

Basic Skills of Bible Study

Compiled by

Dr. Kenneth Meadors

Basic Skills of Bible Study

BIB242

Syllabus

- 1) The Importance of Bible Study
- 2) Authority and Inspiration of the Bible
- 3) Translations of the Bible
- 4) Bible Study Aids
- 5) Basic Principles of Bible Study
- 6) Methods of Studying the Bible
- 7) Bible Timelines
- 8) Bible Symbols, Measurements, and Numbers

LESSON ONE

The Importance of Bible Study

Introduction

- 1) Americans have access to the Bible.
 - a) Among households which own a Bible, the typical count is three Bibles per household.
 - b) Almost every household in America (92 percent) owns at least one copy of the Christian Bible.
 - c) This includes most homes in which the adults are not practicing Christians as well as the home of hundreds of thousands of atheists.
- 2) Although God is lifted up and believed in most churches, the Bible is still fought and argued about, and read so little.
- 3) The American people's knowledge of the content actually taught in the Bible leaves much to be desired.
 - a) Might expect religious people to have at least some acquaintance with the Gospels—the first four books of the New Testament.
 - b) A September 1997 study by the Princeton Religious Research Center showed that 63 percent of Americans could not name all four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
 - c) One-third of incoming freshmen at a religiously based college “could not identify Matthew as an apostle from a list of New Testament names.” (The Greatest Story Never Read,” Christianity Today, August 9, 1999, p. 45).
- 4) Here are a few reasons that people give for not reading the Bible.
 - a) The Bible doesn't seem relevant to my life.
 - b) The Bible seems confusing and hard to understand. I don't know how to make sense out of it.
 - c) I used to read the Bible, and it made me feel good. But after a while, it didn't seem to have the same impact, so finally I gave it up.
 - d) I feel guilty when I read the Bible.
 - e) The Bible is hopelessly out-of-date. It may have some interesting stories, but it has little significance for life today.
 - f) I rely on my pastor or minister to explain the Bible to me. If I need to know something, he will tell me about it.
 - g) I have doubts about the Bible's reliability.
 - h) I don't have time. I'm just too busy.
 - i) The Bible seems boring to me.
 - j) I don't own a Bible.
 - k) The Bible is full of myths and half-truths. Why study something that lacks credibility?
 - l) I don't read, period! It's not just the Bible; I don't read anything.
- 5) To neglect the Bible is to remove the chief authority on which our faith is built.
 - a) We are left vulnerable, unable to check the teachings of those from TV programs, popular books, and enchanting prophecies.
 - b) We have gross inability to discern truth from error.
- 6) We must not be a reed blown in the wind, but rightly dividing the word of truth. (Eph 4)

- 7) We are to learn to live by every word of God, if we are to be happy in this life and throughout eternity.
- 8) 2 Timothy 3:15. And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. KJV

The Bible

- 1) The Bible is a collection of books in various literature forms, written over a 1500 year period to people 2000 years ago; it speaks to history, and it speaks to our inner soul.
- 2) The Spirit uses the Bible to *reveal the purpose, vision, and love of God*,
 - a) It starts, shapes, and deepens faith in Christ.
 - b) The Spirit made it to show how Christ recreated our relationship with God.
- 3) The Bible is great because of the Great One who stands behind it and that Great One's love for us, a love that came to us, suffered death, and overcame even death so that we might also overcome it.
 - a) The medium (of print or speech or Web) is not the message; the God who Reveals is the message, and the medium is just the messenger.
 - b) Even more, the message is that of a love letter, not that of a rap sheet or a facts list.
 - c) And like with a love letter, it's not so much how it's said than Who says it and why.
- 4) The Bible is the source of the Christian way of thinking, the Christian view of the world, the Christian way of life, and the Christian teachings and beliefs.
- 5) The Bible is the only reasonably accurate report of Jesus and the early Church.
 - a) It is the only place you can find what those who lived with Jesus discovered about Him.
 - b) Thus, it is the only source for finding out what makes a Christian a Christian.

The Importance of the Bible

- 1) Have you considered the Bible's relevance and importance in the shaping of Western society and culture?
- 2) The Bible has sold more copies than all other books in history and has shaped the hands that built this country.
- 3) The Bible is the most important document and influence in Western culture.
 - a) More influential than the U.S. Constitution, the Magna Charta or any philosophical or political idea.
 - b) The Bible is so important it has influenced must we take for granted in the world from science, technology, and even our political system.

Why Study the Bible?

- 1) We must study the Bible because it is the foundation for life.
 - a) It is essential to our understanding of not only God, but ourselves as well.
 - b) Without God's Word we will be purposeless and disrupted from our call and the purpose for our salvation.
 - c) The deep and constant concern of the child of God who dearly loves his Lord is to know and to do the will of God.
 - i) He recognizes that the Bible is the source book of Truth.

- ii) It is the only authority that discloses the will of God for his life.
- 2) Bible Study is essential to growth.
 - a) 1 Peter 2:2. As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: KJV
 - b) Three basic kinds of Bible students.
 - i) “Castor oil” types. To them the Word is bitter, but it’s good for what ails them.
 - ii) “Shredded wheat” types. To them Scripture is nourishing but dry. It’s like eating a bail of hay.
 - iii) “Strawberries-and-cream” types.

So the Bible Is Difficult to Understand?

- 1) The Bible is often difficult to understand!
 - a) How can I, as a student of the Word, reach into the treasures of truth that comprise the Bible?
 - i) So many verses seem irrelevant; so many seem impossible to understand.
 - ii) Not only that, learned theologians frequently come to great differences of opinion concerning what the Bible teaches.
 - b) How can I determine which teacher, which preacher, which theologian is leading me correctly? Must I be limited to blindly following a teacher I trust, knowing full well he is only a fallible human and therefore subject to error?
 - c) And what about the problem that arises from there being so many different translations of the Bible?
 - i) How can I know which ones are trustworthy?
 - ii) Do I dare trust paraphrases, which seem to make the Bible so much easier to understand?
- 2) There are some basic principles that must be kept in view for proper biblical interpretation.
 - a) We must remember that the Bible is the Holy Word of God.
 - i) The Bible is not just any book.
 - (1) God moved by holy men of old to write as He guided them.
 - (2) Sometimes the truths of the Bible are clearly seen.
 - (3) Sometimes they are revealed only by the most diligent searching of the Bible.
 - ii) Because the Bible is God’s book, only God can open the student’s eyes to see the truths set forth in its pages.
 - iii) The Bible is a complete book.
 - b) The Bible is always relevant.
 - i) The Bible’s practical advice remains as relevant today as it was 2,000 years ago.
 - ii) The book of Proverbs gives sound principles of human conduct.
 - iii) The Psalms speak to human emotions and are as effective today as when they were first written.
 - c) The Bible is its own interpreter.
 - i) We compare spiritual things with spiritual (1 Corinthians 2).
 - (1) To understand a word or a phrase or concept in any part of the Bible, we must see how that same word or phrase or concept is used everywhere else in the Bible.
 - (2) This requires a very diligent search of the Word of God, but it is the only sure way to come to a true understanding of the biblical message.

- ii) Any conclusion the student of the Word comes to from his reading of a particular verse or passage must be tested for its validity by checking that conclusion against anything and everything the Bible offers concerning the subject in question.
- d) The Bible provides different levels of meaning.
 - i) Historical.
 - ii) Moral and spiritual teachings.
 - iii) The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the dominant and most important message of the Bible.

The Importance of Bible Study

- 1) It is important to know the meaning of life.
 - a) It is important to us to know what we are to do, why we do things, how we can do things right, and what we can do to be the best we can be.
 - b) We need to bring our mindsets in line with His truth.
- 2) Scriptures.
 - a) Deuteronomy 6:4-9. 4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: 5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. KJV
 - i) God is commanding us to teach ourselves and our children His Word so that it penetrates our hearts, minds and will—every aspect of who we are.
 - ii) We are to write it down and bind it to all our daily aspects of life.
 - b) 2 Timothy 3:14-17. 14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. KJV
 - i) Here is the call to scrutinize, understand, and then apply Scripture.
 - ii) This is the clear, uncompromising call to continue in our studies constantly and passionately.
 - (1) Paul was writing to correct false teaching, people misleading others with twisted Scriptures out of context.
 - (2) The Bible clearly states that a person without knowledge is ignorant.
 - (3) Without wisdom, we are a fool.
 - c) Proverbs 1...’fear the Lord...’, which is the understanding and vigorous reverence of God.
- 3) We can teach ourselves and each other to bring the Word of life into all that we do.
 - a) The opportunity is given to us to seize His Word so we can be wise and live our lives with purpose, direction, and meaning.
 - b) We can impact our society with dignity and liberty, giving hope and showing the Way.
- 4) God desires that we learn and grown.

- a) We do this through the study of God's Word.
- b) Thereby, we gain our values, our moral center, which is how we are to be to God and to those around us.
- c) We gain our wisdom and knowledge through the Word, as well as learning for our lives.
- 5) The Bible is not just about dos and don'ts, but a love letter that lets us know what is best.
 - a) The Bible does this by its honesty with its characters, how they failed and how they succeeded.
 - b) It shows us how we are to view God and each other, how we are to conduct ourselves, and how we are to measure our ideas and activities.
 - c) It contains all we need to know for salvation and godly living.
- 6) So, how do we study the Bible?
 - a) Matthew 7:7. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: KJV
 - b) John 14:24. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. KJV
 - c) James 1:25. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. KJV.

The Bible as the Word of God.

- 1) Word.
 - a) What God says and does.
 - b) God spoke, and the universe, light, earth, and life were created.
 - c) God spoke loudest, clearest, and most transcendently by coming among us in Christ Jesus, being executed and being arisen from death.
- 2) Revelation.
 - a) Related words include 'to show', 'revelation', 'uncover', 'share', 'unveil'. T
 - b) here are matters we could only have any knowledge or understanding about if God told us.
 - i) For instance, how could we really understand anything about God -- character, will, plan, being -- if God didn't show it to us?
 - ii) We lack the needed 'omniscience' to figure it out ourselves (that is, we don't even come close to knowing enough to do it).
 - iii) We'd be left with natural vague hints and intelligent wild guesses.
 - iv) We'd be on somewhat better ground about ourselves, but even there, we still can't seem to figure out for ourselves why we are unable to straighten ourselves out
 - c) Learning about such things takes 'revelation' : the One who knows shares this knowledge with us.
 - d) That's what the Bible is: God sharing these truths with us.
 - i) That's what the prophets and apostles did.
 - ii) Most centrally, it is not just what Christ did, but what Christ **is**.
 - e) Through these writings, the Holy Spirit reveals to us that God's already done God's part in restoring our relationship with God.

- f) The Spirit then goes on to reveal us so much more -- what God has given us, how God wants us to live and to treat each other, deepening our relationship with God, about love and fellowship and family and justice
- g) The Spirit lifts the veil, and thus frees us. The primary way for the Spirit to do this is by revealing it through the Bible

Summary of What the Bible Is

- 1) The Bible calls us to faith and accountability in its entirety, and to have faith in it without risk (since our place is already secured in heaven) and with trust in any situation we encounter.
- 2) The Bible is reliable and stands the test of time, so is your trust there or elsewhere?
- 3) The Bible is the reliable source of historical information, the record of God speaking.
- 4) The Bible is the source for our contact and guidance with our creator.
- 5) The Bible is our story, our history, our struggles, our opportunities, our hope and the climax of His plan and redemption.
- 6) The Bible tells who we are and what we are.
 - a) It gives us purpose and meaning
 - b) Our response to the Bible is how we choose to live.
- 7) The Bible is our source for life and liberty and happiness.
- 8) The Bible is our secure mast on the boat of life, struggling in its way through the storms of the world. It is our firm foundation, which we need to grip tightly.
- 9) The Bible is not to be a secret, but shared and communicated with power and conviction, because it has been entrusted to us as bearers of, as agents of, and witness of its truth.

