

# *Bible Correspondence Course*

## *Lesson Three*

### HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

To study any book one must approach it in an orderly manner. A student does not take his "G.C.E/ C.X C" exams before he begins primary studies. Neither would a person study advanced mathematics until he first studied the basic principles of mathematics. These same principles must be applied to any book, and the **Bible** is no exception.

We have learned in our preceding lessons that the Bible has two main divisions; the Old Testament containing thirty-nine (39) books, and the New Testament composed of twenty-seven (27) books. These six-six (66) books are written for the purpose of leading people to God and eternal life. It is very important then, that this Bible be studied properly.

A study of the Bible reveals three (3) distinct and definite ages, or periods of time. The first period, or age, is called the **Patriarchal Age**. The word patriarchal means father, and it was the age when God spoke directly to the fathers who in turn directed the religious life of their families. Adam, for example, was the religious father to whom God spoke as long as he lived. Adam lived nine hundred (900) years, and as long he lived God spoke to him and then Adam delivered the message to all his descendants. When Adam died his sons took his place. This is known as the **Age of the Patriarchs**.

The second age is called the **Mosaical Age**. It was during this age that the "**Law of Moses**" was given. We call this age the "**Mosaical Age**" because God chose Moses to give a law to govern the people of Israel. Moses directed the religious and civil affairs of Israel for forty (40) years. These Laws guided Israel until the last age was ushered in hundreds of years later.

The last age is the "**Christian Age**" and is now in force. The **Christian Age** or period of time will last until Christ comes again. It is called the **Christian Age** because all mankind is under the "**Law of Christ**". Moreover it is called the last age because when this age is over there will not be another. When Christ comes again God will have his judgment, and the final separation of the righteous and the wicked. There will not be another age, only **Eternity**.

Bible division

*"Study to show thy self approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (11 Timothy 2:15).*

It is because people fail to divide the bible properly that so much confusion exists in the religious world today. It is the purpose of this lesson to learn to divide the word in such a way as to understand the simplicity of it.

## **Old Testament**

The Old Testament, composed of thirty- nine (39) books, is divided into five different sections. They are Law, History, Poetry, Major Prophets and Minor Prophets. Each of these sections must be studied in their respective places or confusion and misunderstanding will be the result.

### **Law**

The first five books are called the Law. Another term often used to refer to the books is the “**Pentateuch**”. These five books reveal the creation, fall of man, God’s provision for man salvation, the flood, the beginning of the nation of Israel, and the giving of the “Law of Moses”.

**Genesis**  
**Exodus**  
**Leviticus**  
**Numbers**  
**Deuteronomy**

It must be remembered that although these subjects are mentioned in other divisions of the Bible, we learn about them and their purpose in these five books.

### **History**

**Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 11 Samuel, 1 & 11 Kings, 1 & 11 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther**

These next twelve books reveal the history of the people God chose for a special purpose. They do not reveal the history of all people, only God’s people and their association with some of the nations around them.

These historical books reveal the entrance of Israel into Canaan, the United Kingdom, the Divided Kingdom, the Captivity, and the return of Judah to Jerusalem. A failure to study these historical facts in their own context brings the student into a state of error.

### **Poetry**

Five books written in poetic form brings to light the beauty of the proper relationship of God and man. Job, David and Solomon express in words the influence of God in their lives.

**Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon**

In the study of these books many moral principles are pointed out for the good of humanity.

## **Major Prophets**

**Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel**

Five books contain the writings of four prophets described as being major. They are not major because they are more important than the Minor Prophets, but because their works are of greater length. In God's word one book is as important as another. Some of the prophesies recorded in one book are not in others. All prophets of God are important whether men consider them major or minor. It would be well for the student to remember that the prophets wrote all during the time of the historical books.

## **Minor Prophets**

The last twelve books of the Old Testament are called the books of the Minor prophets. They are called "Minor" because they have written less, and not because they are less important. They, too, were written by the power of God, and their words are just as much a part of the will of God as the other books.

**Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi**

## **New Testament Division**

**Matthew, Mark, Luke, John**

The New Testament is divided in much the same way as the Old Testament. There are Twenty-seven (27) books in the New Covenant. The first four books tell of the life and work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. These are often called Biographical books, although they are certainly not a complete biography. John the writer of the fourth gospel, tells us why these books are written. He said, "*and many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name*" (John 20:30,31).

