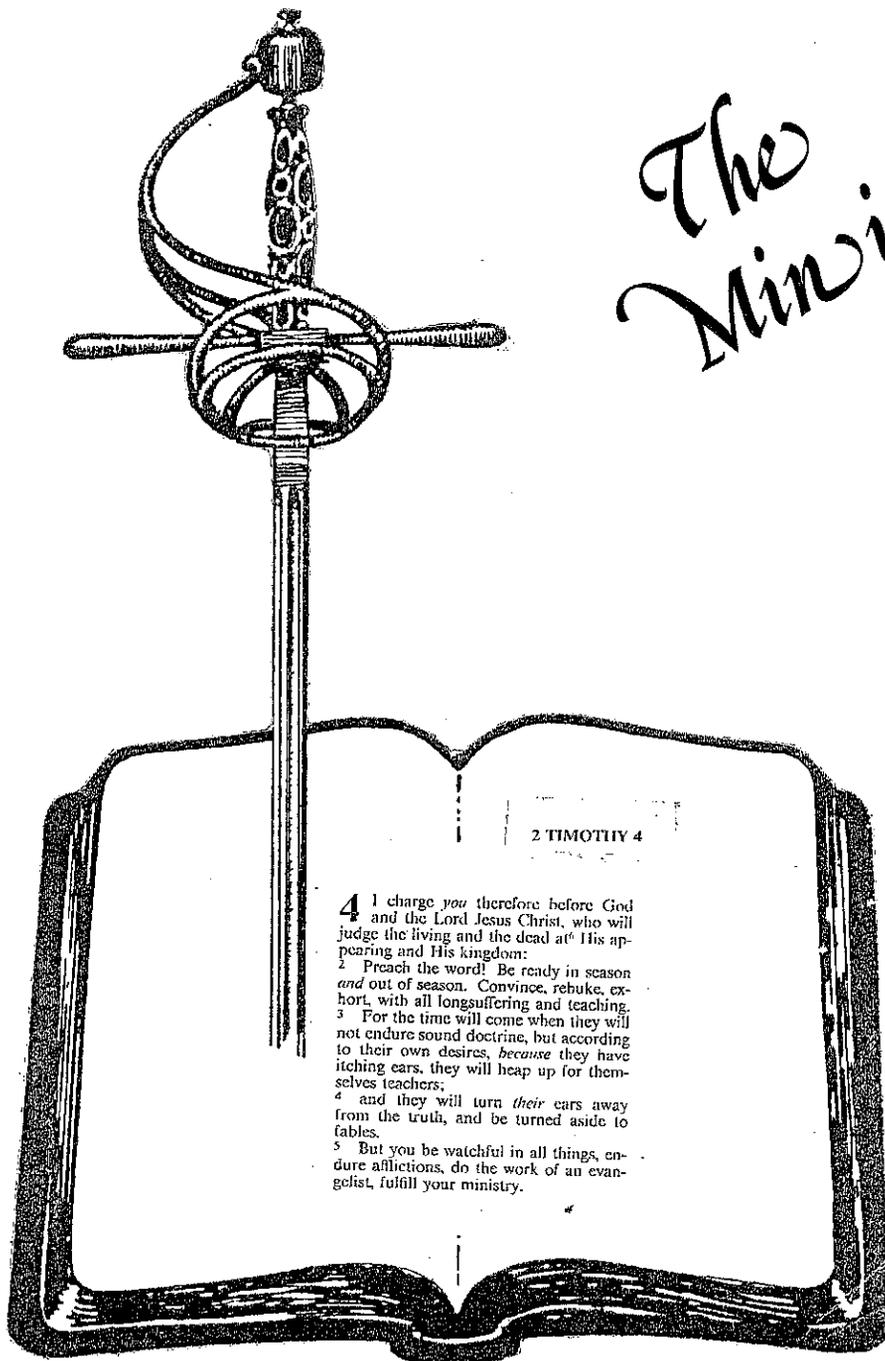


# The Ministry



Prepared by:  
Rob Harbison

# BIBLE LIBRARY

## Old Testament

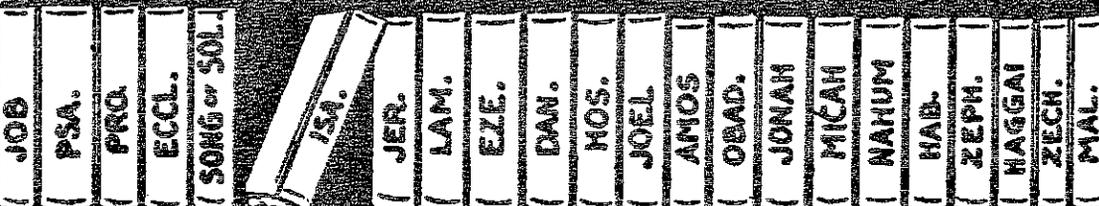
LAW 5 BOOKS

HISTORY 12 BOOKS



POETRY 5 BOOKS

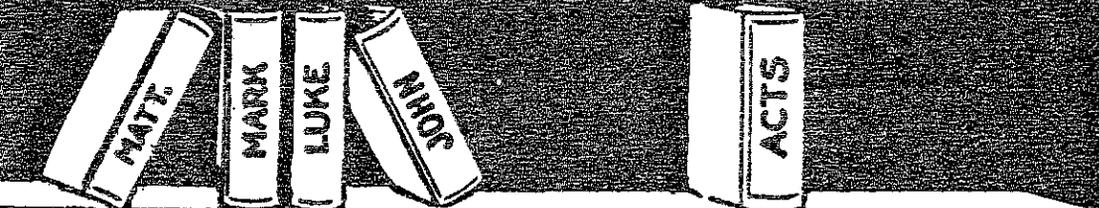
PROPHECY 17 BOOKS



## New Testament

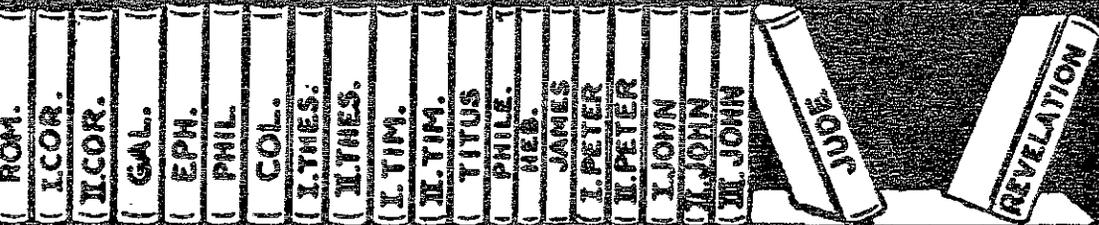
GOSPELS 4 BOOKS

ACTS OF APOSTLES 1 BOOK



LETTERS TO CHRISTIANS 21 BOOKS

PROPHECY 1 BOOK



# Section 1

## RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

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The Need To Know God's Word

INTRO: "Man shall not live by bread alone but, by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Along with the foodstuffs necessary for the survival and growth of the body is that food necessary to the growth of the soul (1 Peter 2:1-2; Matthew 5:6). Without knowing that word a man is spiritually famished.

Are you ready for a feast?

I. WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

- A. A Library. Consisting of 66 different books, written by about 40 different authors, over 1500 years. Yet, in essence, it is **one** book ("biblios" Greek, "book of books").
- B. God's Revelation To Man (1 Corinthians 2:9-13; Isaiah 55:8-9). It is **the** way God gives us instructions for life and speaks to us. Such is unattainable by man in any other way.
  - 1. Inspired By God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). "God-breathed" God is its source and we are ultimately its recipients.
- C. Power Of God Unto Salvation (Romans 1:16). It has the power infused by God to reach and convert the lost sinner (Romans 10:13-17; 1 Corinthians 1:18,21-24) when preached by men.
- D. Indestructable (Isaiah 40:6-8; Matthew 24:35). Poem "The Bible"

II. WHY SHOULD WE STUDY THE BIBLE?

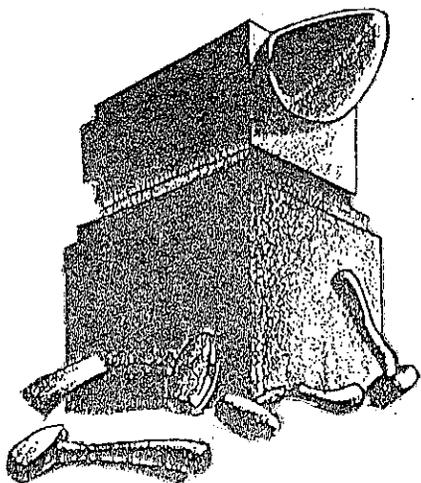
- A. To Know The Will Of God (Ephesians 3:4; 5:17; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12). Man **cannot** know God's will apart from God's disclosure of that will (cf. Isaiah 55:8-9).
  - 1. God Holds Man Responsible For Knowing It (John 12:48; Revelation 20:12). The Bible is the most widespread book in the world and the believers of Christ are the most devoted in taking it to those who haven't heard (Mark 16:15). Men have ready access to it.
  - 2. We Will Be Destroyed For Lack Of Knowledge (Hosea 4:6)
- B. To Come To God (John 6:44-45). Man comes to God through Christ, but how can they know of Christ without the writings and teachings of God? (Romans 10:14).
- C. To Grow To Spiritual Maturity (1 Peter 2:2; Hebrews 5:12-14). It guides, nurtures, disciplines and corrects us to make of us the spiritual men and women God seeks to have follow Him (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2:15)
- D. To Apply It (James 1:21-25). Any knowledge obtained which does not change our lives by applying it, is useless. The Bible is not a guide to "holy trivia", but a guidebook for life (Psalm 119:105)
- E. To Teach It (2 Timothy 2:2). God's word cannot be hoarded in our hearts. It is intended to be shared (1 Timothy 4:13,16; 2 Timothy 2:24; 2 Corinthians 4:13). We must hear it, learn it, then entrust it to others.

### III. RETURNS ON OUR INVESTMENT (What God's Word Does For You)

- A. Helper. It is a vibrant source of aid to our hearts, not just a bunch of lifeless words.
1. Times Of Affliction (Psalm 119:50). How often in time of distress has a Bible verse plucked from our memory bank made the difference between hope and despair? (In hard times [Romans 8:28], in sickness [James 5:13-16], in death [Revelation 14:13])
  2. Times Of Indecision (Psalm 119:105). It lights the right path for us and gives us the confidence to take it
  3. Times Of Temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13; Matthew 4:3-11). We fall so often. What is a source of stability (Psalm 119:11)?
- B. Motivator (Ecclesiastes 12:11). A "goad" is a rod with an iron spike sharpened at the end, used in driving oxen. God's words act like a goad -- they hurt or sting -- but they impel one to do what is right.
- C. Transformer (2 Corinthians 3:18; Romans 12:2). Word is the same as our word "Metamorphosis" (ex. change from a caterpillar to butterfly). It has the power to totally change us if we take it into our hearts. It can change our lives.
- D. Investigator. (Hebrews 4:12-13). It performs an autopsy of the soul, baring it open and examining what is wrong. It searches out and exposes our motives and the reasons behind our actions (2 Corinthians 4:2).

CONCLUSION: The reasons to know and study God's words are evident. Read Psalm 119 for the greatest tribute in the Bible to the Bible.

Bible study is a noble effort to busy ourselves with (Acts 17:11). "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:13)



### The Bible

"Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door  
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;  
When looking in, I saw upon the floor  
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,  
'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'  
'Just one, said he; then said with twinkling eye,  
'The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.'"

"And so I thought the anvil of God's word  
For ages skeptics blows have beat upon;  
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,  
The anvil is unharmed — the hammers gone!"

Learning To Learn

INTRO: People commonly complain that "I read the Bible, but I just don't get anything out of it" or "I do a lot of reading, but forget most of it within a few days". The real difficulty is that we don't know how to learn effectively.

The Bible is not as hard to understand as many think (Ephesians 3:3-4; 5:17). But it cannot be understood by just a casual reading of its page. **Reading** is not necessarily **study**. Reading through from Genesis to Revelation (no matter how many times you have done it) will not likely help you understand fully.

One must **train** his mind to do certain things to aid the learning process.

I. LEARNING TO LEARN

A. Motivation. Learning starts **here** because motivation takes place from **within you!!** Motivation is a desire to do something along with that which urges or spurs one on to do something.

1. Proper Motivation (Ezra 7:10; Psalm 1:1-2). Love for God and His word are necessary to the learning process (John 7:17). When the Bible is read from a sense of duty, without expecting to learn anything, then little that is beneficial will be learned
2. Wrong Motivation (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). Prejudice, disbelief, coming to the Bible just to "prove one's position", etc, will likely produce false beliefs

Other positive motivations make Bible study profitable:

1. Desire To Solve Spiritual Problem. It is difficult to study in a vacuum (where you see no possible use for what you are studying)
2. Knowing The Bible Holds Answers To Our Everyday Problems (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Home life, church life, and moral problems.
3. Trying To Convert Someone (1 Peter 3:15)

B. Reaction. Do you read or listen to someone teach and suddenly realize you don't know what is going on? Our minds are not sponges that "soak up" knowledge by merely letting it pass through.

Our minds must be active. Hearing requires nothing but one ear in working condition, listening requires effort and reactions to what it hears. Learning takes both.

1. To learn the mind must constantly ask questions, harmonize that information with things learned earlier, then make a personal application to what is read.
  - a. Jesus taught in parable to so activate people's minds (Matthew 13:9-17; cf. Matthew 11:15; 13:43; Mark 4:23; 7:16; etc.)
2. People sleep during lessons because they are not "putting themselves into" them.

C. Concentration. This is channeling all of one's energies and thoughts into one area. Conversations often "get off the subject" -- so do minds when they lose concentration.

Sometimes we sit intently watching the TV set or a ballgame and don't hear a word anyone says or notice what the kids are doing. That's because we are concentrating. Our **minds** are focused on one thing and so

the other things we even see and hear are fuzzy and blurred.

Suggestions to aid concentration when studying:

1. Proper Atmosphere. TV, radio, kids, windows all offer distractions and compete for our concentration
  2. Proper Surroundings. Comfortable temperature, desk or table and chair (where work can be spread out). Easy chairs and couches are a little too relaxing
  3. Definite Study Habits
    - a. Routine (consistent time and place)
    - b. Have A Topic. Don't study or read randomly. Stick with a subject long enough to learn something about it
    - c. Take Breaks. Maximum peak concentration is about 30 minutes
    - d. Avoid times when physically exhausted
- D. Organization. Jigsaw puzzles are difficult to piece together if you have never seen the entire picture. Get a general idea about what you are studying first by reading summaries, looking over outlines, and read the material (or book) through at least once first.
1. Develop the habit of writing as you study
  2. Keep orderly notes (in bound notebook, folder, binder, etc.)
  3. Outline facts in order of importance to the overall subject or theme
- E. Comprehension. This takes place when you "get the idea" of what you have read, heard or studied. How can you know whether or not you have comprehended the subject?
1. Put It Into Your Own Words. Frequently people say "I get the picture, I just don't know how to put it into words". True, the lightbulb in our minds has come on, but it is not yet bright enough to "see" anything
  2. Put It Into Writing. This will force you to comprehend the subject
  3. Ask Yourself Questions. Answer other people's questions. Soon you will be able to determine whether you or the questioner has comprehended the subject at all
- F. Repetition. Children learn by repetition. So do adults. Unfortunately adults think repetition is a childish and oversimplified exercise and refuse to participate.
1. Make time for review in your study habits. It is **not** wasted time.
  2. Jesus used repetition to teach His disciples (John 2:19-22; 3:14-15; 8:28; 12:32-33; Matthew 12:40; 16:21; 17:9,12,22-23; 20:17-19; etc.). Repetition helps the truth ultimately "sink in".
  3. Few indeed are the impressions that last a lifetime with only one exposure.

CONCLUSION: Learning is an active process of personal involvement. You can read the Bible all your life or you can learn it... You can listen to sermons all your life or you can learn them!!

If most of your study time is confined to reading (Bible, commentaries, etc.) rearrange it and give more time to exercises which call for thinking.

Tools Of Bible Study

INTRO: The Scriptures are a veritable goldmine, full of God's "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Peter 1:4). The knowledge of Christ contained within is a treasure-store (2 Corinthians 4:6-7). In Christ "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:2-3) and it is God's word which testifies of Him (John 5:39ff).

Thus, mining the Scriptures for its precious truths is one of our most important activities. What more effective way can one mine that treasure than with the appropriate tools?

The Bible can be understood alone... But with the right kind of tools, precious nuggets can be extracted which otherwise might remain concealed. Paul even recognized a benefit in other books (2 Timothy 4:13).

I. BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

A. Bible Translations. Although there is much disagreement about which is the **best** translation, there remain a number of good translations. Everyone should have 2 or 3 good ones.

1. King James Version (1611). Oldest, most well-known and most used, although it was not the **first** English translation from Hebrew and Greek. The KJV is not inspired, the writers in the original language were inspired.
2. American Standard Version (1901). Considered to be the most literal of all translations, although some think at the expense of syntax.
3. New American Standard Version (1963). Revision of American Standard. The construction of the sentences and the use of the English language is adapted to that used by people of this generation.
4. New International Version. A very readable and simple translation, but many have complained of the Calvinistic tendencies of some of the translated words.
5. New King James Version (1979). This version holds on to the beauty and lyrical quality of the Old King James, with only revisions thought necessary to make a good version better.

B. Paraphrases. A paraphrase is a "restatement of a text giving the meaning in different words". They do not attempt to give the original words spoken, but rather an explanation or interpretation of those words.

Paraphrases are beneficial for difficult passages, sometimes, but not always reliable ("The Living Bible", "Today's English Version" ['Good News For Modern Man']).