LESSON TWO

The Authority and Inspiration of the Bible

Introduction

- 1) The origin of the bible is God.
 - a) It is a historical book that is backed by archeology, and a prophetic book that has lived up to all of its claims thus far.
 - b) The Bible is God's letter to humanity collected into 66 books written by 40 divinely inspired writers over a period of over 1,600 years.
 - c) The Bible validates its divine authorship through an astonishing 668 fulfilled prophecies.
- 2) Why is the Bible to be our authority for faith and practice for life?
 - a) Because, God tells us so.
 - b) God is the author and has given it to us so we can "be all you can be."
- 3) As the Bible is God-breathed, it is the only infallible, authoritative truth we have.
 - a) It is true in all that it says and what God requires of us.
 - b) The Bible is actually the voice of God to His children.
 - c) We should submit to His authority through His Word.
- 4) Three primary objections to the Bible.
 - a) It is full of contradictions and myths.
 - i) Where are these contradictions?
 - ii) When there is a verse or passage that appears to be contradictory, we discover it was either out of its context, or just not there.
 - b) It is too difficult to understand.
 - i) We may have been exposed to a Bible with antiquated language, small print, and paper that was hard to read.
 - ii) Often one starts with the Book of Revelation and get confused.
 - c) It is boring.
 - i) The Bible is filled with stories of wonder and excitement.
 - (1) What soap opera has more excitement, sex, and betrayal than that of Judges?
 - (2) What novel have you read that has the elements of passion, wonder, crime, betrayal, lust, remorse, and heroism, with deep philosophy and truth?
 - ii) The Bible is alive and incredibly exciting; if you find it boring, then switch to a better translation.
- 5) The Bible requires an effort.
 - a) There are three forces that pound and tear at the foundation of a growing Christian.
 - i) Pride.
 - ii) Laziness.
 - iii) Dishonesty.
 - b) The result of those three is usually the lack of motivation.
 - c) To read a novel, you have to first be willing to sacrifice the money to go buy it, then set aside time for reading it, and then gather the necessary effort to be able to begin.

The Scriptures Are Inspired

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

1) Meaning of inspiration.

- a) Biblical inspiration may be defined as God's superintending of the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities (and even their writing styles), they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs.
 - i) Inspiration means that "the Holy Spirit of God superintended the human writers in the production of Scripture so that what they wrote was precisely what God wanted written.
 - ii) The word inspiration literally means "God-breathed" in the Greek.
- b) Because Scripture is inspired and inerrant, it alone has final authority.
- c) Syllogism.
 - i) Major Premise: God is true. (Romans 3:4). 4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. KJV
 - ii) Minor Premise: God breathed out the Scriptures. (2 Timothy 3:16). All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: KJV
 - iii) Conclusion: Therefore, the Scriptures are true. (John 17:17). Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. KJV

2) The Holy Spirit is the Agent of Inspiration.

- a) 2 Peter 1:21. 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. KJV
- b) The human wills of the authors were not the originators or the carriers of God's message.
 - i) God moved and the prophet mouthed these truths.
 - ii) God revealed and man recorded His word.

3) Inspiration in the Old Testament

- a) 2 Samuel 23:2-3. The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. KJV
- b) Many Old Testament passages quoted in the New Testament are said to have the Holy Spirit as their author, even though a human prophet actually spoke the words in the Old Testament.
 - i) Mark 12:36. For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. KJV
 - ii) Acts 1:16. Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. KJV
 - iii) Acts 4:24-25. 24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? KJV

- iv) Acts 28:25. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, KJV
 - v) Hebrews 3:7. Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, KJV
 - vi) Hebrews 10:15-16. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; KJV
- 4) Inspiration in the New Testament
- a) 2 Timothy 3:16. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: KJV
 - b) By the time 2 Timothy 3:16 was written, all of the New Testament books had already been written except for 2 Peter, Hebrews, Jude, and the apostle John's writings.

The Scriptures Are True

- 1) *Therefore, the Scriptures are true (John 17:17).*
- 2) As illustrated above, the inerrancy of Scripture can be inferred by premises that are themselves taught by Scripture.
- 3) We read in Scripture that truth is an attribute of God
 - a) Jeremiah 10:10. But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. KJV
 - b) John 1:14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. KJV
 - c) John 14:6. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. KJV
 - d) God speaks truthfully - that is, He does not lie.
 - i) Numbers 23:19. God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? KJV
 - ii) 1 Samuel 15:29. And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent. KJV
 - iii) Titus 1:2. In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; KJV
 - iv) Romans 3:3-4. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? 4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. KJV

Evidence for the Reliability of the Bible

- 1) **Fulfilled Prophecy.** Unique among all books ever written, the Bible accurately foretells specific events in detail many years, sometimes centuries, before they occur.
 - a) Approximately 2500 prophecies appear in the pages of the Bible.

- b) Since the prophecies are for the most part independent of one another, the odds for all these prophecies having been fulfilled by chance without error is less than one in 10^{2000} . That is 1 with 2000 zeros written after it.
- i) Some examples.
- (1) Daniel.
 - (a) Some time before 500 BC, the prophet Daniel proclaimed that Israel's long-awaited Messiah would begin his public ministry 483 years after the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Dan. 9:25-26).
 - (b) He further predicted that the Messiah would be "cut off," killed, and that this event would take place prior to a second destruction of Jerusalem.
 - (2) Micah.
 - (a) In approximately 700 BC, the prophet Micah named the tiny village of Bethlehem as the birthplace of Israel's Messiah (Micah 5:2).
 - (b) The fulfillment of this prophecy in the birth of Christ is one of the most widely known and widely celebrated facts in history.
 - (3) Zechariah.
 - (a) In the fifth century BC, a prophet named Zechariah declared that the Messiah would be betrayed for the price of a slave—thirty pieces of silver and that this money would be used to buy a burial ground for Jerusalem's poor foreigners (Zech. 11:12-13).
 - (b) Fulfilled by Judas' betrayal of Jesus (Mat 27:3-10).
 - (4) King David and Zechariah.
 - (a) Some 400 years before crucifixion was invented, both Israel's King David and the prophet Zechariah described the Messiah's death in words that perfectly depict that mode of execution.
 - (b) They said that the body would be pierced and that none of the bones would be broke (Ps 22 and 34:20; Zech. 12:10)
 - (5) Moses (Jeremiah and Jesus).
 - (a) Prophesied that the ancient Jewish nation would be conquered twice and that the people would be carried off as slaves each time, first by the Babylonians and then by a fourth world kingdom (Rome).
- ii) A summary of the messianic prophecies fulfilled by Jesus Christ.
- (1) Seed of woman. Genesis 3:15.
 - (2) Virgin birth. Isaiah 7:14.
 - (3) Birthplace: Bethlehem, Micah 5:2.
 - (4) Forerunner: John: Malachi 3:1
 - (5) Ministry of miracles: Isaiah 35:5-6.
 - (6) Sold for 30 shekels: Zechariah 11:12.
 - (7) Hands and feet pierced: Psalm 22:16.
 - (8) Crucified with thieves: Isaiah 53:12.
 - (9) No bones broken: Psalm 22:17.
 - (10) Suffered thirst on cross: Psalm 69:21.
 - (11) Resurrection: Psalm 16:10; 22:22.
- 2) Archaeological Support of the Bible
- a) The Bible's accuracy and reliability has been proved and verified over and over again by archeological finds produced by both believing and nonbelieving scholars and scientists.

- b) This includes verification for numerous customs, places, names, and events mentioned in the Bible.
- 3) Manuscript support for the Bible's reliability.
 - a) There are more than 24,000 partial and complete manuscript copies of the New Testament.
 - b) The variants in the New Testament manuscripts are minimal.
 - c) The New Testament versus other ancient books.
 - i) There is more manuscript support for the Bible than for other ancient documents and books.
 - ii) There are more New Testament manuscripts copied with greater accuracy and earlier dating than for any secular classic from antiquity.
- 4) The Support for the New Testament from the Church Fathers.
 - a) There are over 86,000 quotations of the New Testament in the early church fathers' writings.
 - b) There are enough quotations from the early church fathers that even if we did not have a single copy of the Bible, scholars could still reconstruct all but 11 verses of the entire New Testament from material written within 150 to 200 years from the time of Christ.
- 5) Manuscript Evidence for the Old Testament.
 - a) The Dead Sea Scrolls prove the accuracy of the transmission of the Bible.
 - b) These were discovered in 1947, and they proved to be over 1000 years earlier than previous manuscripts. When compared to earlier manuscripts, there is incredible accuracy of the Old Testament's manuscript transmission.
- 6) God's preservation of the Bible.
 - a) The God who had the power and sovereign control to inspire the Scriptures in the first place is surely going to continue to exercise His power and sovereign control in the preservation of Scripture.
 - i) How Christ viewed the Old Testament shows that He had full confidence that the Scriptures He used had been faithfully preserved through the centuries.
 - ii) We can safely assume that the first-century text of the Old Testament was a wholly adequate representation of the divine word originally given.

Jesus' View of the Bible

- 1) Divine inspiration. (Matthew 22:43). He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, KJV.
- 2) Indestructibility. (Matthew 5:17-18). 17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. KJV
- 3) Infallibility. (John 10:35). If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; KJV
- 4) Final Authority.
 - a) (Matthew 4:4). But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. KJV
 - b) Matthew 4:7. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. KJV

- c) Matthew 4:10. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. KJV
- 5) New Testament references where the writers claim divine authority for their writings.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 2:13. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. KJV
 - b) 1 Corinthians 14:37. If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.
 - c) 1 Thessalonians 2:13. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.
 - d) 1 Thessalonians 2:13. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.
 - e) 2 Corinthians 13:3. Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you. KJV
 - f) Galatians 1:12. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. KJV
 - g) 2 Corinthians 12:7. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. KJV
- 6) When the questions of revelation and inspiration with regard to the Bible have been answered, the issue of authority will have been settled.
 - a) The authority of Scripture cannot be separated from the authority of God.
 - b) Whatever the Bible affirms, God affirms.

LESSON THREE

Translations of the Bible

Introduction

- 1) The various books of the New Testament were written individually and copied to be circulated amongst the churches of the ancient world.
 - a) In time God moved men to combine these books into a single volume, the New Testament.
 - b) This volume and its parts were copied and recopied by hand for centuries.
 - c) Many manuscripts have been found over the centuries in areas of the ancient Greek-speaking world, and a few, less reliable, manuscripts have been discovered in Alexandria, Egypt.
- 2) Over 5,000 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament exist today ranging from small fragments containing two or three verses to nearly entire Bibles.
 - a) Their ages vary from the second to the sixteenth century.
 - b) The manuscripts are ending with the arrival of printing.
- 3) By the time of the development of the printing press in the mid-15th century, there were many handwritten manuscripts available.
 - a) Over the next centuries, numerous men set about collecting, combining and comparing the manuscripts in order to have one complete Greek New Testament text to print.
 - b) One of the earliest of these is the text we know of as the Textus Receptus, or Received Text.
 - c) The Interlinear Greek-English N.T. by Berry is the Textus Receptus from which the KJV was translated in 1611.

Origin of the Bible

- 1) There are presently two original manuscripts available for translators to use.
 - a) Received Text or Textus Receptus.
 - i) Comes from the Byzantine era which was at that time more closely associated to the true apostolic fathers who were the eye witnesses to Jesus life, death, and resurrection.
 - ii) The Western church took up heresies of the Gnostic and other doctrines that were not held as canon by the Apostles and Paul.
 - iii) Basis for King James Version.
 - b) Vaticanus or Siniaticus.
 - i) This text was considered by Middle Age scholars to be not only spurious but in error.
 - ii) This manuscript was the basis for the Catholic Bible.
- 2) Translations such as the King James Version are derived from existing copies of ancient manuscripts such as the Hebrew Masoretic Text (Old Testament) and the Greek Textus Receptus (New Testament).
 - a) Not translations of texts translated from other interpretations.

- b) The primary differences between today's Bible translations are merely related to how translators interpret a word or sentence from the original language of the text source (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek).
- 3) The reliability of ancient manuscripts.
 - a) There are more than 14,000 existing Old Testament manuscripts and fragments copied throughout the Middle East, Mediterranean and European regions that agree dramatically with each other.
 - i) These texts agree with the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, which was translated from Hebrew to Greek some time during the third century BC.
 - ii) The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in Israel in the 1940s and 50s, also provide phenomenal evidence for the reliability of the ancient transmission of the Jewish Scriptures before the arrival of Jesus Christ.
 - b) The Hebrew scribes who copied the Jewish Scriptures dedicated their lives to preserving the accuracy of the holy books.
 - i) These scribes went to great lengths to insure manuscript reliability.
 - ii) They were highly trained and meticulously observed, counting every letter, word and paragraph against master scrolls.
 - iii) A single error would require the immediate destruction of the entire text.
- 4) The manuscript evidence for the New Testament is also dramatic, with over 5,300 known copies and fragments in the original Greek.
 - a) Nearly 800 of these were copied before 1000 AD.
 - b) Some date to the early second and third centuries.
 - c) These manuscripts evidence far surpasses the manuscript reliability of other ancient writings that we trust as authentic every day.

