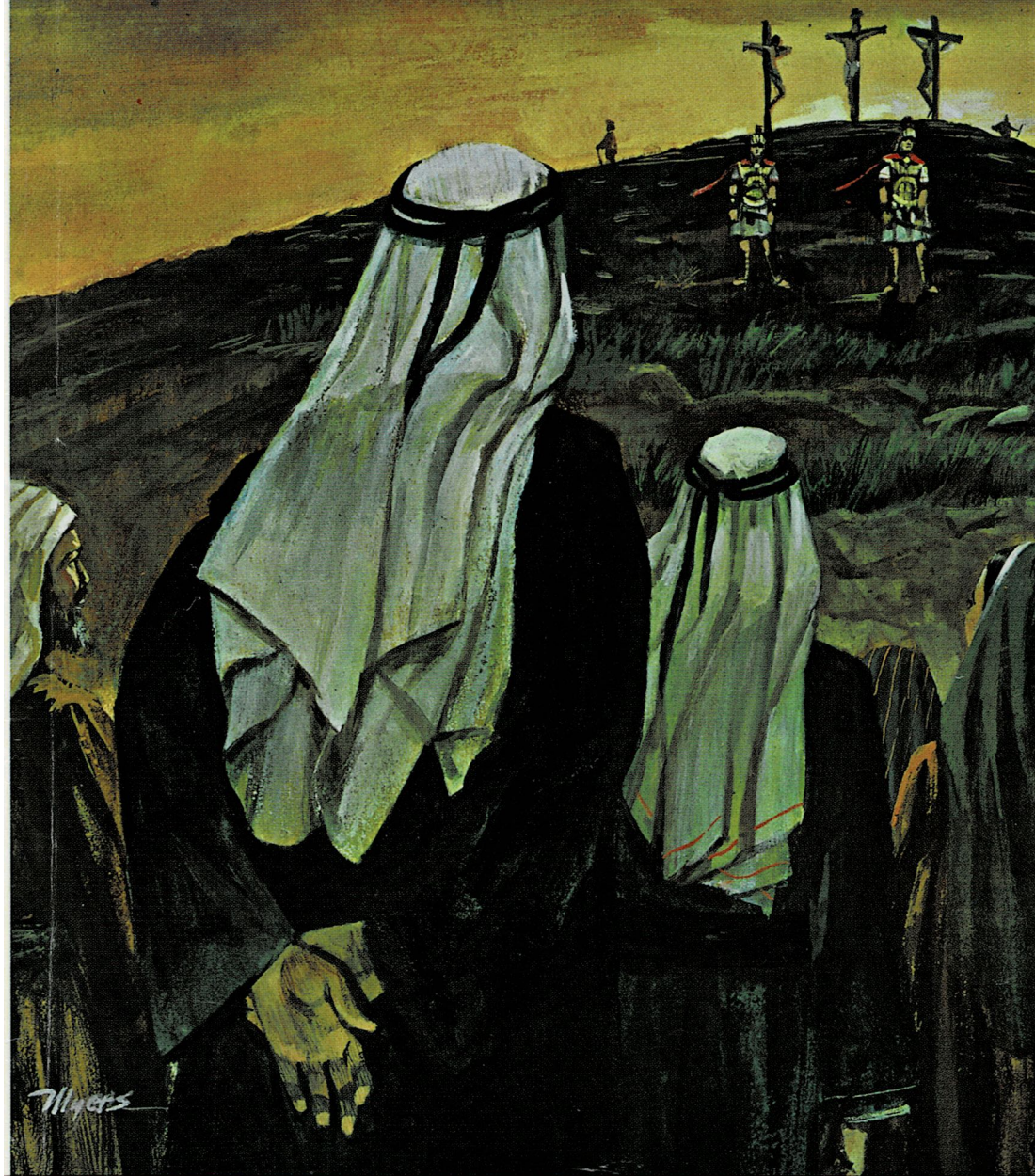


THE NEW TESTAMENT



LESSON TWO

BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

BY JOHN M. HURT



The Potter's Wheel

I took a piece of potter's clay
And gently fashioned it one day,
And as my fingers pressed it still,
It moved and yielded to my will.
I came again when days were past;
The bit of clay was hard at last;
The form I gave it still it bore,
But I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day;
And molded with my power and art,
A young child's soft and yielding heart.
I came again when days were gone;
It was a man I looked upon.
He still that first impression wore,
And I could change it never more.
(Author unknown)

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The New Testament

The second great division of the Bible, the New Testament, consists of twenty-seven books written by at least eight different authors. Just as the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, the New Testament was first written in Greek. The Bible has since been translated into over one-thousand different languages. The most popular English translation of the Bible, the King James Version, was first translated in 1611 A.D. by forty-seven of the world's greatest scholars. The second most widely used version is the Revised version. It was translated in 1885 by one hundred and one prominent scholars in America and England.

