

Bible Correspondence Course

Lesson One

THE BIBLE: GOD'S MESSAGE

With this lesson, you the students, are beginning a diligent study of the greatest book mankind has ever received. Each lesson studied is based completely on the book of books, the Bible, and reveals various sections of it. In this course the Bible is accepted as the source of authority, being inspired by God delivering His word to men and they in turn writing the books contained therein. Because of God's desire for man to know His wishes, He has chosen this media for man to receive His will. Because of this it is more responsible for the changing of human events than any other book ever printed.

For thousands of years the Bible has been the motivating force in setting standards morality. Those who search its pages for historical information accept it as a source book. It has improved the condition of every nation who has accepted it and lived by it, treating it with respect and honour.

This book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners. **Its doctrine are** holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true and its decisions immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to sustain you and comfort to cheer you. It should fill the memory, rule the heart and guide the feet

May the Lord richly bless you in this study of his Holy Word.

The Old Testament

The Bible is divided into two main divisions, the Old Testament (originally written in Hebrew) and the New Testament (Originally written in Greek). It consists of sixty-six books written by about forty different men over a period of sixteen hundred years. The writers consist of kings, soldiers, Shepard's, farmers and fishermen. It was begun by Moses in the lonely desert of Arabia and finished by John on the Isle of Patmos. Some of it was written in king's palaces, some in Shepard's tents, some beside still waters and part of was written from prison.

Parts of the bible were written by highly educated men and parts were written by unlettered fishermen. It was written in different languages and different countries. Yet, when all the books of the bible are brought together they blend into one great whole. They are a unit, hence the Book. There are no contradictions, there is no discord. It is never necessary to rewrite the Bible and bring it up to date. These men could have written such a book only by divine guidance. They blend harmoniously because they were written under the direction of the Holy Spirit of God.

GOD THEN MAN

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth”. God created man in His image and placed him in the Garden of Eden to live. After Adam and Eve’s sin they were cast out of the garden and had two sons Cain and Abel. Abel was the more righteous, and Cain being jealous, killed his brother, thus becoming the murderer (Genesis 4). A third son, Seth, was the forefather of such great characters as Noah, Abraham, David and Christ (Genesis 5).

Within a few hundred years the world became so wicked that God decided it must be destroyed. Only Noah and his family had remained faithful, but the world refused the many warnings through Noah. Only eight souls were saved (Genesis 7; 1 Peter 3:20); Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives. The Jewish people were descendants of Shem.

The Beginning of Israel

The next great bible character was Abraham. Two of his sons were Ishmael (the father of the mixed Arabs) and Isaac. We will be most concerned with Isaac since the nation of Israel came through him (Genesis 15:21).

Lot was the nephew of Abraham. Through him sprang the Moabites and the Ammonites (Genesis 19). These later became bitter enemies of Abraham’s descendants. Isaac had two sons – Esau and Jacob. Esau’s descendants were the Edomites. Jacob had twelve sons, who with their sons moved to Egypt. Their descendants formed the nation of Israel sometimes called “Children of Israel” after their father Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel by God (Genesis 32:28).

MOSES AND DELIVERANCE

After Several years in Egypt, the Israelites were enslaved by the Egyptians. The many years of hard bondage soon ceased as they were led out of Egypt by Moses under the direction of God. Because of Pharaoh’s stubbornness, God brought ten plagues upon the Egyptians before the people were released (Exodus 7-12). By a miracle of God they crossed the Red Sea on dry ground and thus escaped the Egyptian soldiers (Exodus 14). It is estimated that by this time the Israelites numbered more than two million people.

Shortly after crossing the Red Sea, they came to Mount Sinai where Moses was given the Ten Commandments by God (Exodus 20). While at Sinai God gave to the people laws governing their activities both religiously and in their everyday life. Following this they begun their journey through the wilderness. The people proved to God on various occasions that their faith was weak and small and not deserving of the Promised Land which God had promised. They continually complained and criticized and for these reasons God caused them to wander in the wilderness forty years (Numbers 14).

Following the death of Moses, Joshua led the people across the Jordan River and into the promised land of Canaan which they finally conquered and divided among the tribes (Joshua 11:23).

When Joshua died God gave the judges to rule the people. During this period such famous leaders as Samson, Gideon, and Samuel lived (Judges 1-21). After several years they became as their

neighboring nations and demanded a king to rule them. God granted their wish and the first kings were Saul, David and Solomon.

A DIVIDED KINGDOM

The death of Solomon brought a divided kingdom. Ten tribes under Jeroboam rebelled forming the Northern Kingdom (still known as Israel) while two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) under Solomon's son, Rehoboam, formed the Southern Kingdom, simply known as "Judah" (1 Kings 12). Because of their wickedness and idolatry the Northern Kingdom was soon taken into Assyrian captivity and was never heard of as a nation again.

END OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Within a few years the two Southern tribes were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Babylonian Empire. After a number of years they were allowed to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls of the temple under the direction of Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah. The last three prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi preached at the times contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah. They attempted to awaken the people to first rebuild the temple and later to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. They too preached to return the people to God's way.

