AMBASSADOR COLLEGE **Bible** LESSON 4

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

How to Study the Bible

Why do so *few* really UNDERSTAND the Bible?

Why do we find such confusion—such disagreement as to what it says? WHY don't the hundreds of differing church denominations and sects AGREE on what their acknowledged textbook SAYS? WHY do so many individuals, capable of understanding almost any *other* book, say: "I just *can't* understand the BIBLE"?

Take a recognized textbook on biology. Show this book to ten different biology professors from ten different colleges and universities. Ask them what it says. They'll all give you the same answer. PEOPLE DO NOT DISAGREE AS TO WHAT BOOKS ACTUALLY SAY—EXCEPT WHEN IT COMES TO THE ONE BOOK of ALL the books—the Holy Bible! Did you ever stop to think of that?

But take the Holy Bible to ten different ministers or to professors of theology from ten different religious denominations, and ask them what God's Book says—and you'll probably receive ten different answers!

Didn't you ever wonder WHY? Here, certainly is the enigma of the ages! The most important, yet the least understood Book of *all* the books! Year after year, the world's BEST SELLER—the Book owned by more people than any other. The one Book that has *lived*, in spite of every effort to stamp it out, down through the ages—and still outsells all others! THE ONE BOOK WHICH HAS *foretold*, centuries in advance, the very chaotic and uneasy conditions of the world today—THE ONE BOOK THAT EXPLAINS THE MEANING of this perturbed condition—that opens before us to behold IN ADVANCE, the WONDERFUL, PEACEFUL, HAPPY WORLD that is coming TOMORROW! The one Book that predicted, in advance, the rise and fall of specific nations and governments—that reveals the DESTINY OF THE WORLD!

No mere *human*-devised book could reveal such things! If you want to know the most necessary, basic knowledge of all life—the very FOUNDATION of all right knowledge—WHERE WOULD YOU GO?

Purpose of the Bible

WHAT are we? Were we put on earth for a PURPOSE? And WHAT is that purpose? WHY are human lives empty, discontented, unhappy? How may human life become HAPPY, *filled* with interest, ABUNDANT, successful, prosperous? WHAT is the real cause of wars, and THE WAY to world peace? WHAT lies on after death—what is THE WAY to a happy, abundant, ETERNAL life? No book ever written, except the Holy Bible, REVEALS this FOUNDATION of all knowledge.

Are *these* questions important? One might ask, is anything ELSE important? You can find the answers to THESE questions *only* in this one divinely inspired, sacred volume!—and yet almost NO one has ever found the answers so PLAINLY written there! Here is the Book that, in spite of the human perversion of it, has *changed* more lives than all other books combined! And yet—it is *the* BOOK THAT NOBODY KNOWS!

The most *mis*understood book of history! The most twisted, distorted, misrepresented, maligned and lied-about! WHAT'S WRONG?

Why Is the Bible Misunderstood?

Here is the answer—and it is very plain!

The answer lies in the fact that people have NOT BEEN WILLING TO *OBEY* the precepts of this holy, divine Word—and therefore this world has LOST ITS WAY. In so doing it has not only lost PEACE, and HAPPINESS, and PROSPERITY, but it has also lost the knowledge of the PURPOSE of the Bible—it doesn't know what the Bible really IS!

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
Bible
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
LESSON 4
Herbert W. Armstrong, *publisher and editor*
Dr. C. Paul Meredith, *director*
Sent FREE to all who request it, as the Lord provides.
Address all communications to the editor, Box 111, Pasadena, California
© 1955 Ambassador College
463
Printed in U. S. A.

NOTICE: Be sure to notify us immediately of any change in your address. IMPORTANT!

Stop and think! Would a Creator, having supreme intelligence, wisdom and love to think out, to plan, design, and bring about *all creation—this earth*, and all life and life-functions upon it—have left His created beings in IGNORANCE of His PURPOSE—the PURPOSE of their being here—THE LAWS that would bring us PEACE, and HAPPINESS, and JOY, and everything good?

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S DIVINE REVELATION OF BASIC NEEDED KNOWLEDGE which mankind is not otherwise capable of finding out!

Absolutely no tools or instruments of science can ever tell you whether there is life after death—the PURPOSE of your being alive—where you are going—or the WAY to a happy, abundant life, or to universal PEACE. Our scientists, our world leaders and our statesmen have failed UTTERLY to tell us these answers, or to lead us into the universally desired PEACE with happiness, and JOYOUS living!

God Almighty did *not* hide from human minds these all-important truths. He made them accessible to mankind. *He committed His TREASURE-HOUSE of basic knowledge to* WRITING. He revealed THE WAY TO PEACE and everything the human heart desires!

Now, WHY do so few understand the Bible? WHY do all the different church denominations disagree as to what it says?

We find the answer in II Tim. 3:16-17: "All Scripture"—not just those few verses or PARTS of sentences you wish to apply to suit your desires, but—"ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God." It is ALL inspired—EVERY Scripture is inspired by the Eternal GOD—"and is *profitable* for"—WHAT? "...is PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

So the Scriptures are PROFITABLE for the purpose of REPROVING, of CORRECTING us! But how we do resent being reproved, and corrected! How many people do you know who are even WILLING to be corrected where they are in error—to be REPROVED for the wrong things they do!