During the early part of the First Century, before the New Testament was completed, its teachings were imparted by the word-of-mouth instruction of the inspired writers and teachers. Before the end of the First Century, however, it was placed in a permanent written form for people of all generations. A list of the New Testament books, their authors and the approximate dates of their writing is shown in the accompanying table.

It should be remembered in studying this chart that most ancient dates are subject to controversy and may have varied somewhat from the best methods of calculation. Such dates and accompanying remarks, often found in the margins or headings of Bibles and at the end of each book, have been placed there by the translators or printers and are not a part of the inspired text. They have indeed, often been shown to be unreliable. The same is true of pictures of Bible characters, which are but artist's drawings based upon pure imagination. No true originals have ever been discovered.

It is interesting to note that Paul wrote at least thirteen epistles of the New Testament, (Romans-Philemon), far exceeding all other writers as far as number of books is concerned. He is also generally accepted as the author of Hebrews although it does not bear his name. If Hebrews is not attributed to Paul, however, Luke actually wrote nearly the same number of words but combined them into only two books, Luke and Acts.

BOOK	AUTHOR	DATE OF WRITING
1. Matthew	Matthew	50 A.D.
2. Mark	Mark	67-68 A.D.
3. Luke	Luke	58 A.D.
4. John	John	85-90 A.D.
5. Acts	Luke	61 A.D.
6. Romans	Paul	56 A.D.
7. 1 Corinthians	Paul	54 A.D.
8. 2 Corinthians	Paul	55 A.D.
9. Galatians	Paul	55-56 A.D.
10. Ephesians	Paul	60 A.D.
11. Philippians	Paul	61 A.D.
12. Colossians	Paul	60 A.D.
13. 1 Thessalonians	Paul	50-51 A.D.
14. 2 Thessalonians	Paul	51 A.D.
15. 1 Timothy	Paul	64-65 A.D.
16. 2 Timothy	Paul	67-68 A.D.
17. Titus	Paul	65 A.D.
18. Philemon	Paul	60 A.D.
19. Hebrews	Uncertain, probably Paul	67-68 A.D.
20. James	James	45-48 A.D.
21. 1 Peter	Peter	65 A.D.
22. 2 Peter	Peter	66-67 A.D.
23. 1 John	John	85-90 A.D.
24. 2 John	John	85-90 A.D.
25. 3 John	John	85-90 A.D.
26. Jude	Jude	75 A.D.
27. Revelation	John	95-96 A.D.

NEW TESTAMENT

Writers

Some of the most interesting biographies ever written are of the great men who were inspired of God to write the New Testament. Their trials, tribulations and suffering for the name of Christ, together with their final victory over the forces of evil serve as wonderful examples to God's people in all generations. Listed below are brief accounts of their lives.

MATTHEW—was a publican (or tax collector) who collected revenue from the Jews for the Roman Empire. Most such tax collectors in the days of Christ were greatly hated by the Jews because of their unfair methods. Matthew, a notable exception to this, was called by Christ to be an apostle (Matthew 9:9, Luke 6:13-16). He is also called "Levi" and "the son of Alphaeus" (Mark 2:14). He is believed to have been slain with a sword in Ethiopia because of his testimony of Christ. He wrote the Gospel bearing his name.

MARK—Author of the Book of Mark was a nephew of Barnabas and a fellow worker with Paul and Barnabas in the gospel. His full name was John Mark, and he is called by both names in the Bible (Acts 12:12).

LUKE—was a physician and a close friend and fellow worker with Paul. He wrote both "Luke" and "Acts." He was the only disciple known to remain with Paul during the last few months of the apostle's life (II Timothy 4:11).

JOHN—was an apostle and the brother of James. He wrote the four books bearing his name and "Revelation." He should not be confused with John the Baptist, (who did not write any part of the Bible), or with John Mark described above. He is the only apostle believed to have died a natural death.

PAUL—a highly educated man, was first called by his Hebrew name of "Saul" and was, before his conversion, a relentless persecutor of the church. Thinking Christianity to be contrary to the laws of God, he even went to foreign cities to persecute and deliver to death those who followed Christ (Acts 26:5-11). After his conversion (recorded in Acts 9, 22, and 26) he became an outstanding gospel preacher and the last apostle (I Corinthians 15:8-9; Galatians 1:1). Much of his work is recorded briefly in Acts 13-28. It is generally believed that he was beheaded in Rome in approximately 68 A.D.

JAMES—Three disciples are mentioned in the New Testament by this name (Mark 1:19; Galatians 1:19; Matthew 10:3). It is very difficult to determine with absolute certainty which of these was the author of the book of "James."