II. TOOLS OF STUDY

A. Center Column Reference Bible. A valuable tool for quickly finding related Bible passages to a verse under consideration. Some of the references form a chain leading from one to another to another.

B. Concordance. Probably one's most valuable book other than a Bible. Contains a complete listing of major words or an exhaustive list of all words in the Bible text.

1. Helps locate passages when student is only familiar with one or two words.

2. Helps locate **all** passages with that word for topical studies.
  3. Gives brief definition of original Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic word.
  4. Advantages of Strong's, Young's, and Cruden's
- C. Bible Dictionary . Misunderstandings often come over words. An English dictionary can tell you what a certain word means **today**, but a good Bible dictionary tells you what it meant when it **was written**.  
Two kinds of Bible dictionaries:
1. Defines Words (Vine)
  2. Articles Containing Information About Words. Mainly persons, places, or things. Background and explanations are related (Unger, Smith).
- D. Encyclopedia. A more exhaustive reference tool featuring articles with pertinent information about many people, places, events, and things mentioned in the Bible (along with other related topics).  
Complete with pictures, maps, illustrations, outlines, etc., it is an excellent source of reference and research (Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia, International Standard Bible Encyclopedia)
- E. Topical Bible. A topical digest which organizes all the passages pertaining to a specific subject together for easy reference and comparison in topical studies. It includes major doctrines, teachings, people, places, etc.  
Be careful when using it. It only supplies the verse, not the context, and some of the verses used may be misapplied (Nave's)
- F. Atlas. Emphasis is on geography and topography of Bible lands. It includes many pictures and maps to put the Bible lands and cities in perspective.  
Usually it provides a gazeteer which gives basic information about a place and pinpoints it on the maps (Baker's).
- G. Lexicons. For greater in depth study of Bible words in original language. Thayer's (Greek) and Gesenius (Hebrew-Chaldee) are both coded to Strong's concordance.
- H. Word Studies. Major words are expounded in the order they appear in the gospel text for greater in depth study (Vincent, Wuest).
- I. Commentary. These come in sets or cover individual books. They are a scholar's comments on the Bible text. They are handy for understanding the meaning of the Bible. But they are not inspired -- the authors may be learned, but not inspired! Most are denominationalists. Watch for their theology (Barnes, Erdman, Barclay).
- J. Handbooks. Very concise, information packed books with general outlines and commentary on the Bible, background information, history, charts, illustrations and maps (Unger, Halley)
- K. Sermon Outline Books. Not for lazy people, but they can be beneficial for ideas, emergencies, or new and different perspectives. When someone asks "Do you mind if I use that sermon" I say "No, and the fellow I got it from didn't mind either".

- L. Periodicals. Monthly subscription magazine published by our brethren. Has : articles on many different subjects, all written by New Testament Christians. Remember though, they are not the gospel because those authors are not inspired (Christianity, Searching The Scriptures, Guardian Of Truth)
- M. Books By Brethren. Commentaries or other books. They offer a conservative viewpoint based on same respect for Scripture we have.
- N. Tapes. Easier to learn from than books sometimes. Often more convenient when traveling, doing something else, etc.
- O. Denominational Handbooks. To better understand doctrines of religious world (from their own mouths).
- P. Thesaurus, Dictionary. Handy reference tools for writing, spelling, finding synonyms or words you don't know the meaning.

CONCLUSION: With the proper tools you can enhance your understanding of God's precious words. Learn to use them and you will see the benefit.

## SUGGESTED BOOKS FOR A LIBRARY

### CONCORDANCES:

- Cruden's Complete Concordance (Alexander Cruden)
- \* Strong's Exhaustive Concordance (James Strong)
- \* Young's Analytical Concordance (Robert Young)

### BIBLE DICTIONARIES:

- Davis' Dictionary Of The Bible (John D. Davis)
- Smith's Bible Dictionary (William Smith)
- \* Unger's Bible Dictionary (Merrill F. Unger)
- Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary (General Editor, Merrill C. Tenney)
- \* An Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words (W.E. Vine)

### BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIAS:

- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (James Orr)
- \* The New Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia Of The Bible (Merrill C. Tenney)
- Nichols' Pocket Bible Encyclopedia (C.R. Nichols)

### TOPICAL BIBLES:

- \* Nave's Topical Bible (Orville Nave)

### ATLAS:

- \* Baker's Bible Atlas (Charles F. Pfeiffer)

### LEXICONS:

- \* Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament (Joseph H. Thayer)
- \* Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon To The Old Testament (William Gesenius)
- Lexicon To The New Testament (Arndt & Gingrich)

### WORD STUDIES:

- Word Pictures In The New Testament (A.T. Robertson) [6 volumes]
- Word Studies In The New Testament (Marvin R. Vincent) [4 volumes]
- Word Studies In The New Testament (Kenneth S. Wuest) [4 volumes]

### COMMENTARIES:

#### Sets:

- \* Barclay, William, Daily Study Bible [18 volumes]
- \* Barnes, Albert, Barnes' Notes On The Old And New Testaments [14 Or 27 volumes]
- \* Erdman, Charles R., Commentaries On New Testament Books [17 volumes]
- Gospel Advocate, New Testament Commentaries [14 volumes]
- Henry, Matthew, Matthew Henry's Commentary On The Whole Bible [6 volumes]
- Keil & Delitzsch, Commentary On The Old Testament [10 volumes]
- The Pulpit Commentary [23 volumes]
- Zerr, E.M., Bible Commentary [6 volumes]

### Individual Volumes (Old And New Testaments):

- .The Genesis Record (Henry M. Morris)
- \* Harmony Of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles (William D. Crockett)
- \* The Treasury Of David (Charles H. Spurgeon) [3 volumes]
- \* Commentary On Isaiah (Homer Hailey)
- \* The Book Of Isaiah (Jim McGuiggan)
- The Book Of Isaiah (Edward Young) [3 volumes]
- \* Notebook On Jeremiah (L.A.Mott, Jr.)
- \* The Book Of Ezekiel (Jim McGuiggan)
- \* The Book Of Daniel (Jim McGuiggan)
- \* A Commentary On The Minor Prophets (Homer Hailey)
- \* The Fourfold Gospel (J.W. McGarvey)
- John: The Gospel Of Belief (Merrill C. Tenney)
- New Commentary On Acts (J.W. McGarvey)
- \* "Our Hearts Burned Within Us" (Rodney Miller) [Acts]
- Commentary On Romans (Robertson L. Whiteside)
- \* MacKnight On The Epistles (James MacKnight)
- \* Jesus Christ Today, A Commentary On The Book Of Hebrews (Neil R. Lightfoot)
- \* Revelation, An Introduction And Commentary (Homer Hailey)
- More Than Conquerors (William Hendriksen)
- \* The Old Testament In The Book Of Revelation (Ferrell Jenkins)
- \* The Book Of Revelation (Jim McGuiggan)
- \* The Avenging Of The Apostles And Prophets (Art Ogden)
- Worthy Is The Lamb (Ray Summers)

### MISCELLANEOUS BOOKS:

- Baxter, Batsell Barrett, I Believe Because...
- Boles, H. Leo, The Holy Spirit, His Personality, Nature, Works
- \* Cogdill, Roy E., The New Testament Church
- \* Cogdill, Roy E., Walking By Faith
- Edwards, Johnie, Gospel Meeting Sermons
- Flavius Josephus, Works Of Josephus [4 volumes]
- \* Floyd, Harvey, Is The Holy Spirit For Me?
- \* Green, Michael, Evangelism, Now And Then
- \* Hailey, Homer, From Creation To The Day Of Eternity
- \* Hailey, Homer, Hailey's Comments Vol. 1 & 2
- Haley, John W., Alleged Discrepancies Of The Bible
- \* Jenkins, Ferrell, Introduction To Christian Evidences
- Jenkins, Ferrell, The Theme Of The Bible
- Jennings, Alvin, Traditions Of Men Vs. Word Of God
- \* Jensen, Irving, Jensen's Survey Of The New Testament
- \* Jensen, Irving, Jensen's Survey Of The Old Testament
- King, Marie Gentert (Editor), Foxe's Book Of Martyrs
- LaHaye, Tim, How To Win Over Depression
- Lewis, C.S., Mere Christianity
- \* Lewis, C.S., The Screwtape Letters
- Mattox, F.W., The Eternal Kingdom
- \* McDowell, Josh, Evidence That Demands A Verdict
- \* McDowell, Josh, More Evidence That Demands A Verdict
- \* McDowell, Josh, More Than A Carpenter

- \* McGuiggan, Jim, The Reign Of God
- \* Miller, Rodney, The Lion And Lamb On Planet Earth
- Patton, Marshall E., Answers For Our Hope
- Phillips, H.E., Scriptural Elders And Deacons
- Porter, W. Curtis, Porter's Sermon Outlines
- Robertson, Earl (Editor), Preach The Word
- \* Schnabel, A.O., Has God Spoken?
- Sherrod, Paul, Successful Soul Winning
- Stewart, Ivan, God Ye Means Go Me
- \* Swindoll, Charles, Dropping Your Guard
- \* Swindoll, Charles, Hand Me Another Brick
- \* Swindoll, Charles, Improving Your Serve
- VanBaalen, J.K., The Chaos Of Cults
- Wallace, Foy, Bulwarks Of The Faith
- Wallace, Foy, God's Prophetic Word.
- \* Wight, Fred H. Manners And Customs Of Bible Lands

Basic Questions Needing Answers When Studying

INTRO: There are certain fundamentals for learning. They are building blocks for understanding the facts and their meaning. Bible Study is no different. Knowing the 5 W's is essential to understanding God's word -- who, what, when, where, and why!!

Always try to identify the 5 W's in any study of a Bible topic, individual book or Bible events. God commands us to understand (Ephesians 5:17) and these are keys to understanding.

I. WHO?

- A. Who Wrote It? God inspired it to be written (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Corinthians 2:13). But knowing something about the author of each book will help us appreciate more of what he wrote.
1. David -- wrote many psalms and poems. Poetry is an expression of what is in the heart. David was a "man after God's own heart". Thus, we can appreciate more those psalms which give us a glimpse into the very heart of God.
  2. Solomon -- wisest man who ever lived. Thus we find more beneficial his books of wisdom (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes).
  3. Daniel -- a statesman in Babylon. We can see the rewards firsthand of courage and faith, even in the midst of a heathen government.
  4. John -- apostle of Jesus. We can better appreciate the insight into the man Jesus from John's writings, because he was constantly with Jesus.
  5. Paul -- wrote many epistles. Knowing he had established most of those churches and worked with people he wrote to, we can better appreciate his personal love and concern for them evident in his letters.
- B. Who Is Speaking? The Bible is from God but it records speeches of unrighteous and uninspired people too.
1. The Devil (Genesis 3:4; Job 2:9; Matthew 4:3,6,9; etc.)
  2. Men With Erroneous Philosophies (Job 4-5,8-11,etc.)
- C. Who Is Being Spoken To? This is very important because although the Bible was designed to meet all spiritual needs until the end of time, sometimes the things spoken to certain individuals or churches might not apply generally to others.
1. Jews (Exodus 20:1-17)
  2. Gentiles (Ephesians 2:11-13)
  3. Christian (1 John 1:9; Acts 8:22-23)
  4. Alien Sinner (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16)
  5. Church (1 Timothy 5:9-11)
  6. Individual Christian (Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 5:3-4)
  7. Apostles (John 13-16; Acts 1:8)
  8. Elders (1 Peter 5:1-2)

## II. WHAT?

- A. What Is His Message? What is the writer trying to tell them or us to see? Knowing the author's theme, goals and purpose for writing will put **each** verse into perspective.
- B. What Did The Author Intend To Accomplish? Some statements have been taken out of their original context to say something that is not true, and the author did not mean to say.
1. "I thank God that I baptized none of you..." (1 Corinthians 1:14-17; see 1:10-13)
  2. "A brother or sister is not under bondage..." (1 Corinthians 7:15-40; see 7:1, 26)
  3. "And they shall never perish" (John 10:28; see 10:27)
- C. What Has He Been Talking About? That is the **context**. "A text taken out of its context becomes a pretext". The context is that portion of a passage which is immediately connected with it -- either preceding or following it.
- Taking a passage out of its setting and giving it a meaning out of harmony with the surrounding verses is twisting the Scriptures (2 Peter 3:15-16).
1. Faith (Hebrews 11). Those examples also mention works which were proofs of their faith.
  2. End of World (Matthew 24). This chapter deals exclusively with the destruction of Jerusalem (see 24:1-3, 15, 34)

## III. WHEN?

- A. When Was It Written? Understanding the historical context (especially of Old Testament books) is important to understand the impact of the prophet's message. Knowing that context makes obscure passages much more meaningful.
- Knowing the time of its writing and composition also adds more weight to the prophecies contained within it.
- B. In What Age (Dispensation) Is He Speaking? Patriarchal? Mosaical? Christian? It does make a difference! We are not under the Law of Moses (Romans 7:4).
- Failure to distinguish that truth leads to much error.

## IV. WHERE?

- A. Where Was It Written From? We gain a greater appreciation for Paul's later epistles and some of the statements found within them when we recognize that he wrote them from prison (cf. Philippians 1:12-14; 2 Timothy 2:9; etc.)
- B. Where Was It Written To? Knowing the church or individuals to whom an epistle was written, allows us to further research the Bible record for other times they are mentioned. This can give us an insight into the problems or characteristics of those Christians and better understand the impact of the writer's words (Laodicea, Revelation 3:17-18; etc.).

V. WHY?

A. Why Did He Write? Every book in the Bible had a purpose for being written. Why was it written?

1. The Old Testament books (1 Corinthians 10:1-11; Romans 15:4; 4:23-24; etc.)
2. 1 & 2 Corinthians -- Instructions were written concerning problems and sins they were encountering. The second letter was written in response to their actions prompted by the first epistle, and to make provisions for needy saints.
3. 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus -- Written to instruct and admonish young preachers
4. Philemon -- Written to intercede for a runaway slave turned Christian whom Paul was sending back to his master.

B. Why Did He Write The Way He Did? Certain books have characteristics all their own which are suitable for the purpose of the writer to convey some special truths in a special way.

1. John -- Written with expressed purpose of convincing men and creating faith in Jesus (John 20:30-31)
2. Luke And Acts -- Both written as a testimonial to a Gentile about Jesus and the spreading of His cause (Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-3)
3. Revelation -- Likely written in a way that those who were familiar with the Old Testament types and symbols could understand, but the Romans could not (Revelation 1:1-3)

CONCLUSION: A good newspaper reporter bases his story around the 5 W's and uses them in his first paragraph or two to pinpoint the necessary information. A good Bible student answers those questions too before getting very far along in his study.

Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth

INTRO: "Be diligent to present yourself to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

The Bible is a **united** book but it has to be **divided** to understand it. Sound contradictory? The Bible is a complete unit. Genesis through Revelation is the story of God's work in redeeming man, but we must understand the difference between periods of God's dealings and various covenants with man. These differences do not mean that God keeps changing His mind, but that each of these are part of God's brilliant plan in motion and working!

Understanding these divisions is essential to knowing what God wants us to do, not just as a mental exercise in Bible study.

I. PROPER DIVISIONS OF THE BIBLE

A. Two Major Divisions

1. Old Testament (2 Corinthians 3:14; Romans 3:2). It contains 39 books translated from Hebrew and Aramaic. It is the record of man's earliest existence and God's first covenants and promises with men.
  - a. Law (Penteteuch) - Genesis through Deuteronomy
  - b. History - Joshua through Esther
  - c. Poetry (Wisdom literature) - Job through Song of Solomon
  - d. Major Prophets - Isaiah through Daniel
  - e. Minor Prophets - Hosea through Malachi
2. New Testament (2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:6-13; 9:15-17). It contains 27 books and is a record of God's covenant with man today. It is called "new" because the "first" (old)covenant was taken away (Hebrews 8:13). It was originally penned in Greek and then translated. Similarly, these books are classified together according to subject matter.
  - a. Life of Christ - Matthew through John
  - b. History - Acts
  - c. Epistles - Romans through Jude
    - 1) Pauline epistles - Romans through Philemon (Hebrews ?)
    - 2) General epistles - Hebrews through Jude
  - d. Prophecy - Revelation

B. Three Dispensations Of Time

1. Patriarchal (father-rule). It began at creation and as far as the **Jews** were concerned lasted until Mt. Sinai, where they made a covenant with God to be a special people by keeping a special law (Exodus 19:3-8).

It is recorded in Genesis 1 through Exodus 20. There is not evidence of any written law revealed by God during this period, but God revealed His will directly to the heads of households (Genesis 18:19; 9:1-7; cf. Hebrews 1:1-2).

Although replaced by a new era for the Israelite nation, God continued to have relationships with the Gentile people, sending them His prophets (cf. Numbers 22-24; Nahum, Jonah, Obadiah) until the time of Christ (Romans 2:12-16).
2. Mosaical (national). It began at Mt. Sinai. The covenant which bound the Jews to Moses' law was ratified on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19:3-8; 24:1-8). It was replaced by a new and better covenant when Jesus died (Hebrews 8:6-13; 9:15-17). It spans Exodus 20 to Acts 2.

Its most notable events include the reception of the Law, wilderness wanderings, conquest of Canaan, period of the Judges, united then divided kingdom, the age of the prophets (who announced the fall of the nations and coming of Christ), the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, and the return to Canaan from their captivity.

