

SAMPLE

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Honour of Kings - Bible Curriculum Book III

Foundational Doctrines of the Bible 1

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PACIFIC OCEAN (March 26, 2010) Chaplain Lt. Jason Gregory reads bible verses on the weather deck
aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS Bunker Hill (CG 52).
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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for purchasing the Honour of Kings Bible series; we appreciate your support of our company. Before you begin there are couple of things you should know:

1. The curriculum is a six book series divided into three subject categories:

- Getting to Know the Bible - Old Testament (ages 4 to 10)
- Getting to Know the Bible - New Testament (ages 4 to 10)
- Foundational Doctrines of the Bible I (ages 10 to 14)
- Foundational Doctrines of the Bible II (ages 10 to 14)
- How to Study the Bible I (ages 14 to 18)
- How to Study the Bible II (ages 14 to 18)

2. Each set of two books is designed to be covered at least once during the age-appropriate years.

- Each individual book includes enough lessons suitable for a full school year.
- Lessons in Books 1 and 2 are intended to be completed weekly; feel free to go faster or slower as needed.
- Books 3-6 should be completed at a pace comfortable for parents and students.

3. Each lesson in the “Getting to Know the Bible” series includes age-appropriate comprehension questions, application questions, vocabulary and hands-on exercises designed to drive home the important points. For the “Foundational Doctrines” series we have chosen to take a different tack. Each lesson will go through a specific foundational doctrine of the Christian faith in detail, highlighting key points along the way and encouraging discussion and questions. Various requirements at the conclusion of each lesson test the student's grasp of the knowledge presented. We have chosen this format to be more in line with the learning capabilities of our intended audience ranging in ages from 10 to 14.

4. Those who have used the first two books of our Bible series will also notice that we have eliminated the “Summary for Parents” section for each lesson, beginning with Book 3. We have done so under the assumption that parents of older students need less guidance in presenting material. Furthermore, the “Foundational Doctrines” series is intended more for self-instruction than parental presentation. However, this does not mean parents should be reluctant to be involved in the process of learning. Studying and discussing the material with your children is always encouraged.

Note: all Scripture is taken from the KJV1611 version of the Bible published in 1769. Text is altered *only* to replace *some* of the old English words with their modern equivalents. But:

- no punctuation has been changed
- no sentence structure has been changed
- no phraseology has been changed
- we have only changed words like thee, thou, wont, sitteth, walkest, etc.

Our purpose here is to make reading the Scriptures feel and sound more natural. However, make no mistake that we are 100% committed to the King James 1611 version. If you find any words you believe should not be altered because the modern equivalent is not appropriate, please let us know.

EXAMPLE: "God **hath** not cast away his people which he foreknew. **Wot ye** not what the scripture **saith** of Elias? how he **maketh** intercession to God against Israel, saying," (Romans 11:2)

BECOMES: "God **has** not cast away his people which he foreknew. **Know you** not what the scripture **says** of Elias? how he **makes** intercession to God against Israel, saying," (Romans 11:2)

LESSON 1 – The Word of Truth

The Christian faith was essentially established with the birth of Jesus of Nazareth more than 2,000 years ago. One could argue that Christianity is an extension of Judaism inasmuch as Jesus is the fulfillment of the Messianic promise made to the nation of Israel in the days of Abraham. Because of this association, the two faiths have a lot in common by way of Old Testament history and foundational doctrines. The two faiths part in their understanding of Old Testament Scripture and the acceptance of New Testament authority.

As Christians, our entire faith rests solely on the authority of God's Word. Why? Because the Scriptures tell us everything we need to know about God and his plan for mankind. Without the Word of God to rely on, man would have no way of truly knowing what the Creator expects of him. It is for this reason that Christian people stray from the faith when they also stray from the Bible.

Because the Bible – also known as the 'Word of Truth' in some circles – provides the foundational basis of our faith, it is appropriate to begin our study of foundational doctrines here. If one does not fully accept the authority of the Scriptures as being final in all areas of faith and life, the remaining studies in this Bible series are of no value.

1. A Bible Definition

In order to establish a basis for studying the doctrinal aspects of God's Word, it is helpful to define what we mean when we speak of the Bible. The Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines the Bible, as we know it, as follows:

1. the sacred scriptures of Christians comprising the Old Testament and the New Testament
2. the sacred scriptures of some other religion (as Judaism)

It is true that you can have books like the “Fisherman's Bible” or the “Car Repair Bible” that actually have nothing to do with religious belief or spiritual truth. The Bible we refer to in the Christian faith is a collection of writings put together over thousands of years. As well-known Bible teacher and Koinonia House founder Chuck Missler likes to say, the Bible is “composed of 66 books, penned by 40 different authors, over thousands of years.”