PETER—who was also called "Simon" and "Cephas," was the brother of Andrew. He was an apostle and a married man (Mark 1:30; I Corinthians 9:5). Peter was an uneducated fisherman when Jesus called him, but after Christ's resurrection, became a powerful gospel preacher and the author of First and Second Peter. Several events in his life are recorded in Acts 1-12. Peter is thought by some to have been crucified hanging upside down.

JUDE—Little is known for certain of Jude except that he was a devout disciple and author of the book of Jude. It is believed by some that he was one of the Lord's brothers (Matthew 13:55).



OUTLINE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

MATTHEW—JOHN: These four books (often called the gospels) begin with the birth of John the Baptist and end with the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Christ.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES: Acts is often called "the book of conversions" because it describes in detail how a number of people were actually converted in New Testament times. It also recounts the beginning and growth of the church.

ROMANS—JUDE: These twenty-one epistles (or letters) were written to Christians and discuss how to be faithful in living the Christian life.

REVELATION: This book of prophecy, written principally in figurative language, describes the spiritual battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. It cannot be properly understood on a purely literal basis.

INSPIRATION *of the Bible*

I N II Timothy 3:16 the Bible states, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God . . .". This great Bible truth means simply that the men who wrote the Bible were divinely guided by God in so doing. Although God used the hands of men to do the actual writing, He guided them in such a way that they could not make a mistake in the things which they wrote (I Thessalonians 2:13).

In both the Old and New Testaments the scriptures are clear that they are the divine words of God. In the Old Testament alone the terms "the Lord spake," "the Lord said" and "the Word of the Lord came" are used more than 3,800 times. The New Testament writers likewise spoke of their writings in such terms as "the commandments of the Lord" and "the Word of God." Listed below are a few of the more prominent scriptures which discuss Bible inspiration.

II 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."

I CORINTHIANS 14:37—" . . . the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

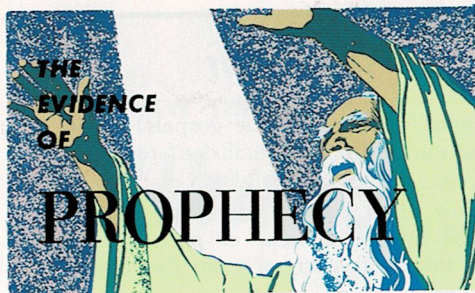
I PETER 1:25—"But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

II TIMOTHY 3:16-17—"All scripture is given by inspiration of God . . ."

GALATIANS 1:8—"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

As time permits, read also the following New Testament scriptures: I Thessalonians 2:13—Galatians 1:11-12—Luke 1:68-71—Matthew 10:19-20.

From these and many other similar scriptures it is evident that when a person disregards the teachings of the Bible he has turned his back upon God Himself.



One of the many great proofs that the Bible is the inspired word of God is found in fulfilled prophecy. Multitudes of Bible prophecies were written hundreds and even thousands of years before they were to happen and yet have come to pass in exactly the way the scriptures said they would. Secular history shows that the scriptures containing these prophecies were in existence centuries before they were fulfilled. These

great prophecies stand as strong evidence of the divine inspiration of the Bible. Space permits us to mention here only five brief examples:

DANIEL 2:—In approximately 600 B.C. Daniel foretold the coming of four great world empires. We now know them to have existed just as Daniel said they would. They were: the Babylonian Empire (of Daniel's day), the Medo-Persian Empire (538-331 B.C.), the Grecian Empire (331-168 B.C.) and the Roman Empire of the time of Christ. Many symbols of this prophecy were fulfilled in great detail.

ISAIAH 13:19-22—This prophecy was written in about 750 B.C. when Babylon was one of the greatest cities on earth, having walls 87 feet thick and 350 feet high. Babylon's famous Hanging Gardens was one of the seven wonders of the world. The prophet said it would be miserably destroyed and never inhabited again. Babylon was indeed destroyed and today lies in ruins. Only wild beasts now roam where great palaces once stood, while other less important cities which then existed have remained to this day. Similar prophecies have been fulfilled about the cities of Tyre (Ezekiel 26:3-8, 21) Samaria (Micah 1:6), and Ninevah (Zephaniah 2:13-15).

DEUTERONOMY 28:—Moses foretold the Jews in about 1400 B.C. that because of their future wickedness they would be overpowered by a nation from afar and scattered throughout the world. Parts of this prophecy were not fulfilled for almost 1500 years when the powerful Roman army swept across the land of Palestine and in 70 A.D. conquered and demolished the city of Jerusalem. This prophecy contains many details too lengthy to discuss in this lesson. History shows each of them to be correct in every way.

