lord shall go forth from Jerusalem . . . and the nations . . . shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Isaiah, preeminently, the Old Testament book of Messianic Prophecy, in language unsurpassed in all literature, goes into ecstasy over the glories of the reign of the coming Messiah.

Isaiah 4:2-6 The Branch of the Lord

"In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious (2). A cloud by day . . . and a fire by night (5). A tabernacle . . . and a place of refuge" (6).

The Messiah is here represented as a branch growing up out of the stump of the family tree of David, becoming a guide and refuge for his people. (Explained more fully in Isaiah 11:1-10).

Isaiah 7:13,14 Immanuel

"O house of David . . . a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a Son and shall call his name Immanuel."

This seems to say that someone, to be called Immanuel, will be born in David's family, of a virgin, evidently, meaning the same person as the branch of 4:2 and 11:1 and the wonderful child of 9:6. The deity of the child is implied in the name Immanuel, which means "God with us", thus the virgin birth and deity of the Messiah are foretold. It is quoted in Matt. 1:23 as referring to Jesus).

Isaiah 9:1,2,6,7 The Wonderful Child

"In Galilee . . . the people have seen a great light (1,2). For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and please there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom, from henceforth even forever (6,7)."

This Child, unmistakably is the ETERNAL KING promised to David's family (II Sam. 7:16): the same person spoken of centuries earlier as Shiloh, the Star, and the Prophet like unto Moses. His Deity is here emphasized. His ministry to be in Galilee. A very accurate forecast of Jesus.

Isaiah 11:1-10 Reign of the Branch

"There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, a branch shall grow out of his roots" (1). That is, a shoot out of the stump of David's family tree, meaning the Messiah.

"And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding (2) . . . He shall stand for an ensign to the peoples and to Him shall the nations gather (10). He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth (4). And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb. The leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf and the young lion and the

fatling together. And a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed: their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (6-9).

A magnificent description of the universal peace in the world-to-be under the reign of the coming Messiah.

Isaiah 25:6-9; 26:1,19 Resurrection of the Dead

"In this mountain the Lord . . . will swallow up death in victory and wipe away all tears off all faces (6,8). In that day . . . thy dead shall live, my dead body shall rise . . . and the earth shall cast forth the dead" (26:1,19).

A forecast of the resurrection of Jesus in Mt. Zion, and also of a general resurrection.

Isaiah 32:1,2 Again, the Reign of the Coming King

"A King shall reign in righteousness . . . A man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, as streams of water in a dry place, and as the shade of a great rock in a weary land."

In Isaiah 9:6, the Deity of the coming King was predicted. Here it is His humanity, a man (2). A man who is a personal refuge to each one of his people from every trouble.

Isaiah 35:5,6 Messiah's Miracles

"Eyes of the blind shall be opened; ears of the deaf shall be unstopped . . . the lame shall leap . . . the tongue of the dumb shall sing" (5,6).

An exact description of Jesus' ministry of miracles.

Isaiah 35:8-10 Messiah's Highway

"A highway shall be there . . . called the way of holiness (8). The ransomed of the Lord shall return and to Zion with singing and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness: sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (10).

Holiness, happiness, singing, joy, no more sorrow, tears forever gone, for the coming Messiah's people.

Isaiah 40:5,10,11 Messiah's Tenderness

"The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together (5). The Lord God will come with a strong hand and His arm shall rule for Him (10). He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (11).

Another preview of the glory of Jesus, His power and His gentleness toward the weak of His flock.

Isaiah 42:1-11 Gentiles

"Behold, my servant (1) . . . I give Him for a light to Gentiles (6) . . . The isles shall wait for His law (4) . . . And from the end of the earth they sing unto the Lord a new song" (10).

Israel's coming King will rule over Gentiles also, and cover the whole earth with songs of praise and joy.

Isaiah 53 The Messiah's Sufferings

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief . . . He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities . . . With His stripes we are healed.

The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all . . . He was oppressed, He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter . . . He poured out His soul unto death . . . and bore the sin of many . . . It pleased the Lord to bruise Him . . . to make His soul an offering for sin . . . And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand . . . by knowledge of Him shall many be justified."