Having said that, the Bible is more than just a collection of writings. Let's examine a few scriptural references to see what the Bible has to say in defining itself:

- *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” (Jn. 1:1-2)*
- *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (Jn. 1:14)*

From these two passages we can establish the idea that God and his Word are one in the same. This is a concept the human mind finds difficult to grasp, but it is true nonetheless. The Bible clearly says that the Word is eternal, it is with God, and it is God. Jesus is the physical manifestation of both God the Father and his Word.

The next thing we discover about the Bible is found in the book of Hebrews, which says:

“God who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds...” (Heb. 1:1-2)

We learn from this reference that God himself spoke to our spiritual predecessors through the prophets and, eventually, through Jesus. The prophets' writings are contained throughout the Old Testament and include everything from Genesis to Malachi. The words of Jesus were recorded by the four writers of the Gospels and later expounded on by Paul, Peter and other New Testament writers.

We can conclude that the Bible is God's revelation of Himself to man. The totality of the Scriptures forms a continuous story describing the relationship between God and man, from beginning to end, concluding with God's plan for the end of the world. That plan includes the redemption of the souls of men through the work of Jesus Christ.

Questions to Ponder:

1. If the Word is God and God is perfect, is his Word also perfect?

2. If Jesus is the physical manifestation of God's Word, how much respect should we pay to the Bible and the study thereof?

2. Scriptural Divisions

The modern Bible we know consists of 66 separate books divided into the Old and New Testaments. There are 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books covering the history of the world from the first day of creation through the eventual end of this earth and the creation of the new.

For the purposes of study, scholars have divided up the Scriptures accordingly:

- **The Pentateuch** – Also known as the books of the law, the Pentateuch consists of the first five books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. They are also known as the 'books of Moses', as he is considered their human author.
- **Historical Books** – There are 12 historical books so named because they tell the history of the nation of Israel from the Exodus through the return from Babylonian captivity. This section includes: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, I and II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.
- **Poetic Books** – The poetic books include Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon and Job. Having said that, there is some debate as to whether or not Job belongs in this category. But because it does not fit anywhere else, it is usually included here.

- **Major and Minor Prophets** – The remainder of the Old Testament books not already listed make up the prophets. These books are subdivided into two categories: major and minor prophets. The designation only refers to the length of the individual books, not the importance of their messages. Isaiah and Jeremiah are two of the major prophets while Jonah and Hosea are considered two of the minor prophets.
- **The Gospels** – The four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John give us an overview of the life and ministry of Jesus. All tell the exact same story from a different perspective. The different perspectives of the writers has resulted in some notable differences in what they wrote, but all four accounts are in complete agreement.
- **Pauline Epistles** – The apostle Paul is responsible for writing the lion's share of the New Testament. His epistles include Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and I and II Thessalonians.
- **General Epistles** – A collection of letters written by authors other than Paul are considered the general epistles. They include Hebrews, James, Peter's two epistles, the three epistles of John, and Jude. We should note that some attribute the authorship of Hebrews to Paul.
- **Miscellaneous Books** – There are two New Testament books that don't fit into any of the other categories: The Acts of the Apostles (Acts) and Revelation. Acts deals with early church history while the book of Revelation is a description of those events that will take place at the end of the world.

New students of the Bible should understand that the 66 books comprising the totality of the Scriptures are not presented chronologically. Therefore, a good understanding of the Bible requires studying each individual book and relating it to the others.

Review of Sections 1+2

1. The Bible we know of today consists of 66 books divided into Old and New Testaments.
2. The Gospel of John explains that God's Word has existed with him for eternity, and that Jesus is the physical manifestation of both God the Father and his Word.
3. The Bible is the foundation of the Christian faith. It contains all we need to know about God, his relationship with mankind, and what he expects of us.

REVIEW ASSIGNMENT: Write a 300-word essay discussing why the Bible is so important to the lives of Christians. In your comments, address what you have learned from the three Scripture references listed in this section.

3. The Inspiration of Scripture

A common criticism of the Bible is that it is allegedly a collection of books written by sinful men prone to making mistakes. Some people go so far as to say these men completely made up what they wrote in order to attract followers to themselves. As Christians, we know otherwise.

