

WRITINGS OF MYER PEARLMAN

by Myer Pearlman

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Myer Pearlman, compiled for study and devotional reading.

73 Chapters

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Chapter 2

01.00.1. Through the Bible Book by Book, Old Testament

Through the Bible Book by Book

Old Testament by

Myer Pearlman

01.00.4. Foreward

FOREWORD - Book One - LAW AND HISTORY The reader has, no doubt, watched a grocery salesman fill an order, and noted how well acquainted he was with the sections where the various articles were kept. This homely illustration will serve to describe the purpose of this course, which is to impart a general knowledge of the contents of each Book of the Bible so that the Sunday school teacher with his lesson before him, may know from which of the sixty-six "compartments" of the Bible to select his material. This purpose has made necessary the method used in this course, which is not to deal primarily with details, but with the main facts of each book.

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01.01. Genesis

Genesis

Theme. The Book is well described by its title, Genesis, which means "beginning," for it is a history of the beginning of all things - the beginning of heaven and earth, of all life and of all human institutions and relations. It has been called the seed-plot of the Bible from the fact that the germs of all the great doctrines concerning GOD, man, sin and salvation are found there.

Genesis 1:1 suggests the purpose of the Book. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The Israelites, to whom the message of the Book was first addressed, would learn that the GOD of Palestine was also the GOD of all lands, and that the GOD of one nation - Israel - was also the GOD of all nations. Since He was the GOD and Creator of all the earth, He must ultimately become the Redeemer of all the earth. The Book describes how redemption became necessary because man had sinned and fallen into darkness; and how GOD prepared to choose one nation to take the light of Divine truth to the other nations.

Author. Moses.

Scope. From the Creation to the death of Joseph, covering a period of 2,315 years, from about 4004 B. C. to 1689 B. C.

CONTENTS The contents of Genesis center around nine outstanding subjects.

1. The Creation (Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-25).
2. The Fall (Genesis 3:1-24).
2. The First Civilization (Genesis 4:1-26).
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9. Joseph (Genesis 27:1-46, Genesis 28:1-22, Genesis 29:1-35, Genesis 30:1-43, Genesis 31:1-55, Genesis 32:1-32, Genesis 33:1-20, Genesis 34:1-31, Genesis 35:1-29, Genesis 36:1-43, Genesis 37:1-36, Genesis 38:1-30, Genesis 39:1-23, Genesis 40:1-23, Genesis 41:1-57, Genesis 42:1-38, Genesis 43:1-34, Genesis 44:1-34, Genesis 45:1-28, Genesis 46:1-34, Genesis 47:1-31, Genesis 48:1-22, Genesis 49:1-33, Genesis 50:1-26).

We shall now analyze the chapters covering each point of the above outline and in so doing we shall be able to fix in our minds the most important facts.

I. The Creation (Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-25) The great Architect of the universe completed His work of creation in six days, and rested on the seventh. The following is the order of the creation:

Preparation and Separation - Completion and Filling 1st Day - Light

2nd Day - Air

2nd Day - Water

3rd Day - Land

3rd Day - Plants

4th Day - Day Lights (heavenly bodies)

5th Day - Birds

5th Day - Fish 6th Day - Animals

6th Day - Man On the seventh day He ceased, setting man an example of laboring six days and resting on the seventh.

II. The Fall (Genesis 3:1-24)

After creating man, the crown of creation, GOD pronounced everything VERY good. Genesis 2:1-25 tells how GOD prepared man's first home, performed the first wedding ceremony and placed two trees in the garden, that taught the following lessons: if Adam and his wife chose the GOOD and refused the EVIL, they would always eat of the tree of LIFE; otherwise, they would die. In Genesis 2:1-25 we find a repetition of the account of Creation. On comparing the two chapters, however, we shall see that chapter 1 gives us a general account of the event, while Genesis 2:1-25 gives the same account with the addition of extra details and with the emphasizing of some particular part of the story. This peculiarity of the Holy Spirit in giving two accounts of one event is called the "law of recurrence" and is found all through the Bible.

What does Genesis 2:1-25 tell concerning the Creation that chapter 1 omits? What is meant by man being created in the image of GOD? (See Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). To whom does "Us" refer in the expression, "Let us make man"? (Read Job 35:10; Colossians 1:16; Job 33:4).

Notice:

1. The possibility of temptation. The tree of the knowledge of GOOD and EVIL was left in the garden in order that man might be tested and learn to serve GOD from a willing heart.

2. The author of the temptation. The serpent represents, and is an agent of, "that great serpent the devil."
3. The subtlety of the temptation. The serpent succeeded in injecting a question mark in the mind of Eve.
4. The success of the temptation. Adam and Eve disobeyed GOD and became conscious of guilt.
5. The first judgment: a. On the serpent: degradation. b. On the woman: pain, and subjection to man. c. On the man: hard labor on a thorn-bearing ground until his death. d. On man and his descendants: exclusion from the tree of life in the paradise of GOD.
6. The first announcement of redemption. a. Redemption promised: Genesis 3:15. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." That is, there will be a struggle between mankind and the power that caused his fall. "It shall bruise thy head" - mankind will be victorious, through its representative, the Son of Man. See Acts 10:38; 1 John 3:8. "And thou shalt bruise his heel" - but the victory will be through suffering, through the death of the Seed of the woman, CHRIST. See also Galatians 4:4; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:21. b. Redemption pictured. The Lord slew the first sacrifice in order to clothe the guilty pair - a picture of the covering of a guilty conscience through blood sacrifice.

Note: the Book of Genesis is the record of the development of this promise of redemption, showing how it passed through different individuals and families.

III. The First Civilization (Genesis 4:1-26) 1. The story of Cain shows how sin became hereditary, and led to the first murder. See 1 John 3:12.

2. The story of Abel teaches us how those sharing in Adam's guilt and sinfulness may be accepted in GOD's sight - through the offering of an atoning sacrifice.

3 The first civilization. Cain became the founder of a civilization that included a city, agriculture, manufactures and arts. In character it was marked by violation of the marriage law and by the spirit of violence. Genesis 4:19-24.

4. The birth of Seth. Abel was dead; Cain was rejected; the promise of redemption passed on to Adam's third son - Seth. Genesis 4:25-26.

IV. The Flood (Genesis 5:1-32, Genesis 6:1-22, Genesis 7:1-24, Genesis 8:1-22, Genesis 9:1-29)

There were now two classes of people in the world - the ungodly Cainites and the godly Sethites. See Genesis 4:25-26. The chosen line of Seth lost its separation and inter-married with the Cainites. Result: a condition of wickedness on the earth that called for GOD's judgment. Of Seth's descendants only the family of Noah remained true to GOD. Noah becomes the chosen one through whom the promise of redemption continued its journey toward fulfillment. Genesis 5:29; Genesis 6:8.

Note the genealogy in Genesis 5:1-32. (Genealogy is the record of descent from some ancestor.) It begins with Adam and ends with Noah. We shall find many of these genealogies in the Bible. The main purpose of most of them, as of the one in this chapter, is to keep a record of the line through which the promised Seed (CHRIST) was to come (Genesis 3:15).

Let us sum up the main events of these chapters. Learn these.

1. The genealogy of Noah (Genesis 5:1-32).
2. The building of the ark (Genesis 6:1-22).
3. The entrance into the ark (Genesis 7:1-24).
4. The departure from the ark (Genesis 8:1-22).
5. The covenant with Noah (Genesis 9:1-29).

Notice the high state of civilization at the time of the Flood (Genesis 4:16-24). The descendants of Cain were the builders of the first city and the originators of the first arts. What are those days to remind us of? (See Matthew 24:37-39).

GOD destroyed the world with a Flood, and started a new race with the family of Noah. He promised that the earth should never again be destroyed by a Flood, and made the rainbow the seal of that covenant. The Lord renewed the charge made to Adam; namely, to replenish the earth. There is a solemn prohibition of murder with this addition that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." This marks the delegating of authority to man to govern his fellows and visit punishment upon crime. Before this, it was GOD alone who punished evildoers.

Later Noah predicted the future of his three sons (Genesis 9:18-27), and appointed Shem as the chosen seed through whom GOD will bless the world.

V. The Dispersion of the Nation. (Genesis 10:1-32, Genesis 11:1-32) As an introduction of the study of the nations, read again carefully Noah's prophecy concerning his three sons (Genesis 9:24-27).

Dr. Pinnock writes of its fulfillment as follows: "These prophecies have been wonderfully fulfilled. In respect of Hams posterity: the Egyptians were afflicted with various plagues; the land of Canaan eight hundred years afterwards was delivered by GOD into the hands of the Israelites under Joshua, who destroyed great numbers, and obliged the rest to flee, some into Africa, and others into various countries; their present condition in Africa we now know.

"In respect of Japheth: 'God shall enlarge Japheth,' has been fulfilled in the vast extent of country possessed by him - all the isles and countries westward; and when the Greeks, and afterwards the Romans, subdued Asia and Africa, they then occupied the dwellings of Shem and of Canaan.

"In respect of Shem: 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem' - that is, He and His church should dwell in the tents of Shem; from him should spring the Messiah; and the worship of the true GOD should be preserved among his posterity; the Jews being the posterity of Shem."

Notice the relation of Genesis 10:1-32 to Genesis 11:1-32. Genesis 10:1-32 indicates the separate locations of the races and Genesis 11:1-32 explains how the separation occurred.

After the Flood, the descendants of Noah, led by Nimrod (Genesis 10:8-10), rose in rebellion against GOD, as an outward sign of which they erected the Tower of Babel. Their purpose was to organize a "league of nations" against GOD.

GOD spoiled their plan by confounding their speech and scattering them in different countries.

We may speculate in vain as to the exact purpose of the tower itself, but this we may know - that their project was an act of rebellion against GOD. It was evidently GOD's purpose that the descendants of Noah should spread abroad and occupy the different countries of the earth. (See Acts 17:26 and Deuteronomy 32:8). But they said, "Let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad." Who was the probable instigator of this rebellion? (See Genesis 10:8-9.) What was his kingdom? (Genesis 10:10). Of whom is he a type? (2 Thessalonians 2:3-11; Revelation 13:1-18). Who, in rebellion, will gather the nations together in the last days? (Revelation 16:13-15). Will Babel (or Babylon) again be prominent in the last days? (See Revelation 17:1-18, Revelation 18:1-24).

Learn the following simple outline of Genesis 10:1-32, Genesis 11:1-32 :

1. The unity of race and speech.
2. The location of the event - the land of Shinar.
3. The purpose of the tower of Babel - to be a center of rebellion against GOD.
4. GOD's judgment - the confusion of tongues.
5. The result of the judgment - dispersion.

VI. Abraham (Genesis 12:1-20, Genesis 13:1-18, Genesis 14:1-24, Genesis 15:1-21, Genesis 16:1-16, Genesis 17:1-27, Genesis 18:1-33, Genesis 19:1-38, Genesis 20:1-18, Genesis 21:1-34, Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 23:1-20, Genesis 24:1-67, Genesis 25:1-34)

It will be interesting to observe that the first eleven chapters of Genesis cover about 2,000 years - about equal in length to that time covered by all the rest of the Bible. Why does the SPIRIT hurry so over the events of the dawn of history? Because, as we found out in our earlier study, the Bible is mainly a history of redemption, and the history of nations is only incidental to that subject. The SPIRIT hurries over all these events till He comes to Abraham. Then He stops and devotes more space to that one person than He does to 2,000 years of human history. The reason is obvious. The "Father of the Faithful" plays an important role in the history of redemption. By way of review turn back to Genesis 5:1-32. We called attention there to the genealogy of Noah beginning with Adam.

Now turn to Genesis 11:10-26, and you will find that this list is continued. GOD is still keeping a record of the ancestors of the "Seed of the woman." With the name of what one important person does this list end (Genesis 11:26)? Why? (See Genesis 12:2-3). The promise of Genesis 3:15 passed on to Abraham. GOD separated him from his heathen surroundings, and besides personal promises, made the following national and universal promises: (See Genesis 12:1-3). a. That he should be given a land (Canaan). b. That he should be the father of a nation (Israel). c. That through this nation in this land all nations of the earth should be blessed. In other words, the Redeemer promised in Genesis 3:15 should come from a nation descended from Abraham. A study of the life of Abraham will reveal that it is a life of faith - a faith that was tested from the time that he was called to the time when he was commanded to sacrifice his son, Isaac. His life is an illustration of the type of person who would receive the blessing promised in Genesis 12:3, and a

prophecy of the truth that salvation should be through faith. See Galatians 3:8; Romans 4:1-25. In this study we shall have time to give only the bare outline of the life of this patriarch. Since you have read the chapters, the details will suggest themselves. Learn the following facts:

1. His call to go to Canaan (Genesis 12:1-5).
2. His descent into Egypt and happenings while there (Genesis 12:10-20).
3. His separation from Lot and his subsequent deliverance of the latter from captivity (Genesis 13:5-11; Genesis 14:14).
4. His reception of GOD's covenant and his justification by faith (Genesis 15:6; Genesis 15:18).
5. His circumcision as a sign of the covenant (Genesis 17:9-14).
6. The annunciation of Isaac's birth. (Genesis 17:15-19; Genesis 18:1-15).
7. His intercession for Sodom (Genesis 18:23-33).
8. His dismissal of Hagar and Ishmael (Genesis 21:14).
9. His offering up of Isaac (Genesis 22:1-24).
10. His choice of a bride for Isaac (Genesis 24:1-67).
11. His children by Keturah (Genesis 25:1-4).
12. His death (Genesis 25:8).

VII. Isaac (Genesis 17:1-27, Genesis 18:1-33, Genesis 19:1-38, Genesis 20:1-18, Genesis 21:1-34, Genesis 22:1-24, Genesis 23:1-20, Genesis 24:1-67, Genesis 25:1-34, Genesis 26:1-35, Genesis 27:1-46, Genesis 28:1-22, Genesis 29:1-35, Genesis 30:1-43, Genesis 31:1-55, Genesis 32:1-32, Genesis 33:1-20, Genesis 34:1-31, Genesis 35:1-29) To Abraham were born two sons - Ishmael and Isaac. Of these, Isaac was chosen as the inheritor of the promise. The life of Isaac is quiet and uneventful, and it seems to be a mere echo of his father's. Yet, like his father he is a man of faith, and a channel of blessing. Notice that the promise is repeated to him. Ch. 26.

Learn the following six facts concerning Isaac:

1. His birth promised to Abraham and Sarah (Genesis 15:4; Genesis 17:19).
2. Bound upon an altar of sacrifice (Genesis 22:9).
3. Abraham's choice of a bride for him (Genesis 24:1-67).
4. GOD appears to him and renews the covenant made to his father (Genesis 26:2-5).
5. His deception by Jacob (Genesis 27:18).
6. His death (Genesis 35:28-29).

What was Isaac's birth a type of (Genesis 18:9-15 and Matthew 1:21)? His going to Mt. Moriah to be sacrificed (Compare Genesis 22:1-24 and Matthew 27:22-23)? His deliverance from death (Genesis 22:1-24; Matthew 28:1-6)? His father's sending his servant to seek a bride for him

(Genesis 24:1-67; Acts 15:14; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 5:25-26; Ephesians 5:32).

VIII. Jacob (Genesis 25:1-34, Genesis 26:1-35, Genesis 27:1-46, Genesis 28:1-22, Genesis 29:1-35, Genesis 30:1-43, Genesis 31:1-55, Genesis 32:1-32, Genesis 33:1-20, Genesis 34:1-31, Genesis 35:1-29) To Isaac were born two sons - Esau and Jacob. Esau was rejected, and Jacob was chosen as the channel of blessing (Genesis 25:23). The character of these two sons is revealed by their attitude toward this promise. See Genesis 25:29-34.

Learn the outstanding events of Jacob's life.

1. His purchase of his brother's birthright (Genesis 25:33).
2. His deception of his father (Genesis 27:18-27).
3. His flight to Padan-aram (Genesis 27:43-46, Genesis 28:1-5).
4. His vision and vow (Genesis 28:10).
5. His dealings with Laban (Genesis 31:1-55).
6. His wrestling with an angel (Genesis 32:24).
7. His reconciliation with Esau (Genesis 33:1-20).
8. His descent into Egypt and his meeting with Joseph (Genesis 46:1-34).
9. His death and burial (Genesis 49:33, Genesis 50:1-13).

Jacob is the true father of the chosen people, for to him were born the twelve sons that became the fathers of the twelve tribes. And notice that he is a remarkable type of the nation in its character and experiences: a. Notice the combination of shrewd business ability and the desire for the knowledge of GOD. Consider how these two characteristics are revealed in Jacob's attempts to gain possession of the birthright and blessing. And remember that the Jews have been the religious nation, and also the business nation. b. Jacob was an exile from his own land for about twenty years. The Jews as a whole have been exiled from their land about nineteen hundred years. c. Jacob went into exile with a promise that the Lord would bring him back, in order to fulfill the promise made to Abraham. So Israel's restoration has been assured. They are beloved for the sake of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Romans 11:28. d. GOD's plan was fulfilled through Jacob in spite of the defects of his character. So shall it be with Israel as a nation. As Jacob's character was transformed, so will that of his descendants.

Some important lessons may be learned from the life of Jacob.

1. The power of the grace of GOD. Jacob was all that his name meant - a supplanter, a deceiver. The sacred ties of family were no bar to his scheming, for his father and his brother fell victims to his deceit. But through the dross of Jacob's sinfulness, GOD saw the glint of that which has been likened to fine gold-faith. At the brook Jabbok, the Grace of GOD engaged in battle with him, and in the struggle which ensued, the sinful Jacob died, but from his grave rose a new creature Israel, an overcomer with GOD and man.

2. GOD's high estimate of faith. Though the scheming of Jacob to obtain his brother's birth right is inexcusable, yet his earnest desire for it showed an appreciation of spiritual things. To him, the birthright carried with it the honor of being the progenitor of the MESSIAH, and his longing for that honor we may well regard as an expression of faith in the Coming One. It was this faith that gave him preference before GOD over his brother, Esau, who, though in many respects a more noble man than he, showed an utter lack of appreciation of spiritual values by selling for a mess of pottage the right of becoming the progenitor of the "Desire of all nations."

3. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Jacob's uncle, Laban, was in the hands of GOD an instrument of retribution for the disciplining of Jacob. Jacob had cheated others; he in turn was cheated. He found in his uncle a mirror that reflected back upon him his own deceitfulness.

IX. Joseph (Genesis 27:1-46, Genesis 28:1-22, Genesis 29:1-35, Genesis 30:1-43, Genesis 31:1-55, Genesis 32:1-32, Genesis 33:1-20, Genesis 34:1-31, Genesis 35:1-29, Genesis 36:1-43, Genesis 37:1-36, Genesis 38:1-30, Genesis 39:1-23, Genesis 40:1-23, Genesis 41:1-57, Genesis 42:1-38, Genesis 43:1-34, Genesis 44:1-34, Genesis 45:1-28, Genesis 46:1-34, Genesis 47:1-31, Genesis 48:1-22, Genesis 49:1-33, Genesis 50:1-26) The story of Joseph, a boy of seventeen, favored by his father, Israel, who outwardly manifested his affection and esteem, and so caused jealousy on the part of the other sons. Joseph was also favored by the Lord, who revealed to him through dreams that he would be ruler over the other members of his family. This enraged his brothers, who sold him into Egypt, where after much adversity and temptation, and years of waiting for the fulfillment of the promise, he was exalted as the second ruler of the land of Egypt. When his brothers came down for grain and bowed before him, his dreams were fulfilled. The meaning of the story. Joseph's experiences were connected with the plan of redemption that we have already mentioned. GOD permitted him to be sold into Egypt and to suffer, in order that he might be exalted and thus have an opportunity to nourish the chosen family during famine and settle them in a territory where they could grow into a great nation and undergo certain experiences, until the Lord was ready to lead them to the conquest of the Promised Land. See Genesis 45:7-8; Genesis 50:20.

Learn the following brief outline of the life of Joseph:

1. Loved by his father (Genesis 37:3).
2. Envied by his brethren (Genesis 37:4).
3. Sold to the Ishmaelites (Genesis 37:18-36).
4. Favored by his master (Genesis 39:1-6).
5. Tempted by his master's wife (Genesis 39:7-19).
6. Imprisoned by Potiphar (Genesis 39:20-23, Genesis 40:1-23, Genesis 41:1-13).
7. Exalted by Pharaoh (Genesis 41:1-44).
8. Unrecognized by brethren at first meeting (Genesis 42:7-38, Genesis 43:1-34, Genesis 44:1-34).
9. Revealed to brethren at second meeting (Genesis 45:1-15).

10. Re-united to his father, Jacob (Genesis 46:28-34).

11. His death (Genesis 50:22-26). The life of Joseph presents some striking types of CHRIST. Of what is his father's love for him a type (Genesis 37:3; John 5:20)? The hatred of his brethren (Matthew 27:1; Matthew 27:22-23)? His temptation (Matthew 4:1)? His patience in suffering (James 5:11)? His promotion by Pharaoh (Mark 16:19)? His marrying a Gentile bride during his rejection by his brethren (Acts 15:14)? His revelation of himself to his brethren the second time (Zechariah 12:10)?