The most conspicuous feature in the prophecies about the coming King is that He would be a sufferer. It was hinted in Abel's sacrifice, and in Abraham's offering of Isaac, and vividly fore-pictured in the institution of the Passover Feast, and in the Annual Day of Atonement, and some of its details described in Psalm 22. And here, in Isaiah 53, detail upon detail is added, making the picture more complete. And in chapters 54, 55, 60, 61, the suffering King fills the earth with sons of joy. Marvelous forecasts of the Christian Era.

Isaiah 60 To Be Light of the World

"Darkness shall cover the earth" (2). "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (1). "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended" (20).

In the New Testament, Jesus is repeatedly called the light of the world.

Isaiah 62.2; 65:15 A New Name

"Thou shalt be called by a new name" (62.2). "The Lord will call His servants by another name" (65:15).

In the Old Testament times, God's people were called Israelites. Since the days of Christ, they have been called Christians.

Jeremiah 23:5,6 The Branch

"The days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous branch . . . a king . . . this is His name whereby He shall be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

As Isaiah, chapters 4 and 11, speaks of the coming King as a Branch out of the family of David, so, here, Jeremiah repeats the name and asserts his deity.

Ezekiel 34 The Prince of the House of David

"My servant David . . . shall be . . . shepherd . . . of my flock . . . King over them . . . and their prince forever" (34:22-24); 37:24,25).

In describing the reign of the Prince, there is given a transcendently beautiful picture of the blessed influences arising out of Jerusalem, under the imagery of the life-giving stream issuing from the temple and flowing out to the whole world, as recorded below, in Ezekiel 47:1-12.

Ezekiel 47:1-12 The Life-Giving Stream

"In visions of God . . . waters issued from under the Temple eastward. A man who had a measuring line . . . measured a thousand cubits, and caused me to pass through the

waters, waters that were up to the ankle.

Again, he measured a thousand . . . and waters were up to the knees . . . another thousand, and waters were up to the loins.

Afterward, he measured a thousand, and it was a river that could not be passed through. And he said to me, Son of man, these waters shall go on and on to the sea. Whithersoever the waters come, everything shall live."

Daniel 2 The Four Kingdoms

"In the days of these kings . . . of the fourth kingdom . . . the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom . . . which shall stand forever" (2:40,44).

In the 600 years from Daniel to Christ, there were four world empires: Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. They were exactly described in the imagery of this 2nd chapter of Daniel. In the 7th chapter of Daniel the same four world empires are more fully described. It was in the days of the Roman empire that Christ appeared.

Daniel 9:24-27 The Time More Exactly

"From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks and three score and two weeks . . . and after the three score and two weeks . . . in the midst of the one week . . . shall Messiah be cut off . . . to make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness" (24-27).

Here Daniel set the exact date for the coming of the Messiah. And further said, 600 years before the Messiah came, that the Messiah, after a three and half year public ministry, would be cut off in atonement for sin. An amazing prediction!

Hosea 1:10 Gentiles To Be Included

"In the place where it was said, Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God."

Here Hosea repeats what has already been said time and time again, that the Messiah's kingdom will include all nations.

"I called my son out of Egypt" (11:1). A way of saying, part of the Messiah's childhood would be spent in Egypt (Matt. 2:15).

Joel 2:28,32; 3:13,14 The Gospel Era

"I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh . . . whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered . . . put in the sickle. The harvest is ripe . . . multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision."

The Messiah to institute an era of world evangelism, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:16-21).

Amos 9:11,12,14 David's Fallen Throne to Rise

"I will bring back the captivity of my people . . . and I will plant them in their own land . . . and in that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen . . . to possess all the nations that are called by my name."

Jonah 1:17 A Sign to Nineveh

"Jonah was in the fish three days and nights." Jesus took it to be a three-day picture

miracle of His own resurrection from the tomb, as a sign to the world (Matt. 12:40).

Micah 5:2-5 Bethlehem To Be Messiah's Birthplace

"Thou, Bethlehem . . . out of thee shall He come forth that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been . . . from everlasting . . . He shall be great unto the ends of the earth. And this man shall be our peace."

Evidently, meaning the King so often mentioned before.

Zephaniah 3:9 A New Language

"Then will I turn unto the nations a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent."

That is, a correct system of thought about God, evidently meaning the gospel of Christ.