Humanity Resents Correction

People DO NOT LIKE TO BE REPROVED AND CORRECTED! They love PRAISE—they like FLATTERY—but reproof and correction they surely HATE! Now do you see why it is so hard for so many people to understand the Bible, and to agree on just what it says? The Bible is God's great spiritual MIRROR. IT SHOWS UP EVERY FLAW IN OUR THINKING, reveals every spot on our characters. It pictures us AS WE REALLY ARE—as *God* sees us, not as we like to THINK we are, or as we like to have other men look upon us!

"For the Word of God," we read in Heb. 4:12, "is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword"—IT CUTS DEEP, and it CUTS BOTH WAYS, "...and is a discerner of the thoughts and INTENTS of the heart." Yes, it opens up and exposes and LAYS BARE THE INNER SOUL OF MAN!

When your little children do things that are wrong—that you have forbidden—do they usually admit it freely and frankly? Do they say: "Father, I cannot tell a lie. I did it"?—or do they usually DENY it as long as possible, then try to cover it up, excuse it, JUSTIFY it, or place the blame on somebody else? Yes, it's just human nature. WE are all only little children grown up; and so, when our heavenly Father speaks to us, through His Holy Scriptures, and reproves and rebukes, and corrects us, we usually do not like to ADMIT our errors, our faults, our wrong WAYS.

Too often, men have APPLIED SOME DIFFERENT MEANING to Scriptures that reproved them—they have passed right OVER *some* Scriptures that corrected and rebuked them or they have ignored them utterly, and have studied diligently to find some OTHER Scripture, or portion of Scripture, into which they could read a meaning THAT WOULD JUSTIFY THEIR COURSE! And so men began, centuries ago, to INTERPRET the Bible! God's Word has become twisted, wrested, perverted.

Almost every false and counterfeit meaning imaginable is read INTO it, instead of drinking the natural meaning—the plain, simple INTENDED meaning out of it! Today we have hundreds of human INTERPRETATIONS of the Bible. YOU NEVER HEAR OF HUNDREDS OF INTERPRETATIONS OF A CERTAIN BIOLOGY TEXTBOOK IN HUNDREDS OF COLLEGES! WHY? BECAUSE BIOLOGY TEXTBOOKS DO NOT REBUKE AND CORRECT MEN!

Instead of acknowledging the truth, repenting of the sin, having it legally justified by the blood of Christ, men seek to JUSTIFY THEIR OWN ACTS BY *PERVERTING* THE SACRED AND HOLY WORD OF GOD!

The MOST DIFFICULT thing on earth for the average person to do is to ADMIT IT and CONFESS IT and *repent of it* when he is wrong. OH how hard

that seems to be! Almost the rarest thing in this world is a person who will *always* acknowledge it when he is wrong, repent, and turn the other way. This world is FULL of people who PROFESS to be willing to do this. But the one who *does* it is a rare jewel.

Under God's inspiration, Paul continued to say, in II Tim. 4:1-4, that the time truly has come when the *many* do not endure SOUND doctrine. Men have turned away their ears from the TRUTH and have turned to FABLES! Yes, fables *palmed off* AS the truth of God's Word! ISAIAH prophesied that in these latter days men would demand, "Preach not unto US RIGHT things, PREACH UNTO US SMOOTH THINGS—PREACH DECEITS" (Isaiah 30:8-11).

Yet Another Reason

Here is another reason why the Bible is not understood. Did you ever stop to think that KNOWLEDGE can be transmitted to the human mind, naturally, ONLY THROUGH FIVE CHANNELS? The ONLY means by which the mind can receive ANY KNOWLEDGE, naturally, is through the eye, the ear, the nose, the mouth, or the sense of feeling—the five physical senses. But the Bible reveals SPIRITUAL things—and SPIRITUAL THINGS CANNOT NORMALLY BE SEEN, nor heard, nor tasted, nor felt, nor smelled. And so the NATURAL human mind is INCAPABLE of understanding these spiritual revelations.

Then notice I Cor. 2:14: "The NATURAL man" (that is, the natural-born, unconverted mind), "receiveth not the things of the SPIRIT of God: for they are FOOLISHNESS unto *him*: neither can he know them, *because they are* SPIRITUALLY *discerned*!"—revealed by GOD'S SPIRIT; for it says in the 10th verse, "God hath REVEALED them unto US BY HIS SPIRIT." And then again, you read that it is "the SPIRIT of Truth" which "will guide you into all Truth" (John 16:13). Since the Bible IS God's Word (it distinctly says "THY WORD IS TRUTH"), then it requires the HOLY SPIRIT TO OPEN UP to the human mind this marvelous revelation of God. Understand: THE HOLY SPIRIT *within* IS THE KEY WHICH ALONE CAN UNLOCK THE DOORS TO SCRIPTURAL UNDERSTANDING.

Thus, as this Scripture has said, WHEN WE RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT—when the mind becomes SPIRIT-led, then, through this *supernatural process* of God, spiritual knowledge is REVEALED, and the spiritual mind can begin to UNDERSTAND!

REPENT and BELIEVE

The CONDITIONS in the Bible for receiving God's Holy Spirit are basically TWO—REPENT, and BELIEVE. But, REPENT means *more* than being sorry. It means a complete YIELDING to the WILL OF GOD, *as that Will is expressed in His Word!* It means a complete willingness to accept, and to DO what Scripture teaches, no matter what the cost, the persecution, the sacrifice, or the effort!

Jesus said, as recorded in John 7:16, 17: "My doctrine is not mine, but HIS THAT SENT ME. If *any man will* DO HIS WILL, he shall *know* the doctrine." Yes, there is a condition: You must SURRENDER TO THE WILL OF GOD IF YOU WOULD COME TO UNDERSTAND the Bible.

