AMBASSADOR COLLEGE **Bible** LESSON 1

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

Why Study the Bible?

WHY SHOULD we want to study the Bible? What *is* the Bible? How shall we study it, in order to understand it?

At the very beginning of our course we need to ask, and answer, these questions.

We know God has commanded, "STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD." But WHY should we want to be approved unto God? And is this study to be a tiresome, uninteresting DUTY which we force ourselves to undertake because of the stern command of a harsh God—or is this study to become the most INTERESTING, the most THRILLING, the most ENJOYABLE and PROFITABLE interest that ever entered our lives?

WHY is the study of the Bible a dull, uninteresting, irksome task to most people—done, if at all, only as a duty out of fear of a harsh God? Simply because these people have not KNOWN God, or what He is like—and because they have never started to really UNDERSTAND the Bible!

In this study we shall come to really see that God is LOVE—not a harsh, stern God; that God wants every one of us to be happy, and to ENJOY life to the very full, and to make life *interesting*—every second of it! And we shall, once we begin to UNDERSTAND the Bible, come to find it the most fascinating, the most INTERESTING, as well as the most profitable and enjoyable INTEREST that ever came into our lives! Once you get really into it, you'll enjoy this study so much you will hardly be able to wait until the next lesson. You'll find that NO FUN, no PLEASURES, no sports, entertainments or worldly interests were ever SO TRULY ENJOYABLE, so delightful, so interesting, so SATISFYING!

Because God is LOVE, He, your Creator who loves *you*, and wants you to be happy and healthy and prosperous gives you the Bible. It is HIS WORD by which He reveals to you THE WAY out of boredom, fear and worry, sickness and disease, poverty and want, emptiness and discontent, and into the happy, healthy, prosperous ABUNDANT life which He will give you to enjoy for all eternity!

Theoretically, there are four proper places to BEGIN this course of Bible study.

One is to show you first WHAT the Bible is, HOW it was written and has been preserved, HOW to study it, and to show you why it is that so *few* REALLY UNDERSTAND the Bible. We should realize, before even starting to study the Bible itself, that the *CONDITION* to understanding is a complete *SUBMISSION* to its teachings, its laws and instructions. Jesus said we must LIVE by it—we must study so that we can pattern everything we do according to the Bible instructions. It is our *guide* to life—whether in our business, social and political relations, educational or religious life. God commands us to STUDY the Bible for one purpose—"to show thyself approved unto God." One who does not study for *that* purpose solely—who has not surrendered fully to God so that God can rule his life, can never UNDERSTAND the Bible, no matter how much or how diligently he studies. It is absolutely true that "a GOOD UNDERSTANDING have all they who DO God's commandments"—and *only* they!

Another natural and proper starting place would be to start at the very *beginning*—with God as CREATOR—at the very first chapter of Genesis, and compare the Bible account of creation with the modern "scientific" theory of evolution; to study the creation of man, the origin of Satan, the first sin, and to continue on from there through the Old Testament.

The third natural starting point is with the beginning of the New Testament. While the very first words of the entire Bible, in Genesis, are: "In the beginning GOD created the heaven and the earth," yet the real beginning of the New Testament, in

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
Bible
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
LESSON I
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
© 1954 Ambassador College 563
Printed in U. S. A.

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

actual time-sequence of events, is John 1:1, "In the beginning was the WORD." So the account of the pre-existence, the birth and work of our Saviour—Christ, who is called "the Word" or Spokesman of God—also begins with the words, "IN THE BEGINNING."

And still there is a *fourth* natural STARTING POINT—and this is the one we have adopted.

That is to begin with this very *PRESENT*, in which we live—this time of upset world conditions, when the whole world seems suddenly to have erupted in chaos and physical violence—this time when scientific discoveries and technological developments have produced destructive forces that threaten the extinction of all life on this planet—this "*TIME* OF THE END," just before the END OF THIS WORLD, and Christ's Second Coming.

We feel the BIBLE will mean more to you if you fully UNDERSTAND its vital relation to YOUR LIFE today—its direct connection with WORLD EVENTS you read every day in your newspaper—hear every day in newscasts and see on television.