Haggai 2:6,7 The Desire of All Nations

"Yet a little while . . . and the desire of all nations shall come, and . . . fill this house with glory."

That will be crowning day for David's son, here typified in Zerubbabel (2:23).

Zechariah

"I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH" (3:8). "O Jerusalem, thy King cometh to thee . . . lowly, riding upon a colt" (9:9). "In that day the house of David shall be as God" (12:8). "I will remove the iniquity of the land in one day" (3:9). "They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver . . . and cast them to the potter" (11:12,13). "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced" (12:10). "In that day a fountain shall be opened . . . for sin and uncleanness" (13:1).

Malachi 3:1; 4:5 A Forecast of John the Baptist

"Behold, I will send my messenger . . . Elijah the Prophet before the great day of the Lord . . . and He shall prepare the way before me."

Jesus in speaking of John the Baptist, in Matthew 11:7-14, quotes this passage from Malachi, and expressly states that it referred to John the Baptist.

SUMMARY

Near the beginning of the Old Testament, it is stated that the Hebrew nation was being founded for the purpose of blessing all nations. Then there begins to loom the figure of ONE PERSON through whom the nation will accomplish its mission.

First, He is called Shiloh, to arise in the tribe of Judah, and rule the nations. Then He is called a Star, who will have dominion. And next, a Prophet like unto Moses, through whom God will speak to mankind.

And then, over and over, He is spoken of as a King, to arise in David's family, to be called the Branch, the Prince, the Anointed One, God's Firstborn, Wonderful, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The exact time of His coming is foretold. He was to be born of a virgin at

Bethlehem. Part of His childhood to be spent in Egypt. He would be brought up at Nazareth.

He would be introduced to His nation by an Elijah-like forerunner. Galilee was to be the scene of His ministry. He would work miracles of healing and speak in parables. He would be rejected by the leaders of His own nation, be a smitten shepherd, a sufferer, a man of sorrows. He would enter Jerusalem riding on a colt. He would be betrayed by a friend for thirty pieces of silver. The pieces of silver to be spent for a potter's field. He would be led as a lamb to the slaughter.

He would die with the wicked, opening a fountain for sin. Removing sin in one day. Even His dying words foretold. He would be given gall and vinegar in His agony, his hands and feet would be pierced, but not a bone to be broken. Lots would be cast for his garments. He would be buried with the rich and in the tomb for three days. He would rise from the dead and ascend to heaven at God's right hand.

It was foretold that He would introduce a new language into the earth, that is, a new idea: salvation. He would offer a New Covenant to mankind and give God's people a new name. He would introduce an era of the Holy Spirit. His kingdom would include Gentiles, and be universal and endless. This pre-written story of Jesus, recorded centuries before Jesus came, is so astonishing in detail that it reads like an eyewitness account of His life and work.

Suppose a number of men of different countries, who had never seen, nor in any way communicated with one another, would walk into a room and each lay down a piece of carved marble, which when pieces were fitted together, would make a perfect statue. How would you account for it in any other way than that some, one person, had drawn the specifications and had sent to each man his part? And how can this amazing composite of Jesus' life and work, put together by different writers of different centuries, ages before Jesus came, be explained on any other basis than that ONE SUPER-HUMAN MIND supervised the writing? The miracles of ages!

THE TWO BRANCHES IN THE STREAM OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY

There are two strands of Messianic Prophecy in the Old Testament. (1) The Lion Prophecies and, (2) The Lamb Prophecies.

The Lion Prophecies foretell a Messiah who will be the *"lion of the tribe of Judah"...*a sovereign ruler of every nation and realm.

The Lamb Prophecies foretell a Messiah who will be a suffering servant . . .a meek and gentle *"lamb of God who will take away the sin of the world."*

Of course, Jesus fulfilled both these seemingly contradictory strains of prophecy.