MANY are like the man who once said, "I wouldn't do anything I thought was wrong for the world!" He was sincere, but the BIBLE says, "There IS a way that seemeth RIGHT to a man, but the ends thereof ARE THE WAYS OF DEATH!" (Pro. 14:12.) Therefore, since death is the penalty of SIN, then the ways that *seem* RIGHT to the natural mind of man MUST BE THE WAYS OF SIN.

GOD'S WHOLE PURPOSE is to RESCUE men from this FALSE way that appears so alluring—this way that seems RIGHT—and yet ends up in despair, and suffering, and death!

We read from Psalm 111:7-8, 10: "ALL His commandments are SURE. They stand fast FOREVER AND EVER and are done in truth and uprightness. The FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM: a GOOD UNDERSTANDING HAVE ALL THEY THAT DO HIS COMMANDMENTS!"

We can see now why men do not understand the Bible. They are not yielded to the Eternal's will—they are filled with the fear of MEN, instead of the fear of GOD. They tremble at the thought of what PEOPLE say—but we had all better begin to tremble at the WORD OF THE LIVING GOD.

TRUTH is REVEALED. It is revealed by GOD'S SPIRIT—and that involves a SUPERNATURAL ACT OF GOD. The terms and conditions are utter surrender—REPENTANCE, and FAITH.

DAVID had understanding. And David said, "THY WORD is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

Today's generation is like that of Jesus' day, of which He said, "This is the condemnation, that LIGHT is come into the world, and MEN LOVED DARKNESS, RATHER THAN THE LIGHT, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

Yes, the Bible is LIGHT—a lamp unto our feet—a LIGHT unto our path. Surely the world is in gross darkness.

How, then, can you understand the Bible?

Here is *how* you may begin this *thrilling*, soul-satisfying adventure.

Here is how *you* can begin to really UNDERSTAND the Bible.

First, SURRENDER to God, and the authority of His Word. Forsake *your* ways—*your* thoughts—and those of this world's society. Study to find TRUTH—to show yourself approved unto God. Ask God for guidance—ASK Him to reveal the true meaning. Then BELIEVE GOD—BELIEVE His Word—accept

it in its plain, simple, NATURAL meaning, just as you would accept any other book in which you had confidence. Be careful to PROVE all things. Be cautious—avoid jumping to hasty conclusions, or taking things carelessly for granted. And above all—do not try to *interpret* the Bible. *Don't* take the interpretation of any *man* or *church*. THE BIBLE INTERPRETS ITSELF.

God would not have us shut up our ears and our minds from HEARING what is being preached—even though it differs from what you have been taught. When the Apostle Paul came to Berea, the Bereans found he was preaching something utterly DIFFERENT than that which they had been taught and had believed. THEY did not know whether Paul was a *false* prophet, or a man sent *from God*. We read of them, in Acts 17:11: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind" (that is, WITHOUT PREJUDICE) "and SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, *whether* these things were so." STUDY WITHOUT PREJUDICE—but BE CAREFUL—PROVE all things—search the SCRIPTURES WHETHER those things be so.

You have probably noticed that this Lesson, unlike all the previous ones, is on GREEN PAPER. Why has this Lesson a color different from other Lessons?

Because THIS PARTICULAR LESSON IS TO SHOW YOU *HOW* TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE. It is devoted entirely to giving you methods explaining *HOW* TO GRASP THE LESSONS WE ARE GOING TO PRESENT IN THE FUTURE. These methods of Bible study are like *tools* in your work. You will use them often. For this reason this Lesson is printed on GREEN sheets so it can be filed in its proper order with the rest of your Lessons, yet BE EASILY FOUND FOR REFERENCES on how to study. Refer to it often!

Use the time you have set aside for this Lesson in familiarizing yourself with its contents. You will undoubtedly purchase a Bible Concordance. Familiarize yourself with this valuable tool, and be sure to *review the three previous Lessons*. As you review these previous Lessons, *apply* to them any new ideas you learn here. For instance, you may want to *mark* your Bible. Then, when the next regular Lesson comes out, you will find yourself better equipped than ever for studying this fascinating Course!

Now for the actual method of Bible study. But remember, the right SPIRIT—the RIGHT ATTITUDE—full SUBMISSION to scriptural dictates, BEING WILLING TO BE CORRECTED and reproved—that is the MAIN THING.

Necessities for Bible Study

God wrote the Bible. He *inspired* men to pen it (II Tim. 3:16). It is *God's message to man!*

Meaning Locked Up Until NOW!

Bruce Barton, the author, has called the Bible *The Book Nobody Knows*—and he has been right *until* NOW! This lack of understanding is the very cause for so many religions today—they *cannot* agree on what the Bible teaches. There is a reason for this.

God said, "For precept must be upon precept ... line upon line ... here a little and there a little: FOR WITH STAMMERING LIPS AND ANOTHER TONGUE will I SPEAK to this people" (Isa. 28:10-11).

The dictionary defines "stammering" as the making of *pauses* in speaking. God has written the Bible with GAPS OR PAUSES BETWEEN RELATED MATERIAL—material which *must be brought together* before its meaning becomes clear. Later, when you come to understand God's PLAN, you will know *why* He did this. Even Christ, in His day, spoke in PARABLES TO CLOUD THE MEANING (notice Mark 4:11-12; and also Mat. 13:11-13).

NOW Revealed!

But was there to be a *future* time when the *true* message of the Bible COULD become known to those willing to be corrected? Yes! When?