For, we must understand, first, that JESUS' GOSPEL was the divine MESSAGE sent FROM GOD TO MANKIND—the Message OF GOD'S PURPOSE BEING WORKED OUT HERE BELOW—of the END OF THIS WORLD, AND the COMING KINGDOM OF GOD—the *WORLD TOMORROW!*

If you were to try to understand a map of the world, it would not mean much to you, unless and until you could first put your finger on the precise spot on the map where you, yourself, are at the moment, and then you can see and comprehend the rest of the world, in relation to your own location on the map, and all becomes clear. We feel you will understand the Bible better, and find it more interesting, if you view it all—its history and prophecy—its teachings and divine revelations—from the vantage point of *your life, now*—how this world has led up to the very time, and the conditions, in which you live—where it is destined to go from here.

You will find this the most thrilling—the most interesting, and IMPORTANT experience of your whole life—IF you apply yourself, and really STUDY!

REMEMBER: this is a Bible STUDY course. It is not just something for you to read quickly. What we have written is only the outline to help you to STUDY your BIBLE. The one textbook of this course is *your BIBLE!* Always have your Bible before you when you sit down to STUDY this course.

You Live in a World in Chaos!

EVERYONE is fearful! All today recognize there is something radically wrong with this world.

World rule by one great ATHEISTIC nation seems to loom just ahead. Communism sweeps over vast areas of the earth. *GREAT MASS DESTRUCTION OF THE EARTH'S INHABITANTS APPEARS IMMINENT! How* can the free nations arrest this evil trend? *How* may they bring world peace?

No one seems to know! Russia desires no peace. Rumblings are heard of another power further advanced in science than Russia which is seeking world rule.

Scientists frankly say that unless we have WORLD GOVERNMENT the H-bomb and other super-destructive weapons will annihilate humanity from the earth. *But* nations HAVE FAILED PEACEABLY TO AGREE TO WORLD GOVERNMENT! The Hague Conference, the Pact of Paris, the meetings of Berchtesgaden, Munich, Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam did *not* bring peace. Neither has the United Nations.

A relatively *inexpensive* way has been found to manufacture the A-bomb. Now *all* nations can have this destructive weapon. The *OUTLOOK DAILY GROWS MORE SERIOUS.* First the A-bomb. Now the H-bomb—1000 times more powerful and destructive than the A-bomb dropped on Japan. And when "rigged," it will release the equivalent of five million pounds of radium. A target need not be sought! Dropped in mid-Pacific, with the wind in the right direction, its deadly cloud would destroy millions of Americans. Neither man, animal, fish nor bird would be spared. There are no limitations as to how powerful it can be made. Yes, *this* world's civilization has come to a CRISIS!

Will the terrible destructiveness of such weapons prevent their use by some power-mad group? It never has prevented the use of new weapons *when the opportunity was right!*

IT IS TIME TO BE CONCERNED! Man is showing that he is utterly INCAPABLE of governing himself. Formerly, the power-seeking madness of a nation usually came to an end with the death of its leader—but

now other equally power-mad candidates are trained far in advance to take the place of the leader at his demise and the race to destruction goes on unabated!

What is the answer? MAN WILL DESTROY HIMSELF FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH, IF LEFT TO HIS OWN DEVICES! "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And *except those days should be shortened*, THERE SHOULD NO FLESH BE SAVED ALIVE!" (Matthew 24:21-22.)

If we cannot save ourselves *WHO CAN SAVE US?*

THE ANSWER to this question comes from One whose word has been tested hundreds of times by events foretold by His prophets—events which have ALWAYS come true. Who was this? What did He say? What he said deeply concerns *you* and *me—everyone*—for the time is short!

You will certainly *not* be wasting your time when you *STUDY* THE LESSONS OF *THIS* CORRESPONDENCE COURSE as they are issued. On the contrary, you will *LEARN YOUR ONLY WAY TO AVOID* THE *DIRE EVENTS SHORTLY TO FALL.* You will gain knowledge which will richly reward you in future happiness.

You will be repaid *far* more generously for your effort than for anything you have ever accomplished before!

So put all your effort into the study of these lessons. *How* you study them may well have an effect on your future here on this earth and on your future in the life to come also.

WHY God Must Intervene in World Affairs

COUNTLESS intelligent, well-educated men and women scoff at the idea that Jesus Christ is soon to return. They can see *no sense whatever in such an idea!*

You've known such people, haven't you?