Human beings may have physically penned the words that make up the Bible, but God himself is the true author of his Word. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God put in the hearts and minds of the authors exactly what they were to write. The Bible says:

“But continue you in the things which you have learned and have been assured of, knowing of whom you have learned them; and that from a child you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and 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.” (II Tim 3:14-17)

You will notice from the underlined portion of the above reference that the words of the Bible were given to the human writers by God himself. So when someone tells you that the Bible cannot be believed because it was written by men who make mistakes, rest assured those people are discounting the fact that God made sure those men wrote what he wanted them to write.

Rest assured that God did not direct the writing of the Scriptures simply because he needed something to do. Notice that the II Timothy reference says that the Bible is profitable for a number of things. Those things are:

- **Doctrine** – the foundational beliefs on which we base our faith
- **Reproof** – the evidence of who God is and what he has done
- **Correction** – the information needed to correct our behavior
- **Instruction in Righteousness** – the information we need to live as God expects us to live

Questions to Ponder:

- 1. Why is doctrine so important to the Christian faith?*
- 2. How does God's Word act as evidence of who he is and what he has done?*

The Bible also says the following:

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (II Pet. 1:19-21)

This reference answers the dilemma of prophets who spoke while their scribes wrote down what they said. The practice was actually quite common back in the day. But make no mistake, the Holy Ghost

spoke through those prophets while also assuring that what the scribes wrote down was completely accurate.

As long as we're talking about prophets, the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) has documented over 300 Old Testament prophecies fulfilled by Jesus in the New Testament. Other organizations and scholars have reached the same conclusion through their own studies.

For the record, the mathematical chances of one person fulfilling just 8 prophecies is 1-in-10 to the 10th power. The chances of fulfilling 300 prophecies is 1-in-10 to the 157th power. Jesus' fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy pretty much confirms the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures.

4. The Accuracy of Scripture

The accuracy of Scripture should not be a question if one accepts that it was written under the direct inspiration and supervision of God. Be that as it may, it's still important to establish the fact that the Scriptures are fully complete and 100% accurate. In simple terms, God has made no mistakes in the writing and preserving of his Word. It is the only document in the world that can claim as much. The Bible says:

- *"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. You shall keep them, O LORD, you shall preserve them from this generation forever."* (Ps. 12:6-7)
- *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."* (Matt. 24:35)
- *"I will worship toward your holy temple, and praise your name for your loving kindness and for your truth: for you have magnified your word above all your name."* (Ps. 138:2)

From these three references we can learn some very important things. First of all, God's words are pure. Just like gold or silver that has been purified in a smelting pot contains no impurities, the Word of God contains no mistakes.

Second, we learn that God's Word is eternal. In other words, what God has said and written down will last forever. We know this is true from the previous section's discussion of the introductory verses of the Gospel of John. If God is eternal and his Word has been with him since the beginning, it must also be eternal.

Third, and most importantly, we learn that God considers his Word even more important than his own name. Why is this so important? Because none of us likes to have our names or reputations injured by someone else. We go to great lengths to protect the family name against damage. God is the same way. But according to Psalm 138, his Word is even more important. Rest assured he will go to great lengths to make sure that it remains perfect and pure for all eternity.

DIFFERENT BIBLE VERSIONS

If God's word contains no mistakes, we are then presented with a dilemma. That dilemma comes by way of different Bible versions saying different things. Daniel 3:25 provides a perfect example:

- *"He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."* (KJV)
- *"He answered, Behold, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt! And the form of the fourth is like a son of the gods!"* (AMP)
- *"He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."* (NIV)
- *"He answered, "But I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."* (RSV)

Notice that the King James version says the man observed walking with three men in the fiery furnace is like the "Son of God." This reveals that the person who saved Daniel's three friends was Jesus himself. The other three versions not only fail to reference Jesus, they reference the man as just a "son of the gods."

This is no small disagreement. Either the person in the fiery furnace was Jesus or he wasn't. It can't be both. Furthermore, Jesus is no "son of the gods." He is **THE Son of God!**

Questions to Ponder:

- 1. Can two Bibles say different things and both still be correct?*
- 2. If God put the effort into inspiring his Word, doesn't it make sense he would make the effort to preserve it as well?*

The existence of different and conflicting Bible versions can only mean one thing: either there is one among them that is perfectly accurate or none of them are perfectly accurate. But it's impossible to have conflicting Bibles be completely accurate simultaneously.

Some people believe that God's Word is perfect only in the original languages. The official position of Honour of Kings is that the 1769 edition of the King James 1611 Bible is the perfect word of God in English. We believe this based upon our own studies and a mountain of manuscript evidence too extensive to discuss here in detail.