## **Acts**

There is one book called history because it is an account of the history of the early church. It describes the origin and spread of the church from Jerusalem unto the uttermost part of the world.

It contains the requirements of the Lord for a person to become a Christian, and reveals how all people become Christians in the first century.

## Letters to the Churches

The next twenty-one (21) books of the New Testament are written to those people who become Christians by obeying the same commandments that those in the book of Acts obeyed.

These letters to Christians tell Christians how to live in order to please God. There are many words of encouragements, correction, exhortation and rebuke, but if children of God follow these instructions it will eventually mean eternal life with God.

<b>Romans</b>	<b>I Corinthians</b>	<b>11 Corinthians</b>	<b>Galatians</b>	<b>Ephesians</b>
<b>Philippians</b>	<b>Colossians</b>	<b>1 Thessalonians</b>	<b>11thessalonians</b>	
<b>1 Timothy</b>	<b>11 Timothy</b>	<b>Titus</b>	<b>Philemon</b>	<b>Hebrews</b>
<b>James</b>	<b>1 Peter</b>	<b>11 Peter</b>	<b>1 John</b>	<b>11 John</b>
<b>111 John</b>	<b>Jude</b>			

## Revelation

The last book is often referred to as a book of prophecy, simply because it is a book of revelation of things past, present and future. It is a highly symbolic book, and because of private interpretation has been made difficult to understand. Nevertheless, it should be studied with the same concern as the rest of the New Testament.

## Nailed to the Cross

The Apostle Paul said, “*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith*” (Galatians 3:24). Then again he said, “*blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it away, nailing it to the cross*” (Colossians 2:14)

There are many today who cling to the Old Testament law as their guide in religious matters refusing to accept the fact that it was fulfilled on the cross. This is the result of a failure to properly divide the word of God, and study it accordingly.

The most important step in learning to study the Bible, and rightly divide it, is to learn which commandments apply to us today. If we are under the Old law then we must keep it, but if under the “Law of Christ,” then keep it. Which are we under? The writer of Hebrews points out the Old covenant was not good enough and another has been

provided. He said, “*For if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place be sought for a second*” (Hebrews 8:7).

The new Covenant, or New Testament, which is faultless in that it offers forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God, is the Covenant we are to follow today. The Old Covenant has passed away and the New Covenant is binding.

## Questions

### 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. When you have answered the questions, 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 below

**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 statement is true, and circle "F" if any part is not true

1. (T F) There are 26 books in the New Testament.
2. (T F) There are 5 divisions in the New Testament.
3. (T F) The "letters" of the New Testament were written to Christians.
4. (T F) There are 5 books called Biographical books.
5. (T F) Revelation is also called a book of prophecy.
6. (T F) 1 John is a book of history.
7. (T F) Acts is a book of history.
8. (T F) The last book in the Old Testament is Ezra.
9. (T F) Matthew is one of the letters to the Christians.
10. (T F) It doesn't matter which Covenant we follow.

### Answer the following Questions by Filling in the Blanks

1. There are \_\_\_\_\_ main divisions of the Bible.
2. There are \_\_\_\_\_ books in the Bible.
3. There are \_\_\_\_\_ distinct ages in the Bible.
4. Moses directed the lives of the Israelites for \_\_\_\_\_ years.
5. There are \_\_\_\_\_ sections or divisions in the Old Testament.
6. The word "Pentateuch" is the same as the word \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Job is considered to be written in \_\_\_\_\_ form.
8. There are \_\_\_\_\_ books written by the Major Prophets.
9. There are \_\_\_\_\_ books written by the Minor Prophets.
10. There are \_\_\_\_\_ books in the Old Testament.

## Answer the following Questions in as Few Words as Possible

1. How many ages are there in the Bible?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which age is called the last age?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Were the Major Prophets more important than the Minor Prophets?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Whose life and work are recorded in the first four books of the New Testament?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. In your own words tell why a New Covenant was necessary?

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### 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 below on this page.
4. Contact the address sending the Bible correspondence Course for any assistance in spiritual needs or problems.

### Questions

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## Bible Answers to Above Questions

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### 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