They are the typical product of an age that has lost sight of the reality of God. This age prides itself on being the most intellectual, the most cosmopolitan and "worldly wise" that has ever existed —yet it has completely lost sight of the very *basis* of all knowledge: *what* we are, *why* we are, what is the PURPOSE of *human existence!*

If men knew the answers to these questions, they would understand the completely *logical* REASON—and in fact the *ABSOLUTE NECESSITY*—for the soon-return of Jesus Christ to rule this earth.

World Chaos INEVITABLE!

In spite of earnest attempts to bring about a lasting peace—TOTAL WAR looms just ahead. With the emergence of the hydrogen bomb—the possibility of GLOBAL DESTRUCTION is now a *reality!*

Although WE are warned that the *only solution* is WORLD GOVERNMENT—all attempts at achieving this objective HAVE *FAILED MISERABLY.*

Our great statesmen and scientists are realizing what this means. They are beginning to *fear!*

The cold, hard FACT is that *HUMAN BEINGS HAVE ABOUT REACHED THE END OF THEIR ROPE.* Men have reached the place where they are *no longer capable* of protecting themselves against horrifying weapons of their own devising.

THE INTERVENTION OF A HIGHER POWER IS THE ONLY REAL SOLUTION WE HAVE FOR THIS WORLD'S ILLS.

When Jesus was here on earth nineteen hundred years ago, He knew what the *ideas of men* would lead to in years to come. Jesus knew that in this *end* time men would be groping in the dark for the *way* to peace, but would actually be on the verge of *human annihilation.*

"*EXCEPT THOSE DAYS SHOULD BE SHORTENED,* there should *NO FLESH be saved alive,*" He warned (Mat. 24:22). See also the Moffatt translation.

The Cause of World Ills

In this same momentous prophecy, Jesus gives us a *key* to WHY our present world is in such a terrible state. He warned: "But *AS THE DAYS OF NOAH WERE, so shall also* the coming of the Son of man be" (Mat. 24:37).

What were men doing in Noah's time that brought on them such terrible *destruction?*

Turn in your Bible to Genesis 6:12 where we find the answer: "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted HIS WAY upon the earth"... "and *the EARTH WAS FILLED WITH* VIOLENCE" (verse 11). Carnal men had used their own *human reason* and had already departed from the *way of life* God had originally given.

This substitution of PERVERTED HUMAN REASON for the WAY *of God* threatens world destruction. Jesus said the very *same* conditions would prevail just before His second coming.

Look about you in this world. Have men been seeking and practicing *God's way*—or do they al-

ways use human reason to justify continuing in their *own way?* As the apostle Paul wrote of all carnal-minded men: "*Destruction* and *misery* are in their WAYS; and the WAY OF PEACE have they *not known:* there is NO FEAR OF GOD before their eyes" (Romans 3:16-18).

Study this whole passage carefully. A vital point in understanding God's plan is revealed here. Note that God speaks of a definite WAY of peace—and that He links ignorance of it to one thing: *a lack of the right kind of fear—a godly* FEAR.

The basic attitude of irreverence and even CONTEMPT FOR THE WILL AND AUTHORITY OF GOD is a prevalent characteristic among people of every station in life today. In our "enlightened age," men no longer *fear* to do wrong.

Where has this led us? Yearly, crime increases!

J. Edgar Hoover, director of the F.B.I., states: "Crime is on the march in America. Day after day, year after year, the appalling tide of criminality continues to *rise*... And young America still makes its alarming contribution to the sum... During 1950 more persons 21 years of age were arrested and fingerprinted *than in any other age group.*"

The 1954 *World Almanac* reports that an all-time peak in criminality took place in 1952. It states: "During 1952, for the first time in the history of recorded crime statistics, there were *more than* 2,000,000 *major crimes in the United States.*"

Yes, CRIME and VIOLENCE are increasing everywhere. Men are beginning to realize that something is *basically wrong* with this world's society.

But even more ominous than the *GROWING MENACE* of individual crime is the realization that in our generation the *ENTIRE EARTH IS ENDANGERED* by *super-criminals*—mad dictators in warmongering nations who now have the means to *erase humanity from this planet.*

It's Prophesied!

These fearful times are prophesied and described in your Bible.

Open your Bible now to II Timothy 3:1 and read through the entire chapter. Paul was inspired to write Timothy about the *last days*—this twentieth century, when CIVILIZATION itself is threatened with oblivion!

"This know also, that IN THE LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES shall come," Paul warned. Notice carefully the degenerate condition of men in *our* day—"covetous," "proud," "TRUCEBREAKERS."