We further believe that God did not go to the trouble of inspiring his Word just to allow mankind to contaminate it over the years. If he made sure it was written down perfectly in the original languages, it makes sense to us that he would preserve it perfectly somewhere in the world. We believe that preservation is found in the 1769 King James 1611 Bible. In the end, what you believe about the inerrancy of Scripture is between you and God. But don't just accept what others say about it. Study for yourself and ask God to show you the answer.

Review of Sections 3+4

1. All Scripture has been inspired by God and conveyed to man by the Holy Spirit.
2. God's Word is more important to him than his own name.
3. God has gone to great lengths to insure Scripture was recorded properly.
4. God continues to go to great lengths to insure his Word remains perfectly intact.

REVIEW ASSIGNMENT: Using either online resources or printed Bibles, compare the passages of Scripture below in different Bible versions and note their differences. Complete the assignment with a written summary of your observations and how you believe they apply to the study of Scripture. The passages to compare are:

Acts 3:13

II Thess. 3:5

Romans 11:30-32

Isaiah 7:14

Colossians 1:14

Romans 14:10-12

Acts 8:37

Isaiah 14:12

5. How to Study the Bible

Study of the Bible is critical to our understanding of who God is. Why? Because, as we have already demonstrated, the words found in the Bible come directly from God himself. His Word is his revelation to mankind. It is a description of who he is, an explanation of his plans for mankind, and a set of instructions given to us in order that we may live lives acceptable to him.

As an instruction manual, it is impossible for us to live according to God's dictates if we don't know what those dictates are. And the only way to know and understand those dictates is to study the Bible. It's no different than studying to be a doctor. One cannot be a skilled doctor without studying the concepts of biology, physiology, anatomy and medicine. Likewise, one cannot be a skilled and successful Christian if one does not study the Word.

Understanding the importance of study leads to the inevitable question of how to study. The first thing to consider is the basic learning process human beings tend to follow. Think of it in terms of math. How did you learn the process of multiplication? By learning addition first, then building on that principle to understand multiplication. Bible study works the same way. You learn one principle followed by another, gradually building your understanding and knowledge as you go. This is accomplished through verse-by-verse study, going through one book at a time.

Verse-by-verse study is actually a principal God mentions in Scripture. In the book of Isaiah, he says:

“Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: for with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.” (Is. 28:9-11)

It is clear from this passage that God teaches knowledge and doctrine to those who will study precept upon precept, line upon line. Those not willing to study this way are like babies still drinking their mother's milk. The book of Hebrews speaks of such baby Christians:

“For when for the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Heb. 5:12-14)

You will be most successful in your studies if you work through the different sections of Scripture one at a time. For example, you might start with the Pentateuch. You would study from Genesis through Deuteronomy, going through each book verse-by-verse. This would give you a good understanding of who God is and how he works. From there you might move to the historical books or the Gospels. The point is to study an entire section at a time rather than the hit-or-miss practices most Christians utilize. As you study, compare passages with one another.

For the most successful study, consider using the following resources:

- **Concordance** – A concordance allows you to find any word or phrase in the Bible very quickly. A concordance is a great tool for comparing similar passages for greater understanding.
- **Lexicons** – Greek and Hebrew lexicons make it possible to understand the meaning of difficult passages by looking at the meanings of the original Greek and Hebrew words. This is necessary due to the evolution of English over the generations. Lexicons allow you to learn what the original writers were thinking when they penned their words.
- **English Dictionary** – An older English dictionary from the 18th or 19th century is very helpful for understanding words not made clear by the lexicons. Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary is a good option.

As you proceed through your studies, listen to your conscience and your gut instinct to tell you when to stop and reference dictionaries and lexicons. If anything seems out of place, that could be a clear indication that the Holy Spirit wants you to either look up words or compare one passage of Scripture to the next.

In closing this section, be careful about using Bible commentaries and study tools. A wise man once said that the best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself – we agree wholeheartedly. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit is more than capable of helping you understand if you simply trust him to do so.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (Jn. 14:26)

Summary of Sections 3-5

1. The Bible was penned by human authors; God instructed them what to write through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
2. Because the Bible was written by God through men it is always accurate; it is always perfect; it needs no modifications or upgrades by humanity.
3. The existence of different Bible versions saying different things is contrary to point number two. Therefore, all Bibles cannot be equally perfect. Either one is perfect or all are not.

END-OF-CHAPTER ASSIGNMENT: Put together a presentation that will explain the basic concepts you learned in this chapter. You can use your computer, drawings and charts, or anything else you believe will best demonstrate your understanding. Once your presentation is complete, present it to your family, your homeschool group or perhaps your Sunday school class.