God told Daniel to "Seal the *book* even *to* the time of the end: (when) many shall run to and fro (through the pages of this *book*), and KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED" (Dan. 12:4). IN THE TIME OF THE END BIBLE KNOWLEDGE WAS TO BE INCREASED! Moffatt translates "the time of the end" as "the CRISIS at the close." The whole world is now approaching chaos—we are *now* entering the *world*-CRISIS, at the CLOSE of this age! God said that at this crisis time—NOW—"None of the wicked shall understand; but the WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND" (Dan. 12:9-10).

Proper Attitude for Understanding

1. You must ACT on knowledge

Let's get one thing straight right now! If you do not grasp this point, you have NO assurance that *you* will be able to understand this course regardless of all *human* effort to make it plain to you. *God* has vowed that none of the *wicked* would be able to understand His Word in this closing crisis time, but that the *wise* would understand (Dan. 12:9-10). Since the Bible reveals that "sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4), those who conduct themselves as though His law is done away,

are, in Bible terminology, called "the wicked."

Who, then, are "the *wise*" who shall now understand? God says, "The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of WISDOM: a GOOD UNDERSTANDING HAVE ALL THEY THAT DO—[we *must* DO]—His Commandments" (Psalm 111:10). What has this to do with your being able to understand this course?

These Lessons will reveal to you many things that God commands you to *do*. If you *fear* Him enough to begin to build into your life habits of *obedience* to Him (DOING His Commandments) He has said, as we have just seen, that you *will* BEGIN *to become* WISE! THE GREATER YOUR OBEDIENCE TO GOD, THE GREATER YOUR WISDOM WILL BE—you will have less and less trouble in understanding the Lessons mailed to you.

If, on the other hand, somewhere along the way, you rebel at some of the things He wants you to do, your wisdom will be cut off.

None can understand by himself. The carnal mind cannot "see" spiritual things. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, *because* THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED" (I Cor. 2:14). Christ said, "The Spirit of truth... will guide you [the *obedient*] into all truth" (John 16:13).

These truths are *revealed* through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—and *God gives* the SPIRIT *only* to them that OBEY and keep His commandments (Acts 5:32). The choice is in *your* hands.

2. You must PRAY

Pray to God that He will give you more of His Spirit—the Spirit of *truth* (Eph. 5:17-18). Christ derived his power from God. He prayed for hours to God—sometimes all night. Surely we can spend an hour or so a day in such practice—we are incomparably weaker and less wise than Christ was. WE REALLY NEED HELP! IN YOUR PRAYERS ASK GOD THAT *He* OPEN YOUR MIND TO HIS TRUTHS!

3. You must STUDY

This Correspondence Course has been designed with the idea that *thirty minutes a day* devoted to it will enable the student to finish each issue in thirty days. We know that anyone should be able to give at least this amount of time to such a valuable subject. There is a time coming, and it is not far away, when many who take this course will be *judged* by the Word of God—the Bible. We *must* have a knowledge of its teachings!

The Father commands: "STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED unto God, a *workman* that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). We are preparing ourselves for a high calling in God's service!

4. You must BE ZEALOUS

You are going to learn, as you study these Lessons, that God *is* working out a purpose here below. Each of us must use the minutes, hours, days, and years of conscious life which God has given us, to prepare ourselves to fit into this purpose of His.

We do not have forever to do this, but God has given us *enough* time! *We*, *today*, do not even have a lifetime—WE HAVE BUT A FEW SHORT YEARS to prepare—possibly fifteen or twenty—and even in the latter part of these, conditions will make it more and more difficult for us to study. We live in the time of the "crisis at the close." *Now*, while there is relative calm—BEFORE THE STORM BREAKS—is the time to study and prepare for the future!

As most of you have to make a living and it requires a great deal of your time, you must use your remaining time to the greatest advantage. Above all, DON'T LET THE CARES OF THIS WORLD CROWD OUT THE TIME YOU SHOULD DEVOTE TO STUDY AND PRAYER (Mat. 13:22).

God is making clear for a *short time* now—just before the close—the message that the Bible *really* conveys. Let's make the most of this brief period! Be *zealous* in your Bible study! Go far! Dig deep! God says, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, *do it with thy might;* for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave" (Eccles. 9:10). WHAT YOU DO NOW CAN AFFECT YOUR LIFE FOR ALL ETERNITY! (Dan. 12:3.)

What You are Going to Learn

In the lessons of the AMBASSADOR COLLEGE BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE *God is going to:*

1. *reveal the terrible events immediately ahead for you—and instruct you how you may escape* the unprecedented slaughter which the nations are soon to bring upon themselves by their own folly.
2. *prove He does exist* and He is going to *show you His over-all* PLAN.
3. *give you His requirements which you must meet* IF YOU ARE TO HAVE A PART IN FURTHERING HIS PLAN FOR ALL ETERNITY.

Course Written to Aid Retention and Review

1. RETENTION EASY

A LOGICAL SEQUENCE of subjects will be found running throughout the course. Beginning with a description of the world as it is today, the necessity of Divine intervention is next studied. Following this, is the glorious revelation of the world as Christ will make it.

Then we shall go back to the very beginning and learn how God reveals Himself. Who—*what* is God? Very few people today know. What *is* the purpose He has set Himself to accomplish? Subjects continue

to be treated, in order, until *all* phases of the Bible are covered.

The Bible *is* logical when its *over-all pattern* is grasped. BUT its over-all pattern cannot be grasped until all its uncorrelated parts, which are scattered here and there, are FITTED TOGETHER. This course accomplishes just this! This has *not* been accomplished *until* NOW! *This is what makes this course different from all others.* When you have finished the AMBASSADOR COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE the Bible will no longer be, to you, the *Book That Nobody Knows*, but you will see that even a little child can understand its principles!