ISAIAH 53 and PSALMS 22:—These remarkable prophecies are such clear descriptions of the future crucifixion of Christ that one almost feels the authors were actually standing near the cross when they were written. David lived, however, over one thousand years before Christ and Isaiah in about 750 B.C. These writings also appear in translations of the Old Testament which are known to have been in use centuries before the coming of Christ. Many aspects of these prophecies are of such a nature that they could not have been fulfilled by accident or even by a human attempt to do so. They prophesied, for example, that Christ's death would be by crucifixion (Psalms 22:16); that his murderers would cast lots for his clothing (Psalms 22:18; Mark 15:24); that he would be buried in a rich man's grave (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60); that he would be scourged (Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 27:26) and numerous other items including some actual remarks that would be made. (Psalms 22:1,8; Matthew 27:43-46).

Scientific Foreknowledge

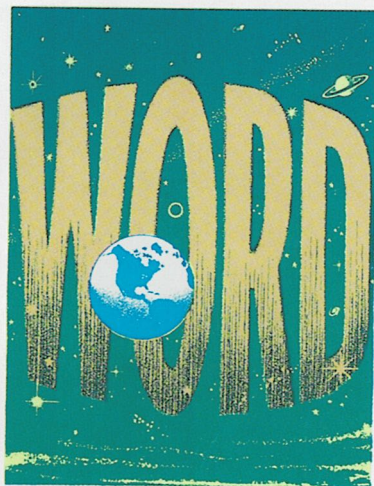
A second great evidence of divine inspiration is shown in the Bible's scientific foreknowledge. Many of the scientific truths which have been discovered only in recent times were discussed in the Bible over a thousand years before Christ.

For thousands of years men believed, for example, that the earth was flat and that if a ship went too far out to sea it would fall off the edge and be destroyed. Today we only smile at such a theory, yet this belief was widely accepted throughout the world as late as the days of Columbus. It was not until Magellan first sailed around the world in 1522 that the earth's roundness was finally proven. As we turn back through the Bible to scriptures written more than two thousand years before Magellan's historic voyage we read, "it is He (God) that sitteth upon the circle of the earth" (Isaiah 40:22). Again we read that God in creation "set a compass (or circle) upon the face of the depth" (Proverbs 8:27).

Another example of the Bible foreknowledge deals with the law of gravity. For centuries it was believed that the earth was held in place by some great support on its underside. As Magellan sailed around the earth, however, he discovered that nothing visible holds it in place. Thousands of years before this fact was accepted by the scientific world Job declared that God "... hangeth the earth upon nothing" (Job 26:7).

"Matthew Fontaine Maury, 'The pathfinder of the seas,' and the founder of the science of Oceanography was a firm believer in and a close student of the Bible. Before Maury lived there were no sailing lanes and no charts of the sea. One day, when he was ill, his son read to him from the eighth Psalm. He read that God put under man '... the fowls of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.' 'Read that again,' he said. Upon hearing it a second time, the venerable scientist said, 'If the Word of God says there are paths in the sea, they must be there. I will find them.' Within a few years he had charted the principal lanes or paths of the sea and these are followed by oceangoing vessels to this day." (George DeHoff, *Why We Believe the Bible*, p. 53) How did Bible writers know in 1,000 B.C. what the wisest men on earth did not understand until relatively recent times? There is but one answer.

As we study these great evidences of inspiration the presence of God shines so clearly that we must say with David of old, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God" (Psalms 14:1).





Please answer the following questions
and return this last page to be graded.

LESSON II

I. LIST THE NUMBER:

- _____ 1. The number of New Testament books.
- _____ 2. The number of books written by Luke.
- _____ 3. The number of books definitely known to have been written by Paul.
- _____ 4. The date of the translation of the King James version.
- _____ 5. The number of scholars who made this translation.

II. TRUE-FALSE:

If the statement is true, circle "T". If false circle "F".

- T F 1. Since the Bible was written by men, parts of it are not correct.
- T F 2. The destruction of Babylon has taken place just as Isaiah prophesied.
- T F 3. Moses lived in about 400 B.C.
- T F 4. Our modern sea lanes were discovered through reading the Bible.
- T F 5. The scattering of the Jews throughout the world is the fulfillment of prophecy.
- T F 6. John the Baptist wrote three books of the New Testament.
- T F 7. If an angel preached a new gospel to us we should accept it.
- T F 8. Peter was a married man.
- T F 9. Peter wrote more of the New Testament than any other writer.
- T F 10. To reject the teachings of the Bible is to reject God.

III. FILL IN THE BLANKS:

1. The New Testament was first written in the _____ language.
2. _____ was a physician and fellow worker with Paul.
3. The "book of conversions" is _____.
4. "All scripture is given by _____ of God . . ."
5. _____ was a tax collector before becoming a disciple.

CUT ALONG THIS LINE—PLEASE DO NOT RETURN THE ENTIRE BOOKLET—SHEET MAY BE TAPED BACK LATER

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