CHRIST HAS BEEN GIVEN A HOST OF TITLES:

Architect, He is the Chief Cornerstone	I. Pet. 2:6
Artist, the all-together lovely one	Song of Solomon 5:16
Astronomer, the bright and morning star and the sun of righteousness	Rev. 22:16; Mal. 4:2
Baker, the bread of life	Jn. 6:35
Banker, the supplier of every need	Phil. 4:19; Gen. 22:14
Battalion, the leader and commander	Isa. 55:4
Biologist, the life	Jn. 14:6
Builder, the foundation	Isa. 28:16; I Cor. 3:11
Carpenter, the door and the nail	Jn. 10:7; Isa. 22:23
Chief, the chiefest of ten thousand	Song of Solomon 5:10
Defendant, the righteous judge	II Tim. 4:8
Doctor, the great physician	Matt. 8:17; Lk. 4:23
Educator, the teacher	Jn. 3:3
Electrician, the light of the world	Jn. 8:12
Engineer, the new and living way	Heb. 10:19,20
Executive, the head of the Church	Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18
Executor, the heir of all things	Heb. 1:2
Farmer, the sower and Lord of the harvest	Matt. 13:37; Lk. 10:2
Fireman, the water of life	Jn. 4:10,14,15
Fisherman, the calmer of the seas	Matt. 8:23-27
Florist, the lily of the valley – the rose of Sharon	Song of Solomon 2:1
Geologist, the tired stone (Rock of Ages)	Isa. 28:16
Herbalist, a cluster of Camphire	Song of Solomon 1:14
Historian, ancient of days	Dan. 7:9
Horticulturist, the tender plant	Isa. 53:2
Host, the perfect guest	Lk. 19:5-10
Industrialist, the faithful servant	Matt. 20:28
Jeweler, the precious stone	I Pet. 2:6
Juror, the faithful and true witness	Rev. 3:14
King, the crown and scepter	Isa. 28:5; Num. 24:17
Laborer, the burden-bearer	Matt. 11:28-29, Isa. 53:4-6
Lawmaker, the law giver	Isa. 33:22
Lawyer, the advocate-mediator	I Jn. 2:1; I Tim. 2:5
Machinist, the polished shaft	Isa. 49:2
Merchant, the pearl of great price	Matt. 13:46
Mortician, the resurrection and the life	Jn. 11:25
Musician, the horn of salvation	Lk. 1:69
News Reporter, good tidings of great joy	Lk. 2:10,11
Nurseryman, the true vine	Jn. 15:1

Oculist, the light of the eyes	Prov. 29:13
Pharmacist, the balm of Gilead and ointment	Jer. 8:22; Song of Solomon 1:3
Philanthropist, the unspeakable gift	II Cor. 9:15
Philosopher, the wisdom of God	I Cor. 1:24, 30
Photographer, the express image of God	Heb. 1:3
Policeman, Shiloh (peacemaker)	Gen. 49:10
Printer, the word	Jn. 1:1; Rev. 19:13
Publisher, the author	Heb. 12:2
Rancher, the owner of cattle on a thousand hills	Psa. 50:10
Refiner, the purifier	Mal. 3:3; Heb. 1:3
Royalty, the King of kings	I Tim. 6:15
Sailor, the desired haven	Psa. 107:30
Scholar, the Alpha and Omega	Rev. 1:8
Scientist, the Creator of all things	Col. 1:16
Sculptor, the living stone	I Pet. 2:4
Sea Captain, refuge in a storm	Isa. 25:4
Servant, the good master	Matt. 23:8
Shepherd, the lamb of God	Jn. 1:29
Shipbuilder, the anchor	Heb. 6:19
Soldier, the captain	Josh. 5:15; Heb. 2:10
Statesman, the desire of all nations	Hag. 2:7
Student, the truth	Jn. 14:6
Teacher, the example	I Pet. 2:21
Theologian, the author and finisher of our faith	Heb. 12:2
Toiler, the giver of rest	Matt. 11:28
Traveler, the narrow way	Matt. 7:14; Jn. 14:6
United Nations, peace	Eph. 2:14
Warrior, a shield	Psa. 3:3
Zoologist, lion of the tribe of Judah	Rev. 5:5

And to the Christian, He is the Son of the Living God, the Savior, our Redeemer, and the loving Lord and Master.