Various Translations

- 1) The Bible is a divine revelation, written by holy men of old, who wrote as they were moved by the Spirit of God (2 Peter 1:21).
 - a) It was not originally given in the convenient form in which it is now possessed.
 - b) Neither were the original copies of the Bible written in the English language.
- 2) All modern versions of the bible are translations.
 - a) **King James Version (1611, KJV)**
 - i) Many biblical quotations you will read are from the KJV.
 - ii) Many mature Christians have used the King James Bible for so long and are so familiar with it, that they just hate to change.
 - iii) The main argument for keeping it is that some of the best concordances are based on the King James Version.
 - iv) Unfortunately, the language has changed so much since 1611 that the old Bible simply does not mean what it used to mean.
 - v) Keylock suggests that one reason we keep using the old KJV is that we love its style.
 - (1) According to the King James Bible, Jesus told His disciples, "**Let not your hearts be troubled.**"
 - (2) The Good News Bible tells the disciples, "**Do not be worried and upset**" (John 14:1). The KJV has a beauty of style that is rarely matched.
 - b) **Revised Standard Version (1952, RSV)**

- i) The Revised Standard Version retains much of the beauty of the King James Version while getting rid of many archaic expressions.
- ii) Unfortunately, the Revised Standard Version has now had more than forty years to become archaic itself.
- iii) The RSV was especially noted for its scholarship, but we have discovered so much about the Bible since 1952 that even the RSV is out of date.
 - (1) So, the Revised Standard Version Bible committee has released a New Revised Standard Version (1989, NRSV).
 - (2) Naturally, this reflects the progress of scholarship in the intervening years.
- c) **New American Standard Bible (1963, NASV)**
 - i) According to Keylock, "The most literal, word-for-word translation on the market today . . . is the New American Standard Bible."
 - ii) Some authorities consider the NASV choppy and hard to read.
 - (1) But for those who have no background in the biblical languages, it serves as an interesting counterbalance to some of the more modern free translations or paraphrases (as the Living Bible).
 - (2) However, even this literal translation slips up in places. In Mark 7:19, for example, the words "**Thus He declared**" are gratuitously added. They are in no ancient Greek manuscript.
- d) **The Jerusalem Bible (1966, JB)**
 - i) The Jerusalem Bible and the New American Bible have replaced all earlier Bible translations among Catholic readers.
 - ii) Many scholars consider them good translations except for some Catholic idiosyncracies and some rather opinionated notes.
- e) **New English Bible (1970, NEB)**
 - i) The New English Bible, the first British Bible to break completely with the King James tradition is remarkable in that it is a work intended to be both accurate and literary.
 - ii) It is one of the few modern translations which has attempted to maintain the literary standards of the King James and Revised Standard Versions.
 - iii) Some scholars charge that the NEB translators did too much rearranging of the text. Nevertheless, it makes good reading.
- f) **Living Bible (1971, LB)**
 - i) As Keylock points out, the Living Bible is not really a translation, but a paraphrase.
 - (1) Restatement of an author's thoughts, using different words.
 - (2) The purpose of this version is for it to say as exactly as possible what the writers of the Scriptures meant, and to say it simply, expanding where necessary for clear understanding by the modern reader.
 - ii) It was an attempt made by one man to put the Bible in a language his children could understand.
 - (1) It is easily the most readable contemporary interpretation of the Bible.
 - (2) The reader should not approach the Living Bible expecting to find scholarship, however, as its author knows neither Hebrew nor Greek.
 - (3) Others have suggested that it is no more readable than the New International Version and that the author's doctrinal views are visible in both the translations and the footnotes.

- iii) Dangers of paraphrasing.
 - (1) The translator, though honest, may give the English reader something that the original writer did not mean to say.
 - (2) When the Greek or Hebrew is not clear, the theology of the translator and his sense of logic are his guides.
- iv) In spite of all this, it does read well and is extremely powerful--particularly in the Old Testament prophets. But one does need a counterbalance--perhaps the New American Standard Bible.
- g) **Good News Bible (1976, GNB)**
 - i) *Newsweek* magazine said the Good News Bible was "useful for new readers, but short on poetry and majesty."
 - ii) It is translated by Southern Baptist Robert Bratcher and is what Keylock calls a "dynamic equivalence" translation.
 - (1) By that he means that the translators did not attempt to make a literal translation.
 - (2) First they ask what the biblical text really means and then they try to find the equivalent meaning in contemporary English.
 - iii) One has to wonder, however, whether "Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires" is any better than "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness."
- h) **New International Version (1979, NIV)**
 - i) Keylock concludes that the New International Version is "rapidly developing into the closest thing to a standard Bible among evangelical Bible-reading people in America."
 - ii) Many scholars feel that the NIV is a balanced translation. I
 - (1) It stays close to the Hebrew and Greek text without becoming stilted as the NASB.
 - (2) Still, the NIV is another dynamic equivalence translation, and much depends on what the translator thought the author *meant*.
 - (3) This creates some theological problems, especially in the translator's interpretation of Paul.
- i) **New King James Version (1982, NKJV)**
 - i) As its title suggests, the NKJV stays very close to the King James Bible simply replacing archaic words and phrases with more contemporary expressions.
 - ii) The purpose of the NKJV is to "maintain that lyrical quality which is so highly regarded in the Authorized Version."
 - iii) Scholars generally agree that they accomplished that, but wonder if the translation went far enough in making necessary revisions.
- j) **Reader's Digest Bible (1982, RDV)**
 - i) The Reader's Digest Bible is simply a condensation of the Revised Standard Version by about 40 percent.
 - ii) Keylock points out that the strongest criticism has been to the introductions to some of the books, which adopt critical views of the Bible.
 - iii) It is really not a useful translation even for an amateur who is settling in for a serious study of the Bible.
- k) **The Message.**
 - i) This version is the work of a Presbyterian pastor, Eugene H. Peterson.

- ii) A feature of the original writings of the New Testament is that it was done in the street language of the day.
 - (1) At that time in the Greek-speaking world, there were two levels of language: formal and informal.
 - (a) Formal language was used to write philosophy, history, government decrees, and epic poetry.
 - (b) Some people suppose that language dealing with a holy God and holy things should be elevated—stately and ceremonial.
 - (c) However, Jesus preferred down-to-earth stories and easy association with common people.
 - (2) The followers of Jesus in their witness and preaching, translating and teaching, have always tried to get the Message—the “good news”—into the language of whatever street they happened to be living on.
 - iii) In order to understand the Message right, the language must be a rough and earthy one that reveals God’s presence and action where we least expect it.
 - (1) This version is in a contemporary idiom that is current, fresh, and understandable in the same language that we use in all of our activities.
 - (2) The goal was not to render a word-for-word conversion of Greek into English, but rather to convert the tone, the rhythm, the events, and the ideas into the way that we actually think and speak.
- 3) **Which One Is for You?**
- a) If you do not own one at all, and you are only going to buy one Bible, your choice should probably be between the New Revised Standard Version, the New American Standard Bible, or the New King James Version.
 - b) After that it depends upon what you are looking for.
 - i) If you want easy readability, the Living Bible is hard to beat.
 - ii) If you want a more literal translation, perhaps the New American Standard Bible is for you.
 - iii) Whatever you choose, keep in mind that the truth of God can even survive bad translation. But you still should not carelessly accept one version of a controversial scripture.
 - c) One other point if you are buying a new Bible.
 - i) The version you will use the most, carry to church, read in bed, make notes in, etc., should be of good enough quality to last a lifetime.
 - ii) Look for one with wide margins so you can make notes in it.
 - iii) After a few years, a personally marked and annotated Bible will be one of your most cherished possessions.
 - iv) Your other translations can be more economically bound.
- 4) Many people are furious over any deviation of the King James Version.
- a) When the highly publicized *Revised Standard Version* was published in 1952, many Protestant and other Fundamentalists were opposed to it.
 - i) There were public burnings.
 - ii) Many thought it was of the devil.
 - b) No translation of the Bible is perfect.
 - i) Where vital doctrines of the divine plan are not involved, these new translations frequently state the thought more clearly than does the *King James Version*.

- ii) The new translations are not always entirely trustworthy as can be ascertained by consulting reliable Greek and Hebrew concordances of the Bible.

Manuscripts

- 1) Probably the greatest weakness of the *King James Version* is the fact that when it was translated only eight manuscripts were available from which the work could be done.
 - a) The oldest one dating back only to the tenth century.
 - b) Since then, many hundreds of manuscripts have come to light, some of them dating back as early as the fourth century
 - c) A few went back to the second century.
- 2) The original writings of the Bible are all lost, therefore manuscripts now available are merely copies, usually copies of copies, many times removed.
 - a) The value of a manuscript depends largely upon its age.
 - b) The original contained no punctuation, and they show no division between words.
 - c) Must keep in mind when we study any English translation of the Bible, we must remember that the punctuation is not a part of the inspired record.
 - d) Generally speaking, the punctuation of all the English versions of the Bible is very good, but at times it has helped to confuse the meaning of the text.
 - i) *King James Version* of Luke 23:43. “Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise.”
 - ii) *Rotherham Translation*: “Verily I say unto thee this day, with me shalt thou be in Paradise.”
 - e) The earlier the manuscript, likely more accurate.

LESSON FOUR

Bible Study Aids

Helpful Books to Supplement Bible Study

- 1) A Study Bible
 - a) This will be your most important tool and should have a good system of cross-references.
 - b) There should be a concordance in the back and Bible maps.
 - c) Most study Bibles also include a good section of notes which will give you pertinent facts about customs, traditions, archeology, geography and history..
- 2) An exhaustive concordance
 - a) This will give all the references where a word may be found.
 - b) It will exceed the limited concordance found at the back of most Bibles.
 - c) The two most popular exhaustive concordances are:
 - i) Strong's Exhaustive Concordance (Zondervan).
<http://bible.crosswalk.com/InterlinearBible>
 - ii) Young's Analytical Concordance (Eerdmans).
- 3) Lexicons.
 - a) New Testament Greek.
 - b) Old Testament Hebrew.
 - c) Brief lexicons come at the end of Strong's Concordance.
 - d) The most widely used exhaustive lexicon of Hebrew and Aramaic words (Aramaic is the language of a few passages in the Old Testament) are known after its authors, as Brown-Driver-Briggs.
 - e) The leading Greek lexicon is the one compiled by Arndt and Gingrich.
- 4) Bible dictionaries.
 - a) Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Bible Words.
 - b) Easton's Bible Dictionary.
<Http://Bible.crosswalk.com/Dictionaries/EastonsBibleDictionary/>
 - c) Halley's Bible Handbook
 - d) Smith's Bible Dictionary.
 - i) Over 4,500 subjects and proper names are defined and analyzed with corresponding Scripture references.
 - ii) Has been used by students of the Bible since it's introduction in the 1860s.
<http://bible.crosswalk.com/Dictionaries?SmithsBibleDictionary>
- 5) Bible Encyclopedias.
 - a) Condensed Biblical Encyclopedia.
 - i) <http://bible.crosswalk.com/Encyclopedia/CondensedBiblicalCyclopedia>
- 6) Study Bibles
 - a) Topical Bibles.
 - i) These offer lists of passages speaking on the same subject.
 - ii) Two classics are:
 - (1) Thompson's Chain Reference Bible.

