


THE BIBLE SPEAKS


JAMES M. GRAY



Developed as a study course by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.



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STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

The Bible is God’s communication to man, and in that sense we can say that the Bible “speaks” to us. The thinking person who has questions about life, the world, and the future will find answers in the Bible. In this course you will discover first why we can trust the Bible as coming from God, and then some of the main things it says about God and our relationship to Him—in short, the basic teachings of the Christian faith.

LESSONS YOU WILL STUDY

1. What the Bible Says About the Bible	5
2. What the Bible Says About God	11
3. What the Bible Says About the Trinity	19
4. What the Bible Says About God’s Relation to the World	25
5. What the Bible Says About Creation and the Fall of Man	31
6. What the Bible Says About Sin	37
7. What the Bible Says About the Person of Christ	43
8. What the Bible Says About the Work of Christ	49
9. What the Bible Says About the Holy Spirit	57
10. What the Bible Says About Faith and Repentance	63
11. What the Bible Says About the Christian’s Heritage	68
12. What the Bible Says About Growing as a Christian	76

Course Components

This course has two parts: this study course and the exam booklet.

How To Study

This study has twelve chapters, and each chapter has its own exam. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read the chapter through at least twice, once to get a general idea of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete at least one chapter per week.

Exams

In the exam booklet there is one exam for each chapter (exam 1 covers chapter 1 of the course). Do not answer the questions by what you think or have always believed. The questions are designed to find out if you understand the material given in the course.

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions. It is important that you read the Bible passages referenced as some questions may be based on the Bible text.

How Your Exams Are Graded

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is to be found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.

1

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THE BIBLE

Various names are used for the Bible, such as *The Holy Bible*, *The Scriptures*, and *The Word of God*. The word *Bible* comes from a Greek word which originally meant “books,” but through a gradual change of usage the word came to be regarded as a singular “book.” To call the Bible a “book” is very appropriate, for beyond question the Bible is *the* Book.

The Bible is called *holy* because of its sacred character as coming from God. The term *scriptures* mean “writings.” This is the term most often used in the Bible in reference to itself, occurring about fifty times (including both the singular and the plural forms). Paul, in writing to Timothy, used the expression, “the Holy Scriptures” (2 Timothy 3:15).

The Bible is divided into two parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament has thirty-nine books and is the record of God’s dealings with man—especially with the nation of Israel, God’s “chosen” people—before Jesus Christ was born; it also includes prophecies about Christ’s coming. The New Testament contains twenty-seven books, the first four of which tell about the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. The rest of the New Testament proclaims the salvation that God offers in light of Christ’s coming.

The Bible Is Inspired of God

“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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The phrase “by inspiration” is literally, “God-breathed.” Nothing is closer to a living being than its breath; the Bible comes direct from God. The Bible is inspired by God in the sense that (a) it is *His* communication, and (b) He is the ultimate Author behind the men who penned it.

1. God Spoke It

David said, “The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue” (2 Samuel 23:2).

The LORD told Jeremiah, “Behold, I have put My words in your mouth” (Jeremiah 1:9).

The prophets said again and again, “This is what the Sovereign LORD says . . .” (e.g., Ezekiel 5:5).

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonian church that “when you received the word [in this context, the message of the gospel] of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe” (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

2. God Caused Men to Write It in His Name

Some people maintain that the Bible only *contains* the word of God, thereby setting themselves up as judges to determine what in the Bible is inspired and what is not. On the contrary, the truth is that the Bible *is* the word of God. The Bible originated from God. He directed the men He had chosen to write down exactly what He wanted written.

“For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21).

The word “moved” in this verse is used in Greek to describe the moving of a ship by the wind towards its planned destination; Bible writers were “borne along” by the Spirit to write what God designed to accomplish with those words and wording.

Since thoughts cannot be divorced from words, the very words and order of them in the original Scriptures were given by God, as Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 2:13, “These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” This doctrine is called *verbal inspiration*. The term

plenary inspiration means that all parts of the Bible are equally authoritative owing to it all originating from God. The Bible declares this to be a fact without telling us exactly how God did it. In some way, mysterious to us, He influenced the writers of Scripture to record His message to mankind. God worked through these men in such a way that their personalities are evident—for instance, John did not write in the same style as Paul, yet what each of them wrote is the inspired word of God.

The Bible Is the Revelation of God

Revelation is God's act of making known to us those things that we otherwise could never know. Men always have sought to discover the truth concerning their Creator and His relationship to the world, but the things of God cannot be found by ordinary human means.

“But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.’ But God has revealed them to us by His Spirit” (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

The Bible is both a revelation *from* God and a revelation *of* God in that it comes from God and tells us about Him. This revelation is twofold:

1. God Reveals Himself in His Written Word

“I am the LORD, and there is no other. I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth; I do not say to the seed of Jacob, ‘Seek Me in vain’; I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right” (Isaiah 45:18-19).