The remaining Old Testament history has to do mainly with the general activities of the returning Jews, and leads towards but not include the birth of Christ. Following the book of Malachi there remain four hundred (400) years of history, not covered in the Old Testament, but important years of events, laying down the preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ. These years between the Old and New Testament are called intertestamental years.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

For hundreds of years, men of learning have turned to the Old Testament for the only record of numerous places, events and people of the ancient world. Many of these records have been scoffed at by scholars but time has proven with the aid of recent archaeological discoveries that the Bible is true.

The skeptics once claimed no such nation as the Hittites ever existed, but the Bible mentioned it (Genesis 15:20). Records of Egypt and Assyria have now been found showing that the Hittites for nearly seven centuries were one of the greatest nations on earth. Genesis 11:31 talks about Abram (Abraham) living in UR of the Chaldeans. Many once scorned this statement but recent archeological diggings discovered its ruin.

The fallen walls of ancient Jericho have been located and the remains fit exactly to the description given in Joshua 6. Excavations show that the wall did fall outward quite flat filling the ditch which surrounded the city. Further diggings show that the city was intentionally burned, but was not sacked or plundered, according to the Biblical record.

INSTRUCTIONS

This course of Bible Study has been written and printed in Jamaica especially for you living in this country. It is designed to help you learn about the Bible and what to do to be saved in eight simple lessons. Before beginning, please make sure you understand what to do.

1. Read each paragraph carefully making sure you understand the information given before proceeding to new material.
2. As you come across Bible references be sure and use your Bible to read each scripture mentioned.
3. When you have completed a study of the given material, try to answer all the questions from memory without looking back to the information.
4. Now that the questions have been answered, please check them with the given material so as to have the correct answer.
5. When the test has been completed, be sure to include NAME, ADDRESS, and DATE in the space provided.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

DATE: ____/____/____

HOW MUCH HAVE YOU LEARNED?

INSTRUCTIONS: In order to get the most from this lesson, the student should answer all the questions in this section. Complete the test and mail it to the sponsor of the correspondence course. It will be graded and returned to you along with the next lesson.

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle "T" if the statement is true, and circle "F" if any part is not true.

- (T F) 1. The Bible has been the motivating force in setting standards of morality.
- (T F) 2. The Bible is divided into three main divisions.
- (T F) 3. Cain and Abel were the only two sons of Adam and Eve.
- (T F) 4. Noah and his family were the only ones saved from the flood.
- (T F) 5. The Nation of Israel descended through Isaac.
- (T F) 6. After God sent ten plagues upon Egypt God led his people to freedom through Moses' leadership.
- (T F) 7. Because of the lack of trust in God the people wandered in the wilderness for thirty years.
- (T F) 8. Following the death of Moses Joshua became their leader.

- (T F) 9. The divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel were taken captive by enemy nations.
(T F) 10. Archaeology proves the Bible was not written by God.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Underline the answer which is most nearly correct.

1. The Bible was written by about (a) forty men (b) seventy men (c) 1600 men.
2. The original languages of the Bible are (a) Hebrew and Greek (b) Aramaic and Latin (c) German and English.
3. God punished Adam and Eve by (a) killing their first born child (b) whipping them (c) casting them out of the Garden of Eden.
4. The forefather of Noah, Abraham, David and Christ was (a) Seth (b) Isaac (c) Moses.
5. The Jewish people were descendants of (a) Shem (b) Ham (c) Japheth.
6. Men first became separated from God because: (a) Man sinned (b) The garden was a paradise (c) Adam was created first.
7. The nation which came from Abraham by way of promise was named after: (a) Abram (Abraham) (b) Ishmael (c) Jacob (Israel).
8. The land of promise given to the children of Israel was called: (a) Egypt (b) Canaan (c) Wilderness.
9. Two Judges of Israel were (a) David and Solomon (b) Cain and Abel (c) Samson and Gideon.
10. The Old Testament does not include the story of (a) Solomon (b) David (c) Jesus.

PLEASE NOTICE

1. Friends may be enrolled in this Bible Correspondence Course upon request without cost or obligation.
2. A beautiful certificate of completion will be presented to those who successfully complete all eight lessons.
3. Bible questions are welcomed. Write them in the space provided on this page.
4. Contact the address sending the Bible Correspondence Course for any assistance in spiritual needs or problems.

QUESTIONS

BIBLE ANSWERS TO ABOVE QUESTIONS

Sponsoring Congregation

This Correspondence Course is being sent to you by:

Patrick Gardens Church of Christ
6 Waterhouse Drive
(Off Washington Blvd.)
Kingston 20
Tel. 876 933-5550

Join us for worship

Sunday	9:45 am	Bible School (for adults and children)
	10:30 am	Morning Worship
	5:00 pm	Youth Meeting
	7:00 pm	Evening Worship
Wednesday	7:30	Bible Study and Prayer Meeting (In this session you are permitted to ask questions and make comments.)

You are also invited to listen to **“Preparing for Eternity”** Wednesdays at 4:45am on RJR

Write to Us at: **P.O. Box 369 Kingston 8, Jamaica W.I.**

Visit Us on the Internet at : **www.churchofchristjamaica.org**