01.02. Exodus

Exodus

Title. Exodus comes from Greek words meaning "going out," and was so named because it recorded the departure of Israel from Egypt.

Theme. In the Book of Genesis we read about the beginning of redemption. In the Book of Exodus we read about the progress of redemption. In Genesis this redemption is being worked out through individual; in Exodus, it is worked out through an entire nation - Israel. The central thought of the Book is redemption by blood.

Around this thought gathers the story of a people saved by the Blood, sheltered by the Blood and having access unto GOD by the Blood. This redemption is shown to meet every need of the nation. Oppressed by the Egyptians, Israel needs deliverance. GOD supplies this deliverance. Having been saved, the nation needs a revelation from GOD to guide them in conduct and worship in their new life. GOD gives them the Law. Convicted of sin by the holiness of the law, the Israelites find their need of cleansing. GOD provides sacrifices. Having a revelation of GOD, the people feel their need of worship. GOD gives them the tabernacle and appoints a priesthood.

Author. Moses.

Scope. The events recorded in Exodus cover a period of 216 years, from about 1706 B. C. to 1490 B. C. It begins with an enslaved people dwelling in the presence of Egyptian idolatry, and ends with a redeemed people dwelling in the presence of GOD.

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We shall now try to obtain a bird's-eye view of the book of Exodus in order to see the book as a whole. Learn the following outline:

1. Israel in Bondage (Exodus 1:1-22, Exodus 2:1-25).
2. Israel Redeemed (Exodus 3:1-22, Exodus 4:1-31, Exodus 5:1-23, Exodus 6:1-30, Exodus 7:1-25, Exodus 8:1-32, Exodus 9:1-35, Exodus 10:1-29, Exodus 11:1-10, Exodus 12:1-51, Exodus 13:1-22, Exodus 14:1-31, Exodus 15:1-22).
3. Israel Journeying to Sinai (Exodus 15:23-27, Exodus 16:1-36, Exodus 17:1-16, Exodus 18:1-27, Exodus 19:1-25).
4. Israel Given the Law (Exodus 20:1-26, Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31, Exodus 23:1-33).
5. Israel in Worship (Exodus 24:1-18, Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-37, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 30:1-38, Exodus 31:1-18, Exodus 32:1-35, Exodus 33:1-23, Exodus 34:1-35, Exodus 35:1-35, Exodus 36:1-38, Exodus 37:1-29, Exodus 38:1-31, Exodus 39:1-43, Exodus 40:1-38).

Let us now analyze each point of our outline.

I. Israel in Bondage The following is a summary of Exodus 1:1-22, Exodus 2:1-25.

1. The oppression of Israel (Exodus 1:1-22).
2. The birth of Moses (Exodus 2:1-4).
3. The adoption of Moses (Exodus 2:5-10).
4. The ill-advised zeal of Moses (Exodus 2:11-14).
5. The flight of Moses (Exodus 2:15).
6. The marriage of Moses (Exodus 2:16-22). Was Israel's bondage prophesied (Genesis 15:7-16)?

What did this bondage do for Israel (Exodus 2:23)?

What would this result in (Romans 10:13)? Did Moses ever forget his people and his GOD while being educated in Egypt (Hebrews 11:24-26)?

Why not (Exodus 2:7-9)?

What did he suppose when he killed the Egyptian (Acts 7:25)? Was it GOD's time? What did Moses' forty years' sojourn in the wilderness teach him? (Compare Acts 7:25 and Exodus 3:11).

II. Israel Redeemed (Exodus 3:1-22, Exodus 4:1-31, Exodus 5:1-23, Exodus 6:1-30, Exodus 7:1-25, Exodus 8:1-32, Exodus 9:1-35, Exodus 10:1-29, Exodus 11:1-10, Exodus 12:1-51, Exodus 13:1-22, Exodus 14:1-31, Exodus 15:1-22)

1. The call and commission of Moses (Exodus 3:1-22, Exodus 4:1-28).

2. His departure to Egypt (Exodus 4:24-31).
3. His conflict with Pharaoh (Exodus 5:1-23, Exodus 6:1-30).
4. The plagues (Exodus 7:1-25, Exodus 8:1-32, Exodus 9:1-35, Exodus 10:1-29, Exodus 11:1-10).
5. The Passover (Exodus 12:1-51).
6. The departure from Egypt (Exodus 13:1-22).
7. The crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:1-31, Exodus 15:1-21).

Notice the greatness and the supernatural character of Israel's deliverance. GOD's purpose was to have a people whose testimony to the world would be, "Saved by the power of God." He wanted so to impress the event upon the mind of Israel that in the days to come, when the oppression and trial should come, they could always look and remember that "salvation is of the Lord." In the Old Testament, GOD's deliverance of Israel from Egypt is the measure of His power. What is the measure of His power in the New Testament (Ephesians 1:19-20; Php 3:10)? The explanation of a difficulty is in order here. Many have stumbled at the fact that GOD hardened Pharaoh's heart and then punished him. Let it be noted that Pharaoh hardened his own heart also (Exodus 8:15; Exodus 8:32). GOD hardened Pharaoh's heart in the same sense that the Gospel hardens men's hearts when they reject it. To some, the Gospel brings salvation, to others death. (See 2

Corinthians 2:15-16). In Acts 19:9 we read that "divers were hardened" after Paul had preached. Could Paul be blamed for the hardness of their hearts? No, the blame rests with those who rejected the message. So it was in the case of Pharaoh. GOD's message was simply the occasion of the hardening of his heart; his own refusal to obey the message was the cause. The Passover contains some wonderful types of our redemption. What does Egypt typify (Galatians 1:4 : Romans 6:18)? The lamb (John 1:29)? The blood sprinkled on the door posts (Romans 3:25; 1 Peter 1:18-20)? The unleavened bread (1 Corinthians 5:8)? The eating of the lamb (1 Corinthians 11:24)? The crossing of the Red Sea (1 Corinthians 10:1-2)?

III. Israel Journeying to Sinai (Exodus 15:1-27, Exodus 16:1-36, Exodus 17:1-16, Exodus 18:1-27, Exodus 19:1-25) In this study it will be well to consult a map of the journey.

1. Marah - Bitter waters (Exodus 15:1-27).
2. Elim - Wells and trees (Exodus 15:1-27).
3. Wilderness of Sin - Manna (Exodus 16:1-36).
4. Rephidim - Rock smitten; battle with Amalek (Exodus 17:1-16).
5. Sinai - Visit of Jethro (Exodus 18:1-27).

IV. Israel Given the Law (Exodus 19:1-25, Exodus 20:1-26, Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31, Exodus 23:1-33) 1. Moses ascent to Sinai (Exodus 19:1-25).

2. The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-26).
3. The civil law (Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31, Exodus 23:1-33).

Study the following topics:

1. Israel's election. Exodus 19:5 By a solemn covenant Israel was appointed the priest - nation - separated from all nations, in order to be trained in Divine truth and ultimately bring light to all nations.
2. Israel's legislation. Exodus 20:1-26, Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31, Exodus 23:1-33

Just as the United States of America is a republic governed on the basis of its Constitution, so Israel was a theocracy (a state governed by GOD) having as the basis of its government the Ten Commandments, which we may regard as the Constitution of the United Tribes of Israel. The commandments represent the tenfold expression of the will of the Lord, and the standard by which He rules His subjects. In order to apply these principles to the everyday life of the people, the civil law was added, which prescribed penalties and gave directions for enforcement.

What did the Israelites undertake to do (Exodus 19:8)? Could they do this (Acts 13:38; Galatians 2:16)? Why not (Romans 7:14; Romans 8:3)? If they could not keep the law, why was it given (Romans 3:19-20; Romans 5:20; Galatians 3:24)? What two principal lessons was the law intended to teach (Matthew 22:37-39)? Then how do Christians fulfill the law (Romans 13:8-10)? How may we possess the love that fulfills it (Romans 5:5; Galatians 5:18)? Under what law is the Christian (Galatians 6:2; John 15:12)?

V. Israel in Worship (Exodus 24:1-18, Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-37, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 30:1-38, Exodus 31:1-18, Exodus 32:1-35, Exodus 33:1-23, Exodus 34:1-35, Exodus 35:1-35, Exodus 36:1-38, Exodus 37:1-29, Exodus 38:1-31, Exodus 39:1-43, Exodus 40:1-38)

1. Moses receives pattern for tabernacle (Exodus 24:1-18, Exodus 25:1-40, Exodus 26:1-37, Exodus 27:1-21, Exodus 28:1-43, Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 30:1-38, Exodus 31:1-18).

2. The law broken (Exodus 32:1-35, Exodus 33:1-23, Exodus 34:1-35).

3. The tabernacle under construction (Exodus 35:1-35, Exodus 36:1-38, Exodus 37:1-29, Exodus 38:1-31, Exodus 39:1-43).

4. The tabernacle erected (Exodus 40:1-38). At Mount Sinai the Lord and His people entered into a special relationship. Through the mediatorship of Moses, a redeemed people and their GOD were united in the holy bonds of covenant relationship. the Lord became the GOD of Israel, and Israel became the people of the Lord. In order that fellowship might be continued, the Lord commanded the erection of the tabernacle. "And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:8. The design of the tabernacle will be more clearly understood as we consider the titles applied to it: a. The Tabernacle (in Hebrew "dwelling"). Though GOD dwells everywhere, He appointed a place where His people could always find Him "at home." b. The Tent of the Congregation or the Tent of Meeting. It was the point of contact and the channel of intercourse between heaven and earth (Exodus 29:42-43). c. The Tabernacle of Testimony, or the Tent of Witness. It was so called from the presence of the two tables of the law which were placed in the ark. These tables were called the "testimony" (Exodus 31:18; Exodus 34:29). They witnessed to GOD's holiness and man's sinfulness. d. The Sanctuary. Literally, "holy place" or a building set apart for the Divine indwelling.

01.03. Leviticus

Leviticus Title: The book of Leviticus is so called because it is a record of laws pertaining to the Levites and their service.

Theme: In Exodus we saw Israel redeemed; redemption of an enslaved people. Leviticus tells us how a redeemed people can approach GOD in worship and how the fellowship thus established can be maintained. The message of Leviticus is: Access to GOD is only through blood, and access thus obtained calls for holiness on the part of the worshiper. Most of the types in the book relate to the atoning work of CHRIST, and are set forth in the various offerings there described. Exodus gives us the account of one offering that pointed to CHRIST our Passover. Leviticus gives us many offerings pointing us to the different aspects of redemption. The message of the book is well stated in Leviticus 19:2. Note the practical purpose of the book: it contains a divinely appointed code of laws designed to make Israel different from other nations, spiritually, morally, mentally and physically. In other words Israel was to become a holy nation - a nation separated from the ways and customs of the nations surrounding them and consecrated to the service of the one true GOD.

Author: Moses.

Scope: The book embraces the period of less than a year of Israel's sojourn at Sinai.

CONTENTS Leviticus is a book of laws, so we may classify its contents with that thought in mind.

1. Laws Concerning Offerings (Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38).

2. Laws Concerning Priesthood (Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20).

2. Laws Concerning Purification (Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34, Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33).

4. Laws Concerning Feasts (Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23).

5. Laws Concerning the Land (Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46, Leviticus 27:1-34).

I. Laws Concerning the Offerings (Leviticus 1:1-17, Leviticus 2:1-16, Leviticus 3:1-17, Leviticus 4:1-35, Leviticus 5:1-19, Leviticus 6:1-30, Leviticus 7:1-38) Sacrifices were instituted as means whereby the people could express their worship of GOD:

1. The burnt offering signified entire consecration to the Lord.

2. The peace offering, part of which was eaten by the priest and part by the offerer, pictured fellowship with his GOD.

3. The meat offering, or food offering, consisting of flour, cakes or grain, represented the offering of a gift to the Lord of all in acknowledgment of His goodness.

4. By means of the sin offering the Israelite expressed sorrow for sin and the desire for pardon and cleansing.

5. The trespass offering was brought in the case of offences that called for restitution.

II. Laws Concerning the Priesthood (Leviticus 8:1-36, Leviticus 9:1-24, Leviticus 10:1-20)

These chapters record the consecration of Aaron and his sons and their inauguration into the priestly office. The following are the main topics of this section:

1. Consecration (Leviticus 8:1-36). The consecration ceremonies included washing with water, clothing with priestly garments, anointing with oil, the offering of sacrifices, and the sprinkling of blood.

2. The service (Leviticus 9:1-24).

3. The failure (Leviticus 10:1-20). Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons, instead of using fire taken from the altar, used ordinary fire for the burning of the incense. In order to impress the nation with the sacredness and responsibility of the priesthood, GOD made an example of these men by destroying them with fire. What probably led to their sin? See Leviticus 10:8-11. Does 1 Corinthians 11:20-32 suggest some parallels?

III. Laws Concerning Purity (Leviticus 11:1-47, Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-57, Leviticus 15:1-33, Leviticus 16:1-34, Leviticus 17:1-16, Leviticus 18:1-30, Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33) Let us sum up this section as follows. Israel as a holy nation has:

1. Holy food (Leviticus 11:1-47).

2. Holy bodies (Leviticus 12:1-8, Leviticus 13:1-59, Leviticus 14:1-32).

3. Holy homes (Leviticus 14:33-57).

4. Holy habits (Leviticus 15:1-33).

5. Holiness annually renewed (Leviticus 16:1-34).

6. Holy worship (Leviticus 17:1-16).

7. Holy morals (Leviticus 18:1-30).

8. Holy customs and costumes (Leviticus 19:1-37, Leviticus 20:1-27, Leviticus 21:1-24, Leviticus 22:1-33).

What does Leviticus 18:1-30 teach concerning the character of the nations surrounding Israel? (See verses Leviticus 18:24; Leviticus 18:28). Many infidels have taken exception to the contents of these chapters, characterizing them as improper. But let it be noted that the Bible, in describing moral diseases, does not resort to prudery or mock - modesty any more than does a medical text-book in dealing with physical diseases.

IV. Laws Concerning Feasts (Leviticus 23:1-44, Leviticus 24:1-23)

1. The Sabbath (Leviticus 23:1-3). We may consider this day as the weekly feast of the Israelites, on which they rested from all work, and on which they gathered for worship.
2. The Passover and the feast of unleavened bread. Notice that there were two feasts in one - the Passover (celebrating the passing of the death-angel over the houses of the Israelites), which lasted one day; and the feast of unleavened bread (commemorating the departure from Egypt), which lasted seven days.
3. Following close after the last named feast came the first-fruits, when a sheaf of the firstfruits of the harvest was waved before the Lord. This was a type of the resurrection of CHRIST (1 Corinthians 15:20).
4. Fifty days after the first-fruits came the feast of Pentecost (meaning "fifty"). On the fiftieth day, two wave loaves, with leaven (Leviticus 23:17) were offered before the Lord.
5. The feast of trumpets (Leviticus 23:23-25), "New Year's Day." Look up the following references and find out the typical signification of this feast (Isaiah 27:13; 1 Corinthians 15:52; Matthew 24:31; Revelation 11:15)
6. The Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:27-32). (Read also Leviticus 16 and Hebrews 9:6-12). This was rather a fast than a feast. On that day the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, with blood, to make expiation for the sins of the people. This was done but once a year, and it typified CHRIST's entering heaven itself with His own blood to make eternal atonement for our sins. Besides the other sacrifices of that day, there were two goats. One of these was killed; upon the other, Aaron laid his hands, confessing over it the sins of the nation, and then sent it into the wilderness. These two goats represented two aspects of the atonement. The first typified CHRIST as paying the penalty for our sins - death; the second, as putting away our sins, never to remember them again.
7. The feast of tabernacles (Leviticus 23:33-44) commemorated the days when the Israelites lived in tents, after their departure from Egypt. As this feast followed the harvest (Leviticus 23:39), we may take it to typify the rejoicing of the saints in the presence of the Lord, after the great gathering. (Compare the references to palms in verse Leviticus 23:40 and Revelation 7:9).

Note the typical sequence of the feasts - how they give the history of redemption. We shall omit the Day of Atonement, for it is not a feast, but a fast.

Passover - The crucifixion.

First-fruits - The resurrection of CHRIST.

Pentecost - The outpouring of the Spirit.

Trumpets - The rapture of the living, and resurrection of the dead, saints.

Tabernacles - Our dwelling in the presence of the Lord after the great gathering.

V. Laws Concerning the Land (Leviticus 25:1-55, Leviticus 26:1-46, Leviticus 27:1-34) 1. The year of the Jubilee (Leviticus 25:1-55).

2. Reward and punishment (Leviticus 26:1-46).

3. Vows (Leviticus 27:1-34). The year of Jubilee was a sabbatical year held every fifty years and beginning on the Day of Atonement. At that time, the land was given rest from cultivation, all debts were canceled, all Hebrew slaves were released, all estates reverted to their original owners. Houses in walled towns were an exception; they did not revert (Leviticus 25:30). The purpose of the Jubilee was to prevent the perpetual enslavement of the poor, and the accumulation of wealth by the rich; and likewise to preserve the distinction of the tribes and their tribal possessions. It was that year which CHRIST proclaimed as "the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19) and by Peter as "the times of the restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21). As a type, the Jubilee finds its partial fulfillment in this Gospel dispensation, and its complete fulfillment during the Millennium. In Leviticus 26:1-46, on what is Israel's blessing conditioned (Leviticus 26:3)? When were Leviticus 26:28-39 completely fulfilled (Luke 21:20-24)? When will the Lord turn to Israel again (Leviticus 26:40)? When will that take place (Zechariah 12:10; Revelation 1:7)?

Even though scattered and under punishment, is Israel forsaken of the Lord (Leviticus 26:44-45)?

What will He remember (Leviticus 26:42)?

01.04. Numbers

Numbers

Title: The book of Numbers is so called because it contains the record of the two numberings of Israel before entering Canaan.

Theme: In Exodus we saw Israel redeemed; in Leviticus, Israel worshiping; and now in Numbers we see Israel serving. The service of the Lord was not to be done in any haphazard manner, so the book gives us a spectacle of a camp where everything is done according to the first law of heaven - order. The people are numbered, according to tribes and families; every tribe is assigned its position in camp; the marching and encampment of the people are regulated with military precision; and in the transporting of the tabernacle, every Levite had his appointed task. Besides being a book of service and order, Numbers is a book recording Israel's failure to believe GOD's promises and enter Canaan, and of their wandering in the wilderness as a punishment. But it is a failure that does not thwart GOD's plans, for the end of the book leaves us at the borders of the Promised Land, where the new generation of Israelites awaits to enter. Thus four words - service, order, failure, wandering - will sum up the message of Numbers.

Author: Moses.

Scope: 39 years of Israel's wandering in the wilderness from about 1490 to 1451 B. C.

CONTENTS

We shall outline Numbers according to the principal journeys of Israel. In these studies it is suggested that the student use a map in locating the different places mentioned in the course of his reading.

1. At Sinai (Numbers 1:1-54, Numbers 2:1-34, Numbers 3:1-51, Numbers 4:1-49, Numbers 5:1-31, Numbers 6:1-27, Numbers 7:1-89, Numbers 8:1-26, Numbers 9:1-23).

2. Sinai to Kadesh (Numbers 10:1-36, Numbers 11:1-35, Numbers 12:1-16, Numbers 13:1-33, Numbers 14:1-45, Numbers 15:1-41, Numbers 16:1-50, Numbers 17:1-13, Numbers 18:1-32, Numbers 19:1-22).

3. Kadesh to Moab (Numbers 20:1-29, Numbers 21:1-35, Numbers 22:1-41, Numbers 23:1-30, Numbers 24:1-25, Numbers 25:1-18, Numbers 26:1-65, Numbers 27:1-23, Numbers 28:1-31, Numbers 29:1-40, Numbers 30:1-16, Numbers 31:1-54, Numbers 32:1-42, Numbers 33:1-56, Numbers 34:1-29, Numbers 35:1-34, Numbers 36:1-13).

I. Israel at Sinai (Numbers 1:1-54, Numbers 2:1-34, Numbers 3:1-51, Numbers 4:1-49, Numbers 5:1-31, Numbers 6:1-27, Numbers 7:1-89, Numbers 8:1-26, Numbers 9:1-23) 1. The numbering of the people (Numbers 1:1-54, Numbers 2:1-34).