ADDITIONAL TITLES & NAMES GIVEN TO CHRIST:

Adam	I Cor. 15:45
Advocate	I Jn. 2:1
Almighty	Rev. 1:8
Alpha & Omega	Rev. 1:8; 22:13
Amen	Rev. 3:14

Apostle of Our Profession	Heb. 3:1
Arm of the Lord	Isa. 51:9; 53:1
Author & Finisher of Our Faith	Heb. 12:2
Author of Eternal Salvation	Heb. 5:9
Beginning of the Creation of God	Rev. 3:14
Beloved Son	Matt. 12:18
Blessed and Only Potentate	I Tim. 6:15
Branch	Isa. 4:2
Bread of Life	Jn. 6:32
Captain of Salvation	Heb. 2:10
Chief Shepherd	I Pet. 5:4
Christ of God	Lk. 9:20
Consolation of Israel	Lk. 2:25
Cornerstone	Psa. 118:22
Counselor	Isa. 9:6
Creator	Jn. 1:3
Dayspring	Lk. 1:78
Deliverer	Rom. 11:26
Desired of Nations	Hag. 2:7
Door	Jn. 10:7
Elect of God	Isa. 42:1
Everlasting Father	Isa. 9:6
Faithful Witness	Rev. 1:5
First & Last	Rev. 1:17
First Begotten	Rev. 1:5
Forerunner	Heb. 6:20
Glory of the Lord	Isa. 40:5
God	Isa. 40:3; Jn. 20:28
God Blessed	Rom. 9:5
Good Shepherd	Jn. 10:11
Governor	Matt. 2:6
Great High Priest	Heb. 4:14
Head of the Church	Eph. 1:22
Heir of All Things	Heb. 1:2
Holy Child	Act. 4:27
Holy One	Acts 3:14
Holy One of God	Mk. 1:24
Holy One of Israel	Isa. 41:14
Horn of Salvation	Lk. 1:69
I Am	Jn. 8:58
Image of God	II Cor. 4:4

Immanuel	Isa. 7:14
Jehovah	Isa. 26:4
Jesus	Matt. 1:21
Jesus of Nazareth	Matt. 21:11
Judge of Israel	Micah 5:1
Just One	Acts 7:52
King	Zech. 9:9
King of All Ages	I Tim. 1:17
King of the Jews	Matt. 2:2
King of Kings	I Tim. 6:15
King of Saints	Rev. 15:3
Lawgiver	Isa. 33:22
Lamb (mentioned 30 times)	Rev. 13:8
Lamb of God	Jn. 1:29
Leader	Isa. 55:4
Life	Jn. 14:6
Light of the World	Jn. 8:12
Lion of the Tribe of Judah	Rev. 5:5
Lord of All	Acts 10:36
Lord of Glory	I Cor. 2:8
Lord of Lords	I Tim. 6:15
Lord of Righteousness	Jer. 23:6
Man of Sorrows	Isa. 53:3
Mediator	I Tim. 2:5
Messenger of the Covenant	Mal. 3:1
Messiah	Dan. 9:25; Jn. 1:41
Mighty God	Isa. 9:6
Mighty One	Isa. 60:16
Morning Star	Rev. 22:16
Nazarene	Matt. 2:23
Only Begotten Son	Jn. 1:18
Our Keeper	Jn. 17:12
Our Passover	I Cor. 5:7
Overcomer	Jn. 16:33
Prince of Kings	Rev. 1:5
Prince of Life	Acts 3:15
Prince of Peace	Isa. 9:6
Prophet	Lk. 24:19; Acts 3:22
Redeemer	Job 19:25
Resurrection and Life	Jn. 11:25
Reward	Rev. 22:12

Risen Lord	Jn. 20:2-18
Rock	I Cor. 10:4
Root of David	Rev. 22:16
Rose of Sharon	Song of Solomon 2:1
Saviour	Lk. 2:11
Seed of Woman	Gen. 3:15
Shepherd and Bishop of Souls	I Pet. 2:25
Shiloh	Gen. 49:10
Son of the Blessed	Mk. 14:61
Son of David	Matt. 1:1
Son of God	Matt. 2:15
Son of the Highest	Lk. 1:32
Son of Man	Matt. 8:20
Son of Righteousness	Mal. 4:2
Spirit of Prophecy	Rev. 19:10
True Light	Jn. 1:9
True Vine	Jn. 15:1
Truth	Jn. 1:14
Witness	Isa. 55:4
Way, Truth and the Life	Jn. 14:6
Word	Jn. 1:1
Word of God	Rev. 19:13

IF JESUS CAME TO YOUR HOUSE?

