

MAILBOX BIBLE COURSE

**LESSON 1: TIMELY TOPICS**

*Welcome to our Mailbox Bible Study Course. We trust you will enjoy these lessons as much as we did composing them. We are glad to be able to serve the Lord and you in this way. Many are being saved and helped through these simple Bible lessons. We suggest that you try to do one lesson each week; this will keep your interest in them active. This particular course contains twenty three lessons on Timely Topics Bible Studies. Please save this lesson onto your computer, read the lesson carefully, full in the answers in the blocks provided then attach this lesson into an email addresses to us [biblelessons@uniserve.com](mailto:biblelessons@uniserve.com) and then push your send button. We will then evaluate and return any corrections to you with your next lesson. On completion of the full course, you will receive a beautifully presented certificate. Should you have difficulty opening or sending this file to us, please let us know by return email. We suggest that you print these lessons and put them in a binder for future studies.*

*May God richly bless you as you proceed?*

*Your Instructor*

*Harold Smith*

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**LESSON 1: TIMELY TOPICS**

The Bible What is it all About?  
Is the Bible Really True?  
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Is Jesus Christ God?  
Can we know that we are saved?  
Baptism, Does it Save.  
Do Heaven and Hell really exist?  
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The Church - What is it?  
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Tongues, Are they for Today?  
One World Under Whom?

**THE BIBLE WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT Part 1**

**The Big Picture**

There are four kinds of people in the world. There are those who have never read the Bible. There are those who have read parts of it, but quit reading it because they did not understand it. Then there are those who have read the Bible and understood it, but quite frankly were drawn away by something of much less importance. Lastly, there are those who have read it, and are still reading it with great enjoyment and blessing. You may have never read the Bible. Either because you just did not care to,

or you felt like you could not understand it if you did. Perhaps you have been taught and believe that only theologians can understand it. Well, you can understand the Bible, and it is not just for theologians. On the other hand, it is very possible that you have tried to read the Bible but you did not get very far. It all seemed so strange to you. This may have been because you started reading in the wrong place, or because you simply approached it with the attitude that you would never understand it anyway. For whatever the reason, you never did understand what it is all about. The purpose of this short booklet is to give you an overview of what the Bible is all about. In just a few short minutes, you will see that there is a story that runs from the beginning to the end of your Bible. It is not just a collection of 66 unrelated books. They are related and there is a story that runs through the whole Bible. Knowing the main story of the Bible makes understanding the individual parts a lot easier. It is like putting a puzzle together. If you have the big picture, it is much easier to put the pieces together. Many people approach the Bible with no idea of what it is all about, and thus have great difficulty in understanding it. Before you go further, there is one important thing you must know about the Bible. The Bible is not just a history book. Nor is it just a religious book. It is a spiritual book. It is God's Word for humankind. The fact that the Bible is God's Word can be seen in the fact that the 66 books contained in the Bible were written by over 40 writers over a 1,500 year period. The majority of the writers never knew each other, and came from different countries and a great diversity of backgrounds and educational levels. Among its writers were shepherds, kings, a lawyer, a doctor, servants, fisherman, and prophets. Despite the fact that many of these writers never knew each other, and came from such varied backgrounds, and wrote over such an expanse of time, their writings fit together to form one story. Truly, the Bible is a supernatural book! Another way that we can see that the Bible is God's Word is that despite man's deliberate attempts to destroy it at various points in history, it has survived over the centuries and more copies of it have been printed than any other book. It has also been printed in more languages than any other book. However, the greatest evidence that the Bible is God's Word for man is the impact it has made on the lives of men and women. For example, the world has tried every effort to rehabilitate men and women in our prisons. Everyone is aware that this has failed miserably. However, there are thousands of men and women in prisons today who are different than when they went into prison. So different, that wardens of many prisons are delighted to have Bibles distributed to the prisoners and for Bible studies to be conducted with the prisoners. Where this is not possible, many prisoners are taking Bible correspondence courses. The impact on their lives is supernatural! Now this supernatural change in lives is not isolated to those in our nation's prisons. Many people from different backgrounds and levels of society have experienced this same change in their lives. The Bible has no social, racial, geographical, or economical boundaries. It is God's spiritual book for all mankind (*Revelation 5:9*). *"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou were slain, and by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation..."* Since the Bible is a spiritual book, we need God's help in understanding it. We must come to it with a spirit of dependence upon its Author (*2 Timothy 3:16*). *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"*: With this in mind please take a moment right now and ask God to help you understand His Word. Tell Him that it is your desire to know what the Bible is all about, and that you want His help in this regard. Your prayer need not be long or formal, but simply sincere. Your dependence on God to show you His Word is very important in your understanding of it. (Pause to pray.)