- (a) Has an appendix with thousands of topics arranged alphabetically, each followed by a list of texts.
 - (b) The major texts are quoted in full, so that the user can easily judge whether a particular one meets the need.
 - (2) Nave's Topical Bible.
 - (a) When collating texts on the same topic, Nave's omits quotations, but provides more references.
 - (b) <http://bible.crosswalk.com/Concordances/NavesTopicalBible/>
 - iii) A topical Bible is handy for researching what the Bible says about a certain issue, or for preparing a topical lesson.
 - b) Parallel Bibles. Several study Bibles are currently available that offer different translations in parallel columns
- 7) Annotated Bibles.
- a) Two most popular.
 - i) Scofield.
 - ii) Ryrie Study Bible
 - b) Do not give the notes the same authority as Scripture itself.
- 8) Interlinear translations.
- a) Bibles that facilitate linguistic study.
 - b) These provide the text in the original language, with the English equivalent of each word placed above or below it—that is, between the lines; hence, the name “interlinear.”
 - c) A layman without formal training in Greek and Hebrew can still gain a good idea of how any text reads in the original language.
- 9) Commentaries
- a) Commentaries come in two types.
 - i) Devotional.
 - (1) Best known is Matthew Henry's, completed in about 1721, but is still popular today.
 - (2) It sets the standard for godly reflection on God's Word, giving insights that are deep but not dense, wise but not proud, fervent in spirit but not reckless in conclusions.
 - (3) Spurgeon.
 - (a) Other than *The Treasury of David* (a commentary on the Psalms) and *The Gospel of the Kingdom* (a commentary on Matthew), Spurgeon did not write books in the form of ordinary commentaries.
 - (b) His sermons may be viewed as the best devotional commentaries from the nineteenth century.
 - ii) Technical.
 - (1) Assembles the results of latest scholarship on the meaning and background of the text, tend to be quickly dated, and many fall into some species of unbelief.
 - (2) Much better for the layman are devotional commentaries.
 - b) A good commentary has the same value as a good sermon.
 - i) It is not infallible, yet it is useful as a source of godly instruction on what the Bible means and how it should apply to our lives.
 - ii) Most good commentaries were written by preachers, and most began as sermons.
- 10) Bible Handbooks.

- a) This is a quick reference book arranged according to the order of books in the Bible.
 - i) It is a combination of encyclopedia and concordance all in one place and can be used as a quick reference as you are reading through a book.
 - ii) It includes maps, charts and other useful information all in one place.
- b) Two most popular handbooks are:
 - i) Halley's Bible Handbook.
 - ii) Unger's Bible Handbook.

LESSON FIVE

Principles for Understanding the Bible

Introduction

- 1) 2 Timothy 3:16-17. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. KJV
 - a) When we study the Scriptures, we should always be careful to seek the true meaning of the words that were inspired by God.
 - b) No study of the Scriptures should be designed to support time-honored church doctrine or to “prove” a personal interpretation of the Scriptures.
- 2) Isaiah 28:9-10. 9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. 10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: KJV
 - a) The Book of Isaiah tells us that in order to understand doctrine, we must study the Scriptures line upon line and precept upon precept.
 - b) This is how we should study every doctrinal question.
- 3) 2 Timothy 2:15. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. KJV
- 4) 2 Peter 1:20-21. 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 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. KJV
 - a) Many teachers are twisting the Scriptures and deceitfully using their own personal interpretations in order to persuade others to believe their false doctrines.
 - b) To support their teachings, they may quote numerous Scripture.
 - c) Teachings may sound very authoritative, but they may be using the Word of God deceitfully.
- 5) 1 Thessalonians 5:21. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. KJV
 - a) Acts 17:11. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. KJV
 - b) The Bereans were diligently studying the Scriptures to prove whether or not the things they had heard were true.
- 6) John 14:26. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. KJV.
 - a) God’s Truth is not understood through human wisdom and rationale.
 - b) It is only through the Spirit of God that the Word of God can be understood.

Some Principles of Bible Study

- 1) Approach the study of the Scriptures with great reverence and awe.
- 2) Study the Bible as a whole.
 - a) Use cross-references to see what else God has to say about a particular subject.
 - b) Consider related passages together before drawing conclusions.
- 3) Consider carefully the context of the passage.
 - a) We must look carefully at the verses that precede and that follow the verse we are studying.
 - b) When we take a passage “out of context,” we are in danger of misinterpreting it.
 - c) A passage can often be taken more than one way—until we look closely at the larger picture, perhaps the entire chapter or even the entire book.
 - i) Rev 4:1-“Come up hither” is not a reference to the rapture of the Church.
 - ii) A careful reading of the context makes it clear that the plain meaning is that these words are addressed specifically to John regarding the revelations he was about to be given.
- 4) Make sure you understand the words and sentences.
 - a) Check out different translations, lexicons, and commentaries to help.
 - b) The definition of the English words may be different from the definition of the Hebrew or Greek words.
- 5) Be aware of the difference between “exegesis” and “eisogesis.”
 - a) Exegesis is a Greek word meaning, “To draw out of.”
 - i) When we do this, we are doing good Bible study.
 - ii) We are attempting to “draw out” the meaning of the passage.
 - b) “Eisogesis” is a Greek word meaning, “To draw into.”
 - i) When we do this we are not doing good Bible study.
 - ii) We are reading our own ideas into God’s Word, rather than “drawing out” His meaning.
 - c) Examples.
 - i) Matthew 19:14.
 - (1) “But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”
 - (2) This verse has been used to validate infant baptism, but it really says nothing about infant baptism.
 - ii) Tower of Babel.
 - (1) Rabbis used to teach that the reason God confounded the tongues at the tower of Babel is that the men were falling off the tower and dying and that the builders were mourning more over the lost bricks than the dying men.
 - (2) To teach that we should care more about people than things is a good lesson, but it is not found in Genesis 11.
- 6) Unless there is a strong Biblical reason otherwise (for example, other Bible passages that clarify the subject), take Scripture at face value.
 - a) Allegorizing the Bible was once very popular.
 - i) Dangerous to draw “spiritual” conclusions that are not found there.
 - ii) The danger of allegorizing does not mean that the Bible does not contain “typology.”
 - iii) In typology there is a strong connection with Bible history.

- iv) The New Testament makes it clear that some Old Testament people events “foreshadow” or “prefigure” or “prefigure” or are “types” of New Testament teaching.
 - v) Typology taken to an extreme can become allegory to the extent that we are reading our creative, but very human, ideas into the passage.
- 7) Recognize the difference between the meaning of a passage and an application of that passage.
 - a) Hebrews 10:25 says, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.”
 - b) A good application of that verse would be to come to Sunday School.
 - c) But the verse itself does not specify a time or place or frequency.
 - d) The meaning of the verse is simply that Christians must not stop gathering together with other Christians.
 - 8) Historical events recorded in the Bible are not the same as Biblical commands directed to us.
 - a) “Go wash in Jordan seven times” (2 Kings 5:10) does not mean that we are to make a pilgrimage to the Jordan River.
 - b) The fact that some of the Old Testament patriarchs practiced polygamy does not mean God approves it.
 - 9) Remember that some passages are obviously meant to be taken as figurative language.
 - a) “You are the salt of the earth,” is not saying you are sodium chloride.
 - b) Judges 7:12 says of the Midianites and Amalekites that “their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude” doesn’t necessarily conclude that there were literally billions of them.
 - 10) There are times when the spirit of a passage must be interpreted in light of the culture.
 - a) Romans 16:16-“Greet one another with a “holy kiss.”
 - b) Emphasis not on the kiss, but on the holy greeting. In other cultures the greeting is a handshake, bow, smile, friendly words, or hug.
 - 11) Always pray for wisdom and understanding when studying a Bible passage but do not assume that every thought you have is a correct understanding of the passage.
 - a) It takes time and careful study to understand some passages.
 - i) Acts 17:11-“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”
 - ii) 1 Thessalonians 5:21—“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”
 - b) When we wish to communicate that the Bible teaches a principle or truth, we should use the passage that actually teaches that truth.
 - c) To try to use a passage that doesn’t teach that truth is to misuse the Scripture and to open the door to the possibility of using a passage to try to teach something that the Bible does not teach at all.
 - 12) Be humble and keep a teachable spirit.
 - a) We must stand on what we believe to be true, but be aware that we may someday learn that we were sincerely wrong.
 - b) Don’t confuse the sins of arrogance and spiritual pride and self-righteousness with the virtue of standing firm on God’s Word.
 - i) If sincere Christians disagree about what the Bible says on certain issues, it is doubly unwise to be arrogant about the position we happen to hold.
 - ii) If we are truly humble, we will not “blast away” those who disagree with us.

Principles of Biblical Interpretation

- 1) The primary rule of Biblical interpretation is, “We must interpret any scripture by other scriptures.”
 - a) Should refer to other verses about the same subject to get a more complete picture of that subject.
 - b) The science of interpretation is called hermeneutics from the Greek word *hermeneuo*, which means “to interpret or explain.”
- 2) Establish a fact or truth in the mouth of two or three witnesses in referring to Scripture.
 - a) Should be at least two or three scriptures verifying a doctrine, or principle.
 - i) Deuteronomy 17:6. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. KJV
 - ii) Deuteronomy 19:15. One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. KJV
 - iii) Matthew 18:16. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. KJV
 - iv) 2 Corinthians 13:1. This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. KJV
 - v) 1 Timothy 5:19. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. KJV
 - vi) Hebrews 10:28. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: KJV
 - b) This is where a concordance can be helpful.
- 3) The law of “first mention.”
 - a) In testing Scripture by Scripture, it is important to look for the place in the Bible that a subject, attitude, or principle is mentioned for the first time and see what it meant there.
 - b) Again, this requires looking up words or phrases in a concordance.
- 4) Scripture should always be accepted literally unless it is clearly figurative or symbolic.
 - a) “Spiritualizing” too much can dilute God’s Word.
 - b) “Literalizing” too much can bring bondage and legalism.
 - c) The Holy Spirit is our guide.
 - d) For example, in Revelation 12:4, Satan is described as being cast out of Heaven with a third part of the “stars” going with him.
 - i) To understand what this means, we apply the “law of first mention.”
 - ii) We use the first mention in Revelation, instead of the first mention in Genesis, because Revelation is full of symbolic pictures of literal things, while Genesis is a book describing literal events.
 - iii) Now we understand the interpretation that one-third of the *stars* means “angels,” and we understand it was angels who were cast out of Heaven with Lucifer (the dragon) to the earth.
 - e) If you are new to Bible study, the best way to read it is at face value, without trying to determine all the layers of meaning that may be hidden there.
 - i) As we continue to seek God, He will reveal those layers of meaning as we are ready to receive them.

- ii) Human wisdom can never ferret them out.
- 5) We should pray and ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Word to us before beginning any study.
 - a) Then we can understand by revelation.
 - b) The Lord can speak a direct message to us from His Word, which is the application of His Word to our spirits.
 - c) Don't use the Bible as a "personal fortune teller."
 - i) Some people open the Bible to a page, then point to a verse with their eyes closed, and use that for guidance and direction.
 - ii) The best way to get answers from god is to spend time daily in prayer and studying the Word; then in our times of study, the Holy Spirit will make the Bible alive to us by highlighting a certain verse, passage, or topic that will speak to us.
- 6) Trust God's Word above all else.
 - a) Believe fully in the integrity of God's Word and give it first place.
 - b) It takes trust that God wants to open up His Word to you, and faithfulness in studying it, and waiting on Him to gain true understanding and knowledge.
 - c) Proverbs 3:5. Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. KJV

Rules for Profitable Bible Studies

- 1) If possible have a regular, private place for your Bible studies.
- 2) Before each study ask God to give you a spirit of humility while reading His word and guide your heart to comprehending, accepting and practicing His precious truth.
- 3) Start with Bible verses that are easy to understand when studying on a particular topic. Then, use these scriptures to understand harder, vaguer passages of God's word.
- 4) Let the Bible interpret and prove the Bible.
 - a) Don't look for what you want to prove.
 - b) Look for what the Bible actually proves.
- 5) Seek to understand the general context of a particular Bible verse by reading the verses and chapters just before and after it.
 - a) Does your understanding of a Bible passage harmonize with the rest of Scripture?
 - b) The Bible does not contradict itself.
- 6) Study the original language (Hebrew or Greek) words and their meaning(s) behind a Bible verse. A particular study aid like *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* can be helpful but should not be used exclusively to discover and prove what the Bible teaches.
- 7) Ask, what does the scripture you are studying clearly say?
- 8) Ask, what does the scripture you are studying not say?
- 9) Ask, to whom was the Bible book containing the scripture you are studying written to?
 - a) Who wrote the book?
 - b) Who is speaking the scripture(s) in question?
- 10) Seek to understand the general time frame in history when the Bible verses you are studying was written.
- 11) Remember that the Bible at times uses parables, allegories, symbols, poetry, metaphors and other figures of speech and literary techniques to reveal God's truth.