Yes, whole nations today *covet* the wealth of others and are willing to *KILL AND DESTROY* to get it. Rather than seeking the Eternal God, most nations take great *pride* in their armies and weapons of *destruction.* They *BLASPHEME* God constantly in word and deed.

What about *TRUCEBREAKERS?* How good, for instance, is Russia's word in a so-called "peace conference"?

In God's sight, men today are *FIERCE.* Many have "a *form* of godliness," but they deny His *power* to interfere in world events and His *authority* to RULE their individual and collective lives. Men in *every nation* seem determined and "hell-bent" to do things their *own* way. And *that way* is leading to DEATH.

God inspired Jeremiah to state that the heart of man is "*DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND* DESPERATELY WICKED" (Jer. 17:9).

Human nature has not changed!

Remember that Christ said the conditions in this world just before His second coming would be "as the days of Noah" (Mat. 24:37). *Now,* as at that time, God sees "that the wickedness of man [is] great in the earth, and that *every imagination of the thoughts of his HEART {IS} ONLY* EVIL *CONTINUALLY*" (Gen. 6:5). "And the *earth* [is] *filled with* VIOLENCE" (Verse 11).

Guided by *greed* and *lust,* man is once again bent on CONQUEST and DESTRUCTION.

Here Are the Facts

Dr. Linus Pauling, Nobel Prize-winning scientist, states that 4,000 *A-bombs can completely demolish the earth* and that *Russia alone, even now, has* 10,000 *of them!* (Pasadena Independent, Jan. 29, 1959.)

Astonishing? Yes. The EARTH is IN *DIRE PERIL.* But read on for even *more frightening* and horrifying developments!

From Montreal, Canada, comes the following astounding news: British scientist Sir Robert Watson-Watts, the developer of radar, says he is making the following disclosure because "*I am not optimistic the human race will survive for another* 10 *years.*"

He says there are now *THREE* WAYS in which the *WORLD'S population CAN BE WIPED OUT* IN a *few HOURS.*

The *first* is the *hydrogen BOMB*—the *second* is a deadly toxin which can easily be produced by the BOTULINUS organism. "*It would take ONLY A HALF POUND to KILL the animal and human POPULATION OF the WORLD,*" he somberly warns!! "And it is easily produced, well known, and, with a well-trained group, could *easily* be made lethal. As the *third* method of destroying mankind he listed NERVE GASES. *Three ways* for world-wide annihilation! Think of that!!

Sir Robert and Dr. Brock Chisholm, of Victoria, have "teamed up separately to inform the world of knowledge that should no longer be kept secret" (Daily Sun, Vancouver, B. C., Jan. 21, 1959).

One high Pentagon official, in Washington, D. C., put it bluntly: "We're scared to death even to mention germ [botulinus] warfare."

SOMETHING DRASTIC MUST BE DONE or man will *totally destroy* himself.

Only One Hope

The basic *cause* of world chaos, and—*in principle*—the *solution*, has been dramatically stated by two great American statesmen.

In his inaugural address, President Dwight D. EISENHOWER STATES: "In the swift rush of great events, we find ourselves groping to know the full sense and meaning of the times in which we live ... How far have we come in man's long pilgrimage from darkness toward light? Are we nearing the light—a day of freedom and peace for all mankind? Or are the shadows of another night closing in upon us? ... Science seems ready to confer upon us, as its final gift, *THE POWER TO ERASE HUMAN LIFE FROM THIS PLANET.*"

Yes, he understands—realizes that *man may soon destroy himself*. Then, after setting forth the nine principles which were to govern our international relations, he stated a truth which—IF *properly applied*—would be a big step toward the solution, not only of our problems, but those of the entire world.

He said, "For this truth must be clear before us: Whatever America hopes to bring to pass in the world must *first* come to pass in the HEART of America."

Whether he realized it or not, President Eisenhower agreed exactly with God's word in his statement that in America—*as in every nation*—the *heart*, the CHARACTER of men must be *changed* if we are to have world peace.

Let us now refer to a unique and striking statement made by General Douglas MacArthur in regard to the chaotic international situation.

When he was relieved of his command and ordered to return to this country by President Truman, GENERAL MACARTHUR made a historic ADDRESS before the assembled Congress of the United States. In that dramatic speech, he made some pointed statements which revealed the depth of his understanding.