Notice the "COMMENTARY" STYLE NOTES which are inserted where the meaning would otherwise not be as clear as it should be. These comments also fill in necessary backgrounds.

The very *logic* of the Bible, when it is presented by this NEW METHOD, will enable you to RETAIN IN YOUR MIND THE BROAD PRINCIPLES WHICH GOD WANTS PEOPLE TO GATHER FROM IT!

2. REVIEW RAPID

Scattered throughout the written material of the lessons will be found words or phrases printed in two types: LARGE TYPE, such as this, or *italicized print*, such as this. These will either indicate the SUBJECT MATTER of the surrounding words or will be used to *EMPHASIZE IMPORTANT POINTS.* With these guideposts, you can quickly skim back over a subject and impress the outstanding points again upon your mind. Reviewing can be accomplished rapidly in this manner.

All lesson sheets will have three holes punched in them. A three-ring binder should be purchased at a bookstore or ten-cent store. Keep all material together. In BOOK FORM, you will *desire to review* it often!

Use of Time and Material

1. SET TIME ASIDE

You should set aside a definite amount of time for your Bible study and religious worship. You can decide what time of the day is best. Your mind is most likely to be more alert in the morning.

2. DIVISION OF TIME

Mr. Armstrong has divided his time for Bible study into three parts, using one third of that time on his knees in prayer to God, devoting another third of the time to the study of the Bible, and using the remaining third to think over the things just studied. In following this method, God has opened the Bible truths to him. Sometimes he has studied the Bible while on his knees.

3. NO OUTSIDE LITERATURE

Religious literature of other sects should not be studied *until you are thoroughly grounded* in this course and have the whole pattern of the Bible fixed in mind. *This takes time.* Our Correspondence Course is complete and it leads from one scripture to another and *lets the Bible interpret itself as it goes along.* NO LITERATURE CAN DO MORE! It would only confuse you to read other religious tracts at first. It is not recommended as a practice to beginning students here at Ambassador College.

4. SELECTING BIBLE

We recommend, as first choice, that you use the King James Version. Most people prefer a Bible having heavy black print, large letters, and containing a center reference column. A good selection of maps in the back helps greatly. Many prefer a Bible measuring about 6½ x 9½ inches for home use. (Often they carry smaller copies on their person for use during the day.) Most like a thumb index and relatively wide page margins.

A Bible answering the above general description is made by the National Bible Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It is their Number 453 C. It may be obtained from, or ordered through, any book store.

The same type of Bible—with heavy black print, large letters and center reference column—may be obtained in London.

Concordances which are found in the back of Bibles are not complete enough, so this should have little weight in your selection of Bibles.

5. READING

First *skim* rapidly over the words that are ENLARGED in the Correspondence Course section you are about to study. This will allow you to obtain a grasp of the general field you are about to cover and will enable you from the very start to draw a better mental picture. *Then* study the section.

After you have finished studying the *assigned* material, it is *often helpful to know the meaning of the Bible verses or chapters* SURROUNDING the matter you have studied. Don't spend much time at this—*glance* over it. WHY is this helpful?

BECAUSE more writers than you realize have lifted whole passages of the Bible out of their setting and have thus been able to use these to prove the reverse of what the passages are intended to convey. It is *very important* that you become aware of this.

Gradually you will learn you have been GROSSLY MISLED in many things. LET THE BIBLE BE YOUR GUIDE, *not men!* ALSO, sometimes the surrounding material is so closely related to a verse discussed in the Correspondence Course that it will cast ADDITIONAL LIGHT on the subject.

6. MARKING

Here at Ambassador College, both faculty and students mark their Bibles. They have found it EXTREMELY USEFUL for purposes of review and Bible study.

The idea in marking is to MAKE CERTAIN KEY WORDS OR PASSAGES STAND OUT above the surrounding words. These key words or passages, in turn, recall to mind the general thought of the whole subject.

STUDY the *key words* or phrases which are written in large letters *in the Correspondence Course* for the purpose of aiding review. This will give you an idea of HOW TO MARK *your* Bible. You will learn the *principle* of emphasizing the right words. It may take some time before you master the method to your complete satisfaction, but it will be well worth the effort.

The SIMPLEST METHOD is to use an ordinary pencil and make an *up and down line in the margin* opposite the material you wish to find again.

The MOST USED METHOD here at the college is to UNDERLINE WITH A COLORED PENCIL THE IMPORTANT PLACES.

PENCILS which have been found valuable for this purpose and which may be purchased at book stores are the Eagle (brand) Prismacolor Number 924 (which is red), or Number 909 (which is green). Scripto pencils into which colored leads can be fitted and which are self-feeding are very popular. A combination red-and-blue crayon pencil can be purchased at most dime stores. Ball-point pens too.

Some will wish to make REFERENCE ADDITIONS IN THE MARGINS of their Bibles. This is best accomplished by use of a pen (fountain pen or other types) with a "*bookkeeping*" *point*. These vary somewhat in fineness. This is where wide-margined Bibles come in handy. Also SMALL NOTES can be inserted IN THE MARGINS. A small circle may be drawn around any IMPORTANT CENTER OF THOUGHT OR MARGIN REFERENCE.

Some may wish to INDEX IMPORTANT SUBJECTS in the back of their Bibles. This is best done by writing, or better yet *printing*, the name of the subject in small letters in the back of the Bible together with *one* reference. Any other references are then written nearest the outer margin at this *point of reference*. In this way there is no crowding for lack of room.