- 12) Don't bring your own personal assumptions and preconceived notions into your understanding or conclusions.
- 13) Base your study on scriptural knowledge that you already understand. What do you know up to this point in time?
- 14) Do not form conclusions based on partial facts or insufficient information, or the opinions and speculations of others.
- 15) Remember that your or anyone else's convictions, regardless of how strong they may be, don't necessarily count. God's word is your ultimate standard and guide.

Conclusion

In conclusion, then, principles for interpreting the Bible are:

1. *Let Scripture interpret Scripture.*
2. *Prove* an interpretation in the mouth of two or three witnesses.
3. Find the first time a certain subject is mentioned in Scripture and study that for its fuller meaning (*the law of first mention*).
4. *Take the Bible literally wherever possible and as it makes sense.* Consider it from the standpoint of God's power, ability, and character.
5. *Gain familiarity with the Bible as a whole.* In other words, get to know the "forest," not just what some individual "trees" look like.
6. *Do not handle the Word of God deceitfully (2 Corinthians 4:2).* In other words, we should not make it say just what we want it to or what someone else has told us it says. And, do not use it as "fortune telling."

LESSON SIX

Methods of Studying the Bible

Introduction

A few suggestions if you haven't studied the Bible before:

- 1) Start with a short New Testament book.
 - a) It will give you a sense of accomplishment and encouragement to be able to finish a book within a relatively short period of time.
 - b) Then you can go on to the longer books.
- 2) Reads through the whole book a few times to get the big picture.
- 3) Start with chapter 1 and work through the book in order.
 - a) It is helpful to read from a Bible that breaks the chapter into paragraphs.
 - b) This makes it easy for you to do your daily study on just one or two of those paragraphs.

Get the Facts

- 1) Who?
 - a) Who is doing the speaking or acting?
 - b) Who is the recipient of the speech or action?
 - c) Who is causing the problem?
- 2) What?
 - a) What are the circumstances surrounding this passage?
 - b) What is being said?
 - c) What is being done?
 - d) What is causing the action?
 - e) What is the reason for the parable or action?
- 3) When.
 - a) What time of year is this taking place?
 - b) What time of day is it?
 - c) What time of life are we looking at?
 - d) When is it predicted to happen?
 - e) When did this happen?
 - f) When can we expect it?
- 4) Where
 - a) Where does this take place?
 - b) Where is he going?
 - c) Where are they coming from?
 - d) Where do they need to go?
 - e) Where can we find it?
- 5) Why
 - a) Why is this being spoken?
 - b) Why did he do this?

- c) Why do they need it?
- d) Why is this story here?
- 6) How.
- 7) How will this be accomplished?
- 8) How will they know the truth?
- 9) How can we find it?
- 10) How do we go about obeying this?

Topical Study

- 1) Use this method when you are confronted with a problem or dilemma and desire to know what God has to say about it.
 - a) Use this form of study to get my own answers to topics, problems, and issues.
 - b) God gives us principles to live by which can guide us at a particular crossroad.
 - c) This takes time and thoroughness, but the results are worth it.
- 2) Tools needed.
 - a) A study Bible.
 - b) An exhaustive concordance
 - c) A topical Bible
 - d) A notebook.
- 3) Steps of Topical Study.
 - a) Define your topic.
 - i) Write down all related words and phrases you can think of that defines the topic of interest.
 - ii) If you want to study healing, you might also write down health, disease, sickness, suffering, physical healing, spiritual healing, prevention, and medicine.
 - b) Collect the Bible references.
 - i) This is where you use your topical Bible, and concordance. Write down the topic verse in the first column.
 - ii) In a second column list any verses referred by the topic verse.
 - (1) The reference verses will amplify and highlight some aspect of your topic verse
 - (2) If a reference verse is one that directly applies to your topic then include it under column one and write out the verse.
 - iii) In a third column list any verses referred by the topic verse.
 - (1) The reference verses will amplify and highlight some aspect of your topic verse.
 - (2) If a reference verse is one that directly applies to your topic then include it under column one and write out the verse.
 - iv) In the fourth column list the subtopic of every verse or phrase in the verse.
 - (1) As you look at a verse or phrase of a verse, ask yourself what question does it answer?
 - (2) If the verse answers two or three different questions then list that verse 2 or 3 times.

| Topic Verse | Verse written out in Phrases | Reference Verse | Subtopic |
|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
|-------------|------------------------------|-----------------|----------|

- c) Group ideas together.
 - i) As you work through the verses of your topic you'll start to see similarities and verses that complement each other.
 - ii) Group these together.
- d) Form an outline.
- e) Draw your conclusions. Write out the principles you have gleaned about the topic

Exegetical Bible Study Methods

- 1) Definition.
 - a) *Exegesis* or the *Deductive Approach* to Bible study simply means "to lead out" or "draw out," extracting objectively, in a systematic study, what a text is actually saying to its original intended readers in their language, culture, and setting before we can discover what it means.
 - i) It is finding the true meaning of the passages of Scripture from word meanings and context.
 - ii) It is a tool and a discipline which enables us to get more out of what we read, so we can see a text in its background and then gain a better grasp of it by knowing the intended meaning, rather than just what we want it to mean.
 - iii) It is an examiner and a detective that interviews a passage in a comprehensive, extensive, and serious manner.
 - b) This enables a better understanding of the Bible that helps draw out more of the meaning for our personal understanding and spiritual growth.
 - c) The exegetical method does not mean going to a passage with a presupposition, idea, or agenda and looking for it; sometimes we may do this in a topical study.
 - i) Best to go to a scripture to look for what it actually says and not what we want to find.
 - ii) We never want to try to get from the passage what is not there and then think we have found something.
 - d) Exegetical Bible study is learning how to systematically analyze and apply the Bible for all its worth with our best efforts.
- 2) Three crucial areas or rules of exegesis that we have to know before we can interpret correctly.
 - a) We must be aware of our nature, as we are filled with sin and desires that do not match up to His Word.
 - b) We must be aware of the nature of Scripture and the Divine Author's intent.
 - c) The Bible was written by the words of people through their cultures, languages, times, and histories, while at the same time all divinely inspired.
- 3) The Exegetical Method.
 - a) Step 1: Select and identify your passage.
 - i) Start by browsing the whole book to see the whole picture of what is going on.
 - ii) Then carefully read the chapter of your passage, then, reread it very carefully and slowly in a good translation.
 - iii) Keep in mind the inductive question, "what does this passage say?"
 - iv) Remember to be in a state of prayer and humbleness before the Father.
 - b) Step 2: Explore the general meaning of the passage.

- i) The primary goal of interpretation is to find the “plain meaning” of the Bible so it can be used in your life, church, and community.
 - ii) What is it? Who is the author? What is the intent, the language, the genre?
 - iii) What does the passage say? What does the general overview of the passage really say?
 - iv) Good exegesis means we write down what God is actually saying not what we want Him to say.
- c) Step 3: Explore the specific meaning of the passage.
- i) How is the passage arranged and set up?
 - ii) What is the sentence structure?
 - (1) The sequence of thought?
 - (2) What is the subordination (how things are supported) and logic, and how are they presented?
 - iii) What are the contexts and/or background?
- d) Step 4: Explore the context.
- i) The historical context: this is about the time period and culture of the people who God used to write it and the people they are writing too.
 - ii) The literary context: This is the type of literature *genres* that refer to the meaning of the words, the Nouns, Verbs, and Adjectives—both the meaning of the word(s) itself as well as what they mean in their context of sentence structure and surrounding passages.
 - iii) What is the *genre* context. Can help to interpret the meaning of the text and whether it is literal or figurative.
 - (1) History or Narrative. There are stories and the epics and include Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Jonah, and Acts.
 - (2) Law: These are the instructions and precepts of God given to us through Moses, such as Leviticus and Deuteronomy.
 - (3) Wisdom: These are the literature of maxims and sayings such as Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.
 - (4) Poetry: These are the prose and rhymes such as Psalms, Song of Solomon, and Lamentations.
 - (5) Prophecy: These include both major and minor prophets.
 - (6) Apocalyptic: These are combinations of narrative and prose written in vivid imagery and poetic phrases that are intended to exaggerate for a purpose such as Daniel and most of Revelation.
 - (7) Parable: These are sayings of Jesus that are narrative and instructional, contained in the Gospels.
 - (8) Epistle: These are the letters written to a specific audience that are practical for us today such as Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, Peter, John, and the first three chapters of Revelation.
 - (9) Romance: These are narrative, written also as love stories, such as Ruth and Song of Solomon.
- e) Step 5: Explore the contents.

- i) In this step, you will want to carefully examine all the parts of the passage, define the key words, and compare the passage to other similar ones.
- ii) You have done the overview, now it is time for the specifics.
- iii) What are the different topics that are involved and how do they relate?
 - (1) How are they interrelated, illuminated, supported?
 - (2) What are the conclusions?
- iv) This is where the word studies come in.
 - (1) Look up key words in lexicons and Bible dictionaries to discover their meaning.
 - (2) One word from the Greek can have several sentences of meaning and give you more insights and precepts into a verse.
- v) Now write out in your own words, and in a meaningful and fruitful way, what the main words are.
- f) Step 6: Put it all together.
 - i) Smooth it out, add further explanations, questions, and illustrations, depending on how you will use it.
 - ii) Make sure you do not go by your own experience; rather, seek His experience.
- 4) Hermeneutical questions to ask yourself to help prepare your lesson:
 - a) How can I best take what the Bible is saying and bring it to the people I am teaching
 - b) The goal is to write and/or teach so your audience can understand and apply His precepts to help them learn about and then lead transformed lives.
 - c) Ask what do you want your audience to understand?
 - d) What can I do to make God's Word real in the lives of the people in my care?
 - e) Good *exegesis* means that the precepts we have dug out are to be applied and not set aside.

LESSON SEVEN

Bible Timelines

Introduction

- 1) One way to effectively study the Word of God is to have some frame for placing biblical events in a time sequence. This would be especially true in the Old Testament.
- 2) The Bible was written by many different writers over a span of 1600 years.
 - a) Some events were described by more than one author.
 - b) Some authors cover a much longer time period than others.
 - c) There were prophetic writers who lived in the same period of time; they were contemporaries.
- 3) Books are not necessarily in chronological order.
- 4) The first distinction needs to be made between the meanings of “BC” and “AD.”
 - a) Even though timelines are commonly established with the BC and AD method, that was not always the case.
 - i) Throughout much of history, each civilization had its own unique method of calculating and referring to historical time.
 - ii) In many places one described the “date” something happened as a certain number of years before or after some significant event such as a great earthquake, or the reign of a significant king.
 - b) Eventually, hundreds of years after the time Jesus lived on the earth, some scholars decided to attempt to use the year of His birth as the “focal” point of history.
 - i) All dates before the birth of Christ would be a certain number of years “BC” (Before Christ).
 - ii) All dates after His birth would be “AD”—which is an abbreviation of the Latin phrase *Anno Domini*
 - (1) *Anno* refers to the concept of year, and is the root of such English words as “annual” and “anniversary.”
 - (2) The word “*Domini*” refers to the concept of “Lord” and shows up as a source for such English words as “dominate” (“lord it over”) and “dominion” (lands ruled by a lord).
 - (3) Thus *Anno Domini* means “The Year of Our Lord,” referring to the Lordship of Jesus.
 - iii) Throughout the next several hundred years, this way of referring to dates was eventually accepted by the whole world in international commerce—even by those nations who did not profess any belief in Jesus.
 - (1) Some, such as Israel, still use their own dating system within their own society, but the common system is used when dealing between nations.
 - (2) At the time that a number of scholars agreed to accept this system, there were no detailed, totally reliable records on hand of the actual number of years in the past that the birth of Jesus had taken place.
 - (3) Now, the most common date suggested by scholars for the birth of Jesus is 4 BC.