This covenant and law was:

- a. Given to Jews alone (Exodus 19:3-8; 24:1-8; Deuteronomy 5; Jeremiah 31:31-34)
  - b. Temporary (Galatians 3:19; 2 Corinthians 3:7-13)
  - c. A tutor to bring men to Christ (Galatians 3:19-29). It taught men about sin, decreed punishment on wrongdoing, and pointed men to the Christ who was coming (Galatians 3:19; Romans 7:7; John 5:39-47)
  - d. A shadow and not the reality (Hebrews 10:1-4; Colossians 2:14-17)
  - e. Incomplete (Hebrews 8:7; Romans 8:3; Galatians 3:21-22). It was imperfect and powerless to save
3. Christian (international). It began at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection and will last until the end of time. It spans the record from Acts 2 through Revelation 22.
- It was preceded by a period of preparation and transition from Moses' law to Christ's.
- a. Matthew through John record Jesus' preparations ushering in the gospel age. Until His death, He and they remained subject to the Law of Moses (Galatians 4:4-5; Matthew 5:17-19; 23:1-3)
  - b. John the Baptist prepared the way for the Lord (Matthew 3:1-6; John 1:29-34; Malachi 3:1-3; 4:1-6)
  - c. Jesus' personal ministry concentrated on the Jews (Matthew 15:24; 10:5-7). He prepared men for the coming of the kingdom (Matthew 4:13-17)
  - d. Jesus' attitude toward Moses' law (Matthew 5:17-19; 23:1-3)
  - e. Jesus fulfilled everything the prophets said about Him (Matthew 5:17; Luke 24:44; Acts 3:22-24)

The Christian dispensation took effect after Jesus' death (Hebrews 9:15-17) and He took the Law of Moses away (Colossians 2:14-17; Ephesians 2:11-17) and brought Jew and Gentile together in Christ, as part of His kingdom [church] (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:47; 20:28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25)

## II. COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS

A. Mixing The Old And New Testaments Together. Tremendous confusion exists when people go to the Old Testament **and** New Testament for religious practices. They pick and choose what they want from both.

But Moses' law has been abolished (Colossians 2:14; Ephesians 2:15; 2 Corinthians 3:11). We must hear Christ (Matthew 17:5; Hebrews 1:1-2; Matthew 28:18,20). The laws of Christ and Moses are incompatible (Romans 7:1-7). The consequences of obeying the Law of Moses are severe

1. Commit spiritual adultery (Romans 7:1-6)
2. Serve a ministry of death (2 Corinthians 3:5-11)
3. Appeal to a faulty covenant (Hebrews 8:6-13)
4. Cursed by the Law itself (Galatians 3:8-14)
5. Return to yoke of slavery (Acts 15:10)
6. Severed from Christ and fallen from grace (Galatians 5:1-4)

- B. Thinking The Old Testament Is Useless. One cannot fully understand the New Testament without knowing the Old Testament and actually will be deficient as a Christian (2 Timothy 3:15-17)
- The Old Testament record was not written specifically for the Jew, it was written for **us!!** (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:1-11; 9:9-11; Romans 4:19-24). It is shameful if we do not "rightly divide the word"!!
- C. Making Distinction Between The "Law of God" and "Law of Moses". One being the permanent, eternal law (ten commandments) and the other being the ceremonial law which was nailed to the cross.
- The Bible makes no such distinction!
1. Nehemiah 8:1,8; 10:29
  2. Mark 7:10 (cf. Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16)
  3. Luke 2:24 (cf. Leviticus 12:8)
  4. Ezra 7:6
- D. Making Too Rigid These General Divisions. Between the two testaments and three dispensations.
1. Between the two testaments.
    - a. Who inserted the page between Malachi and Matthew? Should this page be in there at all, and if so, is it even in the right place (cf. Hebrews 9:15-17)?
    - b. How precise is the separation between the Old and New covenants? Did it change at a certain moment in time? Or do the covenants overlap any at all (cf. Hebrews 8:13; 2 Corinthians 3:11)?

Remember that God's covenant with Israel was not only religious, but also national, civil, and ceremonial. Although the Law and its ordinances were taken away in Christ (Romans 7:1-4; Colossians 2:14), remnants of that covenant lingered until God's final great judgment against the wayward nation. That explains some confusing passages.

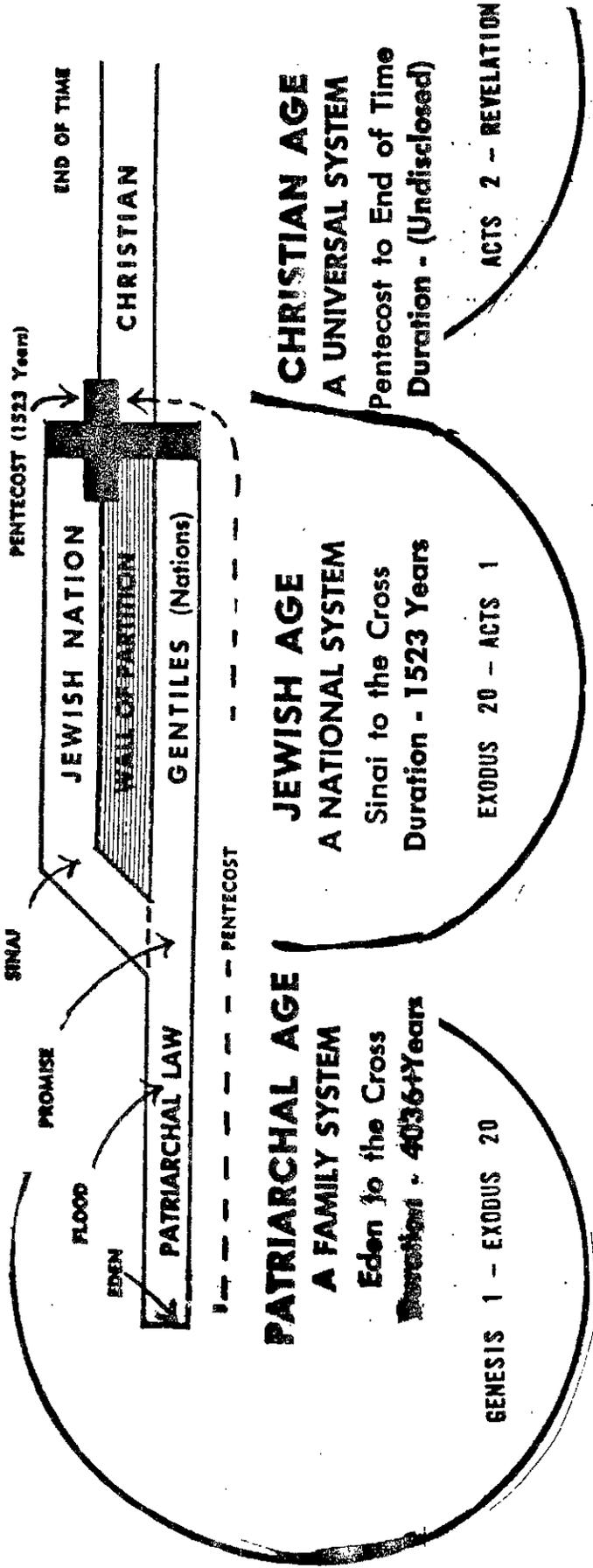
    - 1) Acts 18:18 (cf. Numbers 6)
    - 2) Acts 18:21 (cf. Romans 14:4-6)
    - 3) Acts 21:17-26 (cf. 21:21,28)
    - 4) Acts 24:17-18
  2. Between the three dispensations
    - a. The patriarchal dispensation was not completely absolved at Mt. Sinai. Israel entered a covenant with God and received a law there. But that covenant was **not** worldwide. Actually the **majority** of the world was not subject to that covenant or law (Romans 2:12-16). Yet they remained accountable to God.

God continued to send them prophets and messengers (Hebrews 1:1-2) like Balaam, Obadiah, Jonah, and Nahum. Some even continued seeking after God (Acts 10:1-4).

The Old Testament record, though, is primarily interested in the working out of God's plan through the Israelites and mentions little about the Gentile except when their lives come in contact with God's people.

CONCLUSION: Bible study can be rewarding and profitable **only** if we "rightly divide the word of truth". If not we have every reason to be "ashamed" (2 Timothy 2:15).

# THE THREE RELIGIOUS DISPENSATIONS



**PATRIARCHAL AGE**  
**A FAMILY SYSTEM**  
 Eden to the Cross  
 Duration - 4036 Years

GENESIS 1 - EXODUS 20

**FAMILY RELIGION**  
          
 GOD SPOKE TO FATHERS  
 Gen. 18:18  
 FAMILY ALTAR  
 ANIMAL SACRIFICE

**JEWISH AGE**  
**A NATIONAL SYSTEM**  
 Sinai to the Cross  
 Duration - 1523 Years

EXODUS 20 - ACTS 1

**NATIONAL RELIGION**  
          
 LAW CAME BY MOSES  
 John 1:17  
 JEWS  
 PASSOVER FEAST  
 TEMPLE  
 SABBATH

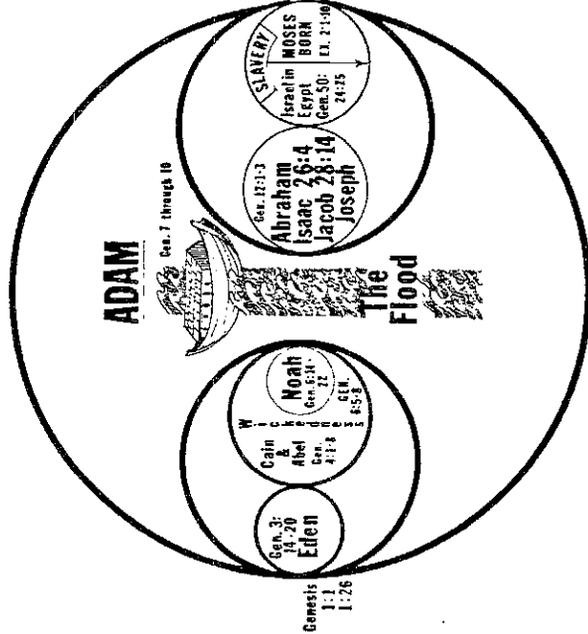
**CHRISTIAN AGE**  
**A UNIVERSAL SYSTEM**  
 Pentecost to End of Time  
 Duration - (Undisclosed)

ACTS 2 - REVELATION

**UNIVERSAL RELIGION**  
          
 GRACE & TRUTH BY CHRIST  
 Hebrews 1:1-2  
 CHRISTIANS  
 LORD'S SUPPER  
 CHURCH  
 LORD'S DAY

# PATRIARCHY

FAMILY RELIGION



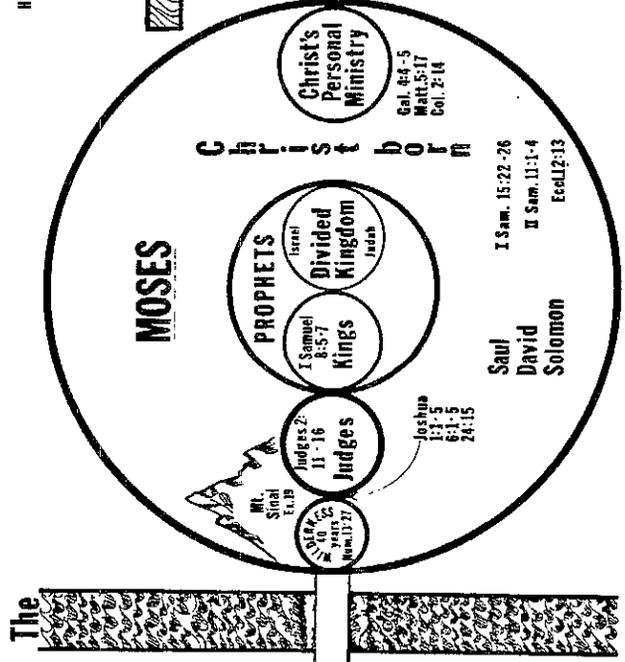
**GOD SPOKE TO FATHERS**  
Genesis 12:1

**ALTAR**

Animal Sacrifice

# JUDAISM

NATIONAL RELIGION



**LAW CAME BY MOSES**  
John 1:17

Was schoolmaster  
Was abolished

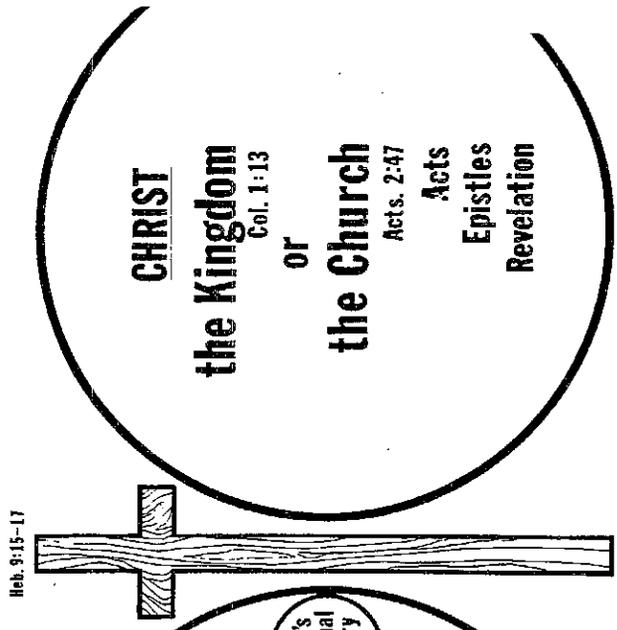
TABERNACLE  
Passover

Sabbath

Gal. 3:24  
Col. 2:14

# CHRISTIANITY

INTERNATIONAL RELIGION



**GRACE & TRUTH BY CHRIST**  
John 1:17

Gospel  
Rom. 1:16

Church  
Acts 2:47

Lord's Supper

Lord's Day

Heb. 9:15-17

# The Patriarchal Dispensation

CREATION

GENESIS 1 -- EXODUS 20



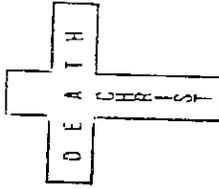
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## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

CREATION GARDEN OF EDEN	FALL OF MAN	WICKEDNESS BEFORE FLOOD	FLOOD 1656 YEARS AFTER CREATION	CONFUSION OF TONGUES	CALL OF ABRAHAM	EGYPTIAN BONDAGE	GIVING OF TEN COMMANDMENTS
? B.C.	? B.C.	? B.C.	? B.C.	? B.C.	1992 B.C.	1777 B.C.	1562 B.C.
PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS & SCRIPTURES							
ADAM	EVE	ENOCH	NOAH	SHEM	ABRAHAM	JOSEPH	MOSES
	SETH ENOS CAINAN MAHALALEEL JARED	METHUSELAH LAMECH	SHEM HAM JAPHETH	TERAH ABRAHAM	ISAAC JACOB JOSEPH	12 PATRIARCHS SONS OF JACOB	AARON
GENESIS 1 -- 2	GENESIS 3 -- 5	GENESIS 6	GENESIS 7 -- 10	GENESIS 11 JOB	GENESIS 12 -- 36	GENESIS 36 -- 50 EXODUS 1 -- 13	EXODUS 14 -- 20

# The Mosaical Dispensation

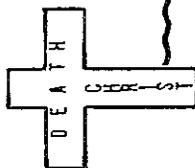


EXODUS 20 - ACTS 1



## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

WILDERNESS WANDERINGS	CONQUEST OF CANAAN	JUDGES OF ISRAEL	UNITED KINGDOM	DIVIDED KINGDOM	FALL OF ISRAEL	FALL OF JUDAH	RETURN OF JEWS	MACCABEAN PERIOD	LIFE OF CHRIST
1560 B.C.	1522 B.C.	1503 B.C.	1053 B.C.	933 B.C.	721 B.C.	606 B.C.	536 B.C.	400 B.C.	4 B.C.
PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS & SCRIPTURES									
MOSES	JOSHUA	SAMUEL	DAVID	ISAIAH	JEREMIAH	DANIEL	EZRA	JUDAS	CHRIST
AARON JOSHUA CALEB	12 TRIBES of ISRAEL	15 JUDGES DEBORAH GIDEON JEPHTHAH SAMSON	SAUL DAVID SOLOMON	UZZIAH HEZEKIAH	JOSIAH	EZEKIEL	ZERUBBABEL	MACCABEUS	JOHN THE BAPTIST 12 APOSTLES
EXODUS 20-40 LEVITICUS NUMBERS DEUTERONOMY	JOSHUA	JUDGES RUTH 1 SAM. 1-8	1 SAM. 9-31 2 SAMUEL 1 KINGS 1-12 1 CHRONICLES 2 CHRON. 1-9 PSALMS PROVERBS ECCLESIASTES SONG OF SOLOMON	1 KINGS 13-22 2 KINGS 1-19 2 CHRON. 10-32 ISAIAH HOSEA JUEL AMOS JOB ISAIAH JONAH MICAH	2 KINGS 20-23 2 CHRON. 33-36 JEREMIAH LAMENTATIONS HABAKKUK ZEPHANIAH	EZEKIEL DANIEL RUTH	EZRA NEHEMIAH ESTHER HAGGAI ZECHARIAH MALACHI	NO INSPIRED WRITINGS — BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS	MARK MATTHEW LUKE JOHN



# The Christian Dispensation

SECOND  
COMING  
OF  
CHRIST

ACTS 2 - REVELATION

## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

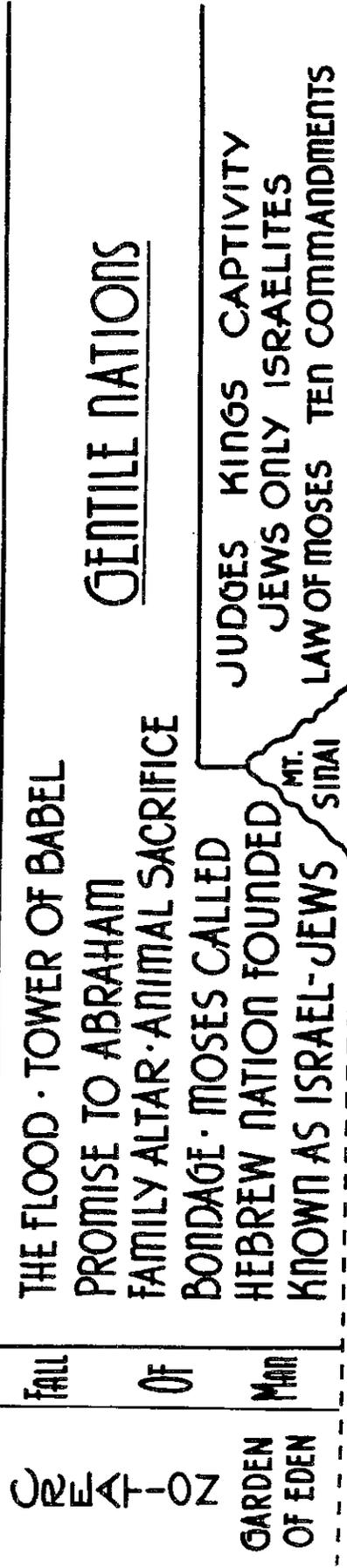
APOSTLES & APPROXIMATE DATES OF N T BOOKS									
ACTS 1-6	ACTS 7-8	ACTS 9	ACTS 10	ACTS 13-15	ACTS 15-18	ACTS 18-20	ACTS 20-28		
1 2 APOSTLES									
PETER ANDREW JAMES JOHN PHILIP BARTHOLOMEW	THOMAS MATTHEW JAMES SIMON THADDEUS JUDAS				1 THESSALONIANS 2 THESSALONIANS	MATTHEW MARK 1 CORINTHIANS 2 CORINTHIANS GALATIANS ROMANS	LUKE JAMES ACTS EPHESIANS PHILIPPIANS COLOSSIANS PHILEMON HEBREWS 1 TIMOTHY 2 TIMOTHY	1 PETER 2 PETER JUDE JOHN	1 JOHN 2 JOHN 3 JOHN REVELATION
ESTABLISHMENT OF CHURCH ON PENTECOST	CHURCH SCATTERED THROUGH PERSECUTION	CONVERSION OF SAUL	CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS	PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY TOUR	PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY TOUR	PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY TOUR	PAUL IMPRISONED	PERSECUTION DESTRUCTION of JERUSALEM by TITUS	DEATH OF JOHN
30 A.D.	31-36 A.D.	37 A.D.	40 A.D.	45-49 A.D.	50-53 A.D.	54-58 A.D.	58-67 A.D.	62-70 A.D.	97 A.D.

# RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

II TIM. 2:15

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

39 BOOKS 30 WRITERS 1400 YEARS IN WRITING 4000 YEARS OF HISTORY



LAW, Gen. - Deut.

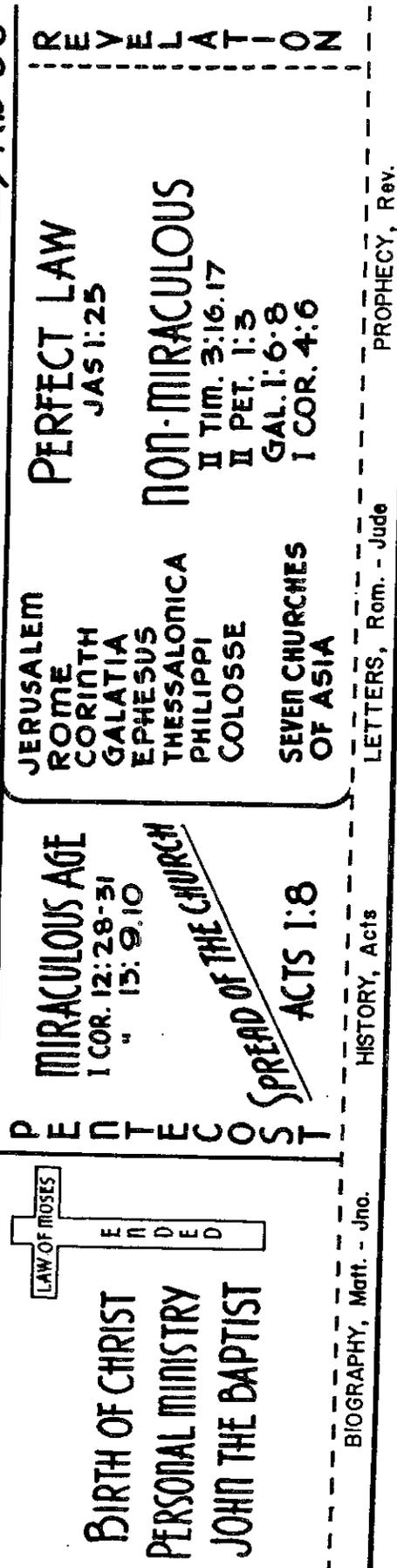
HISTORY, Josh. - Esth.

POETRY, Job - S. of Sol.

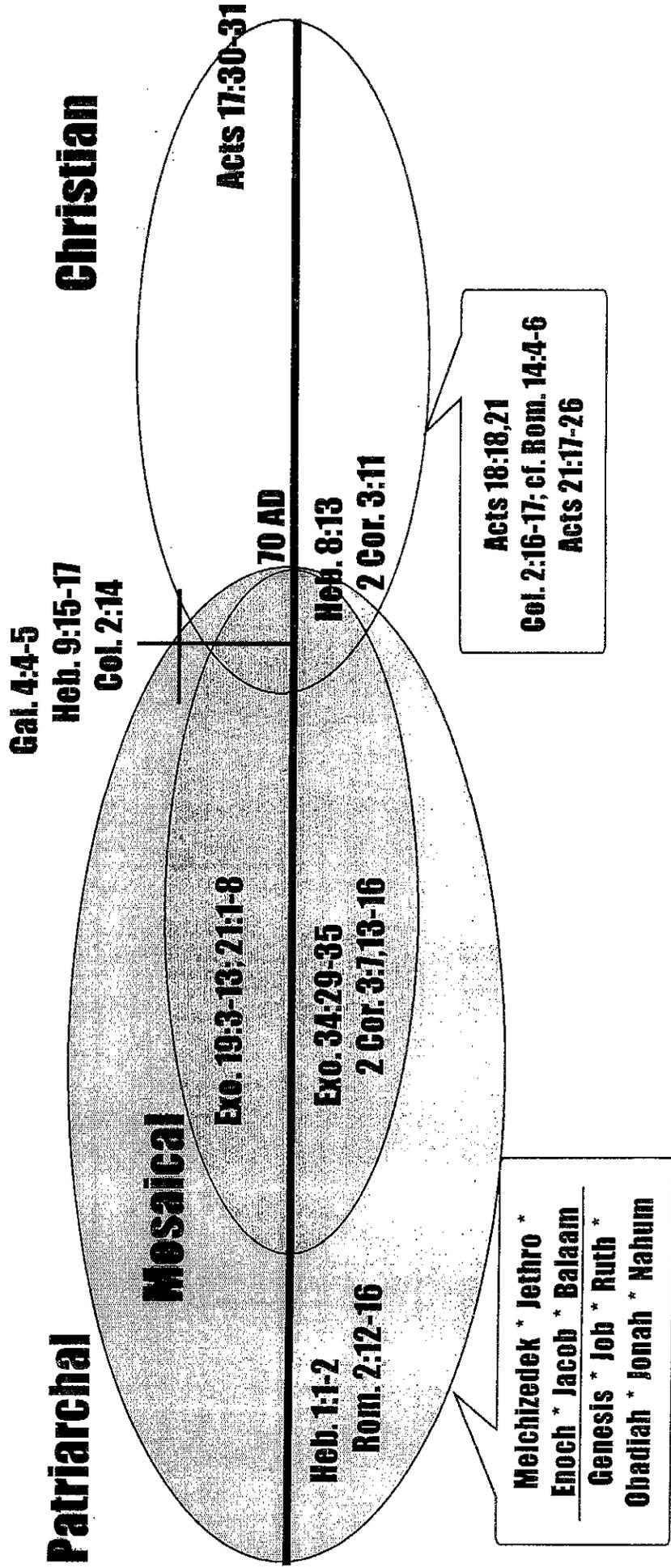
PROPHETS, Isa. - Mal.

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

33 AD ← 63 YRS. → AD 96



# The Two Covenants



How To Study The Old Testament

INTRO: The study of the Old Testament has been severely neglected to the detriment of God's people. New Testament Christians who are deficient in their knowledge of the Old Testament are severely handicapped in their Christian development (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

When studied together, the Old and New Testaments help us understand God's scheme of redemption, which is the skeleton on which rests the "meat of the word". But with all its genealogies, endless lists, and varied ceremonial and civil laws, how can the average Christian understand a section so difficult and confusing? Actually, Christ has lifted the veil of ignorance so we can understand the Old Testament writings [through the things we have learned about Him ] (cf. 2 Corinthians 3:12-18; Luke 24:25-27,44-47).

## I. BENEFITS OF OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

- A. Establish And Strengthen Faith In Jesus As The Christ (John 5:39-47; Luke 24:44-47). Jesus is the central figure in the Old Testament. He is the golden thread running through all 66 books, binding them together (Acts 3:24-26; 1 Peter 1:10-12).  
Every writing prophet (except perhaps Nahum) makes reference to the coming Christ.
- B. Presents Spiritual Truths With Physical Illustrations And Types (Hebrews 10:1; 8:4-5; Colossians 2:14-17). Such things prepare the mind to accept and comprehend spiritual truths -- Jesus is our "passover", the "lamb of God", His work as High Priest, our responsibilities as priests, the tabernacle and God's dwelling among men, etc.  
"The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed".
- C. Shows Us God's Nature (cf. James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:6). God's will and nature have never changed. His dealings in the Old Testament times give us insight into His dealings today.
  1. His principles of rule among the nations (Jeremiah 18:7-10; Psalm 89:14; 97:2)
  2. His attitude toward unbelief and disobedience (1 Corinthians 10:1-11)
- D. Gives Us Hope (Romans 15:4; Hebrews 6:13-20). We can look back on God's promises and the fulfillment years later and be assured that He will fulfil His promises to us (cf. Romans 4:16-24; esp. 4:23-24)

## II. STEPS IN STUDYING THE OLD TESTAMENT

- A. Learn Basic Old Testament History Thoroughly (cf. "Organization" principle of learning). The 39 books cover God's dealings with mankind from Creation to about 400 BC. The main historical thread of these ages can be found in the following sections -- which comprise less than one-third of the Old Testament (283 of 929 chapters).
  1. Genesis (creation to 1804BC?). Chronicles the creation, early civilizations, and God's chosen family of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.
  2. Exodus (1525 to 1445 BC). Relates the exodus from Egypt, journey to Mt. Sinai, along with the reception of God's law there and setting up of a system of worship.

3. Numbers (1445 to 1405 BC). Outlines departure from Mt. Sinai and journey toward Canaan, the 40 years of wandering due to unbelief, and final preparations to enter Canaan.
  4. Deuteronomy (1405 BC). Moses dies and is succeeded by Joshua (see chap. 34)
  5. Joshua (1405 to 1365 BC?). Shows the conquest and settlement of Canaan.
  6. Judges (1375 to 1050 BC?). Judges ruled and delivered Israel from oppressing nations surrounding them during this time.
  7. 1 Samuel (1100 to 1010 BC). Closes out the period of the judges and highlights the reign of Israel's first king, Saul.
  8. 2 Samuel (1010 to 970 BC). Relates the 40 years of David's reign over Israel.
  9. 1 Kings (970 to 852 BC). The reign of Solomon, division of the kingdom and early history of the two rival kingdoms.
  10. 2 Kings (852 to 562 BC). The two rival kingdoms both eventually meet their fate of captivity in foreign lands. Israel was taken in bondage by Assyria and Judah was made captive in Babylon about 115 years later.
  11. Ezra (536 to 458 BC). Includes the first efforts to rebuild Jerusalem after 70 years of foreign domination and captivity. The temple is erected.
  12. Nehemiah (445 to 425 BC). Emphasizes Nehemiah's work in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.
- B. Consider The Other Books In The Context Of That History. Study them in close connection with the events to which they relate. Group them together according to historical time periods and study each book of that period for a fuller and richer understanding of the times and the messages of each book.
1. Other Books Of History And Law
    - a. Leviticus (1445 BC). Laws given to Moses, especially concerning the priesthood and sacrifices, during the period Israel was encamped at the base of Mt. Sinai (cf. Exodus and Numbers)
    - b. Deuteronomy (1405 BC). Moses' final speeches recalling the last 40 years. He repeats the law and makes final preparations for Israel to enter Canaan (cf. Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers)
    - c. Ruth (1125 to 1100 BC). A story of love, devotion, loyalty, and righteousness in the midst of a corrupt period of history (cf. Judges)
    - d. 1 & 2 Chronicles (1010 to 536 BC). Repetition (with some additions) of events found in 1 & 2 Kings. The book has a priestly tint, likely written to chronicle the **religious** history of the nation (cf. 2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings)
    - e. Esther (483 to 472 BC). Deliverance of the Jews from annihilation with events set in the court of the Persian king (cf. Ezra)
  2. Books Of Prophecy. The prophetic books are often regarded as especially difficult and therefore not worth the time to study. A few helpful hints when studying are:
    - \* Associate prophet with the history of his time
    - \* Remember he was simply a man speaking for God, usually denouncing the sins of the people. In one word his message was "Repent"!

- \* Realize he was a "forth-teller" more than a "fore-teller". His ability to tell the future was in close connection with his message -- to prove its divine source, to warn the wicked of impending doom, or to raise the hopes of the discouraged.
- \* Keep in mind the major events which their predictions were usually concerned with:
  - \*Coming punishment upon Israel for sin (ultimately by Assyria and Babylon)
  - \*Eventual return of the Jews to Palestine (a ray of hope that they would be able to rebuild Jerusalem and renew their religious service to God)
  - \*Coming of the Messiah and establishment of His everlasting kingdom

Since the prophets sometimes intermingled all three types of prophecy, be alert to discern them.

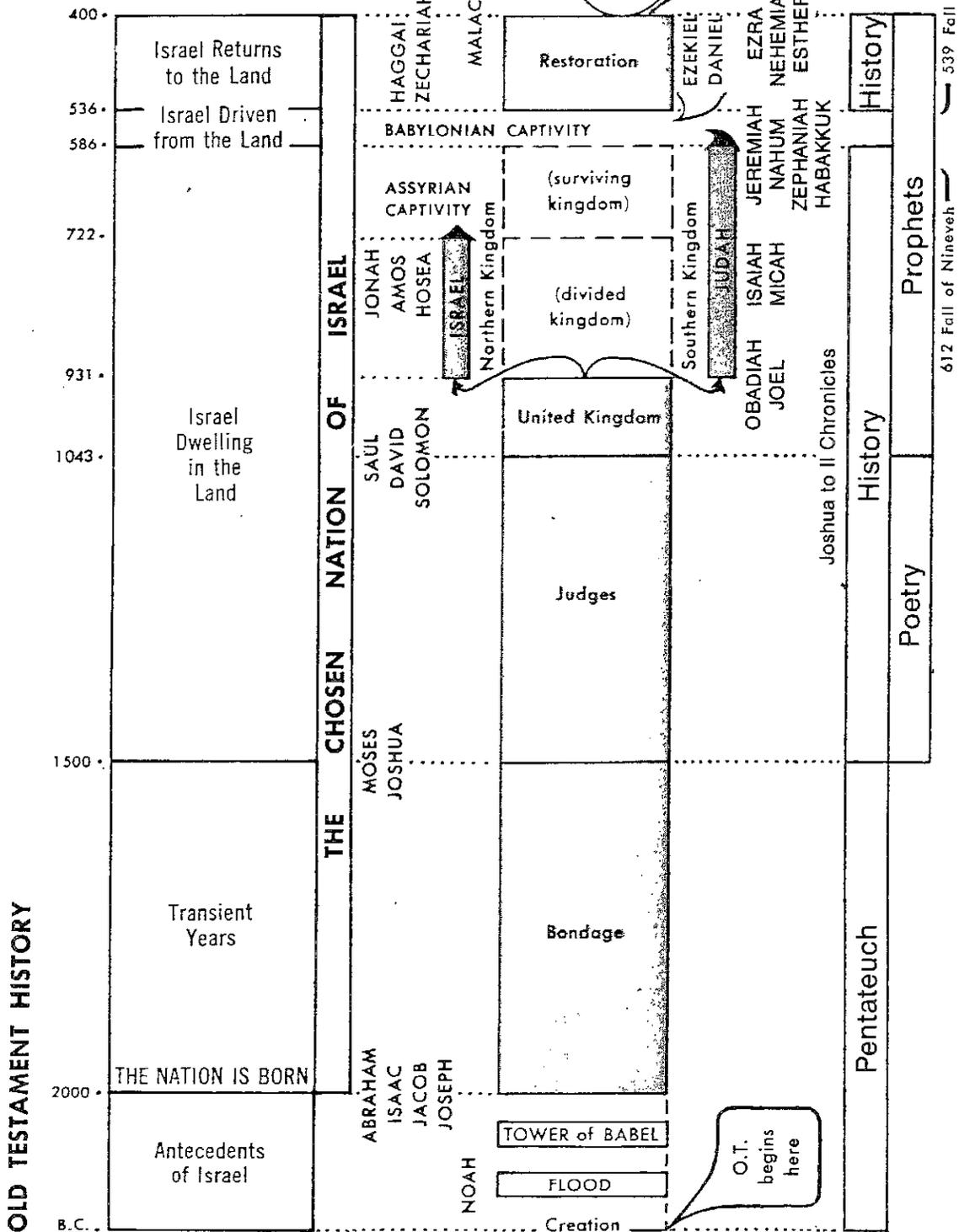
- a. Isaiah (740-690 BC). Prophesied during reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (1:1). He is especially noted for his Messianic prophecies.
- b. Jeremiah (627-586 BC). Prophesied from time of Josiah to Babylonian captivity of Judah, all the while warning Judah of impending doom. "Lamentations" were his sad songs of Jerusalem's fall (586 BC)
- c. Daniel (606-536 BC). Prophesied of God's protection for the captives, their restoration to their homeland, and the Messianic kingdom. He served as God's representative in the heathen courts.
- d. Ezekiel (593-573 BC). Prophesied to the fragments of a shattered nation. Ezekiel gave the captives hope while in captivity.
- e. The Minor Prophets. Not because their work was less important but because their callings and messages were more isolated and singular. (Discussed in order of chronology)
  - 1) Obadiah (845 BC [perhaps 586 BC]). He prophesies of the fall of Edom, notably for her sins against God and Israel.
  - 2) Joel (830 BC?). Prophesies of the "day of the Lord" coming against God's people.
  - 3) Jonah (780 BC). Sent to Ninevah to turn them away from sin and back to God.
  - 4) Amos (755 BC). Prophesied in days of Uzziah and Jotham (1:1) and demanded Israel's repentance or "prepare to meet thy God".
  - 5) Hosea (750-725 BC). Prophesied in the days of Uzziah through Hezekiah in Judah and Jeroboam II of Israel (1:1). He condemned Israel's harlotry against God with other gods.
  - 6) Micah (735-700 BC). Prophesied during reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah (1:1). He cried out against the social injustices of greed and oppression of the poor which came with Judah's prosperity.
  - 7) Nahum (663-612 BC). Prophesied the destruction of Ninevah for her ungodliness and cruelty.
  - 8) Zephaniah (630-625 BC). Prophesied in days of Josiah (1:1). He saw the Babylonians as a growing threat to the nations and especially Judah.