If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two –
 If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do?
Oh, I know you'd give Him your nicest room – this honored Guest,
 And all the food you'd serve to Him would be the very best;
And you would keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him there,
 That serving Him in your home is joy beyond compare.

But – when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door
 With arms outstretched in welcome to your Heavenly visitor?
Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in?
 Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they'd been?
Would you turn off the television and hope He hadn't heard?
 And wish you hadn't uttered that loud, hasty word?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymn books out?
 Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?
And I wonder – if the Saviour spent a day or two with you,
 Would you go right on doing the things you always do?
Would you go right on saying the things you always say?
 Would your life for you continue as it does from day to day?

Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace?
 And would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?
Would you sing the songs you always sing, and read the books you read?
 And let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?
Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd planned to go?
 Or would you, maybe, change your plans for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet your closest friends?
 Or would you hope they'd stay away till His visit ends?
Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on?
 Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone?
It might be interesting to know the things that you would do
 If Jesus Christ in person came to spend some time with you!

LESSON V

GOD'S KINGDOM - THE CHURCH

The theme and subject of the Bible is THE KINGDOM OF GOD, the kingdom being the spiritual apparatus and structure of authority by which God Almighty governs His creation. Divine government was overthrown in the Garden of Eden, when man rebelled against God's authority, and disobeyed God's commandment. The Church is the re-establishment of God's government over all mankind through Christ and the gospel. Those who believe God and His Word, who accept the authority and Word of Christ as the authority and Word of God, and obey it, are accepted by God as His people, His children, as members of His family.

One of the many differences between the church of Christ and other religious groups is that it believes that the Bible teaches that the Church is the kingdom of God, that God's kingdom has been established for almost 2,000 years – since the establishment of the Church on the Day of Pentecost, A.D. 33, and we can be citizens in that divine and heavenly kingdom right now. Almost all other religious groups teach that the kingdom of God is yet to come on earth, and still pray that part of the Lord's Prayer which petitions God, "*Thy Kingdom come.*"

Many religious groups believe that Christ will return to the earth and set up an earthly kingdom, with headquarters in Jerusalem, thus ushering in the Millennial Age foretold in Revelation 20:1-6. This teaching contradicts many plain passages in the Bible.

While Jesus did tell his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, that they should pray for the coming of God's kingdom (Matt. 6:10), he told them later in his ministry, that the kingdom of God would come with power during their lifetime . . . or at least while some who were listening to him were alive. He said, "*Verily, I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power*" (Mk. 9:1; Lk. 9:27). That it did come with power, on the Day of Pentecost after Christ's resurrection, is attested to by Acts, Chapter 2. In fact, the apostles were told to wait in Jerusalem for that heavenly power (Lk. 24:49). Those who pray for the kingdom of God to come either are ignorant of or disbelieve Jesus' emphatic statement that it would come during the lifetime of some of his listeners when he was on earth.

During the 40 days between his resurrection from the dead and his ascension into heaven, Jesus met with his apostles repeatedly, conferring with them and giving them instructions concerning the Church and the Kingdom which was to be established in a very few days in Jerusalem. ". . . *He showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*" (Acts 1:3).

Peter, in his sermon on Pentecost, made the climax of his proclamation to the Jews that God had fulfilled his promise to David by raising up Christ and seating him on his throne at his right hand in heaven (Acts 2:29-36).

From Pentecost onward, the kingdom is spoken of as an accomplished fact. No longer is it "at hand" – it is here! Again and again, Jesus the King, is spoken of as ruling and reigning at the right hand of God on high. Paul says: "*Then comes the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all enemies under*

his feet . . . For He has put all things under his feet" (I Cor. 15:24-28). The saints and faithful brethren at Colossae were told that they had been "delivered from the power of darkness and been translated into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13). The writer of Hebrews call the Church the kingdom – "A kingdom which cannot be shaken," and says that we have received it (Heb. 12:23-29). The apostle John said, "I, John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ", meaning that he was in the kingdom with them – and that was almost 2,000 years ago! Obviously, John and those to whom he wrote, could not have been companions in the Kingdom if the Kingdom had not been established.