- (4) Since the current system has been in place for so many hundreds of years, no one has ever seriously suggested that the whole world go back and “adjust” all their calendars, nor change the dating of future events.
- 5) There is one other set of abbreviations used in dating sometimes found in writings on Biblical History, particularly in Jewish sources—BCE.
 - a) In recent years, many groups which have reacted unfavorably to the notion that they should use what is, after all, a “Christian” definition of time.
 - b) This would include those of other “world religions” such as Judaism and Islam, and those who are committed atheists.
 - c) Now may see the terms “BCE” and “CE.”
 - i) The CE stands for “Common Era,” meaning “commonly used system” of dating.
 - ii) The BCE stands for “Before the Common Era.”
 - 6) Basic concepts on Bible chronology which is helpful to know are:
 - a) All of the historical events chronicled in the Bible occurred either before the birth of Jesus or within 100 years after His birth.
 - b) The further back in history one goes before the birth of Jesus, the more disagreement historians have on specific dates for events.
 - 7) The Bible itself does not have an accurate “internal dating system,” in which all events are described in relation to years before or after some key event.
 - a) In order to construct a chronology of Biblical events, historians must rely on external historical records from such things as ancient monuments, records kept by writers in other civilizations, and astronomical facts such as the dates of known eclipses, and compare those factors to clues in the Bible.
 - b) These are reasons why it is not necessary to remember exact dates of Bible events.
 - c) What is less likely to be in dispute in most cases is the sequence of events.
 - 8) A basic premise of the “time line” is by:
 - a) Memorizing the general dates related to the lives of only five significant Biblical characters, each of whom is approximately 500 years apart.
 - b) By this method, you can establish a frame of reference within which to order the general sequence of the lives of all other Biblical characters, and all Biblical events.
 - c) These five characters are:
 - i) Abraham, 2000 BC.
 - ii) Moses, 1500 BC.
 - iii) David, 1000 BC.
 - iv) Daniel, 500 BC.
 - v) Jesus, 4 BC.
 - d) It would be very helpful to memorize these five men and their dates of existence.

Abraham

- 1) The Bible isn’t intended to be a comprehensive history of the existence of Mankind on the earth.
 - a) It is rather in particular a chronicle of the relationship of one man’s family with the Creator of the Universe.
 - b) It is the record of that Creator’s intention to bless all of Mankind through the descendants of that man.

- c) People introduced in the early chapters of Genesis not primarily for the details of their own history, but as preludes to the history of the family of that one man and his descendants.
- d) That one man is Abraham.
- 2) Before the time of Abraham, the scriptures are somewhat vague on when certain events happened.
 - a) *Halley's Bible Handbook* gives an approximate date for the creation of Adam of about 4,000 BC.
 - b) Flood of Noah's time may have happened about 1,500 years later, in about 2,500 BC.
 - c) Thus, the time of Abraham is approximately 500 years after the Flood.
- 3) Once you have committed to memory that Abraham's lifetime centers generally around the time period of 2000 BC, you can pinpoint the general time frame of a number of Biblical events and characters.
 - a) Abraham is the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob.
 - b) Jacob's name is changed to "Israel," who becomes the father of twelve sons, one of whom is Joseph, who became a ruler in Egypt.
 - c) About 400 years of bondage ensues.
- 4) The next major person to consider is Moses, who lived around the time of 1,500 BC.

Moses

- 1) Moses is one of the most significant individuals in the history of Israel.
 - a) He is the deliverer from Egypt.
 - b) He receives the law, which is the beginning of the nation of Israel.
- 2) Moses' era was approximately 1500 BC.
 - a) When you come across any Bible story which clearly takes place before the time of Moses, but after the birth of Abraham, you will be able to clarify the relative position in Bible history for such a story.
 - i) Stories such as those of Joseph and the coat of many colors.
 - ii) The story of the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, where Abraham's nephew Lot lived.
 - b) Any of the events of the Exodus such as the parting of the Red Sea, the giving of the Ten Commandments, the wandering in the wilderness for forty years of the people of Israel, and the conquering of the Promised Land will be shortly after 1500 BC.
 - c) All of the events in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua are in this time frame.
 - d) The lifetimes of individuals such as Aaron, Moses, Miriam, and Joshua will also be included.

David

- 1) After the Israelites entered the Promise Land, and for the next 400 or so years, they had no king over them.
 - a) This was the period of the "judges," described in the book of Judges and Ruth.
 - b) Any stories about these individuals will also be in the time period between 1500 BC and 1000 BC.

- c) Included in these stories would be the lives of Samson, Deborah, Ruth, and Gideon.
- 2) At the end of the judges came the rise of the monarchy in Israel.
 - a) The people of the land were uncomfortable not having a king over them as the nations around them had.
 - b) Shortly before 1000 BC, the prophet Samuel spoke to the nation on behalf of God.
- 3) The first king chosen by God to rule in Israel was Saul.
 - a) When Saul became corrupt, God cut off the monarchy from his family, and gave it to David and his descendants.
 - b) It is the Davidic line which leads directly to Jesus of Nazareth, who would be the King of Kings.
- 4) Once you commit this date to memory, you will be able to pinpoint the relative time of many other events and Bible characters.
 - a) The stories of David's life, including the battle with Goliath and the incident with Bathsheba will be around this time.
 - i) Any events involving later kings of Israel will be after 1000 BC, including Solomon and the building of the Temple.
 - ii) The period of David and Solomon's reign is the only time that all of the tribes of Israel were united under one king.
 - iii) Almost immediately after Solomon's death, there is a struggle over who will reign in his place, and the kingdom becomes divided.
 - (1) The tribes of Judah and Benjamin comprise what becomes known as the "House of Judah."
 - (2) The rest of the tribes become known as the "House of Israel."
 - b) Most of the events of the books of I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, and I and II Chronicles will be spread out between 1000 BC and the next point on our time-line, 500 BC.
- 5) The book of Psalms (written in large part by David), and the book of Proverbs (written in large part by Solomon) belong primarily to the early part of this period.
- 6) Biblical prophets active during this period include Isaiah, Elijah, and Jonah, among many others.
- 7) Around the latter part of the 700s BC, the northern kingdom of Israel was subjugated in war by the Assyrian empire, most of its population was taken captive and dispersed from the land of Israel, and it ceased to exist as a political entity from then on in history.
- 8) Almost 100 years later, the southern kingdom of Judah was subjugated in war by the Babylonian empire.
- 9) It is during this period of captivity in Babylon that the next individual on our time-line, the prophet Daniel rises to prominence.
 - a) Actually, Daniel himself was taken captive as a young man from Jerusalem to Babylon in about the year 600 BC (possibly closer to 606 BC).
 - b) We don't intend the time-line dates to be exact, just general reference points which clarify the relative positions in time of the people and events of scripture.
 - c) Thus, the lifetime of David spanned both before and after 1000 BC; the lifetime of Daniel is just slightly before 500 BC.
 - d) Several very famous Bible stories are related to the life of Daniel.
 - i) Daniel and the lion's den.
 - ii) Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace.
 - iii) The incident of the writing on the wall.

Conclusion of Old Testament Writings and Characters

Before Abraham

Particularly memorable Bible stories leading up to the lifetime of Abraham include:

- *The Creation account*
- *The story of Cain murdering Abel*
- *The Flood*
- *The building of the Tower of Babel*

Thus you can commit to memory that all of these events would have occurred prior to **2000 BC**. Some significant Bible characters whose lifetime would have occurred during this period would include:

- *Adam and Eve*
- *Cain and Abel*
- *Methuselah* (the oldest man recorded in the Bible)
- *Noah* (and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth)
- *Nimrod*, the founder of ancient Babylon

Abraham

Significant Biblical stories around the lifetime of Abraham, and leading up to the time of Moses (**2000 - 1500 BC**) would include:

- *Abraham's calling by God to leave his home and go to Palestine*
- *The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah*

Significant Bible characters of this time period include:

- *Abraham and Sarah*
- *Isaac and Rebekah*
- *Jacob and Esau*
- *Jacobs wives, Rachel and Leah*
- *The sons of Jacob, from whom the tribes of Israel were named: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph, Benjamin*
- *The sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh*

Moses

Significant Biblical stories around the lifetime of Moses, and leading up to the time of David (1500 - 1000 BC) would include:

- *The Exodus*
- *The crossing of the Red Sea*
- *The giving of the Ten Commandments*
- *The wandering of Israel in the Wilderness*
- *The conquest of the Promised Land by Israel*
- *The Battle of Jericho*
- The stories of the "Judges"

Significant Bible characters of this time period include:

- *Moses, Aaron and Miriam*
- *Joshua and Caleb*
- *Samson and Delilah*
- *Deborah*
- *Ruth*

David

Significant Biblical stories around the lifetime of David, and leading up to the time of Daniel (1000 - 500 BC) would include:

- *David and Goliath*
- *David and Bathsheba*
- *ALL stories of Kings of Israel or Judah*

Significant Bible characters of this time period include:

- *The little boy--and later prophet--Samuel*
- *King Saul and his son Jonathan*
- *The Prophets Elijah and Elisha*
- *The Prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah*

Daniel

Significant Biblical stories around the lifetime of Daniel, and leading up to the time of Jesus (500BC - 1 A.D.) would include:

- *Daniel in the Lions Den*
- *The fiery furnace*
- *The handwriting on the wall*
- *The story of the Book of Esther*

Significant Bible characters of this time period include:

- Daniel's companions, *Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego* (Hebrew names, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah)
- *Nebuchadnezzar*
- *Belshazzar*
- *King Cyrus*

If you are able to commit even these few names and events to memory, in their relative time periods, you will find that you have quite a good start on really understanding Old Testament history!

The Times of Jesus

- 1) The last of the prophets recorded in the Bible was Malachi, who lived sometime around 400 BC.
- 2) From that time until the birth of Jesus, there were no more writings added to the collection of writings agreed by the Jews to be “inspired” by God, the collection now labeled “The Old Testament” in Christian Bibles.
- 3) The Life of Jesus
 - a) Born around 4 BC; died sometime in the late 20s or early 30s AD.
 - b) This period would represent the historical setting for the Gospels.
 - c) In fact, this general period of time represents the period of the entire New Testament.
- 4) New Testament Writings
 - a) The first book written that is now included in the New Testament was not written until some time in the late 40s or early 50s AD.
 - b) We have no historical documentation to know exactly when any of the books of the New Testament were written, but it is generally agreed that all were written before the end of the first century.
 - i) The Old Testament addresses, in topics, events that covered a span of over 4000 years, and was written over a span of at least 1000 years.
 - ii) In comparison, the New Testament covers events that took place during a period less than 100 years, and was written over a span of less than 50 years.

- 5) The material covered in the New Testament includes the life, death, resurrection, and teachings of Jesus, and the acts and teachings of His Apostles during a period of about 60 years after His death and resurrection.
- 6) When considering the relative time period of Jesus and anyone connected to Him in the New Testament, you need only remember that all of these events and characters can be grouped in the 100-year period from just before 4 BC up to 100 AD.