- 9) Habakkuk (612-606 BC). He cried to God because of the wickedness of Judah and the doom on the horizon in the form of the Babylonians.
- 10) Haggai (520 BC). Prophesied to the exiles who returned to Jerusalem to spark them to build the temple.
- 11) Zechariah (520-518 BC). He sees beyond the immediate temple to the Messiah and spiritual temple of God in a series of visions.
- 12) Malachi (432 BC). He cried out against the corruptions of the nation and announced the coming of Elijah the prophet, to precede the "day of the Lord".

- C. Recognize The Godly Wisdom And Universal Human Nature Depicted In Wisdom Literature. The messages and lessons from the lives of these Old Testament characters are as relative to human life in this generation as they were then.
1. Job. This book tells the story of Job's misfortunes and his search for the reason behind human suffering. It is in the form of a conversation through most of the narrative, between Job and his friends.
  2. Psalms. These are the expressions of men's hearts, relaying human emotions and truths about God and life. They are very devotional and the greatest benefit comes from merely reading and meditating on them.
  3. Proverbs. A random collection of wise sayings. Each should be studied individually or in connection with related proverbs found elsewhere. They make points of truth very simply and vividly.
  4. Ecclesiastes. A record of the wise man's search for meaning in life and man's chief duty. Many pursuits are examined and rejected before the conclusion is reached.
  5. Song of Solomon. It is a poem made to express the triumph of pure love over lust. It depicts the beauty of human love and fidelity and the shallowness of mere lust and desire.

CONCLUSION: The Old Testament is rich when studied in the proper manner. It helps us understand our own lives, strengths, and weaknesses. It gives us insight into God's and man's nature, and shows how man has come to the point we are now in God's scheme.

CHART 3



## A CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

<i>Biblical Events</i>		<i>World History</i>
Call of Abraham	2100 B.C.	Hyksos come to power in Egypt
Birth of Joseph	1915 B.C.	
Jacob's family moves to Egypt	1876 B.C.	
Death of Joseph	1805 B.C.	
	1580 B.C.	Hyksos expelled from Egypt
Birth of Moses	1530 B.C.	
	1504 B.C.	Thutmose III (Pharaoh of Oppression)
	1450 B.C.	Amenhotep II (Pharaoh of the Exodus)
The exodus; Ten Commandments	1447 B.C.	
Moses' death; entry of Canaan under Joshua	1407 B.C.	
Death of Joshua; period of the judges begins	1385 B.C.	
	1361 B.C.	Tutankhamen ("King Tut") becomes Pharaoh
		(Cycles of apostasy, oppression and de- liverance during time of Israel's judges)
Saul becomes king	1050 B.C.	
Saul's death; David becomes king of Israel	1010 B.C.	
David's death; Solomon comes to the throne	970 B.C.	
Solomon begins the temple	967 B.C.	
Solomon's death; division of the kingdom	930 B.C.	
Northern Kingdom falls to Assyria	721 B.C.	
	701 B.C.	Sennacherib's invasion of Judah
	612 B.C.	Destruction of Nineveh
First deportation of captives from Judah	606 B.C.	
Second deportation	597 B.C.	
Third deportation; Solomon's temple destroyed	586 B.C.	
Jehoiachin freed in Babylon	562 B.C.	
	539 B.C.	Babylon falls; Persian period begins
	536 B.C.	
Cyrus allows first captives to leave under Zerubbabel		
Work begins on second temple	535 B.C.	
Temple completed	515 B.C.	
	486 B.C.	Ahasuerus becomes King of Persia
Esther becomes Ahasuerus' queen	480 B.C.	
	465 B.C.	Artaxerxes I becomes King
Ezra leads captives home	458 B.C.	
Nehemiah leads captives home	445 B.C.	
Nehemiah visits Artaxerxes	433 B.C.	

How To Study The New Testament

INTRO: The New Testament is the covenant to which Christians are bound today. The words of Jesus and His ambassadors are the words that will ultimately judge us (John 12:48; Matthew 16:19). Therefore, it is vital that we study and understand the New Testament.

In the New Testament we have the mystery revealed (Ephesians 3:3-5), the grace of God made known (Titus 2:11-14; 1 Peter 1:10-12) and the faith once for all delivered (Jude 3). Through that precious word we can be partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:3-4), and be completely equipped (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The Holy Spirit guided the New Testament writers into all truth and inspired their writings, watching over them and guiding them in their very words (John 14:26; 16:13-14; 1 Corinthians 2:9-13; 1 Peter 1:10-12). He completed that work so we could have a valuable sourcebook for Christian living. Undoubtedly it deserves our time, effort and the closest scrutiny. Noble men will so approach and study it (Acts 17:11).

## I. UNPROFITABLE METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

- A. Fall Open At Random. We have nothing definite in view. It is simply a way of flipping pages and reading a little until we find something which interests us.
  1. May open one day to Joseph, son of Jacob... next day to Joseph, husband of Mary... and then Joseph of Arimathea. We could create a fantastic story about Joseph, but it would be incorrect.
  2. Like the little boy flipping through his Bible and reading a verse here and there "And he went out and hanged himself... Go and do likewise... what you do, do quickly" (Matthew 27:5; Luke 10:37; John 13:27). It is evident why this is not a good method of study.
- B. Book By Book. Reading from cover to cover. But the Bible is a collection of inspired material, not a novel to be read from front to back.
  1. The order of its books are arranged according to subject matter, rather than order of occurrence.
    - a. Read of Israel's return from captivity (Ezra, Nehemiah) before reading the words of the prophets of that time (Ezekiel, Daniel)
    - b. New Testament is arranged this way
      - 1) History (Matthew - Acts)
        - a) History of Jesus (Matthew - John)
        - b) History of early church (Acts)
      - 2) Epistles (Romans - Jude)
        - a) Pauline epistles:
          - 1)) To churches (Romans - 2 Thessalonians)
          - 2)) To individuals (1 Timothy - Philemon)
        - b) General epistles
          - 1)) To Jews (Hebrews - James)
          - 2)) Of apostles (1 Peter - 3 John)
          - 3)) Of New Testament prophet (Jude)
      - 3) Prophecy (Revelation)

## II. PROFITABLE METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

- A. Guideposts. When studying the New Testament we need clear guideposts or markers to keep us from getting bogged down with the endless pursuit of facts, doctrines, etc. Otherwise we might get discouraged and confused

over difficult and obscure passages.

Everything in the Bible is important, but these suggestions will help you keep on track as you make detailed studies of New Testament books.

1. View The New Testament As The Fulfillment And Interpreter Of The Old Testament (Colossians 2:13-17; Hebrews 10:1-4). The New Testament includes many references and quotations to Old Testament things. Therefore, quotations and symbols used in the New Testament will appear natural, sound, and necessary.

The Old Testament was a "tutor" (Galatians 3:24) which protected and guided men, but also instructed them and taught of Christ (John 5:39-46; Acts 3:24-26).

Both testaments complement one another in one book -- the Bible. The Old Testament is the foundation on which the New Testament stands.

2. Survey The Entire New Testament Before Analyzing It. It is important to see the whole picture before concentrating on the parts. Thus one has a perspective and setting for each detailed part.
  - a. A doctor must know about the working of the entire human body before he can specialize in any area.
  - b. A builder must know what the house is going to look like when finished before he can begin building any of the rooms.
3. Recognize Key Revealed Truths Of The New Testament. These are re-occurring and everything within its pages are consistent with, pointing to, or an unfolding of these (along with other) fundamental truths.
  - a. Redemption is the prominent subject matter of the New Testament. God's plan, process, and working in man's redemption is emphasized.
  - b. Sin is man's basic, desperate problem. Jesus is God's merciful and gracious solution to that problem (Romans 3:23; 6:23; 3:24-26; 6:3-22; 12:1-15:13; etc.)
  - c. The human race has no hope outside of God's grace. It is the shining ray of hope when man had no other hope (Ephesians 2:8-9, 12). That grace must not be refused nor departed from (Hebrews 12:15,25; Galatians 5:4)
  - d. The gospel is a universal message. It meets the needs of every human and must be taken to all (Mark 16:15; Romans 1:16; Acts 1:8)
  - e. Faith coupled with works is man's necessary response to God's workings. It is a faith which not only believes, but takes hold of man's very soul and changes and guides his life (Hebrews 11:6; Ephesians 2:8-9; James 2:14-26)
  - f. The Holy Spirit is an active worker in this age. His work is no longer miraculous, but like the other two members of the Godhead, He is always ministering on behalf of God's children (Romans 8:11-17,26; Ephesians 2:18; 3:14-19; 6:17; etc.)
4. Accept The New Testament As God's Final Instructions For Living. Even though finished long ago, it is not antiquated, but is vital and vibrant and can lead us to godliness and righteous living (2 Peter 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

- B. Analytical Method Of Study. This is a very thorough and profitable method (more detailed description in next lesson).
1. Picture the whole (bird's eye view). Do so from different perspectives. What is the purpose of this step?
    - a. To see each part in its intended emphasis
    - b. To see each part in its relation to others
  2. Study the background of a particular book
  3. Determine the purpose of the book. Why was it written and why was it written in its unique style or form?
  4. Now you are ready to analyze the contents of the book
    - a. Get acquainted with the book (scanning, first impressions, atmosphere, keys, etc.)
    - b. Work with individual segments (sometimes divided into chapters). Helps you identify parts and movements of the book.
    - c. See how the book holds together. How do these sections and paragraphs blend together into a pattern.
- C. Subject Method Of Study. Material on Bible topics is scattered and must be gathered together to know what the Bible fully teaches on that subject.
1. Select subject
  2. Collect Bible references (all). Use concordances, dictionaries, topical Bible, etc..
  3. Study Bible references. Cross-reference passages and determine their relation to each other
  4. Organize findings. Use some sort of progressive arrangement (one point leads to another which leads to another)
  5. Illustrate and apply. Use Bible examples (people or events) and determine how such principles and teachings apply to us

### III. HISTORICAL BOOKS

- A. The Gospels. Their chief purpose is to relate the life and teachings of Jesus (Luke 1:1-3; John 20:31). Effective methods of studying these are:
1. Study them collectively, side-by-side, using a harmony of the gospels approach. This gives one an overall view of Jesus' life.
  2. Study them according to the periods of Jesus' life:
    - a. Infancy, Preparations, Galilean Ministry, Perean Ministry, Passion Week, Resurrection
    - b. Preparation, Obscurity, Popularity, Opposition, Persecution, Passion Week, Resurrection Days
  3. Study them separately with emphasis on the purpose of each gospel. The gospel writers had to be selective or the account would have been endless (John 21:25). Each gospel was designed for a different audience, therefore approached the subject in a different way.
    - a. Matthew. Was an apostle and eye-witness. He emphasized the manner in which Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy. He wrote primarily for Jewish readers.
    - b. Mark. Was associated with the apostles (cf. Mark 14:51-52?; Acts 12:12; 13:13; 15:36-39). He seems to have emphasized the great power of Jesus as exhibited in His miracles. Likely, he wrote primarily for Romans, who ruling the world, could understand and appreciate His power.

- c. Luke. Was not an eye-witness but carefully researched the subject before writing (Luke 1:1-4). His scholarly care was probably designed to appeal to his fellow Greeks.
  - d. John. An intimate friend and apostle of Jesus. He includes a systematic, representative list of Jesus' miracles and discourses (giving us insight into the man Himself). He emphasizes Jesus' claims to Deity along with His proofs to establish faith in men (John 20:30-31).
- B. The Acts Of The Apostles. This is a selected history of the works of the apostles following Jesus' death. It shows how they carried out Jesus' great commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). The book can be studied from many different angles:
- 1. Conversions
  - 2. Pattern for evangelizing the world
  - 3. Dealing with problems in the church

#### IV. EPISTLES

- A. The Epistles. The subject of all the epistles is Jesus Christ -- the sinner's Saviour, the Christian's sanctifier, and the king who will one day return for His people. They compress more ideas into fewer words than any other writings!!
- B. The Pauline Epistles. Paul's writings constitute a major portion of the New Testament (13 perhaps 14 letters). When studying, look for general theme and purpose.
- 1. Journey Epistles. These were written in transit as Paul travelled on his missions (see chart)
  - 2. Prison Epistles. Written during his first Roman imprisonment
  - 3. Preacher Epistles. Written to young preachers to guide them in their work
- A beneficial study of the epistles is in connection with Paul's missionary journeys in Acts.
- C. The General Epistles. These are fairly general in context and addressed to Christians in general. Written by other apostles and prophets of the first century (Hebrews - 3 John)

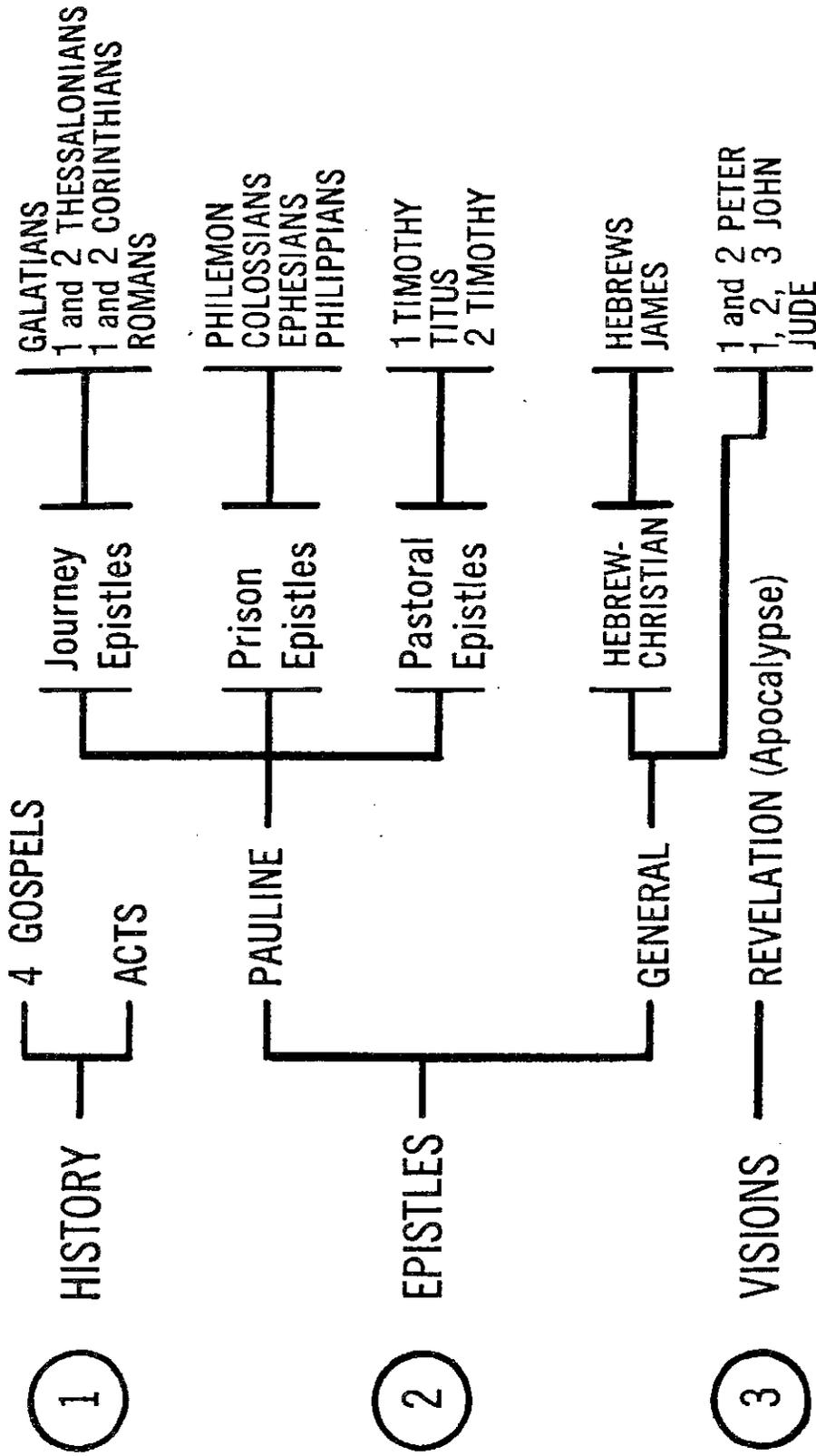
#### V. BOOK OF PROPHECY

- A. Revelation. It is a message to believers (1:1) and a warning to the enemies of God's people (6:12-17; chaps. 8-9; 17:14). A few basics will be helpful in studying this book:
- 1. Written in symbols (1:1)
  - 2. Discusses events shortly to take place (1:1,3; 22:6,10)
  - 3. Written to the people of John's day (1:4; cf. 2:7,11,17,27-28; etc.)
  - 4. Teaches that Jesus Christ is reigning now (1:5,9; 17:14; 19:11-16)
  - 5. Depicts the avenging of the saints (6:9-11; 7:13-34; 16:5-7; etc.)
  - 6. Depicts the spiritual realm (21:5; 1:10)

CONCLUSION: Studying the New Testament has eternal impact, therefore it is important that we learn how to study it and then study it!!