2. The numbering of the priests and Levities (Numbers 3:1-51, Numbers 4:1-49).

3. Laws (Numbers 5:1-31, Numbers 6:1-27).

4. Gifts of the princes (Numbers 7:1-89).

5. Consecration of Levites (Numbers 8:1-26).

6. The Passover and the guiding cloud (Numbers 9:1-23). For what purpose were the people numbered (Numbers 1:3)? In preparation for what (Numbers 13:30)? What was one reason? Why was it necessary that tribal distinction (Numbers 1:2; Numbers 1:4) be kept in Israel (Hebrews 7:14), also family distinction (Luke 1:27)? What tribe was not numbered with the others (Numbers 1:49)? Why (Numbers 1:50)? Who were to lead in the march (Numbers 2:3; Numbers 10:14)? Why (Genesis 49:10; Hebrews 7:14)? What was the total of the census taken (Numbers 2:32)? What was the number of the Levites (Numbers 3:39)? A distinction should be noted between priests and Levites. The priests were those members of the tribe of Levi descended from Aaron and his sons (Numbers 3:2-4), and they had charge of priestly functions of the tabernacle, such as sacrificing, ministering in the Holy Place, etc. The Levites, the remaining members of the tribes, were given to Aaron as helpers (Numbers 3:9) to take care of the tabernacle with its furniture and utensils. All priests were Levites but not all Levites were priests. In Numbers 3:12 we read that the tribe of Levi was set apart to the Lord instead of the first-born of Israel. In patriarchal times, the first-born enjoyed many privileges, one of which was to act as priest of the family. After the slaying of the first-born of the land of Egypt, the Lord commanded that the first-born of the Israelites be sanctified unto Him; i.e., to His service (Exodus 13:12). Now, for reasons that will suggest themselves to the student, the Lord, instead of having the first-born from different tribes serve Him, set apart one particular tribe for that service - Levi. But there were more first-born than Levites. What was then to be done? See Numbers 3:46-51. Those above the number of the Levites were to be redeemed from service by the payment of a certain sum. The ceremony is still performed among orthodox Jews of today. The law of the Nazarite (Numbers 6:1-27) sets forth a beautiful type of consecration. A Nazarite (Nazarite comes from a word meaning to separate) was a person who consecrated himself to the Lord with special vows, either temporarily or for life. As examples of the latter class we may mention Samuel (1 Samuel 1:11) and John the Baptist (Luke 1:13-15). The Nazarite drank no wine (typical of abstinence from natural joy), wore his hair long (perhaps willingness to endure reproach for the Lord, see 1 Corinthians 11:14), and was not allowed to touch a dead body, not even of his parents (severance from family ties). The cause of Samson's fall was the breaking of his Nazarite vow (Judges 13:5; Judges 16:17).

What does the threefold benediction by the priests in Numbers 6:24-26 remind you of? (See 2 Corinthians 13:14). Notice the beautiful ceremony of the laying of the Israelites' hands on the Levites (Numbers 8:10). Does Acts 13:2-3 suggest any resemblance? What new addition to the Passover law was made in chapter Numbers 9:1-14? Notice the lesson taught in this connection; namely that GOD does not lower His standards but helps men to reach them.

II. Sinai to Kadesh (Numbers 10:1-36, Numbers 11:1-35, Numbers 12:1-16, Numbers 13:1-33, Numbers 14:1-45, Numbers 15:1-41, Numbers 16:1-50, Numbers 17:1-13, Numbers 18:1-32, Numbers 19:1-22) 1. Beginning of the march (Numbers 10:1-36).

2. Murmuring and lusting (Numbers 11:1-35).

3. The seventy elders (Numbers 11:1-35).

4. Aaron's and Miriam's rebellion (Numbers 12:1-16).
5. The spies' report and Israel's unbelief (Numbers 13:1-33, Numbers 14:1-45).
6. Korah's rebellion (Numbers 16:1-50, Numbers 17:1-13).
7. Ceremonial laws (Numbers 18:1-32, Numbers 19:1-22). Did Hobab and his children accompany the children of Israel (Judges 1:16)? Did they remain with them (1 Samuel 15:6)? What went before the children of Israel (Numbers 10:33)? What did that represent (Exodus 25:20-22; Joshua 7:6)? What was one of the causes that led to Israel's lusting (Numbers 11:4; compare Exodus 12:38)? What lesson is there here for us (2 Corinthians 6:14)? Who Were appointed to assist Moses (Numbers 11:16-17)? What does the manifestation of the Spirit in Numbers 11:25 remind you of (Acts 19:6)? Was Moses' prayer in verse Numbers 11:29 ever answered (Acts 2:17; 1 Corinthians 14:31)?

Notice that the quails were not piled two cubits high, as might seem from the hasty reading of Numbers 11:31, but they flew that high and so were easily captured. Notice how contagious was the spirit of murmuring. It affected even Miriam and Aaron. From the fact that Miriam's name is mentioned first in verse Numbers 11:1, and that she was the one who was punished, it seems clear that she was the leader in the rebellion. Since marriage with Gentiles was discouraged by the law (Genesis 24:3; Deuteronomy 7:3), Miriam had a just cause for complaint. But she failed to take into account the grace of GOD that can sanctify Gentiles. Some have seen in Moses' action a dispensational and prophetic significance. Rejected by Israel, Moses married a Gentile bride (Acts 15:14). Aaron and Miriam represent those Jews who objected to the union of Jew and Gentile (Acts 11:1-3). The exclusion of Miriam is typical of the temporary rejection of Israel, and her reception into the camp, of their restoration.

Deuteronomy 1:9-22 shows that the command to send out the spies was given in response to the people's request. GOD's plan was that the people should trust Him in this matter, but seeing the weakness of their faith, He allowed them to have their own way. Whose name was changed at this time (Numbers 13:16)? What does a change of name in the Bible usually signify (Genesis 32:28)? What kind of report did the spies bring back (Numbers 13:25-33)?

What effect did the report have on the people? What did they plan to do (Numbers 14:4)? What was the attitude of the faithless people toward those who really believed GOD (Numbers 14:10)? What does Numbers 14:13-19 reveal as to the character of Moses? Notice verse Numbers 14:21. In spite of the people's failure, GOD's plan would be fulfilled. What was Israel's unbelief the beginning of (Numbers 14:25)? Notice verse Numbers 14:28. As reward is according to faith, so loss is according to unbelief. Was the sin of the people pardoned (Numbers 14:20)? Did that save them from reaping what they had sown because of their unrepentant attitude (Numbers 14:29-30)? What happened to the men who brought the evil report (Numbers 14:37)? Was the act of the people in Numbers 14:40-45 true obedience? What was it (Num Numbers 14:44)? In Numbers 14:22, the Lord mentions the fact, that up to this time, the people had tempted Him ten times. Look up the following scriptures and make a list of these temptations: Exodus 14:1-31; Exodus 15:1-27; Exodus 16:1-36; Exodus 16:20; Exodus 16:27; Exodus 17:1-16; Exodus 32:1-35; Numbers 11:1-35; Numbers 12:1; Numbers 14:1-45.

Numbers 15:27-29 deals with sins of ignorance; i.e., sins not committed in the spirit of willful disobedience. In contrast Numbers 15:30 mentions sins committed presumptuously, for which sacrifice does not avail, and the following verses give an illustration of such a sin in the case of a man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath. The severe penalty visited was not for the mere act of gathering sticks, but for the spirit of presumption in which the law was broken.

Why was it necessary for the Lord to command the Israelites to wear a fringe on their garments (Numbers 15:37-41) as a visible reminder of His commandments (Psalms 78:11; Jeremiah 2:32)?

Notice in the case of Korah and his company how the murmuring, begun after the departure from Egypt, has developed into open rebellion. The sin of Korah and his company consisted in rebellion against Moses and Aaron and intrusion into the priestly office. Did Moses attempt to vindicate himself (Numbers 16:4)? Against whom was Korah really rebelling (Numbers 16:11)? Was Korah's accusation true (Numbers 16:13)? How was he punished? How were the 250 men punished? What shows the utter hardness of the people's hearts (Numbers 16:41)?

Chapter 19 gives an account of the preparation of a water for legal purification. For its typical significance read Hebrews 9:13-14. Its main purpose was for the cleansing of people who had touched dead bodies, which touch brought defilement. This law may have been enacted because of the presence of so many dead after the Lord's judgment on the rebels, for it is not found in Leviticus.

III. Kadesh to Moab (Numbers 20:1-29, Numbers 21:1-35, Numbers 22:1-41, Numbers 23:1-30, Numbers 24:1-25, Numbers 25:1-18, Numbers 26:1-65, Numbers 27:1-23, Numbers 28:1-31, Numbers 29:1-40, Numbers 30:1-16, Numbers 31:1-54, Numbers 32:1-42, Numbers 33:1-56, Numbers 34:1-29, Numbers 35:1-34, Numbers 36:1-13) 1. Moses' sin (Numbers 20:1-29).

2. Death of Miriam and Aaron (Numbers 20:1-29).

3. The brazen serpent (Numbers 21:1-35).

4. Balaam's error and doctrine (Numbers 22:1-41, Numbers 23:1-30, Numbers 24:1-25, Numbers 25:1-18).

5. The numbering of the new generation (Numbers 26:1-65).

6. Preparations to enter the land (Numbers 27:1-23, Numbers 28:1-31, Numbers 29:1-40, Numbers 30:1-16, Numbers 31:1-54, Numbers 32:1-42, Numbers 33:1-56, Numbers 34:1-29, Numbers 35:1-34, Numbers 36:1-13).

We have come to the end of Israel's thirty-eight years of wandering, and we find them again at Kadesh-barnea; the same place from which they turned back to begin their long journey in the wilderness. That period is almost a blank as far as historical record is concerned. It was simply a time of waiting until the unbelieving generation had died out. They are now ready to enter the land. In what did Moses' sin consist (Numbers 20:12; Psalms 106:32-33)? What does this teach us concerning Moses, in spite of the beauty of his character (James 5:17)? Though Esau and his brother Jacob became reconciled, the descendants of the former harbored enmity toward Israel, as shown in chapter 20. This enmity was never forgotten (See Psalms 137:7; Ezekiel 35:1-5; Obadiah 1:1; Obadiah 1:10-14).

What types of the atonement does the brazen serpent suggest to you (John 3:14; Galatians 3:19; Romans 8:3)?

We now come to the story of Balaam. The fact of his being a prophet teaches us that sometimes GOD revealed His will to individuals other than Israelites. Melchizedek and Cornelius, both Gentiles, will serve as further examples. It is clear that Balaam's besetting sin was covetousness (2 Peter 2:15). It may be asked why GOD permitted Balaam to go with the messengers and then was angry at him for so doing (Numbers 22:20; Numbers 22:22). It was GOD's perfect will that Balaam refuse to go, but seeing the intenseness of his purpose, He gave His permission, but with this condition, "yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do" (Numbers 22:20). Now, reading verses Numbers 22:22; Numbers 22:32; Numbers 22:35, we infer that Balaam left with the thought in mind of violating that very condition.

Thus far we have had a record of Balaam's error (Jude 1:11), which consisted in the belief that GOD could not refuse to curse such a sinful people: as Israel. But he failed to take into account that which could blot out their sins like a thick cloud - the grace of GOD. Now in Numbers 25:1-18 we are given an account of Balaam's doctrine (Revelation 2:14), which consisted in teaching Balak to corrupt by immorality, the people which he could not curse by enchantments.

Why was it necessary to re-number the people (Numbers 26:64-65)? What do we learn in Numbers 26:11 concerning Korah's children? What was Moses' attitude toward the Israelites to the very last (Numbers 27:15-17)? What was the Lord's estimate of Joshua (Numbers 27:18)? With what was he endued (Numbers 27:20)? By what ceremony was he inducted into office (Numbers 27:23)?

Against whom were the Israelites to go to war (Numbers 31:1-54)? Why (Numbers 25:1-18)? Who in particular perished in this war (Numbers 31:8)? Was his prayer in Numbers 23:10 granted?

Some have objected to the wholesale slaughter of the Midianites as being inconsistent with the love of GOD. But let it be remembered that these people were a moral cancer in the midst of a land that threatened the purity of Israel. Read in Leviticus 18:24-30 and context, the account of the corruption of the nations surrounding Israel, and it will be seen that the action of the Lord in utterly destroying them was as necessary from the standpoint of the natural as the action of a surgeon in amputating a diseased limb. The 32,000 female children (Numbers 31:18) were kept alive for domestic service, and not for immoral purposes as some infidels have imagined. Had not Israel been severely punished for impurity (Numbers 31:25)? Was not impurity punishable by death (Deuteronomy 22:1-30)? Hebrew law permitted a soldier to marry a captive woman but only on condition of observing the legislation made in her favor, designed as far as possible to make immorality impossible (Deuteronomy 21:10-14).

Passing over Numbers 32:1-42, recording the choice of land of the two and a half tribes; over Numbers 33:1-56, containing a summary of Israel's journeys; and Numbers 34:1-29, recording the borders of each tribe, we come to Numbers 35:1-34, containing the account of the appointment of cities of refuge. What was the inheritance of the Levites? For whom were the six cities of refuge to be (Numbers 35:11-12)? Where were these cities to be located (Numbers 35:14)? How long was the slayer to remain there (Numbers 35:25)? Who was excluded from the cities (Numbers 35:20-21)?

01.05. Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy

Title: Deuteronomy comes from two Greek words meaning "second law," and is so called from the fact that it records the repetition of the laws given at Sinai.

Theme: Moses has fulfilled his mission. He has led Israel from Egypt to the borders of the Promised Land. Now that the time of his departure is at hand, he reviews before the new generation, in a series of discourses, Israel's past history and upon this review he bases the warnings and exhortations that make Deuteronomy one great exhortatory sermon to Israel. He exhorts them to remember the Lord's love toward them during the wilderness wanderings, in order that they may rest assured of His continued care of them when they enter Canaan. He admonishes them to observe the law in order that they might prosper. He reminds them of their past backslidings and rebellions, and warns them of the consequences of future disobedience. The message of Deuteronomy may be summed up in three exhortations: Remember! Obey! Take heed!

Author: Moses.

Scope: Two months on the plains of Moab, 1451 B. C.

CONTENTS We shall outline Deuteronomy according to the three exhortations mentioned in our theme

I. Remember! - Review of the Wanderings (Deuteronomy 1:1-46, Deuteronomy 2:1-37, Deuteronomy 3:1-29, Deuteronomy 4:1-49).

II. Obey! - Review of the Law (Deuteronomy 5:1-33, Deuteronomy 6:1-25, Deuteronomy 7:1-26, Deuteronomy 8:1-20, Deuteronomy 9:1-29, Deuteronomy 10:1-22, Deuteronomy 11:1-32, Deuteronomy 12:1-32, Deuteronomy 13:1-18, Deuteronomy 14:1-29, Deuteronomy 15:1-23, Deuteronomy 16:1-22, Deuteronomy 17:1-20, Deuteronomy 18:1-22, Deuteronomy 19:1-21, Deuteronomy 20:1-20, Deuteronomy 21:1-23, Deuteronomy 22:1-30, Deuteronomy 23:1-25, Deuteronomy 24:1-22, Deuteronomy 25:1-19, Deuteronomy 26:1-19, Deuteronomy 27:1-26).

III. Take Heed! - Prophecy of Israel's Future (Deuteronomy 28:1-68, Deuteronomy 29:1-29, Deuteronomy 30:1-20, Deuteronomy 31:1-30, Deuteronomy 32:1-52, Deuteronomy 33:1-29, Deuteronomy 34:1-12).

I. Remember! - Review of Israel's Wanderings (Deuteronomy 1:1-46, Deuteronomy 2:1-37, Deuteronomy 3:1-29, Deuteronomy 4:1-49)

Since the events recorded in the following chapters are simply a repetition for the most part of those given in Numbers, we shall not dwell on them. We may divide the section into two parts:

1. Moses reviews Israel's wanderings (Deuteronomy 1:1-46, Deuteronomy 2:1-37, Deuteronomy 3:1-29), and 2. Makes that review a basis for a warning (Deuteronomy 4:1-49). Where do we find Israel at the beginning of this book (Deuteronomy 1:5)?

What prophecy had been partially fulfilled in Israel (Deuteronomy 1:10 and Genesis 15:5)? In what one instance was Moses' prayer refused (Deuteronomy 3:25-28)?

What was to be Israel's attitude toward the Word of GOD (Deuteronomy 4:2)?

What was the law to Israel (Deuteronomy 4:6)?

Concerning what days does Moses prophesy in Deuteronomy 4:25-30? To what book written by himself does Moses indirectly refer (Deuteronomy 4:32)?

II. Obey! - Review of the Law (Deuteronomy 5:1-33, Deuteronomy 6:1-25, Deuteronomy 7:1-26, Deuteronomy 8:1-20, Deuteronomy 9:1-29, Deuteronomy 10:1-22, Deuteronomy 11:1-32, Deuteronomy 12:1-32, Deuteronomy 13:1-18, Deuteronomy 14:1-29, Deuteronomy 15:1-23, Deuteronomy 16:1-22, Deuteronomy 17:1-20, Deuteronomy 18:1-22, Deuteronomy 19:1-21, Deuteronomy 20:1-20, Deuteronomy 21:1-23, Deuteronomy 22:1-30, Deuteronomy 23:1-25, Deuteronomy 24:1-22, Deuteronomy 25:1-19, Deuteronomy 26:1-19, Deuteronomy 27:1-26) 1. The Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5:1-33, Deuteronomy 6:1-25).

2. Warnings and exhortations (Deuteronomy 7:1-26, Deuteronomy 8:1-20, Deuteronomy 9:1-29, Deuteronomy 10:1-22, Deuteronomy 11:1-32, Deuteronomy 12:1-32).

3. False prophets (Deuteronomy 13:1-18).

4. Ceremonial laws (Deuteronomy 14:1-29, Deuteronomy 15:1-23, Deuteronomy 16:1-22).

5. A future king and a future Prophet (Deuteronomy 17:1-20, Deuteronomy 18:1-22).

6. Civil laws (Deuteronomy 19:1-21, Deuteronomy 20:1-20, Deuteronomy 21:1-23, Deuteronomy 22:1-30, Deuteronomy 23:1-25, Deuteronomy 24:1-22, Deuteronomy 25:1-19, Deuteronomy 26:1-19).

7. Blessings and cursings of the Law (Deuteronomy 27:1-26).

What was GOD's earnest desire for His people (Deuteronomy 5:29)? Will it ever be realized (Ezekiel 36:26)?

What is the one great commandment of the Law (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)? Was Israel chosen because of their greatness or righteousness (Deuteronomy 7:7; Deuteronomy 9:4)? For what two reasons were they chosen (Deuteronomy 7:8)?

What was one of the purposes of GOD's leading Israel through the wilderness (Deuteronomy 8:2-5; Deuteronomy 8:16)?

What was all that GOD required of Israel (Deuteronomy 10:12)?

What was to be the difference between Israel's conduct in the wilderness and that in the Land of Promise (Deuteronomy 12:8)? Where were sacrifices only to be offered (Deuteronomy 12:13-14)? Do miracles necessarily prove the genuineness of a prophet (Deuteronomy 13:1-2; 2

Thessalonians 2:9)?

What is the test (Deuteronomy 13:2; Matthew 7:15-23)?

What did Moses foresee (Deuteronomy 17:14-16; compare 1 Samuel 8:5; 1 Samuel 8:10-18)?

What great prophecy did Moses utter in Deuteronomy 18:15-19?

Note that the law of retribution in Deuteronomy 19:21 was given to be enforced by the judges and not by ordinary individuals. With what does the review of the Law end (Deuteronomy 27:26)?

What is our relation to it (Galatians 3:13)?

III. Take Heed! - Prophecies of Israel's Future (Deuteronomy 28:1-68, Deuteronomy 29:1-29, Deuteronomy 30:1-20, Deuteronomy 31:1-30, Deuteronomy 32:1-52, Deuteronomy 33:1-29, Deuteronomy 34:1-12).

1. Blessings and cursings (Deuteronomy 28:1-68).
2. The Palestinian covenant (Deuteronomy 29:1-29, Deuteronomy 30:1-30).
3. Moses' last counsels to the priests, Levites and Joshua (Deuteronomy 31:1-30).
4. The song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1-52).
5. The blessing of the tribes (Deuteronomy 33:1-29).
6. The death of Moses (Deuteronomy 34:1-12).

Deuteronomy 28:1-68, together with Leviticus 26:1-46, should be remembered as the two great prophetic chapters of the Pentateuch. Deuteronomy 28:1-14 would have been fulfilled if Israel had been obedient but they will find their ultimate fulfillment during the Millennium. Deuteronomy 28:14-36 were fulfilled in Israel's apostasy under the Kings, which culminated in the Babylonian captivity (2 Chronicles 36:15-20). Deuteronomy 28:37-68 were fulfilled during the destruction of Jerusalem, 70 A. D. and the period following (Luke 21:20-24). Josephus, a Jewish general and historian who lived during those days, gives some vivid accounts of the terrible sufferings of the Jews at that time, which indicate how literally the foregoing verses were fulfilled. As a commentary on verse Deuteronomy 28:53, we cite the following incident taken from the history of the siege.

During the period of greatest famine in Jerusalem, a party of armed marauders were wandering through the streets in search of food. They smelled the odor of roasting flesh from a near-by house. Entering, they commanded the woman there to give them food. Whereupon, to their horror, she uncovered the roasted body of her infant! It will be plain to anyone who has some knowledge of the Jewish people how the prophecies of verses Deuteronomy 28:37-68 have been made history.