He said: "I know war as few other men now living know it, and nothing to me—and nothing to me is more revolting ... Men since the beginning of time have sought peace ... Military alliances, balances of power, Leagues of Nations, all in turn failed, leaving the only path to be by way of the crucible of war. *The utter destructiveness of war now blocks this alternative. WE HAVE HAD OUR LAST CHANCE. If* we will not devise some greater and more equitable system, our *Armageddon will be at our door. The problem basically is* THEOLOGICAL *and INVOLVES* a spirit of recrudescence and *IMPROVEMENT OF HUMAN CHARACTER* that will synchronize with our almost matchless advances in science, art, literature and all the material and cultural developments of the past 2000 years. "*IT MUST BE* OF THE SPIRIT *IF WE ARE TO SAVE THE FLESH.*"

Let us scrutinize these remarkable statements.

Although he is one of the greatest and most successful generals of our time, MacArthur believes that—in war—*we have had our last chance!* Both of these men know that the ONLY SOLUTION—the *only* HOPE of averting *human annihilation*—is a renewing of man's *spirit*—a *changing* of man's basically evil nature—a re-building of man's CHARACTER.

The Answer

If misguided human beings were left to themselves to solve this world's problem, the final result would be *global* DESTRUCTION. Some men sincerely want to do right, but they know not the *way* to peace. They are honestly *sincere*, but honestly *wrong*. As Solomon was inspired to write: "There is a way that seemeth *right* unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of DEATH" (Pro. 14:12).

God says that the normal, carnal *way* that human beings wish to go ends up in *death*. People are often deceived by thinking that there is no *special* danger right now—that the world has *always* been like this.

This is true—*in part*. Human nature *has* always been like this. Carnal man has *always* brought *death* and *destruction* into the world. However, remember that Paul said, "But evil men and seducers shall wax *worse* and *worse*" (II Tim. 3:13). And most important of all, NEVER BEFORE HAS HUMAN ANNIHILATION BEEN POSSIBLE.

Man has long had guns and powerful shells. Later, tanks and planes came into use. But NOW we have *rockets* which deliver *hydrogen missiles* and can destroy *entire cities* by remote control!

Now—for the *first* time—human annihilation is not only a vague *possibility*, but a terrifying *reality!*

And now *nothing* can save man from self-destruction except a CHANGE in human nature—in man's *character*. But in *spite* of all the professing "Christian" churches—in *spite* of the feeble efforts of the United Nations—in *spite* of everything man is doing to bring peace and happiness, TOTAL WAR looms just ahead. Individual *crime* and *violence* is on the increase everywhere. Just as Solomon was inspired to write, *THE WAY THAT* SEEMS RIGHT *TO MEN IS LEADING TO DEATH.*

WHAT IS THE *ANSWER?*

ONLY GOD CAN *CHANGE* MAN'S CHARACTER, and force men to learn the *way* of *peace*. That is WHY Christ is returning to take over the "kingdoms of this world" (Rev. 11:15). That is WHY "He shall *rule* them with a rod of iron" (Rev. 19:15).

That is the *only* way to preserve human life on

this planet. Jesus Christ *knew* the terrible state of affairs men would bring on themselves in this end time, when He said: "Except those days should be shortened, there should NO FLESH be saved alive" (Mat. 24:22).

May God help you to grasp the *significance* and *reality* of these things as you read these passages. They show that God *foresaw* the invention of our present weapons of destruction long before man ever dreamed of them. And they reveal that God had *already* planned the *only* real and logical solution. God's *entire* plan is just as *logical* and *real.*

The *pattern* for GOD'S little-understood PLAN is given in the first two chapters of Genesis. It is the WEEK of seven days. As God originally set time in motion, man is given six work days followed by a day of rest. In Hebrews 4:4, 11, the seventh day is also a type of the peaceful *rest*—a 1000-year rest—that will follow the *present age of human labor* and futile struggle to master the earth.

Observe carefully after Christ's intervention the time of peaceful rest under His rule is specifically termed "a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4). If the last "day" of God's 7000-year plan is 1000 years, then the preceding *SIX DAYS WHICH HE HAS ALLOTTED FOR MANKIND* to WORK out his own ideas would amount to 6000 years. And this is exactly what world events today are proving. Look about you! This world is *crashing to its* DOOM!