CHART 60

GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT



**A CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF  
THE WRITING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS**

CHART 1

BOOK	AUTHOR		PLACE WRITTEN	DATE A.D.	PERIODS		
					PERSONNEL	APOSTOLIC LITERATURE	CHURCHES
JAMES	James		Jerusalem	45		BEGINNINGS	FOUNDING
GALATIANS	Paul	JOURNEY EPISTLES	} Corinth	48	FIRST PAULINE PERIOD		
MARK?				52			
1 THESS				55			
2 THESS				56			
1 COR			Ephesus	55			
2 COR	Macedonia	56					
ROMANS	Corinth	56					
MATTHEW	Matthew		Jerusalem?	58	FIRST HISTORICAL RECORDS	CENTRAL	ESTABLISHING
LUKE	Luke		Rome	61			
ACTS	"						
COLOSSIANS	Paul	PRISON EPISTLES	Rome	61	CENTRAL PAULINE PERIOD		
EPHESIANS							
PHILEMON							
PHILIPPIANS							
1 TIMOTHY	Paul	PASTORAL EPISTLES	Macedonia	62	PAUL'S LEGACY		
TITUS			Corinth?	—			
2 TIMOTHY			Rome	67			
HEBREWS	?						
JUDE	Jude						
1 PETER	Peter			68?	PETER'S LEGACY		
2 PETER	Mark						
MARK							
JOHN	John		Ephesus?	85	JOHN'S LEGACY	CLOSING	CONTINUING
1 JOHN							
2 JOHN							
3 JOHN							
REVELATION			Patmos	96			

There are various opinions as to the order of writing. For example, some place Galatians later and Mark earlier.

**PROGRESSIVE ADDITIONS OF PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

CHART 61

GROUP	SETTING	EPISTLE	DATE A.D.	MAIN SUBJECTS	GENERAL PURPOSES	
I TRAVEL EPISTLES	between first and second journeys	GALATIANS	48	SALVATION at Present and in the Future	EVANGELIZING	TO CHURCHES
	second journey	1 and 2 THESSALONIANS	52			
	third journey	1 and 2 CORINTHIANS	55			
		ROMANS	56			
II PRISON EPISTLES	first Roman imprisonment	COLOSSIANS	61	CHRIST and the Christian Life	EDIFYING	TO CHURCHES
		EPHESIANS				
		PHILEMON				
		PHILIPPIANS				
III PASTORAL EPISTLES	release	1 TIMOTHY	62	CHURCH and its Workers	ESTABLISHING	TO INDIVIDUALS
		TITUS	62			
	second Roman imprisonment	2 TIMOTHY	67		personal farewell	

## CHRONOLOGY OF NEW TESTAMENT EVENTS

Year	Roman Ruler	Palestine Ruler	N.T. Books	N.T. Events
4 B.C.	Caesar Augustus	Herod the Great		Birth of John the Baptist Birth of Jesus
26 A.D.	Tiberius			Ministry of John Beginning of Jesus' Work
30 A.D.	Tiberius	Pontius Pilate		Crucifixion, Resurrection Ascension of Jesus Events of Acts 1, 2
31-33 A.D.				Church persecution; death of Stephen (Acts 7)
37 A.D.				Conversion of Saul (Acts 9)
40 A.D.				Conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10) Paul at Ephesus (Acts 11)
45-48 A.D.	Claudius	Herod Agrippa		Paul's first missionary Tour (Asia Minor)
50 A.D.				Jerusalem conference (Acts 15)
50-53 A.D.		Felix	1 Thess. 2 Thess.	Paul's 2nd Missionary Tour (Asia Minor, Greece)
54-57 A.D.			Matthew Mark 1 Corinthians (Spring, 57 A.D.) 2 Corinthians Galatians Romans (Winter, 57 A.D.)	Paul's 3d Missionary Tour (Asia Minor, Greece)
58-60 A.D.		Felix Festus	Luke James	Paul in prison at Caesarea. (Acts 23-26)
60-61 A.D.				Paul's trip to Rome (Acts 27, 28)
61-63 A.D.			Acts Ephesians, Philip- pians, Colossians, Philemon, Hebrews	Paul in prison at Rome
64-67 A.D.			1 Timothy Titus	Paul at liberty
67 A.D.	Nero		2 Timothy	Paul's second imprisonment
68 A.D.			1, 2 Peter Jude	Death of Paul
70 A.D.			John	Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus
90 A.D.			1, 2, 3 John Revelation	Death of John

Surveying A Book Of The Bible

INTRO: The fruits of Bible study are greatly determined by **how** the Bible is studied, or the method used. Of the various methods of study for any particular section of Scripture - Old or New Testament - **survey and analysis** are primary.

"Survey" is more than just reading a book and "analysis" more than just defining the words. Used in conjunction with each other, they open up the Bible and deliver the greatest benefit.

This lesson on the survey method of study is taken from "Jensen's Survey of the Old Testament" pp. 52-60 and "Jensen's Survey of the New Testament" pp. 85-94. Any of Irving Jensen's study guides will be helpful.

## I. PURPOSES AND PROCEDURES OF SURVEY STUDY

A. The Full Scope Of Bible Study. Bible study consists of three phases in the following order:

- 1) Observation -- seeing what the text says
- 2) Interpretation -- determining what the text means
- 3) Application -- applying the text to life

The order is very important. One is not prepared to interpret a Bible text until he has first seen what the text is really saying (observation) ... A good Bible student is not one who knows where all the verses he needs are stashed throughout the Bible (and can pull them out at will), but one who knows what those verses are saying in their context! (e.g. John 4:24; Matthew 24:36; Ephesians 4:12).

1. Survey. As applied to the study of a book of the Bible, is an **over-all** view of the book made from different perspectives. Other names given to this method are synthesis, overview, panoramic study, sky-scraper view, bird's eye view.

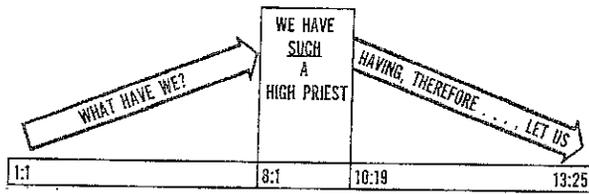
Picture the whole (survey) **then** analyze the parts (analysis). This is the correct procedure for in-depth Bible study. Don't try to scrutinize isolated verses without knowing the complete context. Not only might you not have as full an understanding, but you might come to false conclusions and teach false doctrines!!

## B. Purposes And Aims Of Survey Study

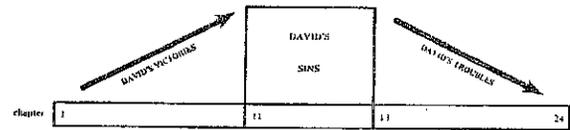
1. To See Each Part In Its Intended Emphasis. Making a survey of the highlights of a book before analyzing the details is a guard against the two extremes of overemphasizing **or** minimizing the point of any one part of Scripture.
2. To See Each Part In Its Relation To The Other Parts. An individual verse studied in isolation could be both obscure and difficult. The survey method of study keeps you aware of the context, both near and far.
3. Other Aims Of Survey Study.
  - a. Observing the total structure of the book. Most books of the Bible are not just collections of spiritual truths and facts. The words are meaningful because their writer, inspired by the Holy Spirit, organized them around themes in such a way as to express the intended truths.

For example, what impresses you about the overall structure of Hebrews and 2 Samuel as shown in the diagrams on the next page?

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS



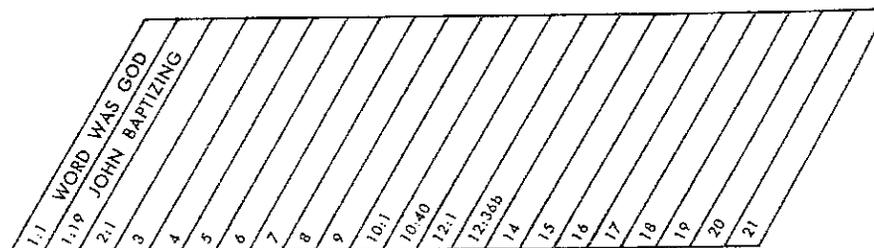
THE BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL



- b. Observing the content of the book. In survey study we are interested in **what** the Bible says (content) as well as **how** the Bible says it (structure). In surveying the content we do not tarry over details, as we would do later in analyzing the text. Here we keep our eyes open to highlights such as key events, prominent persons, emphasized truths. These are the best clues for us in determining the book's main theme.
  - c. Getting the feel of the book's atmosphere. Your personal involvement in the Bible text will greatly help to make your study effective. Survey study helps you catch the tone of the book you are studying as though "you were there".
  - d. Relating each book to the others and to the Old or New Testaments as a whole. This is best and most easily done after a survey of the books has been made.
  - e.. Deriving spiritual lessons from the book's overall thrust. We see the important issues of life because we are constantly observing **emphasized** truths.
- C. Procedures Of Survey Study. After you have studied the background of a particular book of the Bible (date, authorship, etc.) you are ready to survey the Bible text itself. Three main stages are involved. The progression of these stages is from first impressions, to repeated impressions, to lasting impressions.
- A fresh approach is important in Bible study. In survey, read the book as though you have never read it before, in order to awaken your heart and mind from the dangerous sleep of letting the fantastic, earth-shaking story of the evangel become commonplace, trite, and ordinary.
1. Stage One: Get Acquainted With The Book.
    - a. Scanning. Scan the book in one sitting if possible. This breaks the ice and introduces you to the book. It is not necessary to read every word or line at this time, especially of long books. If your Bible has paragraph divisions, reading the first sentence of each paragraph will suffice. If your Bible has chapter or paragraph headings, note those as you scan the book.
    - b. First Impressions. Write down your first impressions of the book. They are not always enduring, nevertheless they are necessary. Throughout your reading, maintain an openness and pliability so you can be impressed.
    - c. Atmosphere. Try to identify the atmosphere of the book as a whole. Atmosphere words are tone words such as "love", "conflict", etc.
    - d. Keys. List any key words and phrases that stand out as of this first reading. Those which may be repeated often or reoccurring.
  2. Stage Two: Working With The Individual Segments.

- a. Divide the book into segments. Scan each of the segments and determine the main subject of each (a segment is a group of paragraphs that represents a unit of thought). A segment may be longer or shorter than a chapter.

### SEGMENT TITLES OF JOHN



- b. Assign a segment title to each unit and record these on paper (a segment title is a strong or picturesque word or short phrase, preferably taken from the text, intended to serve as a clue to at least one part of the segment).  
The value of this step is not only in the segment title itself, but also in the mental process of beginning to identify parts and movements of the book.
  - c. It is important for you to develop and use your own ingenuity and originality regarding what to look for (observations) in Bible Study!
3. Stage Three: Seeing How The Book Holds Together. Observe how the individual items which have been identified blend together into a pattern. This will help you see the theme more clearly and in more depth in its full scope.
    - a. Look for groups of material. Such groupings might be about places, people, things, doctrines, speeches, events and so forth (e.g. Exodus 25-31 is a group of chapters giving specifications for the tabernacle, Matthew 5-7 appears to be a long sermon by Jesus).
    - b. Compare the beginning and end of the book. This comparison will tell you much about the book especially if it is a narrative.
    - c. Look for a key turning point in the book. Not every book has such a pivotal point. Notice the examples of Hebrews and 2 Samuel cited earlier.
    - d. Look for a climax. If the book has a climax, try to observe a progression leading up to that point.
    - e. Read your list of segment titles a few times, and see if you can detect any movement in the action of the book if it is historical, or in doctrine if the book is non-historical.
    - f. Try to state the book's theme in your own words. Assign your own title to the book, a title that will reflect that theme.

## II. USING TOOLS AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS

- A. Supporting Materials. Along with these suggestions for your own survey of Bible books, various kinds of instructive material are given to benefit your study.

1. Background. Refer to supplementary sources for the background and setting of a book (date, authorship, historical events, characters, etc.). This material introduces you to the book.
2. Maps. Much of the Old and New Testaments are history, or have a historical background. Maps will help you focus and visualize the historical, geographical setting.
3. Survey Charts. Jensen has survey charts on every book in the Bible, and self-study guides with such material. His material, or any other good summary material will be an asset in getting the overall view of a book.
4. Outline. A brief outline of a Bible book is a handy tool for making your own survey.

#### B. Tools For Survey Study

1. A Good Study Version Of The Bible. Cross-references will be a tremendous help.
2. An Exhaustive Concordance. Often you will want to see how many times (and where) a particular word appears in a New Testament book.
3. A One-Volume Commentary. You may use this occasionally, mainly in connection with difficult passages or such things as customs, geography and history. But the best method of study overall is independent study because it encourages you to focus on the Bible text itself.
4. Pencil and Paper. Always keep a pencil in your hand when studying, either to mark your Bible or to jot down observations on paper. Recording not only provides a permanent record of what has been observed in Bible Study, it also initiates other lines of inquiry.
5. Colored Pencils. As you survey a book, you might underline or highlight similar references, words, etc. But the use of color loses its effectiveness whenever it is overdone. Hence, the advice here is to use this method for only a few major subjects, words, or phrases.

(See "Sharpening The Sword" Notebook)

**CONCLUSION:** Full Bible Study, whether survey or analysis, is a thrilling challenge to all believers. It calls for reflection and meditation. Reflection requires time and concentration, and the good Bible student will give both (cf. Acts . . . 17:11).

If you are in earnest about making your own personal Bible study fruitful, you can identify with the following four words -- thirst, toil, time, and teachableness. Then involve and apply yourself because one's own original and independent study of the broad pattern of a Bible book, imperfect as the conclusions may be, is of far more value to the student than the most perfect outline obtained from someone else!!

**\*\* Assignment:** Choose one book from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament and survey their contents. Divide each book into segments and assign a title (preferably a phrase from the book) to summarize its content. Give the book a concise outline to emphasize its direction.

Common Sense Bible Interpretation

INTRO: How can we understand (interpret) the Bible? The same way we understand human language generally. Interpreting Scripture is no different from interpreting another person's conversations or written letters.

Hermeneutics and its rules of interpretation are guidelines we use to help us properly grasp God's word. They are not man's clever rules for manipulating and twisting the Bible to make it say what he wants it to say (cf. 2 Peter 3:15-16), but are a description of how **all** language works!!

We might get uneasy about rules of interpretation and lose all hope that the Bible can be understood without knowing them all -- the truth is that we have used them since childhood unaware of their existence and we literally use them daily without thinking.

Understanding and interpreting the Bible is not as difficult as it seems (Ephesians 3:4), but we must be fair and consistently interpret the Bible the way we would **any** other words (Deuteronomy 30:11-14; cf. Romans 10:6-10).

## I. WHAT IS INTERPRETATION?

A. Hermeneutics. This is the word often used in connection with Biblical interpretation. Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation. It is derived from the Greek word "Hermes" who was the messenger of the gods and the interpreter of Jupiter.

The word "hermeneutics" is a transliterated form of the Greek word "hermeneuo" which means "to explain". Different forms of this word are used in the New Testament.

1. Of explaining words in another language (Matthew 1:23; Mark 15:22; John 1:38; Acts 13:8)
2. Of translating sentences from one language to another (Mark 5:41; 15:34)
3. With reference to the explanation of Jesus of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Himself (Luke 24:47)

Bible hermeneutics is very basically a system of sensible directions to follow for human minds to understand the Divine mind through that which is written (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:6-14).

B. Does The Bible Need Interpretation? At first glance we might say 'no' because we often hear people say "The Bible is open to a lot of different interpretations... That's just your interpretation... Everyone has a right to their own interpretation" to which we might respond "I don't have any interpretation, I just take what it says... We do not need to interpret the Bible, just read and obey it".

Does the Bible need to be explained and have its meaning extracted for us (interpreted)?

1. We do not need an **inspired** person to interpret it for us. There would be no reason for God to give His revelation to men in the Bible if that revelation needed inspiration to interpret it. God's word is inspired so the interpreter does not have to be (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
2. We must honestly say that the Bible has to be interpreted to be understood and applied (Nehemiah 8:8; Acts 8:36-38; 2 Timothy 2:15 where "handle aright" equals interpretation). Remember the three phases of Bible study -- observation, interpretation, application.