Deuteronomy 29:1-29 and Deuteronomy 30:1-20 record what is known as the Palestinian covenant; that is, an agreement between the Lord and Israel as to the conditions of their possessing Palestine. It should be carefully noted that there are two covenants which relate to Israel's possession of the land. The first is the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 17:7-8). This

covenant was unconditional; that is, Israel's conduct would not effect its fulfillment. (See Jeremiah 31:35-37; Romans 11:26-29). But GOD saw that Israel would sin, so He put them under another covenant - the Palestinian. This covenant is conditional upon Israel's obedience, and enables the Lord to punish them with temporary banishment from the land without casting them off forever. To use a crude illustration; the Abrahamic covenant was the inheritance laid up for an obedient Israel; the Palestinian covenant was the whip to bring Israel to that place of obedience. Dr. Scofield furnishes an excellent analysis of the last named covenant. It made provision for:

1. Israel's dispersion for disobedience (Deuteronomy 30:1).
2. Future repentance of Israel (Deuteronomy 30:2).
3. The return of the Lord (Deuteronomy 30:3).
4. Restoration to Palestine (Deuteronomy 30:5).
5. National conversion (Deuteronomy 30:6).
6. Judgment of Israel's oppressors (Deuteronomy 30:7).
7. National prosperity (Deuteronomy 30:9).

How often was the Law to be read to the people (Deuteronomy 31:10-13)?

What did the Lord warn Moses of (Deuteronomy 31:16)? In view of this, what was Moses to do (Deuteronomy 31:19-21)?

What did Moses know (Deuteronomy 31:29)? The song of Moses, contained in Deuteronomy 32:1-52, may be considered as a summary of the whole book of Deuteronomy. It may be summed up in the three words of our theme - remember, obey, heed. It was written in the form of a song so as to be more easily remembered by the people.

What is said concerning GOD's character in Deuteronomy 32:4?

Israel's character (verses Deuteronomy 32:5-6)?

What country did the Lord make the center of all nations (verse Deuteronomy 32:8)?

What is said concerning the Lord's care of Israel (verses Deuteronomy 32:10-14)? Was Israel grateful (verses Deuteronomy 32:15-18)? Who was to provoke Israel to jealousy (verse Deuteronomy 32:21; cf. Romans 11:11)?

How would the Lord punish them (Deuteronomy 32:22-26)?

What would prevent the Lord from making a full end of them (verse Deuteronomy 32:27)?

What was His desire for them (verse Deuteronomy 32:29)? When will He return to them (verse Deuteronomy 32:36)? Who will finally rejoice with Israel (verse Deuteronomy 32:43)? When?

Moses' blessing of the tribes should be compared with that of Jacob found in Genesis 49:1-33.

What is a probable reason why the location of Moses' tomb was never revealed (cf. Numbers 21:8 and 2 Kings 18:4)?

What other scripture mentions his burial (Jude 1:9)?

What was his physical condition at death? What did Israel do at Moses' death that they ought to have done during his lifetime (Deuteronomy 34:8)? Did ever a prophet arise in Israel like Moses (cf. verse Deuteronomy 34:10 and Deuteronomy 18:15)?

01.06. Joshua

Joshua

Theme: Israel is now ready to take possession of Canaan, and fulfill their God-given commission to be a witness to the nations of His unity, and a guardian of His word and Law. In the historical books, beginning with Joshua, we shall see whether or not Israel fulfilled their commission. Joshua is the book of victory and possession. It gives us the spectacle of the once rebellious Israel transformed into a disciplined army of warriors, subduing nations, their superiors in numbers and power. The secret of their success is not hard to find - "the Lord fought for them."

Taking GOD's faithfulness as our central thought, we may sum up the message of Joshua in the words of Joshua 21:45, "There failed not ought of anything which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."

Author: Joshua. The Talmud says that Joshua wrote all of the book except the last five verses. It was written during Rahab's lifetime (Joshua 6:25).

Scope: From the death of Moses to the death of Joshua, covering a period of 24 years, from 1451 to 1427 B. C.

CONTENTS I. The Land Entered (Joshua 1:1-18, Joshua 2:1-24, Joshua 3:1-17, Joshua 4:1-24, Joshua 5:1-15).

II. The Land Subdued (Joshua 6:1-27, Joshua 7:1-26, Joshua 8:1-35, Joshua 9:1-27, Joshua 10:1-43, Joshua 11:1-23, Joshua 12:1-24).

III. The Land Divided (Joshua 13:1-33, Joshua 14:1-15, Joshua 15:1-63, Joshua 16:1-10, Joshua 17:1-18, Joshua 18:1-28, Joshua 19:1-51, Joshua 20:1-9, Joshua 21:1-45, Joshua 22:1-34).

IV. Joshua's Farewell (Joshua 23:1-16, Joshua 24:1-33).

I. The Land Entered (Joshua 1:1-18, Joshua 2:1-24, Joshua 3:1-17, Joshua 4:1-24, Joshua 5:1-15) 1. Joshua's charge and commission (Joshua 1:1-18).

2. Rahab and the spies (Joshua 2:1-24).

3. The Jordan crossed (Joshua 3:1-17).

4. Two memorials (Joshua 4:1-24).

5. The first Passover in Canaan (Joshua 5:1-15).

How much land were the Israelites to possess (Joshua 1:3)?

What spiritual truth does this illustrate (Matthew 19:29)?

What was to be Joshua's guide now (Joshua 1:8)?

Note that up to this time the Lord made known His will through visions, dreams and angelic appearances, but now it is through the written Word.

What are the two and a half-tribes reminded of (Joshua 1:13-15)?

What kind of woman was Rahab (Joshua 2:1)?

What saved her (Hebrews 11:31)? Did she do anything difficult to obtain salvation (Joshua 2:21)?

What did Joshua command as a memorial of the crossing of the Jordan (Joshua 4:3; Joshua 4:9)?

What was the effect of the report of Israel's coming upon the Canaanites (Joshua 5:1)?

What did it fulfill (Deuteronomy 2:25)?

What change of diet did the Israelites undergo at this time (Joshua 5:11-12)? Who was the real leader of Israel's hosts (Joshua 5:13-14)? Who was this (Revelation 19:11-16)?

II. The Land Subdued (Joshua 6:1-27, Joshua 7:1-26, Joshua 8:1-35, Joshua 9:1-27, Joshua 10:1-43, Joshua 11:1-23, Joshua 12:1-24)

1. The conquest of Jericho (Joshua 6:1-27).

2. Achan's sin (Joshua 7:1-26).

3. Conquest of Ai (Joshua 8:1-35).

4. Dealings with the Gibeonites (Joshua 9:1-27, Joshua 10:1-43).

5. Final conquest of the land (Joshua 11:1-23, Joshua 12:1-24).

What does the taking of Jericho teach concerning GOD's ways of working (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)?

What warning was given Israel (Joshua 6:18)?

What curse was pronounced at that time (Joshua 6:26)?

Upon whom did it fall (1 Kings 16:34)? To what New Testament characters may we compare Achan (Acts 5:1-42)? Who were punished for the sin of one man (Joshua 7:1)? Is it sometimes out of order to pray (Joshua 7:10; cf. Exodus 14:15)?

What was at the bottom of Achan's sin (1 Timothy 6:1-10)?

What was the symbol of Moses' power (Exodus 10:13)? Of Joshua's power (Joshua 8:18; Joshua 8:26)?

What command of Moses did Joshua fulfill at this time (Joshua 8:30-35, cf. Deuteronomy 27:1-26)?

What mistake did Joshua make in his dealings with Gibeon (Joshua 9:14)?

Why were the Gibeonites spared (Joshua 9:19)?

How were they punished (verses Joshua 9:23-27)?

Note the reference to the conclusion of Joshua's campaign (Joshua 11:23).

How many kings did he conquer (Joshua 12:24)?

What was the secret of his success (Joshua 10:42)?

III. The Land Divided (Joshua 13:1-33, Joshua 14:1-15, Joshua 15:1-63, Joshua 16:1-10, Joshua 17:1-18, Joshua 18:1-28, Joshua 19:1-51, Joshua 20:1-9, Joshua 21:1-45, Joshua 22:1-34) Since the above heading sums up the contents of the entire section, a detailed outline will be unnecessary.

According to Joshua 13:1, what had Israel failed to do (Joshua 1:3)?

What warning did Israel fail to heed? (cf. Joshua 13:13; Joshua 15:63; Joshua 16:10, with Numbers 33:55 and Joshua 23:12-13).

IV. Joshua's Farewell (Joshua 23:1-16, Joshua 24:1-33) What did Joshua enjoin upon the elders of Israel (Joshua 23:6)?

What did Joshua foresee (Joshua 23:13)?

What choice does he put before the people (Joshua 24:15)?

What obligation do the people take upon themselves (Joshua 24:16-18)? From what you know of Israel's history, did they keep their promise? What did Joshua make with the people (verse Joshua 24:25)?

01.07. Judges

Judges

Theme: Joshua is the book of victory; Judges, the book of failure. The verses of chapter Judges 2:7-19 sum up the story of the book. After Joshua's death, the new generation of Israelites made alliances with those nations that the old generation had left in the land, and the result was a lapse into idolatry and immorality. This brought upon them the judgment of GOD in the form of servitude to those nations which they should have subdued. Upon their crying unto GOD, a deliverer was sent unto them, during whose lifetime they remained faithful to GOD but after whose death they again relapsed into their old sins. In the last few chapters of the book, the writer gives us a close-up view of those times of apostasy and anarchy, and explains it all by the fact that "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." The story of the book may be summed up in four words: Sin, Servitude, Sorrow, Salvation.

Author: According to Jewish tradition the author was Samuel.

Scope: It covers the period between the death of Joshua and the Judgeship of Samuel.

CONTENTS I. The Period After Joshua (Judges 1:1-36, Judges 2:1-23, Judges 3:1-4).

II. Israel's Apostasies, Captivities, and Deliverances (Judges 3:5-31, Judges 4:1-24, Judges 5:1-31, Judges 6:1-40, Judges 7:1-25, Judges 8:1-35, Judges 9:1-57, Judges 10:1-18, Judges 11:1-40, Judges 12:1-15, Judges 13:1-25, Judges 14:1-20, Judges 15:1-20, Judges 16:1-31).

III. Israel's Anarchy (Judges 17:1-13, Judges 18:1-31, Judges 19:1-30, Judges 20:1-48, Judges 21:1-25).

I. The Period After Joshua (Judges 1:1-36, Judges 2:1-23, Judges 3:1-4) 1. The incomplete victory of the tribes (Judges 1:1-36).

2. Visit of the angel (Judges 2:1-5).

3. Review of events leading up to Israel's apostasy (Judges 2:6-23, Judges 3:1-4).

Notice that Judges 1:1-36 records that which was the beginning of Israel's fall - their failure to conquer the Canaanites, and their subsequent alliance with them (Judges 2:12). Though contrary to His will that the Canaanites dwell in the same land with Israel, what use does the Lord make of them (Judges 2:21-23)? What else did He use for the same purpose (Deuteronomy 8:2-16)?

II. Israel's Apostasies, Captivities, and Deliverances (Judges 3:5-31, Judges 4:1-24, Judges 5:1-31, Judges 6:1-40, Judges 7:1-25, Judges 8:1-35, Judges 9:1-57, Judges 10:1-18, Judges 11:1-40, Judges 12:1-15, Judges 13:1-25, Judges 14:1-20, Judges 15:1-20, Judges 16:1-31) Let the student make a list of all the judges, giving the following facts connected with each:

1. From whom did he deliver Israel?

2. How long was he in office?

3. What were the important facts concerning him?

Note that there were twelve judges (excluding Abimelech who was a usurper).

What does that suggest to you (Matthew 19:28; Isaiah 1:26)?

Three important facts concerning the judges should be noted: they were called of GOD, endowed with special power, and most of them belonged to that class described by Paul as "the weak things of the world . . . the base things of the world" (1 Corinthians 1:27-28).

Jael's action in killing Sisera, and Deborah's praise of the same, has called forth criticism from some quarters. Two things should be taken into consideration here. First, that although Deborah and Barak glorify the act, the Bible does not endorse or commend it; it simply records the fact. On the other hand, we must take into account the fact that the age in which Jael lived differed from ours in regard to customs and standards. We quote from an English commentator:

"Jael by her righteous and courageous act saved her life, defended the honor of her absent husband, her own honor, and that of many hundreds of her sex (Judges 5:30). By going into the woman's tent, Sisera was guilty of a most cruel action and it was a very base return for the hospitality and kindness shown to him. He well knew that the Desert Law condemned to death a woman into whose part of the tent a man entered. She could only save herself by, if possible, putting him to death. Such was the Law of the Desert; and Jael was a daughter of the Desert, and not of Israel."

How did the angel of the Lord address Gideon (Judges 6:12)? Was that Gideon's estimate of himself (Judges 6:15)? Was Gideon conscious of unbelief in asking for a sign (Judges 6:39)?

Why did GOD want to deliver Israel with only a few men (Judges 7:2)?

What law does Judges 7:3 refer to (Deuteronomy 20:8)?

What can be said concerning the weapons of Gideon's band (2 Corinthians 10:4-5; see Judges 4:6).

We now come to a question which can hardly be passed in a study of the book of Judges ; namely, Did Jephthah really sacrifice his daughter? Since scholars are divided on the question, we can but give what each side has to say on the subject and let the student judge for himself. Some believe, that since human sacrifices were forbidden by law (Leviticus 18:21; Leviticus 20:2-5), the offering of Jephthah's daughter must have taken the form of a dedication of the girl to perpetual virginity (Judges 11:36-40). Others believe that he actually sacrificed his daughter in the conscientious belief that he was bound by his oath (verses Judges 11:31; Judges 11:35; Judges 11:39). Who was it that Samson's parents saw (Judges 13:17-18; Judges 13:22; cf. Genesis 32:29-30)?

What was Samson from his birth (Judges 13:4-5)? Whom did he resemble in this respect (Luke 1:13-15)? Was he to be separated unto the Lord (Judges 13:5)? Did he always remain separated (Judges 14:1-3)?

What was the secret of his strength (Judges 13:25)? Did he always walk according to the Spirit (Judges 16:1-24)?

How strong was he (Judges 14:5-7)? How weak was he (Judges 16:1-17)?

What caused his fall (Judges 16:19; Judges 13:5)?

III. Israel's Anarchy (Judges 17:1-13, Judges 18:1-31, Judges 19:1-30, Judges 20:1-48, Judges 21:1-25) 1. Anarchy in religious life (Judges 17:1-13, Judges 18:1-31).

2. Anarchy in moral life (Judges 19:1-30).

3. Anarchy in national life (Judges 20:1-48, Judges 21:1-25). The first half of the book of Judges gives us a short sketch of some of Israel's apostasies during the 450 years the judges ruled. Judges 17:1-13, Judges 18:1-31, Judges 19:1-30, Judges 20:1-48, Judges 21:1-25 give us a close-up view of one of those periods. The last verse of the book offers an explanation for the terrible conditions that prevailed during that time.

01.08. Ruth

Ruth

Theme: Judges gave us a very dark picture of Israel as seen from the national viewpoint; Ruth gives us a bright picture of that period as seen in the faithfulness and in the beauty of character of certain individuals. The story is one of the most beautiful in the Bible, and is doubly interesting from the fact that its heroine is a Gentile. The very last word in the book - David - will reveal its chief value. Its purpose is to trace the descent of David, the progenitor of the Messiah. The whole book has its climax in the genealogy found in the last chapter.

Author: Jewish tradition assigns the authorship to Samuel.

Scope: The book covers a period of ten years probably during the time of Gideon.

CONTENTS We shall use the outline given by Dr. Scofield.

I. Ruth Deciding (Ruth 1:1-22).

II. Ruth Serving (Ruth 2:1-23).

III. Ruth Resting (Ruth 3:1-18).

IV. Ruth Rewarded (Ruth 4:1-22).

I. Ruth Deciding (Ruth 1:1-22) When did the events recorded in this book take place (Ruth 1:1)?

Ought there to have been a famine at this time (Deuteronomy 28:1-14)?

If Elimelech had trusted GOD would he have gone to Moab (Psalms 37:3)?

What happened to the family in Moab (Ruth 1:3-4)?

What was Ruth's decision (Ruth 1:16-17)?

II. Ruth Serving (Ruth 2:1-23)

Ruth 2:3 says that Ruth happened to light on a field belonging to Boaz, a kinsman of Elimelech. Subsequent events will show that this happening was divinely ordained. Notice Boaz' prophetic blessing of Ruth (Ruth 2:12).

III. Ruth Resting (Ruth 3:1-18) This chapter calls for an explanation of some Jewish laws and customs. Elimelech, through poverty, had lost his property. According to Jewish law, the property could be redeemed by a kinsman of the former owner (Leviticus 25:25). Boaz, as a kinsman of Elimelech had this right. Another law required that if a man died childless, his brother should marry the widow (Deuteronomy 25:5-10). It seems, however, that custom had decided, in the course of time, that in the absence of a brother-in-law, the duty should devolve on the nearest kinsman. Naomi, since she was the widow of Elimelech, and since she had no children, had a claim on

Boaz. This claim she gave over to Ruth.

Ruth is sent to Boaz, and by the symbolic act of lying at his feet, reminded him of the duty owed to his deceased kinsman (Ruth 3:7-9). Boaz, though willing to marry Ruth, reminded her that there was a nearer relative than he, who would have first claim.

IV. Ruth Rewarded (Ruth 4:1-22) The next morning Boaz takes witnesses and offers the right of the redemption of Naomi's property to his kinsman, at the same time reminding him that if he bought the property, he would have to marry Ruth. This he refuses to do leaving Boaz free to marry Ruth.

Ruth 4:18-22 though seemingly an uninteresting list of names, is the climax to which the book leads, for it reveals the purpose of its writing - to show the descent of David, the progenitor of the Messiah (cf. Matthew 1:3-6).

01.09. First Samuel

First Samuel

Theme: The book of Samuel is a transition book. It is the record of the passing of the government of Israel by judges to the government by kings and of the passing from the rule of GOD, the invisible king - which made them unlike other nations - to the rule of a visible king which made them like other nations.

"The book of Samuel is a history with the personal attraction of biography added. The contents may be grouped around three persons:

- Samuel, a patriot and judge with lowly consecrated heart, obediently serving GOD;
- Saul, a selfish, wayward, jealous king, faulty and unfaithful in allegiance to his GOD;
- David "a man after GOD's own heart, the sweet singer of Israel, a man of prayer and praise, tested, disciplined, persecuted, and finally crowned monarch of all Israel."

Author: Samuel is generally supposed to have written the book as far as 1 Samuel 24:1-22; and from the fact that the prophets Nathan and Gad are mentioned conjointly with Samuel in 1 Chronicles 29:29, as writers of the events of David's life, it is considered that they were the authors of the remaining chapters.

Scope: From the birth of Samuel to the death of Saul, covering a period of 115 years from about 1171 B. C. to 1056 B. C.

CONTENTS The contents of the book of Samuel may be grouped around three persons: Samuel, Saul and David.

I. Concerning Samuel (1 Samuel 1:1-28, 1 Samuel 2:1-36, 1 Samuel 3:1-21, 1 Samuel 4:1-22, 1 Samuel 5:1-12, 1 Samuel 6:1-21, 1 Samuel 7:1-17).

II. Concerning Saul (1 Samuel 8:1-22, 1 Samuel 9:1-27, 1 Samuel 10:1-27, 1 Samuel 11:1-15, 1 Samuel 12:1-25, 1 Samuel 13:1-23, 1 Samuel 14:1-52, 1 Samuel 15:1-35).

III. Concerning David (1 Samuel 16:1-23, 1 Samuel 17:1-58, 1 Samuel 18:1-30, 1 Samuel 19:1-24, 1 Samuel 20:1-42, 1 Samuel 21:1-15, 1 Samuel 22:1-23, 1 Samuel 23:1-29, 1 Samuel 24:1-22, 1 Samuel 25:1-44, 1 Samuel 26:1-25, 1 Samuel 27:1-12, 1 Samuel 28:1-25, 1 Samuel 29:1-11, 1 Samuel 30:1-31, 1 Samuel 31:1-13).

- I. Concerning Samuel
 1. The birth of Samuel (1 Samuel 1:1-28, 1 Samuel 2:1-11).
 2. The call of Samuel (1 Samuel 2:12-36, 1 Samuel 3:1-21).
 3. The taking of the ark (1 Samuel 4:1-22, 1 Samuel 5:1-12).

4. The return of the ark (1 Samuel 6:1-21, 1 Samuel 7:1-17). Where was the place of worship at this time of Israel's history (1 Samuel 1:3)? When did Jerusalem become the place of worship (2 Samuel 5:6-9)?

What place did Hannah hold in her husband's heart (1 Samuel 1:8)?

What was her grief? What did it mean in those days for a Jewish woman to be without children (Genesis 30:23; Luke 1:25)?

What kind of child did Hannah request from the Lord (1 Samuel 1:11)?

What did she promise he should be (1 Samuel 1:11, compare Numbers 6:1-27)? Whom does she resemble in this respect (Luke 1:13-15)?

Why was Samuel so called (1 Samuel 1:20)? Did Hannah fulfill her vow (1 Samuel 1:24-28)?

What did the Lord's kindness to her inspire (1 Samuel 2:1-10)?

What Israelitish woman uttered similar words under like circumstances (Luke 1:46-55)? Is it possible for persons to be in the ministry and yet be sinful (1 Samuel 2:12)?

What is said concerning Eli's sons? How did these young men injure the Lord's cause (1 Samuel 2:17)? Was Hannah well repaid for her sacrifice (1 Samuel 2:21)?