Notice your Bible. Many Bibles are complete enough to contain chronological charts showing that human life began on this earth around 4000 years B. C.—*four milleniums before Christ.* And almost another 2000 years have elapsed since—making nearly 6000 years of human civilization to date. In other words, the *TREND OF WORLD EVENTS* is now *PROVING* we are *VERY NEAR the time* the scriptures have always said CHRIST will RETURN—when the probability of world destruction would become a reality. Six thousand years of human history have almost been completed. Here, then, is proof—*DOUBLE PROOF—that CHRIST IS COMING* in our generation!

The common assumption that man has lived on earth countless tens of thousands of years is an idle dream. Reason disproves it. History and archeology disprove it! SCIENCE disproves it! Strange as it may seem, the theory of man's evolution is not only unproved, but irrefutably *disproved* when we understand the *facts.* A soon-coming lesson will give you these *facts* so you may study them in your home!

The apostles did not fully understand this PLAN OF GOD when Christ was yet on earth. They thought the Kingdom would be established in their day—after only about 4000 years of God's plan had been completed. But before they died, the *APOSTLES KNEW GOD'S PLAN.* Peter said: "The Lord is not slack concerning the promise [of Christ's coming] . . . but is long-suffering" (II Peter 3:9). God is patient. He has refrained from intervening in world affairs for nearly 6000 years. Why?

Because He will not intervene until humanity is forced to cry out to God for fear of self-extermination. Notice that the *day* of Christ's intervention and rule is compared to "a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4). Peter also says the same thing—that a day in God's *plan* is as "a thousand years," and "a thousand years" of human civilization is as *one* day in His planned week of seven 1000-year days (II Peter 3:8).

Peter knew that CHRIST WOULD COME AFTER SIX ONE-THOUSAND YEARS of human struggle and slavery—that God would send Jesus Christ to set up His government in the seventh one-thousand years, which will usher in a time of rest and peace.

How *AWE INSPIRING* that in our day at the very time that 6000 years have ALMOST ELAPSED, the world is threatened with extinction of life. How *MARVELOUS* that Jesus Himself said that when we see this taking place HE WOULD COME AGAIN!

Final Important Instructions

Now we are ready for the actual lesson. *But wait!* Is your Bible in front of you? If not, don't read another word!

STOP RIGHT HERE! Go and GET YOUR BIBLE. Also several sheets of paper, and a pencil or pen, so you can MAKE NOTES to help you remember what you learn. This course is based on the King James Version because we find it the most accurate.

Got all? That's fine! Now we are ready to begin this lesson. REMEMBER—you must *OPEN* your Bible *TO EVERY PASSAGE* we give you in this lesson. You must *READ AND RE-READ,* actually *STUDY* every passage *in your Bible.* This is a Bible STUDY course—a study of the *Bible,* not just a study of these words we have sent you. Our words are intended to show you *where* to look in your Bible—to *help* you to know *how* to study the *Bible.*

Now, with your Bible, a good *dictionary,* and your note paper and pencil or pen on a desk or table before you, here is the method of study: Write down, neatly, on your note paper, the caption "Lesson 1," and underscore it. Then—"What Is the End of the World?" Underneath, number each question, and *WRITE DOWN THE ANSWER,* in your own handwriting. As EXAMPLES for the questions, this is what you will write on your note paper:

1. Mat. 24:3—"And as He [Jesus] sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying. Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Also write in any other thoughts or comments you want to remember. When you have finished this question, and have studied it and are sure you under-

stand it, then read question **2.** Write down your own answer to the question, after reading the comment and any Bible passages that may be quoted in the question. After question **3**, write down your answer, and also write down every word of the Bible verse, Mat. 24:22.

It will be much better if you go to a book store or stationery store, and buy a supply of loose-leaf note paper with the three holes punched in the side, just like these lessons. Also buy a binder, and keep these lessons and your own notes and answers fastened in the binder. *Do NOT SEND us the ANSWERS to these lessons.* Keep them for *reference.*

Some may ask, "Is this WRITING *really* NECESSARY?" YES! EXTREMELY so! Why? Here is why!

You can *quickly* review your lessons, as necessary, if you have them in this form. Also, it will aid you greatly in explaining the Bible to others.

We are giving you the BRIEF, COMPREHENSIVE, TRUE OUTLINE OF THE BIBLE. We know of no other place where you can obtain it! You will often want to refer to these lessons AND THE EXPLANATION OF THEM IN YOUR OWN WORDS in future years as you apply them to clear up related points in the Bible.