C. Is The Bible Understandable?

1. The Bible Is Capable Of Being Understood. Jesus spoke often with men as He traveled the countryside. Not only was He understood when He spoke plainly and directly (Matthew 27:63), but His meaning was also perceived when He spoke in parables and figures (Matthew 21:45).  
Not once did Christ excuse misunderstanding on the part of His hearers as being due to factors beyond their control. When His apostles misunderstood, he chided them for their mental laziness (Mark 8:14-17). And when His foes rejected His word, He rebuked them for their self-inflicted ignorance (John 12:34-40).
2. The Bible Is Capable Of Being Misunderstood. God's word is perfect, complete and understandable. But man is human and subject to error. He often misunderstands his fellowman. He is capable of misunderstanding the Lord too (cf. Matthew 13:15).

II. RULES FOR INTERPRETATION

- A. Common Sense. The Bible was not written to stump man or baffle him. It was written so that every man - literate and illiterate - could understand it when in contact with it.  
Use common sense. It is "common" because God gave it to every man. It is a natural human quality and can even be increased. A man with common sense can see when things agree and when they do not agree. What is the obvious meaning of the text in question? What is the logical, natural conclusion of the words spoken?  
God gave His word for the common man, in plain language, so that common people can easily understand it (1 Corinthians 1:18-28; 2:1-5). Those were the men who heard, understood, and accepted Christ's teaching (Mark 12:37).
- B. Let The Bible Be Its Own Interpreter. We must be content to let the Bible speak for itself. Then we must be willing to take the truth **exactly** as God has stated it without addition or subtraction (2 John 9; Revelation 22:18-19).
  1. Let The Bible Give Its Own Explanation Of A Passage.
    - a. Revelation. This book is subject to many different interpretations. But what does the book tell you about itself?
      - 1) Written in symbols (1:1)
      - 2) Pertained to events shortly to come to pass (1:1-3; 22:6-7, 10,12)
      - 3) Jesus Christ is reigning **now** (1:5)
    - b. Matthew 24. Although He eventually tells them of those things which will happen at the end of the world (chapter 25), the events of this chapter deal with the destruction of Jerusalem (24:1-2,34)
    - c. Ezekiel 37. Mormons use this passage and the two sticks in Ezekiel's hand as "proof" that the Bible and Book of Mormon must be taken together (37:15-17). Ezekiel said this symbolic action meant that the nations of Israel and Judah, which had been divided, would again be united (37:18-28).
  2. Don't Read Something Into The Passage That Isn't There. Be content with taking what the passage says. Don't claim a passage teaches something when it says nothing about it.

- a. John 3:16. Salvation by faith only is not taught in that passage!
  - b. John 15:1-8. Denominationalism, with all its different religious branches, is some people's explanation of that passage. Jesus did not say that.
  - c. James 1:27. Church action read into that passage. James is not talking about church work, but individual Christian's responsibility.
  - d. Revelation 20:4. Premillennialism read into that passage although it says nothing about Christ's second coming, setting foot on earth, earthly throne in Jerusalem, rapture, etc.
  - e. Acts 16:33-34. This is not proof to substantiate infant baptism. There is no way of knowing that infants were in that household!
3. The Bible Does Not Contradict Itself. Any explanations which conflict with the teaching of the passage itself or passages throughout the rest of the Bible, has to be wrong!! God is not guilty of "double talk". He does not say one thing in one place and another thing in another place.
- a. Faith and Works (Romans and James). The teachings in Romans concerning faith and James concerning works are not contradictory. Actually they help complement one another showing how both faith and works are essential and inseparable.
  - b. Baptism. The Bible does not teach in one passage that baptism is essential for salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38) and in another teach that baptism is not essential for salvation!!
4. Take The Sum Of All The Bible Says About A Subject. Don't leave off passages which seem to conflict with a theory or teaching. The only way to know the fulness of God's will is to take the entirety of the Bible teaching on that subject (Psalm 119:160). **All** the facts must be reported and assembled into an explanation that is completely consistent with all the rest of Scripture (cf. Acts 15:1-29).
- a. The pattern of the church. Its worship, practices, organization, etc. must be deduced from all New Testament passages which speak concerning these things. This is God's pattern which must be followed (cf. Hebrews 8:5).
5. Understand A Passage In Relation To Its Context. The "context" of a word or expression is that part of the passage which is immediately connected with it, both preceding and following it. The context is determined by what is being discussed in that paragraph, chapter, or section.
- To take a passage out of its setting and give to it a meaning out of harmony with the surrounding verses, and a meaning that was never meant by the writer will do violence to the Scriptures and follow a precedent set by the devil (2 Peter 3:15-16; Matthew 4:5-7).
- a. 1 Corinthians 1:17. Does this passage teach that Paul did not want to baptize anyone or that he was glad there was not a faction there saying "I am of Paul"?
  - b. 1 Corinthians 10:23a. Are lying, stealing, adultery, etc. alright? The context shows that this "all things" has limitations. He is talking about things which are already lawful (like eating of meats), but some are not edifying.
  - c. 2 Corinthians 10:4. Used to show that a Christian cannot bear arms in war. Note the context.

It is easy to impose one's preconceptions on a text in order to bolster some "church doctrine" or personal opinion. The objective in Bible study though should be to learn just what God has to say. Manipulating God's words is nothing short of blasphemy!!

- C. Determine If The Language Is Figurative Or Literal. Oriental language, like our own, is full of figurative speech and expressions which serve to spice up or make our words more vivid ("spice up" is just such a figure). We use figurative language for emphasis and to draw more attention to our words.

Since the Bible is written to the common man in the language of the common man, you would expect to find such figurative expressions. If we interpret figurative language literally or literal language figuratively we will certainly miss the meaning. How can we recognize figurative language?

1. The sense of the context will indicate it. Don't regard anything as figurative unless the context demands it.
  2. A word or sentence is figurative when the literal meaning involves an absurdity or impossibility (Jeremiah 1:18; Psalm 18:2; Matt. 8:22)
  3. The language of Scripture may be regarded as figurative, if the literal interpretation will cause one passage to contradict another.
  4. When the Scriptures are made to demand actions that are wrong, or forbid those that are good, they are supposed to be figurative (Matthew 18:8-9; Luke 19:26).
  5. When it is said to be figurative (John 2:18-22; 7:37-39)
  6. When the definite is put for the indefinite (James 4:13; Psalm 50:10)
  7. Common sense (John 4:10-16; Matthew 20:22-23; Jeremiah 51:7; 1 Corinthians 3:2)
- D. The Attitude Of The Inquirer Is Important To Accurate Interpretation.
1. Must Believe All The Bible. If it is God's word then it is **all** God's word and we must accept it (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Whether we understand it or not (Isaiah 55:8-9; 1 Corinthians 1:25).
  2. Expect To Understand It. Some don't understand because they don't think they can (Ephesians 3:3-4,8-9; 5:17)
  3. Desire To Do The Will Of God. If we are really looking for the truth and wanting to do God's will, we will recognize the truth (John 7:17). When we don't care about doing it, we will not see nor understand it (Matthew 13:15)
  4. Have A Love For The Truth. Otherwise God will let you believe a lie and be condemned (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). Don't go to the Bible just to prove some doctrine. With that attitude a man can "prove anything by the Bible", even though that doctrine may be false!!

CONCLUSION: The Bible is the greatest book in the world and we must give diligence to rightly divide, interpret, and understand it (2 Timothy 2:15). Interpreting it is not as difficult as it seems and is of the utmost importance!!

Interpreting Figures Of Speech

INTRO: Language is full of figures of speech. A "figure of speech" is the extension of a word or expression beyond its ordinary use for the sake of ornament or force. But there is always an underlying relation of some sort between the figure and the actual thing, by which the figurative word is justified.

That may sound scary and confusing, but this is the way **all** languages are. These figures of speech are all normal methods of human speech, therefore don't be afraid you will never understand which of these figures apply to Bible ; phrases. They will usually be obvious:

These are not sets of rules to be used to make the Bible say what we want it to say. Actually, if we **do not** recognize these figures it will allow people to make the Bible say what they want it to. Many wild speculations and theories will be quieted by recognizing these simple figures (John the Baptist -- Malachi 4:5-6; Matthew 11:14; Jesus' ascending into heaven twice - John 20:17,27).

Try to think of a modern example of each type of expression mentioned in our everyday language. Write it in your notes.

## I. INTERPRETTING FIGURES OF SPEECH

- A. Metaphor. A figure which applies the name of one thing to another because of some resemblance, real or supposed, between them.
1. 1 Corinthians 3:16. "Ye are the temple of God"
  2. Luke 13:31-32. "That fox"
  3. Matthew 26:26-28. "This is my blood". The error of the Catholics and Lutherans could be avoided by understanding this. A metaphor figure means "this represents".
  4. Matthew 5:13-16. "Ye are the light", "Ye are the salt"
  5. 1 Corinthians 5:6-8. "Purge out the old leaven"
  6. In this sense Jesus is called...
    - a. The door of the sheepfold (John 10:7)
    - b. The vine (John 15:1)
    - c. The Lamb of God (John 1:29)
    - d. The lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5)
  7. Modern expression.
- B. Simile. A figure which indicates resemblance from a formal comparison using such terms as "like" and "as".
1. 1 Peter 1:24. "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of the grass"
  2. Matthew 23:27. "Like unto whited sepulchres"
  3. Acts 2:1-3. "sound from heaven as a rush of mighty wind", "cloven tongues like as of fire"
  4. Matthew 7:24-27. "liken him unto a wise man"
  5. Modern expression.
- C. Allegory. A figure which is also based on resemblance, and indirectly suggests one thing through the representation of another.
1. Psalm 80:8-14. Israel is allegorically represented by a vine. Parables and fables are allegorical representations.
  2. Ecclesiastes 12:2-6. Lesson is the value of serving God in one's youth.

3. Ephesians 6:11-17. Lesson is we must be armed for the fight against Satan and spiritual forces of wickedness.
  4. Galatians 4:21-31. Paul's allegory of the two women which represent the two covenants
    - a. Two women
      - 1) Hagar and Sarah
      - 2) Ishmael by bondwoman. Isaac by free woman
      - 3) Ishmael after the flesh. Isaac by promise
      - 4) Cast out bondwoman and son. Not heirs with Isaac
    - b. Two covenants
      - 1) Hagar (the old law, Mt. Sinai, earthly Jerusalem). Sarah (the new testament, Jerusalem from above).
      - 2) Children of Hagar (under the law, in bondage). Children of the new covenant (are free).
      - 3) New covenant was object of promise to Abraham
      - 4) Cast out the law. Our liberty is not under law, but under the new covenant.
  5. Modern expression.
- D. Metonymy. A figure which exchanges the name of one thing for that of another on account of some relation between them. The principle varieties of the figure will indicate the kind of relation in each case.
1. The name of the cause is put for the effect
    - a. Luke 16:29. "They have Moses and the prophets", i.e. their writings.
  2. The effect is named when the cause is meant
    - a. Luke 2:30. "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation", i.e. "have seen the Lord's Christ", the source of salvation. (cf. v.26)
  3. An abstract term is used to represent a concrete reality
    - a. Romans 8:10. "The spirit is life because of righteousness", i.e. the spirit is living.
  4. The virtual is represented as the actual
    - a. 1 Corinthians 15:31. "I die daily"
  5. The name of the container is used to denote the thing contained
    - a. 1 Corinthians 11:26. "as often as you drink the cup"
  6. Modern expression.
- E. Synecdoche. A figure in which anything less or anything more is put for the precise object meant. It's principle varieties are:
1. The whole is put for a part
    - a. Luke 2:1. "All the world". The Roman Empire
    - b. Acts 24:5. Tertullus charged that Paul was a "mover of insurrections among the Jews throughout the world". Here the world is put for part of it in which Paul had worked and had an influence.
  2. A part is put for the whole
    - a. Acts 27:37. "Soul" is used to signify the whole man
    - b. Genesis 46:27. "All the souls of the house of Jacob... were threescore and ten". Here the souls of Jacob's kindred are put for the entirety of these people.
    - c. John 3:16. Regarding the conditions of salvation, often "faith" which is the first requirement is put for the whole plan of salvation. Faith is an all-inclusive word. Passages which mention repentance do not rule out baptism, nor does baptism rule out faith.

3. Time is put for part of time
    - a. Leviticus 25:46. Sometimes the term "forever" is meant to exhaust the period to which it belongs.
    - b. Because the term is sometimes used figuratively does not mean it always is.
  4. Plural is put for singular
    - a. Genesis 8:4. "The mountains of Ararat"
    - b. Genesis 21:7. Sarah referred to giving children (plural) suck when she only had one.
  5. Singular put for plural
    - a. Genesis 2:24. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother" included not only Adam but all men.
    - b. Exodus 15:1. "Horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea" included all the Egyptians who perished at that time.
  6. Definite number put for indefinite
    - a. 1 Corinthians 14:19. "Five words with understanding... than ten thousand in an unknown tongue"
    - b. Psalm 50:10. "Cattle upon a thousand hills" said to belong to the Lord.
    - c. Matthew 18:22. "Until seventy times seven".
    - d. Revelation 5:1. Ten thousand often stands for a very great number though indefinite.
  7. General put for the particular
    - a. Joel 2:28. "Pour out my Spirit upon all flesh", cf. 1 Corinthians 15:39
    - b. Mark 16:15. "Preach to every creature" means every responsible creature.
  8. Modern expression.
- F. Antithesis. A grouping of opposites in a formal contrast. It may be single, twofold, threefold, etc. according to the number of opposite thoughts on each side of the contrast.
1. Romans 6:23. "The wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life" is a triple antithesis.
  2. 1 Peter 5:2-3.
  3. Modern expression.
- G. Paradox. A figure in which opposites are seemingly affirmed of one and the same subject.
1. Matthew 10:39. "He that finds his life shall lose it"
  2. 2 Corinthians 12:10. "When I am weak, then I am strong". The force of the figure is in the apparent **opposition** when there is actually agreement discovered by considering the difference in meaning of the terms used. When Paul felt his own weakness as a man, he could realize that he was strong in the Lord.
  3. Modern expression.
- H. Irony. A figure in which what is meant is the opposite of what is asserted. Often has a tint of sarcasm to it.
1. Job 12:2. "No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you"
  2. 1 Kings 18:27. Elijah's ironic ridicule of the prophets of Baal.

- I. Allusion. A figure in which a truth is designated by a sort of indirect, ironical application to a name falsely employed by others as descriptive of the subject.
- a. 1 Corinthians 1:21. "It was God's pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe" i.e. through what the philosophic Greeks regarded as foolishness (1:23).
- J. Hyperbole. An impressive exaggeration for the purpose of expressing the full force and increasing vividness of the subject presented.
- a. Psalm 119:136. "Mine eyes run down with rivers of water"
  - b. Sometimes done in excitement. Sometimes to give added emphasis to a description.
  - c. Numbers 13:33. "We are as grasshoppers in their sight"
  - d. Psalm 6:6-7. David's expression of great sorrow.
  - e. Ephesians 3:8. Paul's expression of his humility.
- K. Climax. Such an arrangement of matter that the thought, in regular gradation, rises from a lower to higher, or falls from a higher to lower conception.
- a. 1 Corinthians 3:23. "All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's". Climax ascending.
  - b. 1 Corinthians 12:28. "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues".
- L. Personification. A figure that clothes inanimate objects with the attributes of the animate.
- a. Isaiah 55:12. "All the trees of the field shall clap their hands"
- M. Paronomasia. A play upon words, a figure in which a word is repeated with a variation in the sense.
- a. Matthew 8:22. "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead"
- N. Interrogation. A figure of speech in which a question is asked, not for information but to make a strong affirmation or denial.
- a. Romans 8:33. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"
  - b. Romans 8:31. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"
  - c. Modern expression.
- O. Anthropomorphism. A figure which ascribes human features or elements of the human form to God.
- a. 1 Peter 3:12. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears unto their supplication".
  - b. Modern expression.
- P. Anthropopathy. A figure that ascribes human affections to God.
- a. Genesis 6:6. "It repented God that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him in His heart"
  - b. Modern expression.

CONCLUSION: We can regard neither a word or a phrase as figurative unless it involves an absurdity or unreasonable course to do otherwise. It is not an arbitrarily made decision based on what a person **thinks** it means!!

Neither must figures be pressed beyond the point or points of resemblance of the intended lesson. The parables of Jesus have especially been butchered in this respect at the hand of careless interpreters. Some of the story was merely a backdrop against which to set the lesson of the story. The true understanding of a figure must be gathered from the context and the author's design and purpose.

The harmony of a figurative description must be preserved throughout its interpretation. When Paul said "Ye are God's building" and then cautions those who built this spiritual house to "take heed" of the kind of materials used in its erection -- the suitable kind "gold, silver, and costly stones" and the unsuitable kind "wood, hay, and stubble" it would be a total disregard of the figure to represent these different materials as different **doctrines** instead of different **persons** who are the living stones (cf. 1 Peter 2:15).

Understand the use of figures and gain the value from the richness of their expression.

Bible Idioms

INTRO: Every language has its own peculiar vernacular -- words, phrases and manners of expression. Even English has various dialects and manners of expression (slang, jive, cajun, soul, preppie, etc.).

The Hebrew people also had their own unique idioms of language. An idiom is "a unique feature of grammar or a figure of speech" (Robert Young) or "language peculiar to a person or group" (Webster). The Hebrews were very expressive people, using a rich, full, and passionate speech.

Understanding some of these manners of speech (idioms) is important to understand the full impact of Hebrew expressions and the teachings of Scripture.

## I. ASSORTED BIBLE IDIOMS

- A. Order Of Importance. Biblical writers often narrate events in the order of their importance, rather than the order in which they occurred. This indicates that **what** happened was of utmost importance to them -- more so than **when** it happened.

Writers often group similar material together rather than following a historical chronology. Many alleged contradictions are cleared up by recognizing this principle of Jewish writers.

1. Daniel. The first six chapters are a unit of chronological events in Daniel's life and the last six chapters are a collection of some of his visions which occurred at various times.

