

Learn to Read the Bible Effectively

Distance Learning Programme

Session 9



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Section 1

Study tools (Part 2)

We are going to have a look at some more aids to your study of the Bible. Most of these are rather more advanced than the previous ones. We are also going to look a little closer at the different translations available. It will help you to know more about the different Bibles available.

Bible atlases

These give the geographical background to the Bible, and often provide additional information to fill out the Bible story.

Useful atlases are:

- The Macmillan Bible Atlas
- The Oxford Bible Atlas
- The Times Bible Atlas

History books

These give historical background to Bible times. There are many history books available; probably your local library is a good place to start if you want background to a specific period. There are two very useful atlases of world history:

- The Times Atlas of World History
- The Penguin Atlas of World History (2 parts)

Another very useful book is Longman's *Chronicle of the World*, which presents the sweep of world history as newspaper reports and pictures.

Most of these books are expensive, but are generally available in the larger reference libraries.

Versions of the Bible

We looked briefly at translations in the first session. We are now going to look in more detail at the various translations of the English Bible.

There are four different types of translation:

a) “Word-for-word” translations.

These are translations where each original word is translated as accurately as possible into English.

Bibles of this type are:-

- The Authorised Version (also called the King James Version)
- The Revised Version
- The Revised Standard Version
- The New King James Version
- The American Standard Version

b) “Phrase-for-phrase” translations.

These are translations where the principle of “dynamic equivalence” is used in translation. This means that the translators put difficult phrases into modern English in an attempt to give what the translators believe is the meaning of such phrases.

Bibles of this type are:-

- The New English Bible
- The New International Version (of which there are four versions)
- The New Revised Standard Version
- The New American Standard Version
- The Revised English Bible

c) Catholic translations.

These are versions produced by, and mainly used by, the Roman Catholic Church.

Examples are:-

- The Douai / Rheims Version
- The Knox Bible
- The Jerusalem Bible

d) Paraphrase translations.

These are versions where the principle of “dynamic equivalence” has been carried a stage further from the “phrase-for-phrase” versions. They make very easy reading, but they are the furthest away from reflecting the meaning of the original text.

Examples of paraphrase versions are:-

- The Living Bible
- The Children’s Bible
- J.B. Phillips (Minor Prophets and New Testament)

The Interlinear Bible is popular with some Bible students. This edition is two versions in one – the Authorised and Revised Versions. Where the two versions vary in translation of the original, the text is split and reduced in size; the AV text is below with the RV text above it. This means that the two versions can be compared instantly.

There are other parallel versions available where two versions are side by side on each page. Examples are the New King James Version parallel with King James Version, and the New International Version parallel with the King James Version. Large Print and Wide Margin versions are also available.

Some of these special Bibles are expensive, so we recommend that you see a particular Bible before buying it to make sure that it is right for you. If you wish to look at a particular version, this can be arranged if you ask your tutor.

Section 2

Terminology (Part 3)

Antichrist

The *Young's Concordance* entry for “Antichrist” shows that the word occurs four times in the Bible.

ANTI-CHRIST -

An opponent of Christ, antichristos.

- 1 Jo. 2.18 antichrist shall come.....are there many a.
- 2.22 He is antichrist, that denieth the Father
- 4. 3 this is that (spirit) of antichrist, whereof
- 2 Jo. 7 This is a deceiver and an antichrist

Let us see what these verses tell us:



Read 1 John 2 v 18 and 19

Verse 18 says that there were many “antichrists” around in John's time in the first century. Verse 19 makes it clear that these “antichrists” were originally part of the first-century community of believers – “They went out from us”.



Read 1 John 2 v 22 and 23

These verses give the added information that antichrists “deny that Jesus is the Christ”. They also refuse to accept Bible truths about God and His Son, Jesus Christ.



Read 1 John 4 v 1 to 3

Antichrist is related to false prophets in these verses. They say that such people do not accept that Christ “came in the flesh”. They also confirm what was stated in 1 John 2 v 18, that the problem was around even in John's day.



Read 2 John 7

This verse again confirms what you have already learned, i.e. the problem was already there and one characteristic was the denial that Jesus “came in the flesh”.

Reference to *Strong’s Concordance* shows us that “Antichrist” is comprised of two words “anti” and “Christ”. The word “anti” means “against” or “instead of”. So we are being told that this influence is opposed to, or claims to be in the place of, Christ himself.

To summarise:-

“Antichrist” is:-

1. An influence which was around in John’s day.
2. An influence which spread from some of the believers.
3. An influence which denies that Jesus is the Christ or Messiah.
4. An influence which denies the Father and Son relationship of God and Christ.
5. An influence which is opposed to Christ’s teachings.
6. An influence which, despite all the above characteristics, claims to be instead of Christ.

Church

If we look at *Young’s Concordance* again we are told that “church” means “that which is called out”. *Strong’s Concordance* defines the church as a company of people who have separated themselves from unbelievers and are united by their common faith.

Messiah

“Messiah” means “anointed” and is the Hebrew form of the Greek word “Christ”. People and objects were anointed in Old Testament times to indicate “holiness” or “separation to God”.

Anointing was fundamentally an act of God, as 1 Samuel 10 v 1 indicates. It was regarded as the giving of Divine favour.



Read Psalm 23 v 5; 92 v 10

Anointing indicates an appointment to a special place or function in God’s purpose.

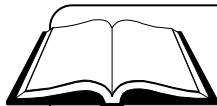


Read Psalm 105 v 15
Isaiah 45 v 1

These ideas of “separation to God” and “appointment to a special place in God’s purpose” were part of Jesus Christ’s mission. This is why he was given the name of “Christ”.

Mediator

A mediator’s function is to intervene between two parties in order to restore peace and friendship. It is the role of Jesus to restore the peace between God and men.



Read 1 Timothy 2 v 5

OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENT 12

Antichrist

Look at the “Antichrist” references. Don’t look at what we have said, but write down in your own words what the verses are saying. Look up cross-references if your Bible has them, and write down what they say. There has been a lot written about this subject which is not based on the Bible, so be careful to draw conclusions which are supported by the Bible.

Notes

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