Remember, you are to spend at least a half hour *every* day studying YOUR BIBLE with this Correspondence Course. TESTS WILL BE SENT *after each group of four lessons.* Now we are ready...

Lesson 1

What Is the "End of the World"?

1. Was Jesus ever asked about the now-threatening doom of civilization—*the* END OF THIS AGE and the signs of His return? Matthew 24:3.

2. Does this verse refer to the end of the PHYSICAL EARTH?—or does it refer to the end of the PRESENT AGE of human misrule? How do modern translations of the Bible properly render Mat. 24:3?

COMMENT: There are *three* basic Greek words inspired in the New Testament which are rendered by the *one* English word "WORLD" in the King James Version. The original Greek word used in Mat. 24:3 is *aion,* meaning AGE!—not the physical earth on which we live.

JESUS, then, was questioned about the *end of this "age"*—the end of this present civilization—rather than the destruction of the terrestrial globe.

3. WHAT did Jesus declare would *HAPPEN IF HE WERE NOT TO RETURN?* Mat. 24:22. This is *not* referring to salvation—but to being saved from physical destruction. Moffatt translates the verse clearly as *"NO SOUL would BE saved ALIVE."*

4. Does Jesus prophesy that *only* the Jews, or *only* the Christians, would be threatened with total destruction? Or does he prophesy that "NO FLESH" would be saved from the threat of annihilation? Doesn't this prove that God MUST intervene to prevent annihilation of *all humanity?*

5. When the nations will be destroying one another in *SUICIDAL ATTEMPTS* to gain world control, will God's intervention *CUT SHORT* the number of days of world-engulfing war? Compare Mat. 24:22 with Mark 13:20.

COMMENT: These verses do not mean that God will alter His broad timetable of world events, but that, *just as He planned originally,* He will intervene at the very time humanity would otherwise destroy itself. By His scheduled intervention He will cut short the DAYS OF MAN'S RULE over man, which otherwise would lead to annihilation of all human life.

Why God MUST Intervene

1. Has there *ever* been a *TIME OF TROUBLE* such as will occur at the close of this age? Matthew 24:21. What does Mark 13:19 say about it?

2. Did any of the prophets foresee this same time of world-wide peril? Jeremiah 30:7, Daniel 12:1. As each of these verses explains that there *never has been* before, and never will be afterward, another similar period of trouble, could they be referring to three different events, or ONLY to *ONE* CLIMACTIC PERIOD at the close of this age?

3. Do the prophets picture the horrible events at the close of this age *as the result of* ravaging destruction in MODERN SCIENTIFIC WARFARE? Joel 2:1-3. Read also Isa. 33:11, 12. Will there ever again be a time like this? Why would this prophecy of Joel have to be referring to the same time as Jesus' prophecy?—could wide destitution, such as Joel describes, have occurred as a result of older and outmoded methods of warfare?

4. Or could it happen for the *first* and *only* time in our day, with the invention of atom and *HYDROGEN BOMBS, ROCKETS* and horrifying *GASES* which can exterminate civilization? Rev. 9:5-10 and 16-19. Do the symbols here in Revelation indicate the *torment* of poison gas and MASS MURDER by the latest scientific weapons?

(COMMENT: For the time sequence of Revelation, write Mr. Armstrong for the free booklet "Key to the Book of Revelation.")

John was DESCRIBING WAR WEAPONS OF OUR DAY BY the CHARACTERISTIC *SYMBOLS* OF HIS DAY. *Early Christians knew they were symbols because such things never existed then. Yet John could not use modern words such as "tank" or "rocket" because no one—and no translator—could have understood the meaning.*

5. Let us momentarily consider a time, over 4300 YEARS AGO, when GOD INTERVENED in human affairs TO POSTPONE what we see threatening the world today. Did human beings want to make a great name for themselves and keep the world *united* under human authority? Genesis 11:4.

6. WHY did God intervene *by scattering* the races and confusing languages at Babel? Verse 6.

7. Doesn't this indicate that GOD HAS had A PLAN in *postponing* and *restraining* the inventive genius of man? Doesn't Genesis 11:6 also prove that when human beings attempt to create one world, learn to speak one another's languages, and finally *POOL* their combined wealth and scientific *KNOWLEDGE,* that *NOTHING* would be RESTRAINED from them?—that they would ultimately destroy themselves by their own inventions?