What warning was given Eli (1 Samuel 2:27-36)?

What was the condition of revelation in those days (1 Samuel 3:1)?

What must have been the condition of the people in consequence (Proverbs 29:18; Psalms 74:9; Amos 8:11)?

What shows that GOD can reveal His will to a little child? How did the Lord confirm Samuel's call (1 Samuel 3:19-20)?

Samuel was the first of the line of writing prophets (Acts 3:2-3; 1 Samuel 3:20). After the priesthood had failed, Samuel became the spiritual leader of the people and the mediator between them and GOD.

1 Samuel 4:1-22, 1 Samuel 5:1-12 record the taking of the ark. The ark was a symbol of the presence of the glory of the Lord (1 Samuel 14:43-44; Joshua 3:6; 1 Samuel 14:18-19; Psalms 132:8. It went before the Israelites in their wilderness wanderings and sometimes before the army in time of war (Joshua 3:6). It was before the ark that the leaders sought the will of the Lord (Exodus 25:22; Joshua 7:6-9; Judges 20:27). Israel, in their backslidden condition, made a superstitious use of this piece of sacred furniture, thinking that the mere formal use of it would bring victory. They trusted in "it" instead of the Lord's power of which it was a symbol (1 Samuel 4:3). Their great shout in the camp was the result of mere natural enthusiasm.

While the ark brought blessing to GOD's people, what did it bring to GOD's enemies (1 Samuel 5:1-12)?

What light did the wise men of the Philistines have on divine healing (1 Samuel 6:3-6)? With what history were they acquainted (1 Samuel 6:6)?

What was the effect on the Israelites of seeing the ark returning (1 Samuel 6:13)? Of what act of profanation were the people guilty (1 Samuel 6:19, compare Numbers 4:5; Numbers 4:15)? Where was the ark then taken? Over what did the Israelites lament (1 Samuel 7:2)?

What did Samuel tell them to do (1 Samuel 7:3)? Of what is the act of the Israelites mentioned (1 Samuel 7:6) typical Psalms 62:8 What prominence is given to prayer in this chapter (1 Samuel 7:5; 1 Samuel 7:8-9)?

Notice that Samuel takes upon himself the office of priest by sacrificing (1 Samuel 7:9). Though only the priests were allowed to sacrifice, the Lord made special dispensation in Samuel's favor, because of the failure of the priesthood. What followed Israel's repentance (1 Samuel 7:10-14)?

II. Concerning Saul 1. Israel demands a king. (1 Samuel 8:1-22).

2. Saul chosen and anointed (1 Samuel 9:1-27, 1 Samuel 10:1-27).

3. Saul's first victory (1 Samuel 11:1-15).

4. Samuel's proclamation of the kingdom (1 Samuel 12:1-25).

5. Saul's rejection (1 Samuel 13:1-23, 1 Samuel 14:1-52, 1 Samuel 15:1-35).

1 Samuel 8:1-22 records the desire of Israel for a king.

What was the reason for desiring a king (1 Samuel 8:5)?

What was GOD's plan for the nation (Deuteronomy 14:2; Numbers 23:9)?

What gave the people an excuse for demanding a king (1 Samuel 8:3-5)?

How closely is GOD identified with His servants (1 Samuel 8:7)? Did GOD let the people have their own way? What kind of king did the Lord say they would have (1 Samuel 8:11-17)? Who had foreseen that Israel would desire a king (Deuteronomy 17:14-20)? Did the Lord's description of their future king discourage the people (1 Samuel 8:19-20)?

What did the Lord then do (Psalms 106:15)?

What was Samuel's reputation among the people (1 Samuel 9:6)?

What was a prophet originally called (1 Samuel 9:9)?

How close to GOD did Samuel live (1 Samuel 9:15)?

What signs were given to confirm Saul's faith (1 Samuel 10:1-8)?

Notice here the existence of a school of prophets of which Samuel was probably the head (1 Samuel 10:5; 1 Samuel 10:10).

1 Samuel 10:6-9 does not teach that Saul was regenerated. It does indeed state that the Lord gave Saul a new heart, but that simply means that He imparted unto him the necessary qualifications for his office. He gave him the heart of a king. Saul's action in hiding himself among the stuff has been interpreted as indicating modesty on his part. But it was modesty displayed at the wrong time. "It is as great a sin to urge modesty and keep in the background when GOD calls

to the foreground as it is to go to the front when GOD's appointment is in the rear." Were all the people in favor of Saul (1 Samuel 10:27)?

How did he show his wisdom (1 Samuel 10:27)?

What established Saul's popularity (1 Samuel 11:11-13)?

Though Israel had rejected the Lord, did He utterly forsake them (1 Samuel 12:14; 1 Samuel 12:22)? As what did Samuel consider neglect of intercessory prayer (1 Samuel 12:23)?

1 Samuel 13:1-23 records Saul's sin-intruding into the priest's office. This was in flagrant violation of Numbers 3:10; Numbers 3:38.

What excuse did he offer (1 Samuel 12:12)?

What did he lose through his disobedience (1 Samuel 13:13)?

What was made known to Saul (1 Samuel 13:14)?

What act of disobedience sealed Saul's fate (1 Samuel 15:1-9)?

What excuse did Saul offer (1 Samuel 15:20-21)?

What principle did Samuel lay down in 1 Samuel 15:22? Was Saul's repentance really sincere (Compare 1 Samuel 15:25 and 1 Samuel 15:30)?

What were Samuel's feelings on Saul's rejection (1 Samuel 15:35)? The Lord's feelings?

III. Concerning David 1. David anointed king (1 Samuel 16:1-23).

2. David's victory over Goliath (1 Samuel 17:1-58).

3. David's persecutions and wanderings (1 Samuel 18:1-30, 1 Samuel 19:1-24, 1 Samuel 20:1-42, 1 Samuel 21:1-15, 1 Samuel 22:1-23, 1 Samuel 23:1-29, 1 Samuel 24:1-22, 1 Samuel 25:1-44, 1 Samuel 26:1-25, 1 Samuel 27:1-12, 1 Samuel 28:1-25, 1 Samuel 29:1-11, 1 Samuel 30:1-31).

4. The death of Saul (1 Samuel 31:1-13). By what was Samuel judging the fitness of a person to become king (1 Samuel 16:6)?

How does the Lord judge (1 Samuel 16:7)?

What happened after David's anointing (1 Samuel 16:13)? Of what event was this typical (Matthew 3:16-17)?

1 Samuel 16:14 seems to present a difficulty. We read that the SPIRIT of the Lord departed from Saul and that an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. It has been asked, Does GOD send evil spirits to men? In explanation of this we quote from Dr. Torrey:

"What is meant by 'evil spirit'? The context clearly shows. It was a spirit of discontent, unrest, depression.

"The circumstances were these: Saul had proved untrue to GOD. He had deliberately disobeyed GOD, and consequently GOD had withdrawn His SPIRIT from him, and a spirit of worry and discontent came upon him.

"This was not an unkind act on GOD's part. There was nothing kinder that GOD could have done. It is one of the most merciful provisions of our heavenly FATHER that when we disobey Him and wander from Him He makes us unhappy and discontented in our sin. If GOD should leave us to continue to be happy in our sin, it would be the unkindest thing He could do, but GOD in His great mercy will win every sinner possible back to Himself, and if we sin, GOD, for our highest good sends us unrest and deep depression in our sin. If we make right use of this spirit of depression that GOD sends us it brings us back to GOD and to the joy of the HOLY GHOST. Saul made the wrong use of it. Instead of allowing the unrest of his heart to bring him to repentance he allowed it to embitter his soul against the one whom GOD had favored. The sending of the spirit was an act of mercy on GOD's part. The misuse of this act of mercy resulted in Saul's undoing."

Students have been puzzled that Saul should not have recognized David after his victory over Goliath when he had just sent him forth (1 Samuel 17:55-58). Mr. Parrot, a missionary to Madagascar, explains this difficulty by describing a custom of that country. In Madagascar when "a man has performed some exploit, the cry is not 'Who is this?' but, 'Whose son is he?' the glory passing to the one who fathered him. Further, the Malagasy custom is to feign ignorance of the parentage the better to express surprise." Who befriended David at this time (1 Samuel 18:1)?

What caused Saul's jealousy (1 Samuel 18:6-7)?

Why did Saul fear him (1 Samuel 18:12)?

How popular was David with Israel (1 Samuel 18:16)?

How did Saul attempt to take David's life (1 Samuel 18:20-30; 1 Samuel 19:1-17)?

How did the Lord protect David (1 Samuel 19:18-24)? Where did David flee (1 Samuel 19:18)?

What was at the root of Saul's enmity toward David (1 Samuel 20:31)?

Let the student make a list of the places where David went during his wanderings, noting what occurred at each place.

We have been reading the account of the wanderings and persecutions of him who had been anointed king over Israel. What were his feelings during that time? His religious experiences? The reading of the following psalms, referring to this period of his life, will answer those questions.

Let the student read them:

- Psalms 59:1-17, compare 1 Samuel 19:11;
- Psalms 56:1-13, compare 1 Samuel 21:10-11;
- Psalms 34:1-22, compare 1 Samuel 21:13;
- Psalms 57:1-11, compare 1 Samuel 22:1;
- Psalms 52:1-9, compare 1 Samuel 22:9;
- Psalms 54:1-7, compare 1 Samuel 23:19.

01.10. Second Samuel

Second Samuel

Theme: "The whole book centers around the figure of David; there is none other of sufficient importance to draw off the attention. It is GOD's portrait of His anointed to which our eyes are directed. It is the picture of the man after GOD's own heart that we are called upon to study. And we begin our study with the question: What is there about David to merit so honorable a title? He is not pointed out to us from a distance that we may gaze at the king set upon lofty eminence, surrounded by all the insignia of royalty, but we are invited to a close acquaintance with the man.

"We see him, not only upon the throne but in the home. We watch him in his deepest sorrows, as well as in the hour of his greatest triumphs; we hear his prayers and his praises, his righteous indignation, his words of kindness, tenderness and generosity. We are witnesses of his sin and his repentance, of his moments of impatience, of his kingly dignity, and the whole picture, in spite of its occasional dark shadows, shows us a man in whose life GOD really was first, and to whom above an else he was a glorious reality - a man, in short, who was deeply conscious of his own weakness, failure and sin, but who knew GOD and trusted Him with his whole heart." - Markham.

Author: The events recorded in the book of II Samuel were probably added to Samuel's book (1 Chronicles 29:29) by Nathan or Gad. In the Hebrew Bible, 1 and II Samuel formed one book. They were divided by the Septuagint translators (about 285 B. C.) when they translated the Old Testament into the Greek language.

Scope: From the death of Saul to the purchase of the temple site, covering a period of 31 years.

CONTENTS

1. David's Rise (2 Samuel 1:1-27, 2 Samuel 2:1-32, 2 Samuel 3:1-39, 2 Samuel 4:1-12, 2 Samuel 5:1-25, 2 Samuel 6:1-23, 2 Samuel 7:1-29, 2 Samuel 8:1-18, 2 Samuel 9:1-13, 2 Samuel 10:1-19).

2. David's Fall (2 Samuel 11:1-27, 2 Samuel 12:1-31, 2 Samuel 13:1-39, 2 Samuel 14:1-33, 2 Samuel 15:1-37, 2 Samuel 16:1-23, 2 Samuel 17:1-29, 2 Samuel 18:1-33, 2 Samuel 19:1-43, 2 Samuel 20:1-26).

3. The Later Years of David (2 Samuel 21:1-22, 2 Samuel 22:1-51, 2 Samuel 23:1-39, 2 Samuel 24:1-25).

I. David's Rise 1. The death of Saul (2 Samuel 1:1-27).

2. David becomes king over all Israel (2 Samuel 2:1-32, 2 Samuel 3:1-39, 2 Samuel 4:1-12, 2 Samuel 5:1-25).

3. The ark brought to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6:1-23).

4. The Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7:1-29).

5. David's conquests (2 Samuel 8:1-18, 2 Samuel 9:1-13, 2 Samuel 10:1-19).

It is believed by scholars that the story of the Amalekite (2 Samuel 1:4-10) was fabrication. His object in coming to David with the news of Saul's death was to find favor in his sight. He imagined that the king would be pleased at the news of the death of his enemy. David, seeing the evil motive of the young man, justly punished him. In thus doing, David acted on the principle that he had followed all through his dealings with Saul; namely, reverence for the Lord's anointed. He wished to avoid all appearances of being accessory to the death of Saul. Which was the first tribe to recognize David as king (2 Samuel 2:1-4)?

How did the men of Jabesh-gilead show kindness to Saul (1 Samuel 31:11-13; 2 Samuel 2:4-7)? Who instigated war between Judah and the eleven tribes (2 Samuel 2:8-11)?

What was the outcome of the war (2 Samuel 3:1)? Who made a league with David at this time (2 Samuel 3:12-26)?

What is revealed concerning Joab's character in 2 Samuel 3:1-39?

What was David's attitude toward Joab's murder of Abner? Notice David's continued faithfulness to Saul and his house (2 Samuel 4:1-12) Where and when was David appointed king over all Israel (2 Samuel 5:1-25)?

What city became the capital of the kingdom at this time (2 Samuel 5:6-9)? Who built David a home at this time (2 Samuel 5:11)?

What Psalm did David compose on that occasion (Psalms 30:1-12)? The bringing up of the ark was a laudable act on David's part, but the manner of carrying it was in violation of the law of GOD. The ark, instead of being carried on a cart should have been borne by the priests (Numbers 4:14-15; Numbers 7:9). Where was the ark taken after this (2 Samuel 6:10-11)?

What did its presence bring to that family? Was David's conduct before the ark very dignified? Who took exception to it? With what did she reproach David (verse 2 Samuel 6:20)? With what words did David justify his conduct (verse 2 Samuel 6:21)?

What was the result of Michal's criticism of David (verse 2 Samuel 6:23)?

What did David purpose to do (2 Samuel 7:1-3)? Who encouraged him in this? Was it however GOD's will that David should build the temple (1 Chronicles 22:8)?

2 Samuel 7:8-17 records GOD's making of a covenant with David, whereby He promises to him and his descendants the throne and kingdom forever. We quote from Dr. Scofield:

"This covenant, upon which the glorious kingdom of CHRIST "of the seed of David according to the flesh" is to be founded, secures:

"1. A Davidic 'house'; i.e., posterity, family.

"2. A 'throne'; i.e., royal authority.

"3. A kingdom; i.e., a sphere of rule.

"4. In perpetuity; 'forever.'

"5. And this fourfold covenant has but one condition; disobedience in the Davidic family is to be visited with chastisement but not to the abrogation of the covenant (2 Samuel 7:15; Psalms 89:20; Psalms 89:37; Isaiah 55:3).

"Chastisement fell; first in the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam, and finally in the captivities (2 Kings 25:1-7). Since that time but one king of the Davidic family has been crowned and He was crowned with thorns. But the Davidic covenant confirmed to David by the oath of the Lord and renewed to Mary by the angel Gabriel is immutable (Psalms 89:30-37), and the Lord GOD will yet give to that thorn-crowned One 'the throne of His father David' (Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2:29-32)."

Notice David's beautiful prayer of thanksgiving after the making of this covenant (2 Samuel 7:18-29).

How did David fully establish his kingdom (2 Samuel 8:1-18)? Make a list of the nations he subdued.

How does David again show his kindness to Saul's family (2 Samuel 9:1-13)?

II. David's Fall 1. David's great sin (2 Samuel 11:1-27, 2 Samuel 12:1-31).

2. Absalom's rebellion (2 Samuel 13:1-39, 2 Samuel 14:1-33, 2 Samuel 15:1-37, 2 Samuel 16:1-23, 2 Samuel 17:1-29, 2 Samuel 18:1-33, 2 Samuel 19:1-43, 2 Samuel 20:1-26).

Read Psalms 51:1-19.

Nathan's saying that David had given occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme (2 Samuel 12:14), has found fulfillment in the sneers of infidels who scoff at the fact of David's being called "a man after God's own heart." That David was a man after GOD's own heart does not mean that he was faultless, but it does mean that he was a man in whose heart there was an earnest desire to do GOD's will and seek His righteousness, in contrast to Saul, who was always seeking his own way. David committed the foulest of sins yet, with a true sense of the Lord's righteousness and a sense of his own guilt, he repented in sackcloth and ashes. There are many important lessons we may learn from David's sin:

1. However strong and spiritual a man may be, if he gets his eyes off GOD, he is liable to fall.
2. The recording in plain terms of the sin of Israel's greatest hero without any attempt to whitewash it, is a strong proof of the divine origin of the Bible. The natural thing to have done would be to draw a veil over this unpleasant event (2 Samuel 12:12).
3. GOD's grace can pardon the blackest of sins if there is true repentance (2 Samuel 12:13).
4. Whatever a man sows that will he reap. The child of David's sinful union died. His two sons followed him in adultery and one committed murder.
5. GOD will not for a moment condone sin even on the part of His best beloved children.

It was not long after his incident that David continued to reap what he had sown. His son Amnon committed an act of immorality which led to his murder by Absalom (2 Samuel 13:1-39). David loved his son, but a dread of public opinion had made him hesitate to recall him from the

banishment to which he had been sentenced.

Joab, knowing the struggle that was taking place in the king's heart, between affection and duty, resorted to a stratagem described in chapter 14. The wise woman he employed, in a skillful speech, obtained a pledge from the king that her son, who had supposedly slain his brother, would be pardoned.

She then insinuated that in pardoning Absalom, he would be doing no more than he had done for her, and there could be no charge of partiality against him. The scheme was successful. However, subsequent events prove that David had acted unwisely in pardoning Absalom for his son rebelled against him.

David's prompt decision to leave Jerusalem and place the Jordan between him and the rebels, was the action of a skillful soldier. In connection with David's flight, Psalms 3:1-8 should be read.

Notice David's patience and humility in the face of Shimei's insult. He sees the hand of GOD in everything (2 Samuel 16:5-12).

Ahithophel counsels Absalom to commit an act which would cut off all hope of reconciliation with his father, and which would compel everyone in Israel to show his colors (2 Samuel 16:21-23). This act was a fulfillment of 2 Samuel 12:12.

Ahithophel then advises Absalom to take a small force and capture his father before he could gather a large army. Hushai defeated this counsel by suggesting that Absalom make a general mobilization of his whole army. This would give David time to pass over the Jordan and gather a large army. Ahithophel, foreseeing David's victory, and his own disgrace, committed suicide.

Joab's insolent reproof of David shows that he had no love for him (2 Samuel 19:1-7). At heart he was a rebel. His having murdered Absalom had turned David completely against him (2 Samuel 19:13, compare 1 Kings 2:5).

"This chapter (2 Samuel 19:1-43) as a mirror, exhibits some sad facts. David seems to have forgotten the use and meaning of prayer. Amid the incessant movement of this chapter it is not once mentioned that: 'David enquired of the Lord.' The result was that he allowed selfish and excessive affection for his rebellious son to smother the affection which he should have shown for his brave and faithful soldiers; he pardoned Shimei, swearing to him by the Lord - an oath which he should not have taken (1 Kings 2:8-9) - when he ought to have judged him; he condemned Mephibosheth when he should have done him justice; he rewarded Zeba when he should have punished him; and he hastened to Jerusalem without giving time for the chiefs and soldiers of the Northern tribes to assist in the restoration, thus occasioning the bloodshed and misery that followed in the next chapter."

What tribe should have been the first to welcome David back (2 Samuel 19:11)?

Why (2 Samuel 19:12)? Will the time ever come when Israel and Judah will welcome David's Son (Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 23:39)? Who conducted David back to the city (2 Samuel 19:40)?

What did David's preferment of the tribe of Judah cause (2 Samuel 19:41-43, 2 Samuel 20:1-2)? Of what was this division between Judah and Israel the beginning (1 Kings 12:16-24)?

What crime did Joab add to his record at this time (2 Samuel 20:1-26)?

III. David's Later Years 1. The three years of famine (2 Samuel 21:1-22).

2. David's song (2 Samuel 22:1-51).

3. David's last words (2 Samuel 23:1-39).

4. David's sin in numbering the people (2 Samuel 24:1-25).

What was the cause of the famine mentioned in 2 Samuel 21:1-22 (Compare Joshua 9:1-27)?

What penalty did Saul's family pay for the violation of this oath?

2 Samuel 22:1-51 has been called by Spurgeon "The grateful retrospect." Toward the close of his life, David looks back on the vicissitudes and trials of the past and gratefully acknowledges the Lord's grace and faithfulness.

2 Samuel 23:1-7 record the last words of David. In this connection, Psalms 72:1-20 should be read, the last verse of which seems to indicate that it was David's last prayer.

What three things are said concerning David in (2 Samuel 23:1)?

What did David claim in verse 2 Samuel 23:2? Who bore witness to this (Matthew 22:43)?

What did David say was GOD's ideal of a ruler (2 Samuel 23:3-4)? Did David feel that he and his house had lived up to this standard (2 Samuel 23:5)?

Though David had experienced many troubles and failures, what fact comforted him (2 Samuel 23:5)?