You can see that your marked Bible will become very valuable to you. You should PRESERVE this BIBLE. If the cover gives way, it can be rebound at a bindery. The cost will not be too great considering its *value* to you. If the Bible comes apart, there are binderies which specialize in *hand sewing*.

7. MEDITATE

What is YOUR OBJECTIVE in studying this Correspondence Course? It is to *learn* and *retain* facts God gives you which will aid you in living. But even more, you are to interweave these God-given facts with the experiences of your daily life in such a way that you will LEARN THE PRINCIPLES *of the right way of living*. If you learn these principles you will know the right way to conduct yourself under *all* circumstances. You will not feel the need of an *exact parallel* case in which God said "do this" or "do that." But HOW can you learn to make the application of these principles?

David, God's beloved, gave the ANSWER! He said, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly . . . his delight is in the law of the Lord; and IN HIS LAW DOTH HE *MEDITATE* DAY AND NIGHT" (Psalm 1:1-2).

David *recalled* the events that occurred during the day. He also remembered God's commands—His "law." And during the spare hours of his time—during the day, and especially during the evening when he had even more leisure—he recalled both, and THOUGHT on them—he DREW BROAD CONCLUSIONS as to what God really wanted. He applied these conclusions! For this reason, he was able to walk "Not in the counsel of the ungodly" to the extent that he became one of those who stood highest in God's good grace. WE MUST DO THE SAME! How should we go about doing this?

Most people can't pour knowledge into their minds and *at the same time* sort and analyze it *properly*. They, like David, will find it helpful to USE THE EVENING OR EARLY MORNING HOURS FOR ANALYZING it. Also, knowledge quickly slips away the first twenty-four hours after it is learned. The rate of loss lessens somewhat after this. If we lose the knowledge we obtain, there is very little use of acquiring it. How can you be relatively sure you will retain the knowledge you learned during the day, until you can analyze it? Here is how!

If you hear or study some religious knowledge during the day, it is advisable that you *review* it mentally *just as quickly as you can* after hearing or reading it. *PICTURE* IT IN YOUR MIND in its real setting as near as possible. These two habits will greatly aid you in remembering what you do not wish to lose. (If you can take notes, these will be of much value if reviewed.) PRACTICE THESE IDEAS UNTIL THEY BECOME HABIT!

In the evening of each day, or early the next morning, you can group off these newly learned thoughts with *similar* thoughts you remember, and draw from them conclusions or principles. ANSWER for yourself such questions as, "WHAT?" "WHERE?" "WHEN?" "WHO?" "HOW?" and "WHY?" These will about cover the field.

DECIDE IMMEDIATELY HOW THESE NEWLY LEARNED PRINCIPLES WILL GUIDE YOU IN YOUR DAILY PROBLEMS THAT YOU KNOW ARE GOING TO COME UP. Apply these principles constantly! It will gradually become second nature for you to act by them! GOD WANTS YOU TO LEARN DEEPLY EVERY DAY!

8. REVIEW

Reviewing will be very profitable in order to *fix* the knowledge you have learned in your mind so you will not forget it—AFTER TWO OR THREE WEEKS, REVIEW ALL YOU HAVE COVERED. On this review, you need only "HIT THE HIGH SPOTS," both when you re-read the material and when you turn it over in your mind later. ASSOCIATE ALL OF THE TWO OR THREE WEEKS' MATERIAL TOGETHER IN YOUR MIND. Read lessons *in order* for thought *sequence.*

You will probably be surprised at the new and better understanding you will obtain by this method. It will help *greatly* in "putting you on your own" in reading and understanding your Bible.

9. OTHER BOOKS WILL AID

You can study the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course without any other books except for a Bible, but THERE ARE SOME WHICH WILL ADD A GREAT DEAL TO MAKING THE BIBLE REAL to you.

A broad knowledge of the customs, social and educational life, history of the people, together with a knowledge of the geography of the country, is a great aid in visualizing and understanding events mentioned in the Bible. From experience, we know what books will help you most. *Some* of these books are *much more* NECESSARY to have than others. (We have no connection whatever with any of the publishers whose books will be recommended here.) The most necessary books will be mentioned first.

A **Concordance** *is almost a must.* Why? Because if you know a few words of a passage you wish to find in the Bible, it will FIND that PASSAGE for you.

It helps in another very important way also—and this is VERY IMPORTANT! IT UNLOCKS THE MEANING OF THE BIBLE to you. How does it unlock the Bible? In *two ways:*

(a) Recall that at the very start of this lesson on "How to Study the Bible" we said that God wrote the Bible with *gaps* between related material in order to *hide* the meaning. Related material naturally has the *same* subject and often many of the *same words* will be used in each of these passages. By using a CONCORDANCE, which has the words of the Bible arranged alphabetically and tells *where* they may be found, you can thus BRING RELATED MATERIAL TOGETHER and thereby CLOSE these GAPS and obtain the WHOLE TRUE MEANING of what the Bible has to say about anything!

(b) Now notice the second way. God has used *another device* to *hide* the meaning of Scripture *until* NOW!—the "time of the end" (Dan. 12:4). He has used SYMBOLS! A symbol is something which stands for something else. God *often* uses symbols which do *not* show clearly what they represent. He speaks (through the Bible) to us "with stammering lips (gaps) and ANOTHER TONGUE" (Isa. 28:10-11)—a tongue which uses *unknown* SYMBOLS. *He* has to *tell* you what they mean, for only He knows what they represent. Here is how He tells you:

In *another* part of the Bible, He uses the *same* symbolical word and EXPLAINS CLEARLY WHAT IT MEANS there. The lesson? IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF A SYMBOLICAL WORD, TAKE IT TO A CONCORDANCE!