LESSON EIGHT

Bible Symbols, Measurements, and Numbers

Meaning of Symbolic Words in the Bible

| Symbolic Word(s) | Means or Represents | Example(s) in Bible |
|---------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Adultery | Idolatry | Jer. 3:8-9, 5:7; Ezek. 23:37 |
| Angel | Messenger, hence minister | Rev. 1:20, 2:1 |
| Arm | Power | Psa. 10:15; Ezek. 30:21 |
| Arrows | Affliction or judgment of God | Job 6:4; Psa. 38:2 |
| Babylon | Rome, heathenism, ruling power | Rev. 16:19, 17:3 |
| Beasts | Tyrannical kingdoms, wicked men | Dan. 7:17; I Cor. 15:32 |
| Black | Affliction – anguish | Job 30:30; Joel 2:6 |
| Blindness | Ignorance | Isa. 29:18; Rom. 11:25 |
| Blood | Slaughter – death | Isa. 34:3; Ezek. 32:6 |
| Brimstone | Desolation – torments | Job 18:15; Rev. 14:10 |
| Bride | Israel | Rev. 21:9 |
| Bridegroom | Christ, wedded to Israel | John 3:29 |
| Bulls | Violent or wicked persons | Psa. 22:12, 68:30 |
| Candlesticks | Churches | Rev. 1:20, 2:1 |
| Chariots | Heavenly hosts | Psa. 68:17; Isa. 66:15 |
| Crown | Victory – reward | James 1:12; Rev. 2:10 |
| Cup | Divine blessings/cursings | Psa. 23:5; Isa. 51:17 |
| Darkness | Misery – adversity – ignorance | Isa. 60:2; Amos 4:13 |
| Day | Indefinite time – prophetic year | Isa 34:8; Rev. 2:10; I Thes. 5:5 |
| Deaf | Lack of regard for divine things | Isa. 29:18, 42:18, 19 |
| Dogs | Heathen or impure persons – Persecutors | Matt. 15:26; Rev. 22:15; Psa. 22:16 |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Door | Opening or access to something | Acts 14:27; I Cor. 16:9 |
| Dragon | A tyrant – a Satanic force | Ezek. 29:3; Rev. 12:3, 9 |
| Drunkenness | Effects of divine judgments | Isa. 29:9 |
| Eagle | Conquering kings or nations | Ezek. 17:3, 7; Hos. 8:1 |
| Earth | The land – ground | Gen 7:10; Ex. 9:33; Num. 22:5, 11 |
| Earthquake | Calamities – Revolutions | Matt. 24:7; Rev. 6:12 |
| Eyes | Knowledge, understanding | Prov. 15:3; Rom. 11:10 |
| Face of God | Divine favor | Psa. 13:1; Dan. 9:17 |
| Fat | Abundance | Neh. 9:25; Jer. 5:28 |
| Fire | Judgments | Num. 11:1, 3; Isa. 42:25 |
| Forehead | Beliefs – Personal Character | Rev. 7:3, 13:16 |
| Forest | City – kingdom – polity | Isa. 10:18, 19; Ezek. 15:6 |
| Furnace | Affliction | Isa. 48:10; Jer. 11:4 |
| Garments | Outward appearance | Rev. 3:4, etc. |
| Gates | Security, center of civil concourse | Psa. 147:13; Deut. 16:18 |
| Girdle | Strength | Job 12:18; Isa. 22:21 |
| Goats | Wicked persons | Zech. 10:3; Matt. 25:33 |
| Gog and Magog | God's enemies | Ezek. 38:2, 39:11; Rev. 20:8 |
| Grass | The lower order, opposed to trees, the higher order | Isa. 37:27; Rev. 8:7 |
| Hail | Divine vengeance | Hag. 2:17; Rev. 11:19 |
| Hand, right | Protection – support | Psa. 18:35, 73:23 |
| Hand of the Lord | Divine influence or providence | Psa. 63:8; Ezek. 8:1 |
| Harvest | A time of destruction | Joel 3:13; Matt. 13:30 |
| Head | Rule or ruler | Eph. 1:22, etc. |
| Heavens | Atmosphere, solar system | Isa. 13:13; Hag. 2:6, 21 |
| Hedge | God's protecting providence | Job 1:10; Ezek. 13:5 |
| Helmet | Salvation of God's people | Isa. 59:17; Eph. 6:17 |
| Horse | War, military might | Zech. 9:10; Jer. 51:21 |
| Hunger and thirst | Spiritual desires | Matt. 5:6; Luke 1:53 |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Incense | Prayer | Mal. 1:11; Rev. 5:8 |
| Jerusalem | City of God | Heb. 12:22; Rev. 3:12 |
| Keys | Power and authority | Isa. 22:22; Rev. 1:18 |
| Lamp | A successor or offspring | I Kings 15:4; Psa. 132:17 |
| Light | Joy – prosperity | Psa. 97:11; Isa. 58:8 |
| Light | Knowledge by the word of God | Psa. 119:105; Isa. 8:20 |
| Milk | Great abundance | Ezek. 25:4; Joel 3:18 |
| Moon | A sign of coming events | Joel 2:31; Rev. 6:12 |
| Mountains | A state – nation – kingdom | Psa. 30:7; Isa. 2:2 |
| Mystery | Not a thing that is unintelligible, but never before made plain | Rom. 16:25, Rev. 17:5, 7 etc.; |
| Naked | In the sinful state of nature | Gen. 3:10-11; Rev. 3:17 |
| Night | Adversity – affliction – ignorance | Isa. 21:12; Rev. 21:25 |
| Oaks | Men of rank and power | Isa. 2:13; Zech. 11:2 |
| Oil | Abundance – fertility – joy | Psa. 23:5, 92:10 |
| Olive trees | Believers and ministers | Psa. 52:8; Rev. 11:2 |
| Palms | Victory | Psa. 92:12; Rev. 7:9 |
| Paradise | Kingdom of Heaven | Luke 23:43; Rev. 2:7 |
| Pit | Ensnaring devices of crafty men | Psa. 119:85; Ezek. 19:4 |
| Rain | Something refreshing, delightful | Psa. 68:9; Isa. 5:6 |
| Rock | God as a refuge and salvation | Psa. 18:2, 94:22, 95:1 |
| Rod/staff | Authority – correction | Psa. 2:9; Job 9:34, etc. |
| Salt | Purity – barrenness | Col. 4:6; Deut. 29:23 |
| Sea | Vast multitudes, an army | Jer. 51:42; Ezek. 26:3 |
| Seal/sealed | Security – secrecy | Song of Sol. 4:12; Isa. 29:11; Rev. 5, 6 |
| Serpent | A cunning and evil being | Gen. 3:1; II Cor. 11:3 |
| Sheep | Christ's disciples, followers | John 10:11, etc. |
| Shepherds | Rulers, civil or ecclesiastical | Nah. 3:18; Ezek. 34:2 |
| Shield | Defense – protection | Psa. 84:9; Eph. 6:16 |
| Sleep | Death | Dan. 12:2; I Thes. 4:14 |
| Sores | Spiritual maladies | Isa. 1:6; Rev. 16:11 |
| Star | A prince or ruler | Num. 24:17; Dan. 8:10 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Sun, moon, stars | Various state heads or rulers | Gen. 37:9; Joel 2:31 |
| Sword | War and slaughter | Isa. 34:5; Ezek. 21:3 |
| Tail | Subjection – degradation | Deut. 28:13, 44; Isa. 9:15 |
| Teeth | Cruelty | Psa. 3:7; Prov. 30:14 |
| Thorns | Desolation, troubles | Prov. 24:31; Hos. 2:6 |
| Throne | Kingdom – seat of government | Psa. 122:5; Dan. 7:9 |
| Travail | Anguish – anxiety | Jer. 4:31; Gal. 4:19 |
| Trees | The great and noble | Dan. 4:20-22 |
| Vine | God’s elect | Psa. 80:8, etc. |
| Vineyard | The house of Israel | Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 12:10 |
| Watchman | Prophet – Preacher | Ezek. 3:17; Isa. 62:6 |
| Waters | Afflictions – multitudes – ordinances | Psa. 69:1; Isa. 8:7, 55:1 |
| Week | Seven years | Dan. 9:24-26 |
| Wilderness | Afflicted state | John 1:23; Rev. 12:6 |
| Wind | Judgments – destructive war | Isa. 27:8; Jer. 51:1 |
| Wine | Spiritual blessings – Divine judgments | Isa. 25:6, 55:1; Psa. 60:3, etc. |
| Winepress | Slaughter | Isa. 63:3; Rev. 14:19 |
| Wings | Protection – assistance | Ex. 19:4; Psa. 17:8 |
| Wolves | Furious, ungodly persons | Isa. 11:6, 65:25 |
| Woman | Jerusalem, the Church | Ezek. 26:2, 3; Rev. 12:1 |
| Yoke | Labor – restraint | Deut. 28:48; Lam. 3:27; Matt. 11:29, 30 |

A GLOSSARY OF SYMBOLS USED IN REVELATION

-- A --

AIR: powers of spiritual control.

ALTAR: the condition of full dedication to God

AMEN: used as a noun to represent Jesus

ANGELS: messengers (spirit, human)

ARK: the new covenant arrangement under Christ and His Church

ARMAGEDDON: condition of ripeness for destruction

ASIA: mud, boggy; condition of being earthbound

-- B --

BABYLON: religious orders.

BARLEY: basic Christian character truths

BEAST: a group of men (institution or government) with unholy characteristics

BEASTS (FOUR): God's four attributes: wisdom, justice, love, and power. Should be translated "living ones."

BED: A place of affliction

BEHEADED: having given up personal will to do God's will

BELLY: effects of having taken in and assimilated information

BIRD (UNCLEAN): demon, selfish profiteer, or person pushing personal ideologies

BITTER: difficult and painful

BLACK: devoid of light (truth)

BLOOD: life or its value.

BOOK: a plan with its information, or a record. (See also "little book.")

BOOK OF LIFE: the record of those found worthy of life.

BOTTOMLESS PIT: condition of powerlessness or dormancy

BRIDE: The church of Christ; the spiritual 144,000.

BRIDEGROOM: Jesus

BRIDLES: a controlling element

-- C --

CALF: justice (because the calf was the principal animal sacrificed to satisfy justice)

CANDLESTICKS: (7) churches (see also "two candlesticks")

CHAIN: connection of truths

CITY: government (religious or secular)

CLOTHING/CLOTHED: status; one's standing before God

CLOUDS: company of people.

COURT: the condition of justification

CROWN: authority, ruling, victory

CUP: experiences

-- D --

DARKNESS: erroneous and superstitious teachings

DAY: a year; a period of time with certain characteristics

DAY AND NIGHT: in perpetuity

DEATH: loss of spiritual life; condition of being alive but not having received eternal life; loss of previous belief or condition; having sacrificed earthly life-rights

DENS: secret societies, hiding places, conditions of subterfuge

DEVIL: adversary

DEVOUR: see "eat"

DOGS: Gentiles; ultimately, anyone outside the domain of the Kingdom of God.

DOOR: opportunity; proximity

DRAGON: civil power or pagan Rome

DRAGON, SERPENT, DEVIL, SATAN (as 4-part name): civil power under control of personal devil

DUST: humanity; earthy.

DWELL ON THE EARTH: having strong ties to earthly or worldly interests (i.e., the establishment)

-- **E** --

EAGLE: wisdom; Bible

EARTH: society; the established way of doing things; the social order

EARTHQUAKE: revolution

EAT: absorb, appropriate, come into harmony with

EGYPT: type of Western, Christian world

ELDERS: Old Testament prophecies

EUPHRATES: people who support Babylon

EYES: foresight; wisdom

-- **F** --

FACE: favor or displeasure

FALSE PROPHET: those who teach error.

FAMINE: lack of truth

FIRE: destruction or judgment

FIRSTFRUITS: the Church and great multitude

FLOOD: great amount of truths

FOREHEAD: the sum total of character

FORNICATION: a Christian dabbling in affairs of this earth, thus unfaithful to Jesus, the espoused bridegroom

FOUNTAINS: the Church (true or false) as a source of religious truths

FOUR: the component parts; earth.

FOWLS: discontents

FROGS: unclean and boastful

FURNACE: heated experiences for proving or judging

-- G --

GARMENTS: justification

GIRDLE: representative of service or servitude

GLASS: purity; transparency; calmness

GOD: position of highest authority (including its counterfeits)

GOG & MAGOG: symbolism for a rebellious civil power at the end of the Age.

GOLD(EN): of Divine things

GOSPEL: the totality of God's Word; good news.

GRAPES: evil fruitage

GRASS: humanity in general, or a specific segment of it; when green is specified, right-heartedness or justification is implied

GREAT MULTITUDE: Christians who will receive a heavenly reward but not be part of the elect, or the manifestation of the body of Christ

GREEN: alive in spirit (in the sense of having inclinations toward righteousness); justified

-- H --

HAIL: hard truths; hidden truths

HAIR: wisdom, venerableness

HAND: works; cooperation; responsibility

HARP: harmonious set of doctrines

HARVEST: end period of the Gospel Age.

HEAD: place of ideas; forms of government

HEAT: adverse effects from enlightenment

HEAVEN: the realm of the Spirit or its leadership

HORNS: powers

HORSE: doctrine

HORSEMEN: followers or promoters of doctrines

HUNGER: lack of spiritual food

-- I --

IMAGE: replication

INCENSE: prayers, sacrifices

IRON: strength

ISLAND: small nation or republic

ISRAEL: the people of God (i.e., the true Church)

JERUSALEM: the Divine government by the Church

JEWS: Christians; believers

JEZEBEL: the false Church or false religious order.