What does he say concerning his enemies (2 Samuel 23:6-7)? The remainder of the chapter gives a list of David's mighty men and their exploits. (2 Samuel 23:16-17 give us a glimpse of the devotion of these men toward David, and his appreciation of their valor.

2 Samuel 24:1-25 records David's sin in numbering the people. A comparison with 1 Chronicles 21:1-6 shows that it was Satan who instigated this.

"GOD, though He cannot tempt man (James 1:13), is frequently described in Scripture as doing what He merely permits to be done, and so, in this case, He permitted Satan to tempt David. Satan was the active mover, while GOD only withdrew His supporting grace, and the great tempter prevailed against the king.

"The order was given by Joab who, though not generally restrained by scruples, did not fail to represent in strong terms (1 Chronicles 21:3) the sin and danger of this measure, and used every argument to dissuade the king from his purpose . . .

"The fact of numbering the people was not in itself sinful; for Moses did it by the express authority of GOD. But David acted not only independently of such order or sanction, but from motives unworthy of the delegated king of Israel; from pride and vainglory, from self-confidence and lack of trust in GOD, and above all, from ambitious designs of conquest, in furtherance of which he was determined to force the people into military service and to ascertain whether he could muster an

army sufficient for the magnitude of the enterprise he contemplated.

"It was a breach of the constitution, an infringement of the liberties of the people, and opposed to that Divine policy which required that Israel should continue a separate nation."

- Jamieson, Fausset and Brown.

01.11. First Kings

First Kings

Theme: In I and II Samuel we read how the Jewish nation demanded a king in order that they might be like the other nations. Though contrary to His perfect will, GOD granted their request. In this book we learn how Israel fared under the kings. Though many righteous kings ruled, the history of most of them is one of misrule and iniquity. In accordance with His promise in 1 Samuel 12:18-24, the Lord did not fail to bless His people as long as they sought Him, but, on the other hand He never failed to punish them when they departed from Him.

Author: The human author is unknown. It is believed that Jeremiah compiled the records made by Nathan and Gad (1 Chronicles 29:29) and others.

Scope: From the death of David to the reign of Jehoram over Israel, covering a period of 118 years from 1015-897 B. C.

CONTENTS I. The Establishment of Solomon's Kingdom (1 Kings 1:1-53, 2 Kings 2:1-46).

II. Solomon's Reign (1 Kings 3:1-28, 1 Kings 4:1-34, 1 Kings 5:1-18, 1 Kings 6:1-38, 1 Kings 7:1-51, 1 Kings 8:1-66, 1 Kings 9:1-28, 1 Kings 10:1-29, 1 Kings 11:1-43).

III. The Disruption and Decline of the Kingdom (1 Kings 12:1-33, 1 Kings 13:1-34, 1 Kings 14:1-31, 1 Kings 15:1-34, 1 Kings 16:1-34, 1 Kings 17:1-24, 1 Kings 18:1-46, 1 Kings 19:1-21, 1 Kings 20:1-43, 1 Kings 21:1-29, 1 Kings 22:1-53).

I. The Establishment of Solomon's Kingdom 1. Adonijah's plot (1 Kings 1:1-38).

2. Solomon appointed by David (1 Kings 1:39-53).

3. The death of David (1 Kings 2:1-11).

4. Solomon's accession (1 Kings 2:12-46).

What was David's physical condition at this time? Who attempted to seize the kingdom?

What should have been a warning to him (2 Samuel 15:1-6)? Who were his accomplices?

How was the plot foiled?

Why could not Adonijah become king (1 Chronicles 22:9-10)?

Concerning David's last charge to Solomon (1 Kings 2:1-9) we quote from Bahr's commentary:

"The special directions which refer to individual persons, David communicates, not as a private man, but as king of Israel. Joab's double murder had gone fully unpunished. At the time of its commission, David was not in a condition to be able to punish him; but he felt the full weight of his deed, and in horror of it, uttered an imprecation against Joab (2 Samuel 3:29). In the eyes of the

people, nevertheless, the non-punishment must have been regarded as an insult against the law and righteousness, the charge of which devolved upon the king. It was a stain upon his reign not yet blotted out. Even on his deathbed he cannot think otherwise than it is his duty, as that of a supreme judge, to deliver to his successor a definite direction about it.

It lay upon his conscience, and he desired that the stain somehow ("Do according to thy wisdom") should be removed. Moreover, Joab's participation in Adonijah's revolt must have appeared as dangerous for the throne of Solomon. As the punishment of Joab was to him a matter of conscience, so also was Barzillai's compensation. What Barzillai had done, he had done for him as King, as the anointed of the Lord.

Such fidelity and devotion to the reigning house, ought to be publicly requited, and to be recognized in honorable remembrance after the death of the king. In direct contrast to the action of Barzillai was that of Shimei.

He did not curse David as a private person, but he cursed him with the heaviest curse as the anointed of the Lord, and therein the Lord Himself indirectly. For blasphemy against the king was on the same level as blasphemy against GOD (1 Kings 21:10). Both were punished with death (Leviticus 24:14; Exodus 22:28), hence Abishai thought that Shimei should be put to death (2 Samuel 19:21) But David wished on the day when GOD had showed him great mercy, to show mercy himself, and on that account saved his life. But it was no small matter to allow the miscreant to spend his life near him (no banishment was talked of). And to permit him to spend his days quietly under the following reign (which had never been promised him) would have been a kindness that might have been greatly abused as a precedent of unpunished crimes. In fact, Shimei was a dangerous man, capable of repeating what he had done to David. As for the rest, David left Solomon to choose the manner and time of his punishment only he was not to go unpunished."

II. Solomon's Reign 1. Solomon's wisdom (1 Kings 3:1-28, 1 Kings 4:1-34).

2. The building of the temple (1 Kings 5:1-18, 1 Kings 6:1-38, 1 Kings 7:1-51).

3. The dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8:1-66).

4. Solomon's glory and fame (1 Kings 9:1-28, 1 Kings 10:1-29).

5. Solomon's fall (1 Kings 11:1-43). Whom did Solomon marry? Where did Solomon and the people sacrifice for want of a sanctuary (1 Kings 3:2-4)?

What request did Solomon make at this time (1 Kings 3:9)?

What else did the Lord give besides that for which he asked?

What scripture does that illustrate (Ephesians 3:20)?

What incident illustrating Solomon's wisdom is given?

What was the condition of Israel and Judah during Solomon's reign (1 Kings 4:20; 1 Kings 4:24-25)?

What were the boundaries of Solomon's dominions (1 Kings 4:21; 1 Kings 4:24)? Who supplied Solomon with materials to build the temple? In what year after Israel's departure from Egypt was the building of the temple begun?

What message came to Solomon at this time (1 Kings 6:11-13)?

How long did it take to build the temple (1 Kings 6:38)?

How long did it take Solomon to build his own house?

What was done after the temple was completed (1 Kings 8:1-19)?

What did the ark contain?

How did GOD manifest His presence at this time?

Notice carefully:

Solomon's sermon (1 Kings 8:12-21);

Solomon's prayer of dedication (1 Kings 8:22-53);

Solomon's blessing of the people (1 Kings 8:54-61).

How was the dedication celebrated (1 Kings 8:62-66)? When was Solomon's prayer answered (1 Kings 9:1-9)?

What choice did the Lord lay before Solomon and his people (1 Kings 9:4-9)?

What did Israel ultimately choose? Describe Solomon's activities (1 Kings 9:10-28).

Describe his wealth (1 Kings 10:1-29). Who caused Solomon's down fall (1 Kings 11:1-2)?

What did they lead him into (1 Kings 11:5-8)?

How did GOD say He would punish him (1 Kings 11:11)? When would that take place (1 Kings 11:12)?

How much of his kingdom would be left?

What prophet is introduced here (1 Kings 11:29)?

What opportunity was presented Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:38)?

III. The Disruption and Decline of the Kingdom The most profitable way to study this section will be for the student to make a list of the kings of Judah and Israel, briefly noting the following facts; the character of the king; the length of his reign; the names of the prophets mentioned in connection with his reign; the principal events of his reign. For example:

Reboboam Foolish and unjust; reigned 17 years; kingdom divided; people commit idolatry; invasion by king of Egypt.

Jeroboam Idolatrous, etc. The following list of kings of Judah and Israel, arranged as far as possible in chronological order will guide the student.

Judah Israel Rehoboam Jeroboam Abijam Nadab Asa Baasha Elah Zimri Jehoshaphat Omri Ahab Ahaziah Jehoram Jehoram What petition did the elders of the people bring to Rehoboam? In spite of the outward prosperity of Solomon's reign, what was the condition of the people (1 Kings 12:4)?

What showed Rehoboam's foolishness?

What did he lose by it? Had there already been the beginning of a breach between Judah and Israel (2 Samuel 2:8-11; 2 Samuel 19:41-43, 2 Samuel 20:1-2)?

What did Rehoboam attempt to do to prevent the secession of the other tribes?

What restrained him?

What did Jeroboam fear (1 Kings 12:26)?

What did he do to prevent this (1 Kings 12:27-28)? Did he at first wish to entirely destroy the worship of the Lord, or did he wish to conduct it in another way?

What suggested his setting up of the golden calves (Exodus 32:1-4)? Where did he set these?

What commandment did he break concerning the priesthood?

Concerning the feasts? Who denounced his sin? (1 Kings 13:1-2)? Whose birth, 350 years before, did he prophesy (Compare 2 Kings 23:15)?

What scripture does the disobedience of the man of GOD illustrate (Compare 1 Kings 13:18 and Galatians 1:8-9)?

What judgment was pronounced upon Jeroboam? What prophecy concerning Israel was uttered (1 Kings 14:15-16)?

Let us notice the main events of the ministry of Elijah. In order to give a complete account of his life, we shall draw from II Kings.

1. His message to Ahab (1 Kings 17:1).
2. His flight to the brook Cherith (1 Kings 17:2-7).
3. Fed by the widow of Zarephath. Raises her son from the dead (1 Kings 17:8-24).
4. His contest with the priests of Baal on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:1-46).
5. His flight to Mt. Sinai before Jezebel (1 Kings 19:1-18).
6. The call of Elisha.
7. His denunciation of Ahab for the murder of Naboth (1 Kings 21:17-29).
8. His message to Ahaziah (2 Kings 1:3-16).
9. His translation (2 Kings 2:1-11).

Elijah and John the Baptist are mentioned together in the New Testament, the latter as fulfilling the ministry of the former in relation to Messiah's first advent (Luke 1:17; Matthew 17:10-13).

Elijah is the John the Baptist of the Old Testament, and John the Baptist is the Elijah of the New Testament. Their ministries yield an interesting comparison.

1. Both ministered in times when Israel had departed from the true spiritual worship of GOD.
2. They resembled each other in appearance (2 Kings 1:8; Matthew 3:4).
3. Both preached national repentance (1 Kings 18:21; Matthew 3:2).
4. Both rebuked wicked kings (1 Kings 18:18; Matthew 14:3-4).
5. Both were persecuted by wicked queens (1 Kings 19:1; Matthew 14:8).
6. Elijah's sacrifice on Mt. Carmel, and John's baptism marked a time of national repentance.
7. Elisha, Elijah's successor, received his power for service at the Jordan; Jesus, John's successor, received the anointing of the Spirit in the same river.
8. Both, towards the close of their ministry, yielded to discouragement (1 Kings 19:4; Matthew 7:2-6).

01.12. Second Kings

Second Kings

Theme: The second book of Kings is a continuation of the story of the downfall of Judah and Israel, culminating in the captivity of both. There is the same story of failure on the part of king and people, a story of backsliding and idolatry. Though this was the great prophetic period of Israel, the message of the prophets was unheeded. The reformations that took place under such kings as Hezekiah and Josiah were superficial. The people soon returned to their sins and continued therein until "there was no remedy" (2 Chronicles 36:15-16).

Author: The human author is unknown. It is believed that Jeremiah compiled the records made by Nathan, Gad, and others.

Scope: From the reign of Jehoram over Judah and Ahaziah over Israel, to the captivity, covering a period of 308 years from 896-588 B. C.

CONTENTS I. The Close of Elijah's Ministry (2 Kings 1:1-18, 2 Kings 2:1-13).

II. The Ministry of Elisha (2 Kings 2:14-25, 2 Kings 3:1-27, 2 Kings 4:1-44, 2 Kings 5:1-27, 2 Kings 6:1-33, 2 Kings 7:1-20, 2 Kings 8:1-29, 2 Kings 9:1-37, 2 Kings 10:1-36, 2 Kings 11:1-21, 2 Kings 12:1-21, 2 Kings 13:1-21).

III. The Decline and Fall of Israel (2 Kings 13:22-25, 2 Kings 14:1-29, 2 Kings 15:1-38, 2 Kings 16:1-20, 2 Kings 17:1-41).

IV. The Decline and Fall of Judah (2 Kings 18:1-37, 2 Kings 19:1-37, 2 Kings 20:1-21, 2 Kings 21:1-26, 2 Kings 22:1-20, 2 Kings 23:1-37, 2 Kings 24:1-20, 2 Kings 25:1-30). As the student reads through the chapters, let him make a list of the kings of Judah and Israel, as he did in the first book. We add a parallel list of those kings:

Kings of Judah Prophets of Judah Kings of Israel-Prophets of Israel

{eS Module note: to make the most of this table, maximize the page. Also, the eS editor of this module is quite sure that the information in this particular chart is not correct. It is with regret he has not taken the time to correct it.} AhaziahJehoramElisha AthaliahJehu JoashJonah AmariahJehoahaz

Azariah (Uzziah)IsaiahJoash AmosJeroboam II

Hosea Zechariah Joel

Shallum

Menahem

Pekahiah JothamHosea AhazMicah

Hezekiah

Manasseh

Amon Josiah Zephaniah

Jeremiah

Jehoahaz Jehoiakim Habakkuk

Jehoiachin

Zedekiah I. The Close of Elijah's Ministry 1. Elijah and Ahaziah (2 Kings 1:1-18).

2. Translation of Elijah (2 Kings 2:1-13). Who fell sick at this time?

What kind of man was he?

What was his great sin (Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 5:7)?

What judgment was pronounced upon him?

How is Elijah described (2 Kings 1:8)?

"Any appearance of cruelty that there is in the fate of the two captains and their men will be removed, on full consideration of the circumstances. GOD being king of Israel, Ahaziah was bound to govern the kingdom according to divine law; to apprehend the Lord's prophet for discharging a commanded duty was the act of an impious and notorious rebel. The captains abetted the king in his rebellion; and they exceeded their military duty by contemptuous insults. In using the term 'man of God,' they either spoke derisively, believing him to be no true prophet; or if they regarded him as a true prophet, the summons to him to surrender himself bound to the king was a still more flagrant insult, the language of the second captain being worse than that of the first. The punishment was inflicted, not to avenge a personal insult of Elijah, but an insult upon GOD in the person of His prophet; and the punishment was inflicted not by the prophet, but by the hand of GOD."

What had the Lord purposed (2 Kings 2:1)? Who was acquainted with this fact (2 Kings 2:3)?

What miracle did Elijah perform at the Jordan?

What request did Elisha make? On what condition was it granted?

II. The Ministry of Elisha The following are the chief events of Elisha's ministry.

1. Elisha's first miracle - the parting of Jordan's waters (2 Kings 2:14).

2. The healing of the bitter waters (2 Kings 2:19-22).

3. The cursing of the irreverent children (2 Kings 2:23-25).

4. His rebuke of the alliance of Jehoshaphat and Jehoram (2 Kings 3:10-27).

5. The increasing of the widow's oil (2 Kings 4:1-7).

6. The raising of the Shunammite woman's son (2 Kings 4:8-37).

7. The healing of the deadly pottage (2 Kings 4:38-41).
8. The feeding of the 100 men (2 Kings 4:42-44).
9. The healing of Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-27).
10. The recovery of the lost axe (2 Kings 6:1-7).
11. Elisha and the Syrian host (2 Kings 6:8-23).
12. Elisha's promise of food (2 Kings 7:1-20).
13. His prediction of seven years of famine (2 Kings 8:1-2).
14. Elisha's visit to Ben-hadad (2 Kings 8:7-15).
15. His sending of a prophet to anoint Jehu as king (2 Kings 9:1-10).
16. Illness and death of Elisha (2 Kings 13:14-21).

Note reference to the "sons of the prophets" (2 Kings 2:3). We learn here that there were schools in those days where the young Israelites were trained for the prophetic ministry (Compare 1 Samuel 10:5-10; 2 Kings 6:1).

Chapter 2 Kings 2:23 has presented difficulties to many.

We quote from different commentators:

"The children mentioned here were the infidel or idolatrous young men of the place, who, affecting to disbelieve the report of his master's translation, sarcastically urged him to follow in his glorious career. The expression "bald head" was an epithet of contempt in the East, applied even to a person with a bushy head of hair."

"The persons in question were not wanton little children, but youths who knew what they were saying and doing. Neither must we overlook the fact that these youths belonged to a city which was the center and principal seat of apostasy, and which, on this account is called 'Beth Aven,' i.e., the House of the Idol, instead of Bethel (house of GOD). They were, therefore, literally, the offspring of apostasy and they represented in general the offspring of apostates which was growing up. The older expositors suppose that the older people had incited the younger ones and that the object was to make the new head of the class of prophets ridiculous and contemptible from the commencement of his career. When, therefore, Elisha threatened with divine punishment the impudent youths, who despised in the holy prophet the holy office to which the Lord had called him, it was no immorality, nor was it unworthy of him; on the contrary, he did what belonged to his prophetic office.

He did not, however, execute the punishment himself; he left that to Him who says, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay.' It was the judgment of GOD that befell these youths, and indirectly, the whole city out of which they came, and it referred back to the threat of the law: 'If ye walk contrary to me and will not hearken unto me . . . I will also send wild beasts among you which shall rob you of your children and destroy your cattle; and your highways shall be desolate'" (Leviticus 26:21-22).

III. The Decline and Fall of Israel What nations were sent against Israel (2 Kings 13:22; 2 Kings 15:19; 2 Kings 15:29)?

What were the Lord's feelings toward Israel (2 Kings 13:23; 2 Kings 14:26-27)?

Under whose reign did Israel's captivity take place (2 Kings 17:1-41)?

How did he hasten Israel's judgment (2 Kings 17:4)?

Notice GOD's indictment of Israel in chapter 2 Kings 17:7-23.

"The forced emigration of the tribes to Assyria was a result of the despotic principle which was accepted throughout the entire Orient, that it was right to make any revolt of subjugated nations impossible. In this case it was not merely a transportation into another country, but also the commencement of the dissolution of the ten tribes as a nationality. No one particular province in Assyria was assigned to them as their dwelling place, but several, which were far separated from one another, so that, although this or that tribe may have been kept more or less together, yet the different tribes were scattered up and down in a foreign nation, without the least organic connection with one another.

They never again came together; on the contrary they were gradually lost among the surrounding nations, so that no one knows to this day, what became of them, and every attempt to discover the remains of them has been vain. In this particular the exile of the ten tribes differs from that of Judah and Benjamin. The exile in Babylon was temporary. It lasted for a definite period which had been foretold by the prophets (2 Chronicles 36:21; Jeremiah 29:10). It was not like the Assyrian exile, a period of national dissolution.

Judah did not perish in exile; it rather gained strength, and finally came back into the land of promise, whereas, of the ten tribes only a few who had joined themselves to Judah, and become a part of it, ever found their way back. The ten tribes had, by their violent separation from the rest of the nation, broken the unity of the chosen people, and, in order to maintain this separation, they had revolted from the national covenant with the Lord. The breach of the covenant was the cornerstone of their existence as a separate nationality. Thereby also they had given up the destiny of the people of GOD in the world's history. They were the larger fragment of the entire nation, but they were only a separated member which was torn away from the common stock, a branch separated from the trunk, which could only wither away.

After 250 years of separate existence, when all the proofs of the divine grace and faithfulness had proved vain, it was the natural fate of the ten tribes to perish and to cease to be an independent nation. The Lord removed them out of His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone (2 Kings 17:18). The case was different with Judah. Although it had sinned often and deeply against its GOD, yet it never revolted formally and in principle from the covenant, much less was its existence built upon a breach of the covenant. It remained the supporter and the preserver of the Law, and therefore also of the promise. Its deportation was indeed a heavy punishment and a well-deserved chastisement, but it did not perish thereby, nor disappear as a nation from history - but it was preserved until He came of whom it was said:

"The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end (Luke 1:32-33)." - Bahr. To take

the place of the Israelites, the king of Assyria sent colonists from his dominions. Their idolatry brought upon them the judgment of GOD in the form of the appearing of lions among them. The king of Assyria then sent an Israelitish priest to instruct the colonists in the religion of the Lord. This religion they accepted, but they still continued to worship idols. They mingled with the remnant of the ten tribes left in the land and from their union sprang the Samaritans.

They later abandoned idolatry and became zealous adherents to the law of Moses. After the captivity, anxious to become Israelites, they attempted to join themselves to the two tribes, but were repelled by Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra 4:1-3). This gave birth to hatred. The Samaritans later built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim and claimed that it was the true place of worship (John 4:20). This temple was later destroyed by a Jewish king. The Jews hated them and contemptuously referred to them as "Converts of the Lions," from the circumstances of their conversion.