Here is a clear, simple EXAMPLE of what to do: Who is the "great red dragon" of Rev. 12:3? Turning to the concordance and locating the word "dragon," we find the word "dragon" appears in this same chapter in verse 9 also. Turning back to the Bible, we read in verse 9, "The great *dragon* ... called the *Devil.*" The symbolical mystery is solved! The "dragon" of verse 3 is the Devil! (Usually, however, the unknown word and the answer are not this close together.)

There are TWO *types* OF CONCORDANCES: large complete concordances (Strong's), which are especially good for *research;* and much *smaller,* but relatively complete, concordances which are easy to carry and are very *convenient* to locate passages with. The small Cruden's Concordance is very popular and may be had for around four dollars.

A BIBLE DICTIONARY is also desirable. *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary* is good. This book describes people, places, and things mentioned in the Bible. It also has chronological tables and maps concerning Bible times.

Caution: Because we recommend books, this does not mean we agree with *all* they say. We do say that the good they contain overbalances their errors. On the whole we find them accurate.

BIBLES other than the King James Version are sometimes valuable. We especially recommend the MOFFATT version. Its wording sometimes makes sections clearer than the King James. The new ENGLISH and AMERICAN REVISED versions also aid at times.

A BIBLE ATLAS is a book which specializes in Bible maps. They are very helpful.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

Length of Course: Many months may be required. Equip yourself accordingly. *Examinations* are given solely to determine your interest. *Questions:* If enough of one kind are received, an article will appear in THE PLAIN TRUTH to cover the topic.

Two Final Thoughts

There are two things you must always keep in mind. **1.** Remember, though insignificant scribal errors have crept in now and then, the BIBLE IS INFALLIBLE. **2.** The BIBLE MAKES SENSE. It means what it says. *Regard it as such!* It deals with places, events, and beings—actual realities—and *reveals* knowledge which you need to know, but which you could not otherwise discover.

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

THE VALUE OF THIS BIBLE COURSE TO YOU!

Greetings! -- fellow student of God's Word:

You would be shocked to know the real "Bible I. Q." of most professing Christians! Here is an eye-opening example of what is going on in the churches today, as REPORTED BY A STARTLED NEWSPAPER REPORTER:

> "Some months ago, a protestant pastor administered a Bible quiz to members of his congregation. The questions were very simple. Anyone with a general knowledge of the Bible should have been able to answer all of them easily.
>
> "The results staggered the pastor!
>
> "Only five per cent of his flock made a commendable grade on the test. Fifteen per cent failed to give a single correct answer. Sixty per cent were unable to name the four Gospels. Seventy-five per cent could not identify Calvary as the place where Jesus was crucified.
>
> "Some congregations might do better than that. But not many. THE VAST MAJORITY of Americans today ARE BIBLE ILLITERATES! They simply have never read the book which they profess to regard as the 'Word of God.' Why?... A great many people have turned away from THE BIBLE because, when they do try to read it, they find THEY CANNOT UNDERSTAND it... To the modern reader, it has a remote and antiquarian flavor. It is likely to leave him with the impression the Bible is an ancient history book that has no real relevance to his life here and now." (Louis Cassels; Tyler, Texas; Courier-Times, April 16, 1961.)

This amazing quotation is not an isolated case! Similar quotes flood our News-Gathering offices, and jam our files. Most people who profess the name of Jesus Christ DO NOT EVEN KNOW WHAT HE SAID! Why?

Understand -- and be AMAZED!

LISTEN to the words of Jesus CHRIST! He GIVES THE ANSWER!!

> "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, By hearing you shall hear, and not understand; and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive. For this people's ears are dull of hearing, and THEIR EYES they have CLOSED; LEST at any time they should understand with their heart, and should BE CONVERTED and I should heal them" (Matt. 13:14-15). THE VAST MAJORITY are BLINDED TO the GOSPEL OF THE TRUE WAY TO BE SAVED!

BUT TO YOU -- yes, you who are taking this course -- CHRIST SAYS, "BLESSED ARE YOUR EYES FOR THEY SEE; and your ears for they hear. For verily I say unto you that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see these things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them" (Matt. 13:16).

THERE HAS BEEN A COVERING BLINDNESS OVER ALL NATIONS (Isa. 25:7)! GOD TODAY IS BEGINNING TO REMOVE this BLINDNESS, BUT ONLY FROM A CHOSEN FEW!

Think of that for a moment! MOST of these professing "CHRISTIANS" ARE NOT EVEN BEING SAVED at this time because they are not seeing and receiving the words of the Bible! Jesus Christ said so!

CAN YOU REALLY GRASP the TREMENDOUS BLESSING that GOD has GIVEN YOU?

HE has PUT RIGHT WITHIN YOUR REACH -- in a form that you are able to understand -- the knowledge which really counts. You can gain the vital knowledge that is necessary for SALVATION. And it has been made so easy!

For you have found that following God's revealed method of this course: of properly placing together again His own true intended meaning and message of His Bible -- REFITTING it back into its true form and meaning, LINE UPON LINE, PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT, here a little and there a little (Isa. 28:13), always letting God's Word explain itself, the Holy Spirit of God guiding us -- has MADE OF YOUR BIBLE a living, intensely interesting, up-to-date DEPENDABLE GUIDE BOOK IN WHICH YOU MAY PLACE ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE because suddenly all has become so CLEAR and SIMPLE. You have been astonished to find that our mode of instruction is not even to be remotely compared with any other course!