The very first time that Jesus ever mentioned the Church, he called it the kingdom and said that he would give Peter the keys to it (Matt. 16:18). It would, of course, have been absurd for Jesus to give the Apostle Peter the keys to open the gates of something that would not even come into existence for thousands of years after Peter was dead – which is what those claim who teach that the kingdom of God has not yet been established upon earth.

Jesus told his little band of disciples – *"Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Lk. 12:32). Yet most religious bodies today teach that all this little flock died without ever having received the kingdom.*

The theme and subject of Jesus' preaching was the kingdom of God – the rule of heaven over the earth. Like John the Baptist, who prepared the way for him, Jesus proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand (Matt. 3:2; 4:17). We are told that *"Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 4:23; 9:35). In his discourses, he set forth the laws of His kingdom. He began the Sermon on the Mount by announcing that the kingdom would belong, not to the proud and the arrogant, but to the poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3). Most of his parables had to do with different aspects of the kingdom, such as the ten parables set forth in Matthew, Chapters 13 and 25. He said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14). He said that he was sent into the world to "preach the kingdom of God" (Lk. 4:43).*

The message of the Old Testament is "The Kingdom Is Coming." The message of the New Testament is "The Kingdom Is Here!"

God had promised David that He would establish His kingdom through him – through his seed and family (II Sam. 7:12-17). God said, *"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations . . . also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth . . . once I have sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven" (Psa. 89:3,4; 27-29; 35-37). Isaiah spoke repeatedly of the eternal government that God would establish upon earth through the house and seed of David, as did also the other prophets of Israel (Isa. 9:6,7; 11:1,10; Jer. 22:29; 23:5,6; 33:20,21; Amos 9:11,12; Micah 5:2,4; Zech. 3:8,9; 6:12,13; 9:10). Zechariah said, "In that day . . . the house of David shall be as God . . . In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David . . . for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. 12:8; 13:1).*

It is startling and significant that the very opening statement of the New Testament is, *"The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David . . ." (Matt. 1:1).*

The angel Gabriel told Mary that she would bring forth a son and call his name "Jesus." The angel said, *"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over*

the house of Jacob forever; and of his Kingdom there shall be no end" (Lk. 1:3-33).

The prophet Daniel, in interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream, said that it meant that in the days of the fourth world-empire after the Babylonian, *"the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44).* The Babylonian Empire was succeeded by the Medo-Persian; and the Medo-Persian by the Greek; and the Greek by the Roman. so the prophecy was that in the days of the Roman Empire, God would establish His eternal divine kingdom on earth. Luke tells us that the reason Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem when Jesus was born was because *"A decree went out from Augustus Caesar that all the world should be taxed" (Lk. 2:1).* So Jesus made his appearance in the world and the Church was established and the kingdom of Christ was set up on earth, in the days of the fourth world-empire after Nebuchadnezzar, just as Daniel had foretold. Daniel had a vision, himself, of the coming kingdom of Christ. He said: *"I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the ancient of days and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed . . . But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever . . . And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:13,14,18,27).*

That Jesus Christ is that Son of mankind whom Daniel saw in his vision being given an everlasting kingdom, a divine government over all people everywhere and for all time and eternity, and that the Church is that government and kingdom, and that Jesus is now reigning over that kingdom, enthroned at the right hand of God on High, is made abundantly clear by numerous emphatic statements in the New Testament, beginning with Jesus' pronouncement after his resurrection – *"all authority has been given unto me, in heaven and on earth . . ."* (Matt. 28:18).

Paul sums it all up when he says that God has *"raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and has put all things under his feet, and has made him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:20-23).*

THE GLORY AND ETERNITY OF GOD'S PERFECTED KINGDOM

That God rules His creation through Christ, and that Christ will rule it through His people, His flock, His church, His kingdom, which he is calling out of the world unto Himself right now, through the Gospel is taught repetitiously in the New Testament. *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him . . ." (II Tim. 2:12).* *"To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21).* Concerning that eternal city, the new Jerusalem, the center of power and authority for God's final and eternal and perfect order which is identified as the Church in its glorified state by the writer of Hebrews (Heb. 12:22-29) we read: *"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his*

servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. 22:3-5).