Who, in your opinion, was the best king of Israel? The worst?

IV. The Decline and Fall of Judah. The kingdom of Judah lasted about 150 years longer than that of Israel. Their history is much brighter than that of the latter. While Israel suffered many changes of dynasty, the kingly line of David was kept intact in Judah. While the history of Israel presents a succession of revolts and usurpations. The history of Judah is comparatively peaceful. The preservation of Judah may be explained from the fact that through them, the Messiah was to come.

2 Kings 24:1-20, 2 Kings 25:1-30 record Judah's captivity. There are three stages to it:

1. Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion (2 Kings 24:1-2).
2. The first deportation to Babylon (2 Kings 24:11-16).
3. The siege and destruction of Jerusalem and the final deportation (2 Kings 25:1-30).

Note that as in the case of the ten tribes, it was the rebellion of the king of Judah against the invading nation that was the cause of the final captivity (2 Kings 24:20). Read GOD's indictment of Judah (2 Chronicles 36:15; 2 Chronicles 36:17).

Whose, in your opinion, was the golden reign of Judah? Whose was the worst reign?

01.13. First and Second Chronicles

First and Second Chronicles

Introduction

Since the books of the Chronicles embrace, for the most part, the matter found in II Samuel and I and II Kings, we think it necessary to give only an introduction to the former.

Theme: The Greek translators of the Bible referred to these books as "The Things Omitted," because they supply much information that is not found in the books of the Kings. Though "Kings" and "Chronicles" show great similarity in the matter of their contents, they are written from different viewpoints, the former being written from the human viewpoint, the latter, from the Divine. To illustrate:

1 Kings 14:20 recording the death of Jeroboam, tells us that he "slept with his fathers." That is the human viewpoint. 2 Chronicles 13:20, recording the same event, tells us that "the Lord struck him and he died." That is the divine viewpoint.

One writer gives the following interesting table to show the difference between "Kings" and "Chronicles":

1. "Kings" was written shortly after the beginning of the captivity in Babylon. "Chronicles" was written shortly after the return from the captivity.
2. "Kings" was compiled by a prophet - Jeremiah; "Chronicles" by a priest - Ezra.
3. "Kings" emphasizes the throne of earthly kings; "Chronicles," the earthly throne (the temple) of the heavenly King.
4. "Kings" deals with Judah and Israel; "Chronicles," with Judah, Israel being mentioned but incidentally.
5. "Kings" is political and kingly; "Chronicles," ecclesiastical and priestly.

Author: "The writer of Chronicles is not certainly known, but probably the prevailing belief of the Jews as stated in the Talmud is correct. Ezra is declared therein to be the editor of the records written and preserved by trustworthy men.

These records written by such men as Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Dido, etc., were inspired of GOD and Ezra was further inspired to select from them and bring together his selections in one continuous narrative.

There can be little doubt that the story in Chronicles was written by Ezra at the return from the Babylonian captivity in order to encourage the people to build the temple."

Scope: From the death of Saul to the decree of Cyrus, covering a period of 520 years from 1056 to 536 B. C.

01.14. Ezra

Ezra

Introduction

Since the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther are closely connected and deal with the same period, we give here the principal events covered by those books, in order that the student may see at a glance the history of the period following the captivity.

1. The exiles return under Zerubbabel. 536 B. C.
2. The rebuilding of the temple. 535 B. C.
3. The ministry of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. 520 B. C.
4. The dedication of the temple. 515 B. C.
5. The events related in the book of Esther 478-473 B. C.
6. Ezra visits Jerusalem. 458 B. C.
7. Nehemiah sent to Jerusalem as governor. He rebuilds the wall. 446 B. C.
8. Malachi prophesies.

Theme: The keynote of Ezra is restoration. A comparison with Kings and Chronicles will bear this out:

- Kings and Chronicles record Israel's destruction of the temple; the latter, its rebuilding.
- The one gives a dark picture of a nation corrupt with idolatry; the other shows us a nation completely cleansed from idol worship.
- The one records the neglect of the law; the other, its restoration to its rightful place in the hearts of the people.
- The one records the mingling of Israel with the heathen; the other, the complete separation of Israel from heathen influence and custom.

Ezra conveys a wonderful lesson of GOD's faithfulness. True to His promise (Jeremiah 29:10-14), He lifts His hand to restore His people to their land, and in so doing, He uses heathen kings:

- Cyrus,
- Darius,
- Artaxerxes As His instruments.

Author: The fact that the book is written in the first person by Ezra (Ezra 7:1-28 and Ezra 9:1-15) indicates that he was the Author: Ezra was the first of that class known as the scribes, who were the official copyists and interpreters of the Scriptures.

We read that Ezra gave himself to the study of GOD's Word with a view to expounding it to the people (Ezra 7:10). To him has been attributed the work of settling the canon of the Old Testament; i.e., of gathering together into one book those writings that were inspired.

Scope: From the return from Babylon to the establishment in Palestine, covering a period of 79 years from about 536-457 B. C.

CONTENTS I. The Return under Zerubbabel (Ezra 1:1-11, Ezra 2:1-70, Ezra 3:1-13, Ezra 4:1-24, Ezra 5:1-17, Ezra 6:1-22).

II. The Return under Ezra (Ezra 7:1-28, Ezra 8:1-36, Ezra 9:1-15, Ezra 10:1-44).

I. The Return under Zerubbabel 1. Cyrus' decree (Ezra 1:1-11).

2. The returning remnant (Ezra 2:1-70).

3. The foundation of the temple laid and ancient worship restored (Ezra 3:1-13).

4. The opposition of the Samaritans (Ezra 4:1-24, Ezra 5:1-17).

5. The dedication of the temple (Ezra 6:1-22).

Cyrus was the Persian king who overthrew the Babylonian empire, in fulfillment of divine prophecy (Isaiah 14:22; Jeremiah 27:7; Daniel 5:28). His decree permitting the Jews' return had been foretold by Isaiah, who called Cyrus by name 200 years before the birth of the latter, referring to him as the deliverer of GOD's people and the rebuilder of the temple (Isaiah 44:28; Isaiah 45:1-4). Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that Daniel showed Cyrus these prophecies, and the monarch was so affected by them and so well disposed to the captive people that he issued a decree permitting them to return to their country. Whom did GOD use to effect the return of His people (Ezra 1:1)? Whose command did Cyrus say he was obeying (Ezra 1:2)? Where did he find this command (Isaiah 44:28)? Which tribes returned (Ezra 1:5)? Who was their leader (Ezra 1:8)? By what other name is he known (Ezra 2:2 Zerubbabel)?

How many returned at this time (Ezra 2:64)?

What was the first thing the remnant did (Ezra 3:1-3)?

How soon after their return was the building of the temple commenced (Ezra 3:8)?

What effect did this have on the people (Ezra 3:10-13)? Who desired to help in the building of the temple (Ezra 4:2; compare 2 Kings 17:24-41)? Did the Governor accept the help of these half-heathen people?

What did this refusal lead to (Ezra 4:4)?

How long did the enmity thus incurred last (John 4:9)?

What active form did their opposition take at this time?

What was the result of this opposition? Which two prophets encouraged the people to continue the building of the temple (Ezra 5:1)?

What made it sure that the temple would be finished (Ezra 5:5)?

What did the enemies of the Jews then do (Ezra 5:7-17)?

What was the result of this opposition (Ezra 6:1-14)?

How was the dedication of the temple celebrated (Ezra 6:17)?

How many of the tribes were represented at this time (Ezra 6:17)?

II. The Return under Ezra 1. Ezra's commission (Ezra 7:1-28).

2. Ezra's companions in the return (Ezra 8:1-36).

3. Sin confessed (Ezra 9:1-15).

4. Sin forsaken (Ezra 10:1-44). In whose reign did Ezra return to Jerusalem? From whom was Ezra descended (Ezra 7:5)?

How is he described (Ezra 7:6; Ezra 7:12)?

What was his purpose in going to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:10)?

What commission was he given (Ezra 7:25-26)? With what did Ezra begin his return (Ezra 8:21)?

How did he show his absolute faith in GOD (Ezra 8:22)?

What law concerning their relations with heathen people had the Jews broken (Ezra 9:1. Compare Exodus 34:15-16; Deuteronomy 7:3)?

What did the violation of that law always lead to (1 Kings 11:4)?

What effect did this violation of the law have on Ezra?

What were the feelings of the people upon realizing their sin (Ezra 10:1)?

What covenant did they make with GOD? What proclamation did Ezra make (Ezra 10:7)?

How great was the conviction of the people?

Note that the action of the Jews in putting away their heathen wives and children was rather a stringent one, but it should be remembered that in the past, intermarriage with the heathen had led to sin and idolatry, and it was necessary that the tribe of Judah should remain pure for through them was to come the Messiah.

01.15. Nehemiah

Nehemiah

Theme: This book centers around a person - Nehemiah. It is an autobiography of a man who sacrificed a life of ease and luxury in order to help his needy brethren in Jerusalem. It describes a man who combined spirituality with practicality - one who knew how both to pray and work. Absolutely fearless, he refused to compromise with enemies on the outside or with sin on the inside. After rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem and effecting many sweeping reforms among the people, he humbly gave GOD the glory for all that had been accomplished. The main lesson taught by his life is that prayer and perseverance will overcome all obstacles.

Author: Nehemiah.

Scope: From Nehemiah's journey to Jerusalem to the restoration of temple worship, covering a period of about 12 years from 446-434 B. C.

CONTENTS:

I. The Building of the Wall of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:1-11, Nehemiah 2:1-20, Nehemiah 3:1-32, Nehemiah 4:1-23, Nehemiah 5:1-19, Nehemiah 6:1-19).

II. The Revival of Religion and the Re-establishment of Worship (Nehemiah 7:1-73, Nehemiah 8:1-18, Nehemiah 9:1-38, Nehemiah 10:1-39, Nehemiah 11:1-36, Nehemiah 12:1-47, Nehemiah 13:1-3).

III. Correction of Abuses (Nehemiah 13:4-31).

I. The Building of the Wall of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:1-11, Nehemiah 2:1-20, Nehemiah 3:1-32, Nehemiah 4:1-23, Nehemiah 5:1-19, Nehemiah 6:1-19)

1. Nehemiah's prayer and commission (Nehemiah 1:1-11, Nehemiah 2:1-20).

2. The builders of the wall (Nehemiah 3:1-32).

3. The opposition of the Samaritans (Nehemiah 4:1-23).

4. The nobles rebuked for their oppression of the people (Nehemiah 5:1-19).

5. The completion of the work of building (Nehemiah 6:1-19).

What news did Nehemiah receive (Nehemiah 1:2-3)?

What effect did it have on him?

How often did he pray for Israel (Nehemiah 1:6)?

What position did Nehemiah hold?

"The cup-bearer, in ancient Oriental courts was always a person of rank and importance; and, from the confidential nature of his duties, and his frequent access to the royal presence, possessed of great influence. Xenophon, a Greek historian, has particularly remarked the polished and graceful manners in which the cupbearers of the Median and Persian monarchs performed their duty of presenting the wine to their royal master. Having washed the cup in the king's presence, and poured into their left hand a little of the wine which they drank off in his presence, then they handed the cup to him, not grasped, but lightly held with the tips of their thumb and fingers."

What led indirectly to Nehemiah's being sent to Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-2)?

Note that Nehemiah's fear is explained by the fact that it was considered highly unbecoming to appear in the presence of the king with any signs of sorrow or mourning.

What did Nehemiah do before making his request to the king (Nehemiah 2:4)? Who were grieved at his coming to Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:10; Nehemiah 2:19)?

What was the first attempt to discourage Nehemiah (Nehemiah 4:1-3)?

How did he treat this attempt (verses Nehemiah 4:4-6)?

What second attempt was made to discourage him (Nehemiah 4:7-8)? To what did he then resort (verse Nehemiah 4:9)?

What other discouragement came at this time (Nehemiah 4:10; Nehemiah 4:16)?

What precautions did Nehemiah take against a surprise attack (Nehemiah 4:16-23)?

What had the people been compelled to do on account of their poverty (Nehemiah 5:1-3)? Who had been guilty of oppression (verse Nehemiah 5:7)?

What example had Nehemiah set before the nobles (Nehemiah 5:14-19)?

What other attempts were made to hinder Nehemiah's work (Nehemiah 6:1-19)?

What does Nehemiah 6:11 reveal concerning Nehemiah's character?

What fact discouraged his enemies (Nehemiah 6:16)?

How long did it take to build the wall (Nehemiah 6:15)?

II. Revival of Religion and Re-establishment of Worship (Nehemiah 7:1-73, Nehemiah 8:1-18, Nehemiah 9:1-38, Nehemiah 10:1-39, Nehemiah 11:1-36, Nehemiah 12:1-47, Nehemiah 13:1-3)

1. Register of the people (Nehemiah 7:1-73).

2. The reading of the law (Nehemiah 8:1-18).

3. The repentance and reconsecration of the people (Nehemiah 9:1-38, Nehemiah 10:1-39).

4. Resettlement at Jerusalem (Nehemiah 11:1-36).

5. Dedication of the wall and restoration of temple service (Nehemiah 12:1-47, Nehemiah 13:1-3).
Whom did Nehemiah leave in charge of Jerusalem while he returned to the king of Persia

(Nehemiah 7:2)?

What precautions were the people to take against surprise attacks (Nehemiah 7:3)?

Before leaving, Nehemiah took another register of the people based upon the one made by Ezra. This was for the purpose of distributing the land according to the ancestral abode of each family, and for ascertaining with accuracy to whom the duty legally belonged of ministering before the altar and conducting the various services of the temple. Chapter Nehemiah 7:73 tells the result of this registration; namely that all the families were in their own cities. Who later joined Nehemiah (Nehemiah 8:1)? For what purpose?

What was the command of Moses concerning the public reading of the law (Deuteronomy 31:9-13)?

How many of the people gathered to listen to the reading of the law (Nehemiah 8:2)? Who explained its meaning (Nehemiah 8:7-8)? What effect did it have on the people (Nehemiah 8:9)?

What other effect did it produce (Nehemiah 8:12)? How many days did this reading continue (Nehemiah 8:18)?

What followed the reading of the law (Nehemiah 9:1-3)?

What historical events were reviewed in the prayer of the Levites?

What was then done (Nehemiah 9:38)?

How many signed this covenant?

What did they covenant to do (Nehemiah 10:28-39)?

Nehemiah 11:1-36 records the settlement of the people at Jerusalem. Since that city was the metropolis of the land, it was necessary that the seat of government and an adequate population should be there for its defense and for the custody of its buildings. Accordingly every tenth man of Judah and Benjamin was chosen by lot to become a permanent inhabitant of that city.

III. Correction of Abuses (Nehemiah 13:4-31) 1. Violation of temple's sanctity. (Nehemiah 13:4-9).

2. Violation of law concerning Levites (Nehemiah 13:10-14).

3. Violation of the sabbath rest (Nehemiah 13:15-22).

4. The violation of the law of separation (Nehemiah 13:23-31).

After his first reforms, Nehemiah returned to the court of the king of Persia (Nehemiah 13:6). On his return, he found that the priesthood and people had lapsed into their old sins. The high priest was entertaining a heathen governor within the sacred precincts of the temple; the support of the priesthood had been neglected; the spirit of commercialism was threatening the sanctity of the Sabbath day; and many of the people had contracted unlawful unions with the heathen. With his characteristic zeal and energy, Nehemiah quickly corrected their abuses.

01.16. Esther

Esther

Theme: The book of Esther has a peculiarity that distinguishes it from any other book in the Bible: namely, the name of GOD is not once mentioned, neither are there any references to Jewish law or religion. But if GOD's name is not mentioned, there are abundant evidences of His working and of His care for His people. The book records GOD's deliverance of His people from a threatened destruction. As truly as He saved His people from Pharaoh's power, He delivered Israel from the hands of the wicked Haman. In the former case, the deliverance was effected by a manifestation of His power and a revelation of Himself; but in the latter case, He remained unseen to His people and enemies, effecting salvation through human channels, and by natural means. The very absence of the name of GOD is its chief beauty and should not be considered as a blot upon it. Matthew Henry says, "If the name of GOD is not here, His finger is." This book is, as Dr. Pierson called it, "The Romance of Providence."

"By Providence we mean that in all the affairs and events of human life, individual and national, GOD has a part and share. But that control is a secret and hidden one. Hence in this wonderful story which teaches the reality of the Divine providence, the name of GOD does not appear, only as the eye of faith sees the Divine factor in human history; but to the attentive observer all history is a Burning Bush aflame with the mysterious presence. Jewish tradition gives Deuteronomy 31:18 as another reason why GOD's name is not mentioned. Because of their sin. GOD had hidden His face from Israel. Yet, though hiding His face, He was not forgetful or unconcerned about His people, though He did it under a veil." - Lee. The message of the book may be summed up as follows: The Reality of Divine Providence.

Author: Unknown. Possibly Mordecai (See Esther 9:20). Some believe Ezra wrote it.

Scope: Between Ezra 6:1-22 and Ezra 7:1-28, before Ezra left for Jerusalem.

CONTENTS

Following the suggestion of Robert Lee of the Mildmay Bible School, we center the contents of the book around the three feasts mentioned therein.

- I. The Feast of Ahasuerus (Esther 1:1-22, Esther 2:1-23).
 - II. The Feast of Esther (Esther 3:1-15, Esther 4:1-17, Esther 5:1-14, Esther 6:1-14, Esther 7:1-10).
 - III. The Feast of Purim (Esther 8:1-17, Esther 9:1-32, Esther 10:1-3).
1. The Feast of Ahasuerus 1. Vashti's disobedience (Esther 1:1-22).
 2. Esther's coronation (Esther 2:1-20).
 3. Mordecai saves the king's life (Esther 2:21-23).

"The refusal of Vashti to obey an order that required her to make an indecent exposure of herself before a company of drunken revelers, was becoming with the modesty of her sex and her rank as queen, for according to Persian customs, the queen, even more than the wives of other men, was excluded from the public gaze; and had not the king's blood been heated with wine, or his reason overpowered by the force of offended pride, he would have perceived that his own honor, as well as hers, was consulted by her dignified conduct. The wise men whom the king consulted were probably the magi, without whose advice as to the proper time of doing a thing the Persian kings never did take any step whatever; and the persons named were the 'seven counselors' who formed the state ministry. The combined wisdom of all, it seems, was enlisted to consult with the king what course should be taken after so unprecedented an occurrence as Vashti's disobedience for the royal summons. It is scarcely possible for us to imagine the astonishment produced by such a refusal in a country where the will of the sovereign was absolute. The assembled grandees were petrified with horror at the daring affront; alarm for the consequences that might ensue to each of them in his own household next seized on their minds, and the sounds of bacchanalian revelry were hushed into deep and anxious consultation as to what punishment to inflict on the refractory queen."

- Jamieson, Fausset and Brown.

Notice what is said in verse Esther 1:19 concerning the laws of the Medes and Persians. The Persians seem to have affected such a degree of wisdom in the construction of their laws, that they never could be amended or repealed; and this formed the ground of the saying "The laws of the Medes and Persians that change not."

Ahasuerus was probably sorry for his treatment of Vashti (Esther 2:1), but according to the law which made the word of a Persian king irrevocable, she could not be recalled by law.

Chapter Esther 2:3-4 refers to a harsh custom of the East. When the order came forth from the royal court for a girl to present herself before the king, however unwilling the parents were, they dared not refuse. Thus Esther was compelled to enter the court of Ahasuerus. It should be noted that, in the East, where polygamy prevailed, it was considered no disgrace for a girl to belong to the "Harem" of a ruler. Everyone there was considered a wife of the king.

Notice that Mordecai had instructed Esther to conceal her nationality (Esther 2:10). If Esther had made this known, it would have interfered with her advancement to the rank of queen, as the Jews were generally despised. In this injunction of Mordecai to Esther, we see an indication of Divine leading, for was it not by her being queen that Esther was able to save her people?

Esther 2:21 mentions another link in the chain of GOD's providence. Mordecai protects the life of the king against plotters, and this is recorded in the chronicles of the kingdom. This incident played an important part in the deliverance of the Jews, as we shall see later.

II. The Feast of Esther 1. Haman's plot (Esther 3:1-15).

2. The Jews' mourning (Esther 4:1-17).

3. Esther's petition (Esther 5:1-14).

4. Mordecai's exaltation (Esther 6:1-14).

5. Haman's death (Esther 7:1-10). The quotations given in the following section are taken from Jamieson, Fausset and Brown's commentary.

"The obsequious homage of prostration, not entirely foreign to the manners of the East, had not been claimed by former viziers; but Haman required that all subordinate officers of the court should bow before him with their faces to the earth. But to Mordecai it seemed that such an attitude of profound reverence was due only to GOD."

"Haman, being an Amalekite, one of a doomed and accursed race, was doubtless another element in the refusal; and on hearing that the offender was a Jew, whose non-conformity was grounded on religious scruples, the magnitude of the affront appeared so much the greater, as the example of Mordecai would be imitated by his countrymen. Had the homage been a simple token of civil respect, Mordecai would not have refused it; but the Persian kings demanded a sort of adoration which even the Greeks reckoned it degradation to express, and which, to Mordecai would have been a violation of the second commandment."