You have been amazed to find that your Bible deals less with ancient history than it does with our modern, pulsating fast-moving twentieth century space age! That it GUIDES YOU INTO a KNOWLEDGE OF the ACTION YOU MUST TAKE IN THESE PERILOUS TIMES! You have begun to find that you are being made able to understand your Bible in a way you never could before!

We are very happy to say that NONE OF the STUDENTS enrolled in the AMBASSADOR College Bible Correspondence COURSE REMAIN BIBLE ILLITERATES FOR LONG. Many even who are ordained ministers find -- for the first time -- the Bible TRUTH!

The Words of a Perceptive Minister

HERE IS WHAT one such MINISTER WROTE TO US -- AFTER ONLY FOUR LESSONS!

"I would like to express my appreciation and let you know how much I'm enjoying the Bible Correspondence Course. I'm expecting my first test in the next day or so. I feel like the first grade student who just learned that 'LMNOP' is not a word but five different letters of the alphabet.

"I'VE BEEN A PREACHER OF ONE OF the LARGER DENOMINATIONS for almost two years now. All this time I really thought I was doing God a favor. I'M AMAZED AND SICKENED TO SEE HOW MANY OF GOD'S

© 1963 Ambassador College — All Rights Reserved
Printed in U. S. A.

ETERNAL TRUTHS BECOME 'LMNOP' when studied through denominational eyes. MAY GOD HAVE MERCY ON THOSE POOR SOULS I'VE SO WRONGLY INSTRUCTED." THE BIBLE AS TAUGHT BY THE WORLD'S CHURCHES, BECOMES NO MORE MEANINGFUL THAN MERE INDIVIDUAL LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET!!

If even ministers find THIS Correspondence COURSE so revealing, think of what it can mean to you. IT CAN MEAN YOUR ETERNAL SALVATION! IT'S UP TO YOU!!

God LOOKS ON THE HEART!

God has given you a precious GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY! He wants you to appreciate it. MAKE Bible study -- the WORDS OF YOUR BIBLE -- an actual PART OF YOUR LIFE, a part of you. As much a part of YOU as your good right hand, or your constantly beating heart.

If you are already doing this, then you know what a great blessing you have already received. The comfort, the wisdom, and foresight, with supreme serenity of mind that you are on the right path to eternal life. You now KNOW WHAT THE AMBASSADOR COLLEGE BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE is REALLY WORTH TO YOU!

If you are one who has not yet advanced far in this practice, AN ASTONISHINGLY GREAT GAIN AWAITS YOU. You too will learn that the time you spend studying your Bible, with the help and guidance of this Correspondence Course, will be the most fascinating, engrossing and rewarding pursuit you have ever engaged in. Time will literally fly! And you will realize that at long last you are finally on the one true path to joyous salvation!

TODAY we are living in the LAST DAYS OF THIS AGE -- the time of the DEATH THROES of man's CIVILIZATION! You need to realize you're living in a time when you -- yes, YOU -- are being THREATENED with EXTINCTION at ANY MOMENT!

We are actually living in the time of which Paul spoke when he said, "This know...that in the last days perilous times shall come" (II Tim. 3:1). That time is now!

You are actually witnessing that climactic time of which so many prophecies speak -- that time of atheistic, godless, defiant man, trembling on the brink of nuclear holocaust -- that time marking the end of this age, and the approach of the glorious Utopia of the World Tomorrow!

YOU NEED DESPERATELY to KNOW HOW you can SURVIVE this hazardous time of threatening world-wide conflict -- to know how to live on over into that wonderful World Tomorrow!

THAT'S WHY YOU NEED THIS COURSE SO BADLY!

NOWHERE ELSE can you find the plain, simple, step-by-step information you so desperately need to help you survive! Nowhere else is such precious, life-saving INFORMATION AVAILABLE!

ONLY IN THIS Bible CORRESPONDENCE COURSE will you find the clear cut, concise, straight-to-the-point information you must have! It affects you, personally!

God has said there is only one way out -- only one method of escape! He is freely giving you that way -- if you want it!

BY ALL MEANS CONTINUE THIS COURSE!

So far, we have sent you 4 lessons. NEXT MONTH, instead of a Lesson, YOU WILL RECEIVE A SIMPLE TEST covering the material you have learned in the first four lessons. After we mail this coming test, we will wait until we receive your test answers before we send further lessons. Then we'll know you are ready for more lessons.

Tests are EASY!

The TEST will be an EASY, practical one -- just a review to help you to better put together for practical use the knowledge you have already received. To us your taking of this test will be an indication of your sincere desire to continue receiving this precious Bible knowledge.

MANY CORRESPONDENCE COURSE STUDENTS MAKE 100% IN THEIR TESTS! NEARLY 9 OUT OF 10 STUDENTS MAKE A GRADE IN THE 90's!!THAT IS AN EXTREMELY HIGH NUMBER OF PEOPLE! Our experience over the years shows that only a few fail!! The FAILING GRADE OF 69 is FAR BELOW WHAT the VAST MAJORITY OF STUDENTS MAKE. You can clearly see that it will not be hard to pass the coming test which you will receive.

IMPORTANT!

FILE these "FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW" sheets just following Lesson 4. REVIEW THEM now and then. They contain worthwhile thoughts you should remember.