THE CHURCH - GOD'S KINGDOM

Jesus' family and kingdom . . . His Bride, His Body . . . the Church which He came into the world to establish and which He died to save . . . filled with His spirit and carrying on His work on earth. No one can have any personal relationship with God apart from Christ or any personal relationship with Christ apart from His Church. Christ has only one Church in the Bible or in the world.

Memory Verse: Eph. 5:25. Other Important Passages to Read and Discuss: Matt. 16:13-19; Acts 2:36-47; I Cor. 12:12-31; Eph. 1:22,23; 2:19-22; 3:10; 4:4-6; 5:22-33; Heb. 12:18-29; I Tim. 3:15.

The Church is the final, perfect and eternal divine order in its present earthly and embryonic state. Those who do not enter the eternal kingdom in this life will be shut out of it forever. The Church is an embodiment and actualization of the Word of Christ, which is an expression of the will of God, and which will endure forever (Matt. 24:35). Heaven will be the Church in its glorified and finalized state. Death will swallow up all else, but it will not devour the Church, the body of Christ, filled with the Spirit of Christ which is transmitted to it through the Word of Christ (Jn. 6:63).

The word "church" is an English translation of the Greek word "*ekklesia*," which means, "the called-out," or "a called-out assembly." The Church is a distinct and unique body of people called by God out of the world to belong to Him as his very own family – a separated, holy community, sanctified by the Word and through the blood, "*cleansed by the washing of water by the Word*" (Eph. 5:27) (i.e., baptism).

The Church is perfect, and is made up of perfect people – perfect with a perfection which they have not achieved and could not achieve, but which is conferred upon them by God, through Christ. Their sins are not imputed to them, but are charged to Christ. They, therefore, are able to stand before God sinless, having appropriated the perfection that Christ purchased with his blood (Rom. 4:8; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 10:14; 12:23).

God, the Word of God, the Son of God, and the Church of God are all indivisibly and inseparably united for time and for eternity: Jn. 1:1-13; 10:30; Jn. 17:20-23; Matt. 25:31-40; Matt. 10:40; I Cor. 6:15; I Thess. 1:1; Eph. 5:23-33. The members of the Church of one . . . a part of each other: Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:25; Gal. 3:28.

The Church is referred to as "*the Kingdom*" (Lk. 8:11). When the Church grows, it is the Word which is bringing forth that growth, as God works through it to propagate his spiritual family (Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20; I Cor. 3:6,7).

The Church is a divine spiritual organism and organization. It is....

1. Divine in its origin. (Dan. 2:44; Matt. 16:18; Lk. 24:46-49; Acts 2).
2. Divine in its membership. (Matt. 16:18; Jn. 10:16; Acts 20:28).
3. Divine in its name. (Acts 4:12; Rom. 16:16; Col. 3:17).
4. Divine in its leadership. (Eph. 1:22,23; 5:23,24; Col. 1:18).
5. Divine in its mission. (Matt. 9:37,38; Jn. 20:21; II Cor. 5:18-21).
6. Divine in its message. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15,16; I Tim. 3:15; Rom. 1:16).
7. Divine in its destiny. (Matt. 25:34; Jn. 14:1-3; II Cor. 5:1-11).

The many-splendored and multi-faceted glorious creation of God called "the Church" is many things. It is called:

1. The Kingdom of God. (Matt. 16:18,19).
2. The City of God. (Heb. 12:22; Heb. 11:10-16; Rev. 21:2).
3. The Temple of God. (Eph. 2:19-22; II Cor. 6:16; I Pet. 2:5).
4. The Family, or Household of God. (Jn. 1:12; II Cor. 6:18; Gal. 4:5,6).
5. The Body of Christ. (Eph. 1:22,23; 5:23; Col. 1:18; I Cor. 12:12-27).
6. The Bride of Christ. (II Cor. 11:2; Rom. 7:4; Rev. 19:7; 21:2; 22:17).
7. Spiritual Israel, the Covenant people. (Matt. 2:6; Eph. 2:12; Gal. 3:29; 6:16).

PLEASE NOTE:

These lessons may be used for classroom instruction or as resource material. Permission to reprint is granted IF NO PORTION of this lesson book or other lesson books in this 6 year study cycle are changed, edited or adapted in any form. This page must remain a part of this book when reprinting.