JOHN: Church in the flesh

-- K --

KEYS: ability to control access

KILLED: discredited; having lost prior belief

KINGS OF THE EARTH: men of influence

KINGS OF THE EAST: probably the church who will shine as the sun

-- L --

LAMB: Jesus

LEAVES: professions

LEFT: position of disfavor

LIFE: justification; spiritual vitality

LIGHTNING: bright flashes of truth.

LINEN: the righteousness of saints.

LION: power; Jesus; king

LITTLE BOOK: Daniel

LIVING SOUL: Christian

LOCUSTS: devouring force as a plague to false Christianity

LORD'S DAY: the day of God's rule

-- M --

MAN (FACE OF): love

MANCHILD: The offspring of the woman (the Church)

MANNA (HIDDEN): immortality

MARK: indication of agreement or sympathy or cooperation

MARRIAGE: the uniting of Christ and His complete Church in the spirit realm

MEN: Christians, nominal or true

MERCHANTS: capitalists

MILLSTONE: a place which prepared spiritual food

MONTH: 30 years (a day for a year)

MOON: Old Testament writings; Jewish Law; lesser glory

MORNING STAR: Jesus

MOUNTAIN: large kingdom

MOUTH: message

MURDERERS: character assassins

-- N --

NAKED: without justification

NAME: sum of character; reputation

NATIONS, KINDREDS, PEOPLE(S), & TONGUES (4-name entity): the "sea" class; people without strong roots or commitments to the present order of things

NEW JERUSALEM: the spiritual government of the peaceable kingdom: Christ's Church glorified

NICOLAITANS: people who lord it over others

-- O --

ODOURS: prayers

OIL: Holy spirit

OLIVE: Holy spirit

OLIVE TREES: see "two olive trees"

-- P --

PALMS: symbol of salvation

PEARL: character developed through trials

PILLAR: stalwart; strength

PLACES: conditions

PLAGUES: truths to weaken false Christianity

PRIEST: a mediator between God and men

PRISON: death or restraint

PURPLE: royalty (real or assumed)

-- R --

RAIMENT: justification or righteousness

RAIN: blessings of truth

RAINBOW: covenant

RED: the blood

REED: standard of judgment

RIGHT: position of favor

RIVER(S): people who support something; source of refreshment

ROCKS: stable institutions

ROD: strong rule; a standard of measurement

-- S --

SACKCLOTH: mourning or humiliation

SAILORS: workmen

SAND OF THE SEA: those ultimately of the earthly kingdom

SAT: controlled

SATAN: the king of darkness

SCORPIONS: tormentings

SEA: restless humanity without strong ties to the social or religious order of things

SEA OF GLASS: pure water of God's truths for cleansing purposes

SEAL: events which reveal once they occur; guarantee

SEAT: center of power

SECOND DEATH: extinction from which there is no hope of return

SEVEN: a complete number with reference to spiritual things

SHIPMASTER: businessman

SHIPS: commerce

SICKLE: truths to do a separating work

SMOKE: remembrance, obscuration, or evidence

SODOM: type of Babylon

SONG: praise coming from harmonious truths

SORE: a perpetual, threatening problem

SOUL(S) (see "LIVING SOUL"): Saints who have died and await resurrection

SPIRITS: teachings

STARS: teachers or leaders (true or false)

STINGS: painful irritations due to unwanted truths

SUN: Gospel [improperly received, can burn: see 7:16; 16:8, 9]

SWORD: Bible; any cutting message

-- T --

TABERNACLE: dwelling place, i.e., presence; God's plan pictured by a building

TAIL: last part; a lying prophet (Isaiah 9:15)

TALENT: sum total of the Gospel

TEARS: disappointment

TEMPLE: God's plan, including the church itself, The Most Holy room of the Tabernacle

TEN: a complete number in reference to earthly or civil things; legality

THIEF: quietly secretive and unexpected

THIRST: craving for truth which leads to life

THRONE: office of rulership including judgment

THUNDER(INGS): results of lightning; i.e., resulting activities or philosophies or controversies

TIME: (chronos) 360 years; a period of certain characteristics

TORMENTED: vexed to the point of great discomfort

TREE: important individuals or small nations or institutions

TREE OF LIFE: promise of continued existence

TRIBES OF ISRAEL: divisions of the glorified Church

TRUMPET: important and timely message

TWO CANDLESTICKS: Old and New Testament writings-as GIVERS OF LIGHT

TWO OLIVE TREES: Old and New Testament writings-as functions of the HOLY SPIRIT

TWO PROPHETS: Old and New Testament writings-as TEACHERS

TWO WITNESSES: Old and New Testament writings-as TESTIFIERS (in advance) of God's purposes

-- V --

VIALS: mechanisms to deliver plaguing truths

VINE OF THE EARTH: Babylon, the fruitage of Satan's planting

| Biblical Unit | Equivalent to | Comments | Examples of Biblical Usage* |
|---------------|---------------|----------|-----------------------------|
|---------------|---------------|----------|-----------------------------|

ways

-- **W** --

WAR: a struggle or persecution

WATER: truth

WATERS: people/truths

WHITE: pure or justified

WHORE: a church which has compromised itself with politics and worldly involvement

WILDERNESS: condition of separation (in mind and attitude) from accepted standards of doctrine and practice

WINDS: powers of spiritual control

WINE: gospel doctrine; experiences coming out of teachings

WINEPRESS: the last trouble of the harvest which squeezes life out of false religion

WITNESSES: see "TWO WITNESSES"

WOMAN: Church (true or false); covenant

WORMWOOD: Arius, as poisonous and bitter to the apostasy

-- **Y** --

YEAR: 360 years (a day for a year)

Bible Weights and Measures

| Biblical Unit | Equivalent to | Comments | Examples of Biblical Usage* |
|---------------|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Bath | = 1 ephah = 22 liters metric = 5.8 U.S. Gallons | Used as a measurement of liquids. The equivalence values are based on the Old Testament use of <i>bath</i> as a liquid measurement. | 1Kings 7:26; Isaiah 5:10 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| Cubit | = 43-53 centimeters metric = 17 to 21 inches U.S. | Used as a measurement of length. Cubits are based on the distance between the tip of the middle finger and the elbow. | Matt. 6:27; Luke 12:25; Rev. 21:17 |
| Ephah (Epha) | = .62 bushels = 22 liters metric = 20 dry quarts U.S. | Used as a dry measure. | Ex. 16:36; 1Sam. 17:17; Zech. 5:6 |
| Farthing | = 2 mites = 1/4th of a cent U.S. | Used as a measure of money in the New Testament. | Matt. 5:26, 10:29 Mark 12:42 Luke 12:6 |
| Gerah | = 1/20th of a Shekel = .57 grams metric = .02 ounces U.S. | Used as a measure of weight and sum of money. It is the smallest weight and smallest piece of money used among Hebrews. | Lev. 27:25; Num. 3:47; Ex. 30:13 |
| Hin | = 1/6th of a Bath = 3.7 liters metric = 1 Gallon U.S. | Used as a measurement of liquids. | Ex. 29:40, 30:24 Num. 15:4 |

| Biblical Unit | Equivalent to | Comments | Examples of Biblical Usage* |
|------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Homer (Cor) | Used as Dry Measure = 10 Ephahs = 211 liters metric = 6 bushels U.S. Used as Liquid Measure = 10 Baths = 220 liters metric = 58 Gallons U.S. | Can be used as a dry or liquid measurement. | Ezek. 45:11, 13-14; |
| Mina | = 50 shekels = 1/60th talent = 567 grams metric = 1.26 pounds U.S. | Used as a measure of weight and sum of money. The word translated <i>pound</i> in Ezra 2:69 comes from Hebrew Mina . The word translated <i>maneh</i> in Ezekiel 45:12 also comes from Mina . | Ezra 2:69; Ezek. 45:12 |
| Mite | = 1/2 Roman quadran = 1/2 farthing = 1/8th of a cent U.S. | Used as a measure of money in the New Testament. The word translated mite in Luke's account of a poor widow giving two mites to the temple comes from the Greek word <i>lepton</i> . This Greek word means the smallest bronze or copper coin used. | Luke 12:59, 21:2 |
| Omer | = 1/10 ephah = 2.2 dry liters metric = 2 dry quarts U.S. | Used as a dry measure. The word <i>omer</i> is sometimes translated as sheaf — specifically, an amount of grain large enough to require bundling. An omer of barley was a traditional offering on the second day of Passover during the period of Temple sacrifice. | Ex. 16:22, 32-33, 36 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Penny | = 16 cents U.S. | Used as a measure of money. The word translated <i>pence</i> or <i>pennyworth</i> in the New Testament comes from the Greek word <i>denarion</i> which can also mean penny. | Matt. 18:28, 20:2, 9 Mark 6:37, 14:5 |
| Pound | <p>Used as Weight</p> <p>= 100 shekels</p> <p>Used as Money (New Testament)</p> <p>= 100 Roman denarii = 100 Greek drachmas = \$16.00 U.S.</p> | <p>Used as a measure of weight and money. When used in the Old Testament for weight, the word translated <i>pound</i> comes from the Hebrew word <i>maneh</i> or <i>mina</i>. When used in the New Testament for money, such as is the case in Jesus' parable of the pounds (Luke 19), the word translated <i>pounds</i> comes from the Greek word for <i>mina</i>.</p> | 1Kings 10:17; Ezra 2:29; Neh. 7:71-72; Luke 19:13, 16, 18 |
| Sabbath Day's Journey | = 2,000 cubits = .91 Kilometers metric = 1,000 yards U.S. | A Sabbath day's journey, according to Jewish tradition, was the maximum allowable distance one could travel on the Sabbath and not violate the law. | Acts 1:12; Joshua 3:4 |
| Shekel | = 20 gerahs = 11.4 grams metric = .4 ounces U.S. | Used as a measure of weight and money. | Gen. 23:15-16; Ex. 21:32, 30:13; |
| Span | = .5 cubits = 22.8 centimeters metric = 9 inches U.S. | Used as a measure of length. A span is the width of a spread out human hand from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the pinky finger. | Ex. 28:16; 1Sam. 17:4; Ezek. 43:13 |
| Talent | = 3,000 shekels = 60 minas = 34.3 kilograms metric = 75 U.S. pounds | Used as a measure of weight and money. If in today's money an ounce of Gold is worth \$400 U.S., one talent is worth \$480,000 . | Ex. 38:24-29 1Kings 9:14 Matt. 18:24, 25:15-18 Rev. 16:21 |

* Biblical references to weights and measures are based on the *King James Version* Bible translation (KJV).

Numbers in Scripture

| <u>Introduction</u> | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <u>One (1)</u> | <u>Nine (9)</u> | <u>Twenty Two (22)</u> | <u>Fifty One (51)</u> |
| <u>Two (2)</u> | <u>Ten (10)</u> | <u>Twenty Four (24)</u> | <u>Sixty Five (65)</u> |
| <u>Three (3)</u> | <u>Eleven (11)</u> | <u>Twenty Five (25)</u> | <u>Seventy (70)</u> |
| <u>Four (4)</u> | <u>Twelve (12)</u> | <u>Twenty Seven (27)</u> | <u>One Hundred Twenty (120)</u> |
| <u>Five (5)</u> | <u>Thirteen (13)</u> | <u>Twenty Eight (28)</u> | <u>One Hundred Fifty Three (153)</u> |
| <u>Six (6)</u> | <u>Fourteen (14)</u> | <u>Twenty Nine (29)</u> | <u>Two Hundred (200)</u> |
| <u>Six (6) and Seven (7)</u> | <u>Fifteen (15)</u> | <u>Thirty (30)</u> | <u>Three Hundred Ninety (390)</u> |
| <u>Seven (7)</u> | <u>Seventeen (17)</u> | <u>Thirty One (31)</u> | <u>Four Hundred (400)</u> |
| <u>Eight (8)</u> | <u>Nineteen (19)</u> | <u>Forty (40)</u> | <u>Four Hundred Thirty (430)</u> |
| <u>Eight (8) and Seven (7)</u> | <u>Twenty (20)</u> | <u>Forty Two (42)</u> | <u>Four Hundred Ninety (490)</u> |
| <u>Eight (8) and Thirteen (13)</u> | <u>Twenty One (21)</u> | <u>Fifty (50)</u> | <u>Six Hundred Sixty Six (666)</u> |