### **A KEY WORD**

A key word that will help you understand what the Bible is all about is "Government." A simple definition of "government" is that it is an "order of authority." The central story of the Bible is one of "authority," or "government." It is very important for you to understand that government is essential for order and happiness. Without government, or an order of authority, everyone does what he or she pleases, and this results in chaos. The same chaos that we see in much of the world, and growing even

in our own country, and unfortunately in our own lives at times. People just do what they want to do, and they even do it openly. Whether it be drugs, immorality, crime, dishonesty, pornography, or disrespect for authority in general, the absence of a sense of accountability to a higher authority leads to disorder, and much sorrow and pain. Now in any order of authority there are two things that must be present in order for there to be harmony and blessing. These are "loving authority," and "willing submission." If these two things are present in any order of authority there will be peace and blessing. This is true whether it be in a marriage, in the home, in the business world, or in human government. If those in authority lovingly lead those under them, and those under authority willingly submit to those in authority over them, order and blessing will always be the outcome. How does government and these two ingredients for order and blessing fit into the Bible?

### THE BEGINNING

In the beginning of the Bible we are told very plainly that God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1). You will notice that the Bible assumes that there is a God, and makes no attempt to prove this fact. It has been wisely said, "There are no child atheists." Implied in this statement is that every child comes into the world believing in the existence of God. It takes man's schools to educate him differently. Now the God of creation is a God of order (*1 Corinthians 14:33*). *"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."* In whatever God creates, He establishes government. Take the human body for example. The physical body is directed by the brain. Every member of the body does not "do its own thing." If your hand begins to shake without any direction to do so by your brain, you realize that something is out of order. God has established an order of authority within the human body. Not only did God establish government within the human body, He also established it among the angels. The Bible clearly indicates that amongst the angels there are different levels of authority. The angel Lucifer was very high, perhaps the highest of all the angels *Isaiah 14:12-15*; *"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."* *Ezekiel 28:12-19* *"Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou were created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou were upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou were perfect in thy ways from the day that thou were created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more."* Under him were archangels, who in turn had authority over other angels. *Jude 9* *"Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."* When God finished creating the world, and the animal and plant life, He then established man as the Governor over it. Man was to govern the earth for God. *Genesis 1:26-28*, *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the*

*air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."* He had God-given authority to do so. Man was not, however, on his own. He was under God's loving authority and responsible to his Creator for his actions. God had provided everything man needed for happiness, and man enjoyed a harmonious relationship with His Creator. This is how the Bible begins. It begins with peace and blessing that comes when man willingly submits to the loving authority of his Creator.