A probable chronological order for these chapters is 1,2,3,4,7,8, 5,9,6,10,11,12.

2. Jeremiah. This book is composed of sketches of biography, history and prophecy, and is grouped according to subject matter which sometimes strays away from the chronology of events.

The outline of the book begins with Jeremiah's call (1), prophecies of doom (2-20), then tells of his relationship with Zedekiah and the people's punishment, with some 10 year old prophecies during the reign of Jehoiakim thrown in (21-29). Jeremiah then prophesies of the restoration and new covenant (30-39). Tells of events after Jerusalem's fall (40-45), then groups together many prophecies made in his life concerning foreign nations (46-51). It closes with a historical appendix.

- B. Significance Of Numbers. Throughout the Bible certain recurring numbers are used to indicate literal quantity and to represent an idea. Certain numbers, their multiples, and combinations with other numbers have much significance (especially in the apocalyptic books of prophecy).

Observing the use of certain prominent, recurring numbers in their context, reveals certain characteristics depicted by those numbers.

1. Fractions (one-half, one-third, one-fourth). They are used in a symbolic or figurative sense to designate a minor portion of the whole under discussion (cf. Exodus 24:6; Revelation 8:1,7-12; 9:15,18; 12:4; 6:8).
2. One. Used primary to denote a single unit. May be used symbolically to represent unity or oneness in order (Matthew 19:4-6; John 17:20-21; Revelation 17:12-13; 18:8,10,17,19)
3. Two. Seems to suggest strength (Ecclesiastes 4:9-11; Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; Luke 10:1; Revelation 11:3-4).

4. Three. Appears to be symbolic of a complete and ordered whole. As all completeness and fulness in the absolute degree are found in God and the Godhead, it is only natural for men to come to think of it as the divine number too -- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20; 3:13-17; 16:21).
  5. Four. Evidently is the number symbolic of the world or any of God's creation (Isaiah 11:12; Jeremiah 49:36; Ezekiel 1:5-8; 10:9; 14:21; 37:9; Zechariah 1:18,20; 2:6; 6:1-2,5).
  6. Six. Seems to represent that which is human. It is "the number of a man" (Revelation 13:18). Seven expressed the idea of perfection or completeness (see below). So six, which falls short of the sacred seven, can never be seven nor reach perfection. Therefore it symbolizes the imperfect, that which is human and destined to fall (cf. Daniel 3:1; Luke 13:14; Revelation 4:8). 666 represents that which was completely human and doomed to fall.
  7. Seven. Stands as the numerical symbol of the complete or perfect (as in God's creation, Genesis 2:2). Look in your concordance to see the prominent occurrences of this number. The Book of Revelation alone uses this number extensively. John mentions seven churches, spirits, lampstands, stars, lamps of fire, seven seals, horns, eyes, angels, seven trumpets, thunders, etc. (cf. Matthew 12:45; 18:22; Acts 6:3; 13:19).
  8. Ten. Seems to have been a favorite symbolic number, suggestive of a rounded total, large or small, a complete number. It also appears to indicate fulness of power or rule (Daniel 7:7-10,20-24; Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:3,7,12,16).  
Multiples of ten (1000, 144,000, 10,000 times 10,000) and larger numbers indicate fulness to a superlative or unlimited degree (Psalm 50:10; Revelation 20:4; 7:4; 14:1; Daniel 7:10; Revelation 5:11; etc.).
  9. Twelve. Thought to be a religious number, bearing a symbolic religious idea or concept. Over and over again the number is used in relation to people, worship, and families of the ancient nation (Genesis 49:28; Exodus 28:15-21; Leviticus 24:5; Numbers 7:78-87; 1 Kings 7:25).  
Also under the New Covenant, the number twelve seems to have the same significance (Matthew 10:1-5; 19:28; James 1:1; Revelation 7:4-8; 21:12,14,19-21).
  10. Three And A Half. Each time it is used, it is used of trial, hardship and testing. Yet it is not a complete, never-ending hardship. It is a temporary one (James 5:17; Daniel 7:25; 12:7; 9:27. Revelation 11:9,11,2,3,7; 12:6,14; 13:5,7).
- C. Significance Of Colors. Certain colors seem to have symbolic references when used in the construction of the tabernacle and set up of worship and in visions of the prophets.
1. White. It has a direct significance because light is white. It denotes purity, holiness and righteousness (Leviticus 16:4,32; Isaiah 1:18; Daniel 7:9; 12:10; Matthew 28:2-3; Revelation 1:13-14; 4:4; 7:9,13-14; 19:8,11,14).
  2. Black. A symbol of affliction, calamity and death. Also an omen of evil (Job 10:20-22; Isaiah 50:3; Joel 2:6,10; Zephaniah 1:14-15; Matthew 25:30, Jude 13; Revelation 6:5; 16:10).
  3. Red (Crimson, Scarlet). Symbolic of various ideas according to context.

- a. Type and shadow of atonement (Numbers 19:2,5; Hebrews 9:19-23).  
Red was the blood of the sacrifices.
  - b. Sin and iniquity (Isaiah 1:18; Revelation 17:3-4)
  - c. God's judgment (Isaiah 63:1-3; Revelation 19:11-16)
  4. Blue. A symbol of Deity to the people, blue pointing man to heaven where God is (Exodus 24:10; Ezekiel 1:26; 10:1; Numbers 15:38-40).
  5. Purple (Crimson). A symbol of royalty. Purple was an expensive dye and was the color worn by kings (Judges 8:26; Esther 8:15; Daniel 5:7,16,29; Matthew 27:28).
  6. Gold. Pictured that which is precious or that which is of God (Revelation 1:12-13,20; 4:4; 5:8; 15:7; 21:18,21).
- D. Variant Names. The Bible often uses different names to refer to the same person or place. In some instances the individual goes by a different name, in others the name is changed because of an encounter with God or some other incident. It is important to keep such characters straight.
1. Peter -- Simon, Simeon, Cephas, Simon Bar-Jonah
  2. Matthew -- Levi
  3. Elijah -- Elias
  4. Jehoiachin -- Coniah, Jeconiah
  5. Joseph -- Barsabbas, Justus
  6. Abram -- Became Abraham (Genesis 17:5)
  7. Jacob -- Became Israel (Genesis 32:28; 35:10)
  8. Gideon -- Became Jerubbaal (Judges 6:32; 7:1)
  9. Saul -- Became Paul (Acts 13:9).
- E. Modes Of Computation. The Jewish people used certain methods of computing time and making calculations which differ from ours.
1. Fractional Years Were Counted For Whole Ones. A king **could** be spoken of as reigning in his second year after only a few weeks if he began his reign at the end of one year and you were computing shortly after the beginning of the next year. A child born in the last week of the old year would be considered a year old the first day of the new year because he was born in the old year.  
Jesus was three days in the ground before His resurrection because He was buried late in the day Friday and arose at the break of the day Sunday (Mark 8:31).
  2. Jewish Day Began At 6:00 In The Evening. "The Babylonians reckoned their days from sunrise to sunrise; the Romans, from midnight to midnight; the Greeks and the Jews, from sunset to sunset" (ZPEB, Vol. 2, p.45). It was comprised of night then day, evening and morning (cf. Genesis 1).
  3. Rounding Off Numbers. It was common practice for the Bible writers to round off to the nearest 10,100,1000. This can cause confusion if the reader thinks every number should be taken literally.
    - a. Genesis 15:13 (400 years) Galatians 3:17 (430 years)
    - b. Exodus 12:37 -- 600,000 fighting men
    - c. Acts 2:41 -- 3000 souls converted
    - d. Acts 4:4 -- 5000 believers
- F. Assorted Words And Expressions.
1. Hell. There are three Greek words in the New Testament translated by the one English word 'hell', which results in confusion.

- a. Hades. This is a transliteration of the Greek word. The word itself means "the unseen" and designates the region of departed or disembodied spirits (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:27,31; Revelation 1:18). It was most graphically described in the account of the Rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).
  - b. Gehenna. Literally means the "valley Hinnom". It was a defiled, unclean refuse heap where the bodies of criminals, animals and all sorts of filth were cast. Jesus used its symbolism to speak of the everlasting punishment of the wicked (Matthew 5:22,29-30; 10:28; 23:33; Mark 9:43f).
  - c. Tartarus. The prison of the fallen angels who are reserved in ward unto the day of judgment (2 Peter 2:4; cf. Jude 6).
2. Day Of The Lord. The Scriptures often speak of "the day of the Lord" or "the coming of the Lord" without having reference to Christ's final triumphant return. Do not automatically think of the end of the world when you hear that phrase. Examine the content.
- This is an important theme which runs through the prophetic books (cf. Isaiah 2:12f; Ezekiel 13:5; Amos 5:18-20; Zephaniah 1:7,14; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 3:1-3; 4:1-6; Matthew 24:3,29-34; Revelation 22:7,12,20).
- It is "the moment when Jehovah grasps the reins which He seems to have held slackly before... and the Lord's work upon the earth is at last fully performed" (Davidson). The phrase does not always refer to the final coming of Christ, but **does** refer to the Lord coming in judgment to punish the guilty and reward the faithful.
- The ultimate "day of the Lord" foreshadowed by all these other times of judgment in history is the final day of judgment (2 Peter 3:10-13).
3. Mystery. Does not denote the mysterious (secret, enigmatic, unexplainable) but rather that which was not known and could not be known apart from divine revelation (Colossians 1:26). It is used of:
- a. Spiritual truth as revealed in the gospel (1 Corinthians 2:6-16)
  - b. Christ (Colossians 1:27; 2:2; 4:3; 1 Timothy 3:16f)
  - c. The church (Ephesians 5:32)
  - d. The change to immortality (1 Corinthians 15:51f)
  - e. The operation of those hidden forces that either retard or accelerate the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:11; Mark 4:11)

**CONCLUSION:** We have just touched the surface of Bible idioms. These unique expressions should not intimidate us in our Bible Study, but rather cause us to seriously work at it (Acts 17:11).

Understanding some of these characteristics and principles of the Hebrew and Greek language will open up a rich language and method of expression so we can understand and better appreciate what the Bible teaches.

## Establishing Bible Authority

INTRO: Divine authority is a very real issue at the base of most religious differences in doctrines and practices -- within the religious world as a whole and even between brethren in the Lord's church. It is an important matter because where there is no scripture, there can be no divine authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 John 9).

"...Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, 'See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain'" (Hebrews 8:5). The tabernacle was a type and symbol of what God was **actually** instructing him about -- "the heavenly things" (the church).

Therefore, we must build the church according to God's blueprints. That does not mean making a law or tradition for every conceivable human situation, like the Pharisees... but finding out what God wants us to do in the **only** way we can know how (1 Corinthians 2:6-13). Basing our religion on "Well, He never said we couldn't" or "I think it would be OK with God" is a very shaky foundation.

Establishing Bible authority is important. How do we do that?

### I. USING THE NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

A. All Scripture Is Profitable. But not all is binding as law on Christians today. We are to be governed today by the authority of Christ, not Moses and the prophets (Hebrews 1:1-2; Mark 9:2-8). We are "under law to Christ" and any attempt to combine the laws of Christ and Moses constitutes spiritual adultery (Romans 7:1-6; Galatians 5:1-4).

1. Old Covenant Taken Out Of The Way
  - a. Ephesians 2:11-16. Bringing Jews and Gentiles together
  - b. Colossians 2:14-17. Christ nailed it to the cross.
2. Christ The Mediator Of A New Covenant (Hebrews 8:6-13)

We cannot haphazardly pull out passages in the Old Testament to support a practice held dear. Such is a shameful use of God's word.

### II. ESTABLISHING BIBLE AUTHORITY

A. Expressed Statement. This is God speaking plainly and telling His people what He wants or does not want done. It may be a direct command or an obvious precept from a positive statement.

1. The Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-25)
2. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)
3. Baptism Is A Burial (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12)

B. Approved Example. These are the practices of the early church, done under apostolic guidance and approval, proving that they were by divine appointment (Matthew 16:19; John 20:22-23). We are urged to follow apostolic examples (1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 4:9).

Approved examples do show that the thing done is acceptable to God -- we can go that way with **no** fear of violating God's will.

1. The day to observe the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7)
2. Appointment of deacons in a local church (Acts 6:1-6)
3. Wearing the name "Christian" (Acts 11:26)

C. Necessary Inference. What authorizes is that which is **necessarily** implied, not just something that could **possibly** be implied by a passage. It must be an inescapable conclusion!!

Jesus even endorsed the validity of necessary inference as a means of establishing truth by His own use of it (Matthew 22:31-32).

1. Establishment of the church on Pentecost (Mark 9:1; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,41-47).
2. Frequency of the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7; cf. Exodus 20:8). Also the use of unleavened bread which is never specified (Matthew 26:17, 26-29; cf. Leviticus 23:4-8).
3. Christ's priesthood (Hebrews 6:20; 7:17,21; cf. Psalm 110:4). This writer makes an argument concerning Christ's priesthood on the basis of necessary implication. His conclusions, even though by implication, are indisputable (7:11-14)...
  - a. There was to be a change in the priesthood
  - b. There was to be a change of the law because a change in priesthoods would necessitate a change also of the law
  - c. Perfection could not be attained through the Levitical priesthood. If it could there would be no need for another to arise after the order of Melchizedek

### III. THE SILENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES

- A. Does God's Silence Give A License To Practice What Is Not Specifically Forbidden? Many people have the impression that if a thing is not expressly **forbidden** by a "Thou shalt not" then it is allowable. Their only defense is "where did God say **not** to do it?"

God tells us in several places that His words and instructions must not be tampered with. We cannot add to, take from, or modify in any way **anything** He said (Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:5-6; 1 Peter 4:11; 2 John 9; Revelation 22:18-19). God takes His word seriously whether we do or not!!

Any traditions **we** add will render our worship vain (Matthew 15:8-9).

- B. Does God's Silence Prohibit Any Practice Not Specifically Forbidden? Man can **only** know what pleases God by God's revelation, not His silence!! (1 Corinthians 2:6-13; Deuteronomy 29:29).

The **silence** of the word of God is as binding as what it **does** say!! It always has been.

1. Leviticus 10:1-2. Nadab and Abihu were consumed by the strange fire (which God never did specifically condemn or forbid). He told them what He wanted (cf. 16:12). He didn't **have** to forbid.
2. Galatians 1:6-9. Whoever preaches and espouses some doctrine that God has been silent about is accursed.
3. Hebrews 7:14; 8:4. Moses never said priests cannot come from the tribe of Judah. He didn't have to -- He specified Levites. That excluded **all** others. Even Jesus could not outstep that boundary without a completely new priesthood going into effect.

- C. Modern Religious Practices. These are all defended by the silence of the Scriptures, yet none of them have God's authority.

1. Burning incense and candles in worship.
2. Sprinkling and pouring for baptism. The Bible specifies a burial (Romans 6:3-4; Acts 8:38-39). The other methods impose on God's silence.
3. Playing musical instruments in worship. God said "sing" (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

4. Church sponsored recreation. The Bible speaks of its spiritual work, but not of church sponsored recreation or social activities (1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2).
5. Brotherhood elderships and sponsoring churches. The Scriptures limit the oversight of elders (1 Peter 5:2).

#### IV. KINDS OF AUTHORITY

##### A. General And Specific

1. General - "pertaining to, affecting or applicable to each and all of a class, kind or order; as 'general law'"
2. Specific - "precisely formulated or restricted; specifying; explicit; as a 'specific statement'"

General authority includes and specific authority excludes. With general authority, men have choices as to how that will be carried out, but when a method or action is specified, that excludes man's choices. That choice is divinely authorized when something is necessary to execute the divine order, but that something is not revealed.

##### B. Examples Of General Authority.

1. "Go" (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19). How can we "go" out to preach? Walk, ride, fly, sail, etc. Which way is authorized? God did not specify the method, but He did say to "go". Therefore, the choice is ours. Whichever method is deemed most expedient.
2. "Teach" (Matthew 28:19-20). How should we teach people? Teaching can be accomplished in private, public, classes, printed material, radio, TV, etc. God did not specify. He gave us the choice and freedom to use the most effective means of teaching for our circumstances.
3. "Assemble" (Hebrews 10:25). Where can Christians assemble for worship? There are many places where people can congregate -- homes, rented halls, buildings purchased for that purpose. Did God specify where He wanted saints to meet? If not, then we are authorized to secure a place in the best way we can as stewards of God's work.

##### C. Examples Of Specific Authority.

1. Noah's Ark. God told him to build it of "gopher wood". When He **specified** that it **excluded** walnut, pine, spruce, ash, oak, and any other kind. He had no right to add to God's instructions.
2. The water of cleansing (Numbers 19:2). God specified the ashes of a red heifer. That excluded the ashes of a sheep, goat, pig, horse, camel, brown heifer, black heifer or spotted heifer!! When God specifies, that excludes whatever else.
3. Singing (Ephesians 5:19; 3:16). Without a doubt, playing instruments was part of the Old Testament worship ritual. But does God want it today? The fact that He mentioned and commanded one and not the other means that God does care!
4. The Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23). The bread and fruit of the vine excludes all other emblems. The first day of the week excludes all other days.
5. The rule of elders (1 Peter 5:2; Acts 20:28). Excludes elders overseeing the work of other congregations, or overseeing some "brotherhood project".
6. Supporting preachers (Philippians 1:5; 4:14-17; 2 Corinthians 11:8). Churches send directly to preachers, excluding "sponsoring churches" missionary societies, etc.

CONCLUSION: God's word is intended to be studied (2 Timothy 2:15), understood (Ephesians 5:17) and then applied (Philippians 4:9).

It is a guide and standard for our lives (Psalm 119:105) and as such contains **all** things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3-4). It will judge us in the last day (John 12:48).

Thus the Bible becomes the most important possession a man can have. God intends for us to "rightly divide" it. Are you ready to??