Every page of Scripture reveals the person, work, and purposes of God. The very first verse tells us three things about Him: (1) He existed before the universe did; (2) He created everything; (3) by inference, He is all-powerful (Genesis 1:1). Some information has to be gleaned with deeper study, as when the resurrected Christ talked with two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus:

“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He [Jesus] explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27). See also Luke 1:1-4; 24:44; John 5:39-47; and Acts 1:1-2.

2. God Reveals Himself in His Son, Jesus Christ, Who Is the Living Word

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word became 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” (John 1:1, 14).

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son . . .” (Hebrews 1:1-2).

The Bible Is Trustworthy

Because the Author of the Bible is the infallible God, we can logically say that the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. It bears testimony of itself:

“Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89).

Someone has said, “If a man lies to me once, I wouldn’t know when to trust him if he told me the truth a thousand times.” The Bible does not lie to us even once. We can have confidence that what it says regarding spiritual things is true because what it says about history and science is true (though it is neither a history book nor a science book). Consider the following example (one of many). Ancient historians said Nabonidus was king of Babylon at the time of its fall to the Persians in 539 BC. The Bible, however, states that Belshazzar was king at that time. Was the Bible wrong? No. Archeologists have since uncovered tablets in Babylon showing that Belshazzar was co-ruler with his father, Nabonidus. Thus we see a historical account in the Bible that has been shown to be true.

The Bible Is God’s Message to Man

Since the Bible is our guidebook for life, and since our conduct is to be governed in all things by what the Scriptures teach, let us examine those particular things in it and give them our undivided attention. These particulars can be summarized briefly in a threefold way:

1. God's Only Plan of Salvation from Sin

The Scriptures teach what God has done to provide salvation for mankind. We will look deeper into God's plan of salvation in another lesson; our purpose now is to simply know that this great truth is taught in the Bible. Some people try to work for their salvation through various ways and means, but God reveals to us in His Word the only way to be made right with Him: believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek [Gentile]" (Romans 1:16).

". . . And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15).

2. Man's Responsibility to Receive God's Salvation

The Scriptures teach what we must each do personally in order to experience this salvation—that is, they teach what we must do in order to be saved from being punished eternally for our sin against God. We might possibly know about the love and mercy of God even without the Bible, but the only way to know how to be saved is found in the Bible.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12).

Just as a person accepts a gift from a friend with no thought of paying for it, so we receive the blessings of life in Christ without exchanging any payment for them.

3. Man's Condition in the Life to Come

The Scriptures teach about the future life (Revelation 21:1-8).

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’ Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful.’ And He said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son’”

In every age, people have tried earnestly to find out something about conditions in the life to come without the aid of the Bible. They have tried fortune-telling, and they have tried to talk with the dead. Isaiah 8:19 and Luke 16:29-31 reveal how foolish these attempts are. In contrast to the doubts, uncertainty, and despair of men, the Bible gives us a true and sure message about the life to come.

We have the most wonderful message of all time and of all eternity. The Bible is indeed the Word of God, and in it the God of heaven has told us about Himself and about our relationship to Him. What study could be more valuable than the study of the Bible?

THE BIBLE SPEAKS

EXAM BOOKLET AK '15 (1 UNIT) TBS

STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: _____

INSTRUCTOR



Exam developed by Emmas Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

The exams are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a Single Page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

TRUE / FALSE

For these questions, circle the correct answer.

T F

MULTIPLE CHOICE

You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer at the space on the right. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

- A. blue
- B. green
- C. yellow

 B

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Under this heading we invite you to put into words something you have learned from that chapter, and to share that with us.

RETURNING THE EXAM

See the back of this exam booklet for instructions on returning your exam for grading.

DO NOT PHOTOCOPY THESE EXAM PAGES

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CHAPTER 1 EXAM

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THE BIBLE

EXAM GRADE

Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.

Read each statement carefully and circle the letter of the correct answer: T—if true, or F—if false. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. The Bible was written by verbal inspiration, God giving the actual words of the original Scriptures. | T | F |
| 2. Because the Bible is true, we can have complete confidence in what it says. | T | F |
| 3. The Bible reveals a few of the ways by which we can experience salvation. | T | F |
| 4. Fortune telling is mentioned favorably in the Bible. | T | F |
| 5. In the Bible, God has told us about Himself and our relationship with Him. | T | F |

Write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 6. The doctrine of plenary inspiration teaches that | |
| A. only parts of the Bible are inspired. | |
| B. the human writers of the Bible all wrote in the same style. | |
| C. all parts of the Bible are equally authoritative. | _____ |
| 7. We can discover the truth about God and His relationship to the world | |
| A. only as He reveals it to us. | |
| B. by ordinary human means. | |
| C. in the traditions of the church. | _____ |
| 8. The expression <i>the Word</i> applies to | |
| A. the Scriptures only. | |
| B. Christ only. | |
| C. Christ and the Scriptures. | _____ |

9. The only way to be made right with God is to

- A. attend church regularly.
- B. believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- C. complete good works.

10. In the book of _____ we learn much about the future.

- A. Revelation
- B. Philemon
- C. Genesis

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Write here one thing you have learned from this lesson.