### **THE REJECTION OF GOD'S GOVERNMENT**

The Bible records for us the fact that the angel Lucifer rebelled against God's order of government. Dissatisfied with his very high position in angelic government, he desired to be like God. As a result of this he fell from his high position (Isaiah 14:12, 14). Despite this fact he continues to function in rebellion. The Bible clearly indicates that he is a defeated enemy of God and will ultimately be cast into the lake of fire, which was designed specifically for him and the angels that followed him in his rebellion against God's loving authority. *Matthew 25:41 "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" Revelation 20: 10 "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."* While he awaits that day he continues to lead a rebellion against God's rule. In Genesis chapter 3 we read of Satan's attempt to get man to rebel against God's loving rule as well. *Genesis 3:1-6. "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."* He deceived Eve into thinking God's will for her was "restrictive," not "loving." He led her to believe that God was holding something back from her, and if she would "govern" her own life, that she too could be God. Believing this, she disobeyed God's instructions. Adam, as the head of the human race, was faced with a difficult choice. Would he follow his wife and eat of the forbidden fruit, or would he remain loyal to God? Would his natural love for his God-given wife govern his choice, or would his love for his Creator govern his choice? With full knowledge of God's will he rejected God's loving authority and took things into his own hands. Mankind, as represented by their head, Adam, had rejected God's loving government over them. *Romans 5:12;19 "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: V. 19, For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."* The Bible teaches very clearly that every human being that has followed in Adam's race has done the same. *Romans 3:23. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"* Just as the trees and animals would always reproduce after their kind, *Genesis 1:11,21, 24, " And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. Verse 21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. Verse 24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so."* so too man. *This explains why we never need to teach our children to lie or steal. This rebellious nature is passed on from one*

generation to the next , *Psalm 51:5; "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Ephesians 2:3. "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* This rebellion against the loving rule of God is called "sin." Every time we act contrary to God's expressed will for man, we sin. We have all sinned (Romans 3:23). We have all governed our own lives, and lived, as we wanted to live. We have all disobeyed the expressed will of a loving God. But it is not just God's will that we have sinned against, we have rejected our Creator, *Romans 1:25 "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."* When a child disobeys his parents, he not only disobeys their commandment, but he also offends them. The parents are hurt. So is God. A Loving Creator hurt by those He created. Have you ever thought of that with regard to your own life? All of the disorder and sorrow in the world today, and all of the disorder and sorrow in your life, is a result of sin. It is the result of rejecting God's government! It is the result of man running his own life, rather than allowing a loving, and all-wise Creator to govern it for him. Think of it, it all began when man disobeyed God (Romans 5: 19). Not only had man rejected God's loving rule, but in so doing he came under the rule of Satan. *Ephesians 2:1-3; "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." 1 John 3:8, 10; 5:19; "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. V.10, In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. 5:19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."* He is a cruel, unloving master, who has no love for those under his rule. He is in fact a destroyer of men. Look at the world and ask yourself if Satan has been a loving master. How does Satan rule over this fallen world and over mankind? By controlling their minds! He is a deceiver. He will use any means to deceive man. He provides a world of pleasure to hide the truth of impending judgment against a rebellious world. He provides false religion to deceive man into thinking he is right with God, when in fact, man continues to govern his own life, and live as he pleases. This is why Christ said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free" last thing Satan wants is for man to see the truth, because it will set man free from his rule. It is for this very reason he has tried to destroy the Bible, and if he cannot do that, to keep men and women from reading it!

**TEST PAGE OF LESSON 1 FROM TIMELY TOPICS BIBLE STUDY**

**Fill in the missing words:**

1. How many kinds of people read the Bible?\_\_\_\_\_
2. The Bible is not just a history book, but it is a \_\_\_\_\_ Book as well.
3. What is the key word of the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_
4. To whom did God establish order among beside man?\_\_\_\_\_
5. Who was the first to disobey and sin against God's order?\_\_\_\_\_
6. What verse or verses tell us Satan final doom?\_\_\_\_\_
7. Satan deceive Eve into think that \_\_\_\_\_ loving?
8. Adam sinned and reproduced a world just like Him. What verse best describe it? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What is the main cause of all sickness, sorrow and death in the world today?\_\_\_\_\_
10. Sinful man is \_\_\_\_\_ of Satan?

Did you say your MEMORY VERSE? -----

Have you taken the Lord Jesus as your Saviour? YES NO

When? -----

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**PLEASE FILL IN YOUR DETAILS:**

Your name:

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Email Address:

.....

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.....

STUDY HELPER DETAILS:

Harold - [biblelessons@uniserve.com](mailto:biblelessons@uniserve.com)

Shelly - [email.bible.lessons@gmail.com](mailto:email.bible.lessons@gmail.com)

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS:

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