CAUSE of World Ills

1. As God will intervene to prevent annihilation of humanity, so will He also have to prevent future wars by removing the *cause* of war! What is the BASIC CAUSE OF WAR? James 4:1-2.

2. Are the desires and passions of HUMAN NATURE *fundamentally* good or evil? Compare Luke 11:13 with Romans 3:10-19. Notice, however, that human nature is a *COMBINATION OF GOOD AND EVIL.* James 3:9-10 and Luke 6:45.

3. Is this world a mixture of good and evil? Do actions and decisions that seem right to great leaders and to the people in general often end in terrible results? Proverbs 14:12. Is this proverb so vital that God thought it worthy of extra emphasis through repetition? Proverbs 16:25.

Doesn't the fact that the world faces self-destruction today PROVE that the *FORCE OF THE EVIL NATURE* of man is *GREATER* than the force of the good part of his nature?

4. Does MANKIND *REALLY KNOW THE WAY TO PEACE?* Romans 3:17. What Old Testament prophet recognized man's real understanding of peace? Isaiah 59:8.

5. In their ignorance, hatred and cowardice, did the rulers of the world kill the Prince of Peace? I Corinthians 2:8.

6. *WHAT DECEIVES MAN* into believing that actions which end in death will bring peace? Jeremiah 17:9. (Remember that in Scripture, the *heart* is spoken of proverbially as the center or seat of human nature.) Then can rulers be deceived by their OWN LUSTS into believing that their evil deeds are right and good for the world?

7. At the close of this age did *PAUL FORESEE* that men would be traitors, truce-breakers, greedy, coveting the wealth and territories of one another? II Timothy 3:1-5.

8. Does *knowledge* tend to increase pride? I Cor. 8:1. Does undue *authority* lead to vanity? I Tim. 3:6. Since we live in an age of *increasing scientific knowledge,* which makes it possible for a few men to amass stupendous industrial and scientific power, will human nature make *MEN* become better and better or *WORSE AND WORSE?* II Timothy 3:13.

9. Is it now possible, through the inventions of science, for the greedy to covet, seize and destroy more than ever before?

WAKE UP!—OR BLOW UP!

1. Will there be SCOFFERS in the last days denying that civilization is threatened with extermination by mad dictators? II Pet. 3:3, 4.

2. Has human nature basically changed? Matt. 24:37-39 and Luke 17:26. Though human nature has not basically altered since Noah's day, have the scientific means of destruction remained the same? Do the nations create greater and GREATER POWERS for peace?—or for MASS MURDER?

3. Are the people today *really* CONCERNED about the mortal danger of suicidal war for world dominion? Matt. 24:39. Are people AWAKE enough to world events even to expect it? Does the WORLD go on in its day-to-day routine *WITHOUT HEEDING* WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN?

4. Will human efforts to re-educate the world and plans for peace prevent annihilation? Isa. 33:7-8. When ambassadors of peace weep bitterly—when cities are leveled—will *GOD INTERVENE to* save humanity? Verse 10.

5. Throughout the Bible, *war* is pictured as a *penalty of sin*—imposed as the result of lust or covetousness. James 4:1-2. Can ambassadors of the nations forgive sin? Can they therefore *permanently* stop WAR, which is its penalty?

COMMENT: World peace cannot come unless the PENALTY of sin is forgiven by an equal payment. Obviously *ONLY CHRIST CAN STOP ALL WAR* because He alone paid the full penalty—*death.* Christ *died* so that we need not all die in the coming horrifying holocaust. God will suspend the penalty upon the human family by soon intervening in human affairs. His Son already voluntarily transferred the penalty to Himself, in our stead.

6. After intervening, *WILL GOD SET ABOUT TO* RE-EDUCATE *THE WORLD* AND REMOVE THE BASIC CAUSE of war? Isa. 2:3-4 and Micah 4:1-4. Instead of being taught as in today's educational institutions how to create instruments of annihilation to destroy fellow humans, will the people then BE TAUGHT to exercise CONTROL and be given DISCIPLINE OVER HUMAN NATURE—to guide inventive genius wholly into peaceful channels?

7. Will *NATIONS* have to *BE REBUKED* with authority? Isa. 34:2. Will they be taught the right way to live—the way to peace? Isa. 30:21.