Haman was so incensed at Mordecai's refusal to worship him that he resolved to destroy the whole Jewish race, and in order to appoint a day for the execution of his purpose, he cast; i.e., he cast lots.

"In resorting to this method of ascertaining the most auspicious day for putting his atrocious scheme into execution, Haman acted as the kings and nobles of Persia have always done, never engaging in any enterprise without consulting the astrologers and being satisfied as to the lucky hour. Vowing revenge, but scorning to lay hands on a single victim, he meditated the extirpation of the whole Jewish race, who, he knew, were sworn enemies of his countrymen, and by artfully representing them as a people who were aliens in manners and customs and habits, and enemies to the rest of his subjects, procured the king's sanction of the intended massacre. One motive used in urging his point was addressed to the king's love of money. Fearing lest his master should object that the extermination of a numerous body of his subjects would seriously depress the public revenue, Haman promised to make up the loss" (Esther 3:9).

Though, as we said in our introduction, there were no direct references to Jewish religion, the fact of Esther's and Mordecai's fasting implies prayer to GOD. Notice also that though the name of GOD is not mentioned, chapter Esther 4:1 ff. clearly teaches faith in GOD's care and protection. Mordecai seems to have a full assurance that GOD will deliver His people and that in GOD's providence, Esther had come to the throne for the purpose of delivering her people. Did natural circumstances seem to promise Esther a hearing from the king (Esther 4:11)?

What did Esther expect (Esther 4:16)?

How was GOD's influence manifested in her behalf (Esther 5:3)? Did she immediately plead for her people's deliverance?

What was to happen before she did this (Esther 6:1; Esther 6:10)?

What scripture does Esther 7:10 illustrate (Proverbs 26:27; Psalms 9:15)?

III. The Feast of Purim 1. The king's decree allowing the Jews to protect themselves (Esther 8:1-17).

2. The vengeance of the Jews (Esther 9:1-19).
3. The institution of the feast of Purim (Esther 9:20-32).
4. Mordecai's greatness (Esther 10:1-3).

Since the laws of the Medes and Persians were irrevocable (Esther 1:19; Daniel 6:8), the king's command to destroy the Jews could not be reversed. But in order to counteract this order, the king gave permission to the Jews to defend themselves. With the support of the king and government, and of a Jewish prime minister, victory was assured. But behind all these natural means, it was the unseen GOD who was protecting His own.

What were the feelings of the Jews on hearing of the king's decree (Esther 8:16-17)?

What effect did it produce on the heathen (Esther 8:17)?

How many of their enemies did the Jews slay (Esther 9:16)?

How did the Jews celebrate their victory?

"They called these days Purim, after the name of Pur" (Esther 9:26). "Pur", in the Persian language, signifies lot; and the feast of Purim, or lots, has reference to the time having been pitched upon by Haman through the decision of the lot (Esther 3:7). In consequence of the signal national deliverance which divine providence gave them from the infamous machinations of Haman, Mordecai ordered the Jews to commemorate the event by an anniversary festival which was to last two days in accordance with the two days' war of defense they had to maintain.

There was a slight difference in the time of this festival; for the Jews in the provinces, having defended themselves against their enemies on the thirteenth, devoted the fourteenth to festivity; whereas their brethren in Shushan, having extended the work over two days, did not observe their thanksgiving feast till the fifteenth. But this was remedied as the authority which fixed the fourteenth and fifteenth of the month of Adar.

It became a season of sunny memories to the universal body of Jews; and by the letters of Mordecai, scattered through all parts of the Persian empire, it was established as an annual feast, the celebration of which is still kept up. On both days of the feast, the modern Jews read the book of Esther in their synagogues. The copy must not be printed, but written on vellum in the form of a roll; and the names of the ten sons of Haman are written on it in a peculiar manner, being ranged, they say, like so many bodies on a gibbet. The reader must pronounce all the names in one breath. Whenever Haman's name is pronounced, they make a terrible noise in the synagogues. Some drum with their feet on the floor and the boys have mallets with which they knock and make a noise. They prepare themselves for their carnival by a previous fast, which should continue three days, in imitation of Esther's but they have mostly reduced it to one day.

Lessons from the Book of Esther.

1. Though sometimes the good may suffer and the evil prosper, GOD will eventually reverse the order. Haman, a cruel tyrant planned the destruction of Mordecai and his nation. In the end, Haman was degraded and Mordecai exalted.

2. GOD's care for His people may not always be an apparent fact, but nevertheless, it is being exercised. The name of GOD is not mentioned in this book, but evidences of His care and protection abound. One writer illustrates this truth by the figure of a stage manager, who, though hidden behind the scenes, plays an important part in the staging of a play.

"Careless seems the great Avenger;

History's pages but record One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the word;

Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne Yet that scaffold sways the future and,
behind the dim unknown, Standeth GOD within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

-- Lowell

3. GOD foresees and provides for every emergency; with Him, nothing happens by chance. GOD foresaw from the beginning the intended destruction of His people, and He provided for that emergency. A poor Jewish girl becomes queen and is thus able to save her people. GOD foresaw that Haman would attempt to destroy Mordecai; accordingly He so arranges events that a spell of sleeplessness on the part of the king leads to Mordecai's exaltation. GOD foresaw that since the decrees of the Medes and Persians were unchangeable, the Jews would have to fight for their lives; so He puts fear upon the people and gives the Jews favor in the sight of the governors.

4. GOD's providence takes in details. The accident of the king's sleeplessness, his fancy to have the records read, the reader's stumbling accidentally on the account of Mordecai's act in saving the king's life, the king's happening to receive Esther when she came unbidden - all these seemingly accidental and insignificant events were used by GOD to deliver His people.

01.17. Job

Job

Theme: The book of Job deals with one of the greatest of mysteries - that of suffering. The question that rings out all through the book is, Why do the righteous suffer?

Job, a man described as being perfect, is stripped of wealth, children and health. He bears these afflictions with fortitude. He does not understand the cause of these calamities, but resigns himself to the thought that GOD sends evil upon men, just as He sends good, and that being GOD, He has a right to do as He pleases with His own creatures. Therefore men must accept evil uncomplainingly just as they accept good at GOD's hands.

Job's friends argued that, since suffering was the result of sin, and that Job was the most afflicted of all men, therefore Job must be the most wicked of men. Job indignantly denies the charge that he has sinned and carries this denial to the point of self-righteousness. At the conclusion of the discussion between Job and his friends, Elihu speaks up, condemning the former for his self-righteousness and the latter for their harsh condemnation of Job. He then proceeds to explain that GOD had a purpose in sending suffering to men; that He chastens man for the purpose of bringing him nearer to Himself.

GOD used the afflictions as a trial of Job's character, and as a means of revealing to him a sin of which he had been hitherto unconscious - self-righteousness.

Author: The author of Job is not known. It is believed that Elihu may have written it (Job 32:18-20).

CONTENTS:

I. Satan's Attack on Job (Job 1:1-22, Job 2:1-10).

II. Job and His friends (Job 2:11-13, Job 3:1-26, Job 4:1-21, Job 5:1-27, Job 6:1-30, Job 7:1-21, Job 8:1-22, Job 9:1-35, Job 10:1-22, Job 11:1-20, Job 12:1-25, Job 13:1-28, Job 14:1-22, Job 15:1-35, Job 16:1-22, Job 17:1-16, Job 18:1-21, Job 19:1-29, Job 20:1-29, Job 21:1-34, Job 22:1-30, Job 23:1-17, Job 24:1-25, Job 25:1-6, Job 26:1-14, Job 27:1-23, Job 28:1-28, Job 29:1-25, Job 30:1-31, Job 31:1-40).

III. Elihu's Message (Job 32:1-22, Job 33:1-33, Job 34:1-37, Job 35:1-16, Job 36:1-33, Job 37:1-24).

IV. The Lord's Answer to Job (Job 38:1-41, Job 39:1-30, Job 40:1-24, Job 41:1-34, Job 42:1-6).

V. Conclusion (Job 42:7-17).

I. Satan's. Attack on Job (Job 1:1-22, Job 2:1-10) Where else is Job mentioned in the Scriptures (Ezekiel 14:14; James 5:11)? What is said concerning his character? His prosperity? His piety? The "sons of God" mentioned in Job 1:6 are evidently the angels who appeared before GOD on

certain occasions, probably to give a report of their ministry on the earth (Hebrews 1:14). As a Judas among the apostles, Satan appears with the angels.

Why he had access to GOD's presence is a mystery, but Revelation 12:10 teaches clearly that he has admittance to heaven, and that there he acts as "accuser of the brethren." (See also Luke 22:31).

Notice in Job 1:7 what Satan says concerning his activity in relation to the world (compare 1 Peter 5:8).

GOD holds up Job as a perfect God-fearing man, one who has escaped the corruption of the world. Satan admits the fact but impugns Job's motive. His contention is that Job is serving GOD for the sake of policy, because it brings him prosperity. In assailing Job, Satan attacks also GOD, for his words carry the insinuation that GOD is not able to win the unselfish love of man. GOD desiring to vindicate His own character and that of His servant, has no alternative but to subject Job to a trial. It is comforting to note that Satan's affliction of the children of GOD is only by Divine permission. From chs. Job 1:21 and Job 2:10 we see that Job justified GOD's confidence in him.

II. Job and His Friends. (Job 2:11-13, Job 3:1-26, Job 4:1-21, Job 5:1-27, Job 6:1-30, Job 7:1-21, Job 8:1-22, Job 9:1-35, Job 10:1-22, Job 11:1-20, Job 12:1-25, Job 13:1-28, Job 14:1-22, Job 15:1-35, Job 16:1-22, Job 17:1-16, Job 18:1-21, Job 19:1-29, Job 20:1-29, Job 21:1-34, Job 22:1-30, Job 23:1-17, Job 24:1-25, Job 25:1-6, Job 26:1-14, Job 27:1-23, Job 28:1-28, Job 29:1-25, Job 30:1-31, Job 31:1-40)

We have seen the cause of Job's afflictions from the Divine viewpoint. We shall now listen to the opinions of his friends concerning the cause of his troubles. It should be remembered that their utterances in themselves are not inspired, for the Lord Himself charged them with error (Job 42:8). It is the record of those utterances that are inspired.

Though these men said many things that were true, they did not tell the whole truth.

Learn the following points summing up the discourses of Job's friends:

1. They contend that suffering is the result of sin. Therefore if a person is afflicted, it must be taken for granted that he has transgressed.
2. The measure of affliction indicates the degree of sin. They argue that, since Job is the most afflicted of men, he must be the greatest of sinners.
3. They tell Job that if he will repent of his sins GOD will restore his happiness. They warn him that his trying to justify himself will only delay his restoration.
4. They admit that sometimes the wicked prosper, but they claim that this prosperity is only transient, for it will soon pass away and retribution overtake them.

We may sum up Job's answers to his friends as follows:

1. Job maintains that it is possible for a righteous man to be afflicted. He considers it cruelty on the part of his friends to accuse him of sin because of his afflictions. He himself does not understand GOD's purpose in afflicting him. He takes it for granted that GOD, in distributing good and evil,

neither regards merit nor guilt, but acts according to His sovereign pleasure. He believes that there are times when a sufferer has a right to justify himself and repine at GOD's decree.

2. Later Job retracts some of his extravagant assertions, and admits that GOD generally afflicts the wicked and blesses the righteous. Still he insists there are exceptions to the rule as, for example when a pious man is afflicted. Because of these exceptions, it is unjust to conclude a man is sinful because of afflictions.

3. He believes that it is our duty to adore GOD even though suffering calamities not deserved; but we should abstain from harshly judging of those who, when distressed, send forth complaints against GOD.

III. Elihu's Message (Job 32:1-22, Job 33:1-33, Job 34:1-37, Job 35:1-16, Job 36:1-33, Job 37:1-24) Elihu's discourse may be summed up as follows:

1. He tells Job that he was wrong in boasting of his integrity (Job 33:8-13), and making it appear that rewards were due to him from GOD. GOD is no man's debtor (Job 35:7). However righteous Job may be, he has no claim on GOD, for all men are sinners in GOD's eyes.

2. He admits that calamities are punishments for sins committed, but at the same time they are corrective. They might be inflicted on the comparatively most righteous in preference to others.

If the object of affliction was attained and the distressed acknowledged his fault, GOD would bless him with greater happiness than he had before (Job 33:14-33).

He then sets forth the majesty and perfection of GOD in creation, and reproves Job for trying to reason with Him instead of humbling himself and confessing that he was at fault (Job 36:1-33, Job 37:1-24).

IV. The Lord's Answer to Job (Job 38:1-41, Job 39:1-30, Job 40:1-24, Job 41:1-34, Job 42:1-6)

"GOD deals with Job only in taking up the discussion. He does not Himself argue with Job, but He gives him the most effective revelations, by which He challenges Job on his own mistaken grounds. He first challenges Job on the mistake of calling the Almighty into question. In judging GOD, Job was assuming a power of measurement commensurate with the person and ways he was measuring namely, the Eternal, the Creator of all things. In Job 38:1-41, Job 39:1-30, he challenges Job's ability to judge from the standpoint of one acquainted directly and personally with all things in their origins. This silences Job, a man of so brief a span of existence and of original knowledge. GOD then reveals to Job His amazing skill in fashioning and benevolently governing the most frightful monsters of the ancient world, behemoth and leviathan, the hippopotamus and the crocodile of the Nile, evidently as an illustration of His skill. So creating, so to speak, and benevolently governing the most frightful troubles that an all-wise and loving Father may permit the "roaring lion" to inflict. This brings Job out of silence into self-abasing adoration of GOD. He confesses that what he had learned theoretically before the certainty of Divine wisdom and goodness is now a blessed reality to him, so satisfying and rejoicing his heart that all thought of arguing one's desert under any dispensation of GOD is forever precluded." - Stevens.

V. Conclusion (Job 42:7-17) The last verses of Job illustrate James 5:11, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender

mercy" (i.e., you have seen in the issue of GOD's dealings with Job, the exercise of His compassion and tenderness).

01.18. Psalms

Psalms

Theme: The book of Psalms is a collection of inspired Hebrew poetry, setting forth the worship and describing the spiritual experiences of the Jewish people.

It is the most personal portion of the Old Testament, giving us a revelation of the heart of the Jewish saint, and running over the whole scale of his experiences with GOD and man. In the historical books we see GOD speaking about man, describing his failures and successes; in the prophetic books we see GOD speaking to man, warning the wicked and comforting the righteous in the light of the future. But in Psalms we see man speaking to GOD, pouring forth his heart in prayer and praise; and speaking about GOD, describing and exalting Him for the manifestation of His glorious attributes. As the Old Testament saint thus speaks to his GOD, whatever be his experience, whether of prosperity or adversity, blessing or chastisement, highest ecstasy or deepest despondency, there predominates one note all through his worship - that of praise.

He is able to praise GOD in all circumstances, for His faithfulness in the past is a guarantee of His faithfulness in the future. Also it is this comparison of the past and the future that has been the occasion for the introducing of the prophetic element into the Psalms. For as the scribe or prophet saw the failure of Israel's earthly kingdom and king, he broke forth into inspired utterance concerning the coming of GOD's glorious kingdom, and of His glorious King - the Messiah.

We may thus sum up the theme of the Psalms: GOD is to be praised in every circumstance of life; and this because of His faithfulness in the past, which is a guarantee of His faithfulness in the future.

Authors: Many of the Psalms are anonymous and the authorship of some are doubtful. The following are the generally recognized authors:

David. He is considered the author of the 71 psalms that bear his name. {eS module note: 73 psalms have David's name in the title as author, and two more "anonymous" psalms are credited to David in the New Testament.}

Asaph, the conductor of the choral service of the temple in the time of David, and also a seer (1 Chronicles 6:39; 2 Chronicles 29:30).

Solomon, king of Israel.

Moses, Israel's leader and lawgiver.

Ethan, a singer (1 Chronicles 15:19).

Heman, a singer and the king's seer (1 Chronicles 6:33; 1 Chronicles 15:19; 1 Chronicles 25:5-6).

Ezra. A scribe, who taught the law to the Jews after the captivity.

Hezekiah, king of Judah. The sons of Korah, leaders in Israel's worship.

Jeduthun, a director of music in the tabernacle (1 Chronicles 16:41-42).

CONTENTS: In the Hebrew Bible the Psalms are divided into five books, as follows:

Book I. begins with Psalm 1. [Genesis portion] Book II. begins with Psalm 42. [Exodus portion] Book III. begins with Psalm 73. [Leviticus portion] Book IV. begins with Psalm 90. [Numbers portion] Book V. begins with Psalm 107. [Deuteronomy portion] The following classification of the Psalms has been suggested. (Read the Psalms mentioned in this classification. Remember the six main points of the classification.)

1. Psalms of instruction: On the character of good and bad men, their happiness and misery (Psalms 1:1-6); on the excellency of the divine law (Psalms 19:1-14, Psalms 119:1-176; on the vanity of human life (Psalms 90:1-17); duty of rulers (Psalms 82:1-8); humility (Psalms 131:1-3).

2. Psalms of praise and adoration: Acknowledgment of GOD's goodness and care (Psalms 23:1-6, Psalms 103:1-22); acknowledgment of His power and glory (Psalms 8:1-9, Psalms 24:1-10, Psalms 136:1-26, Psalms 148:1-14).

3. Psalms of thanksgiving: For mercies to individuals, (Psalms 18:1-50, Psalms 34:1-22); for mercies to the Israelites generally (Psalms 81:1-16, Psalms 85:1-13).

4. Devotional psalms: the seven penitential psalms (Psalms 6:1-10, Psalms 32:1-11, Psalms 38:1-22, Psalms 51:1-19, Psalms 102:1-28, Psalms 130:1-8, Psalms 143:1-12); expressive of trust under affliction (Psalms 3:1-8, Psalms 27:1-14); expression of extreme dejection, though not without hope (Psalms 13:1-6, Psalms 77:1-20):

- prayers in time of severe distress (Psalms 4:1-8, Psalms 28:1-9, Psalms 120:1-7);

- prayers when deprived of public worship (Psalms 42:1-11);

- prayers in time of affliction and persecution (Psalms 44:1-26);

- prayers of intercession (Psalms 20:1-9, Psalms 67:1-7).

5. Messianic Psalms 2:2; Psalms 16:11; Psalms 22:22; Psalms 40:6-8; Psalms 45:1-17, Psalms 72:1-20, Psalms 110:1-7, Psalms 118:1-29.

6. Historical Psalms 78:1-72, Psalms 105:1-45, Psalms 106:1-48.

01.19. Proverbs

Proverbs

Theme: The book of Proverbs is a collection of short, pithy statements setting forth moral lessons. The purpose of the book is declared from the very beginning; namely, the impartation of wisdom to young men (Proverbs 1:1-7).

It is the practical book of the Old Testament, applying the principles of righteousness, purity and Godliness to everyday life. The wisdom it teaches is not merely fleshly wisdom and prudence, but a wisdom based on the fear of the Lord (Proverbs 1:7). We may thus sum up its theme: Practical wisdom resting upon and rising out of religious character. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Author: Solomon himself wrote most of the proverbs (1 Kings 4:32; Ecclesiastes 1:13; Ecclesiastes 12:9). From the reference in places to the "words of the wise," it is believed that besides his own proverbs, Solomon collected some of those current in his time and incorporated them with his own. The proverbs in the last two chapters were written by Agur and Lemuel, about whom the Bible tells us nothing.

CONTENTS: The following analysis has been given:

I. A connected discourse on the value and attainment of true wisdom (Proverbs 1:1-33, Proverbs 2:1-22, Proverbs 3:1-35, Proverbs 4:1-27, Proverbs 5:1-23, Proverbs 6:1-35, Proverbs 7:1-27, Proverbs 8:1-36, Proverbs 9:1-18).

II. Proverbs, headed "The Proverbs of Solomon" (Proverbs 10:1-32, Proverbs 11:1-31, Proverbs 12:1-28, Proverbs 13:1-25, Proverbs 14:1-35, Proverbs 15:1-33, Proverbs 16:1-33, Proverbs 17:1-28, Proverbs 18:1-24, Proverbs 19:1-29, Proverbs 20:1-30, Proverbs 21:1-31, Proverbs 22:1-16).

III. Renewed admonitions on the study of wisdom, headed "the words of the wise" (Proverbs 22:17-34, Proverbs 23:1-35, Proverbs 24:1-34).

IV. Proverbs of Solomon collected by the men of Hezekiah (Proverbs 25:1-28, Proverbs 26:1-28, Proverbs 27:1-27, Proverbs 28:1-28, Proverbs 29:1-27).

V. The wise instructions of Agur to his pupils, Ithiel and Ucal, and lessons taught to King Lemuel by his mother (Proverbs 30:1-33, Proverbs 31:1-31)

01.20. Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes

Title: The word "Ecclesiastes" means "the preacher." It may have been so called from the fact that Solomon, after his sad experience of backsliding taught publicly his experiences and the lessons learned therefrom.

Theme: In the book of Proverbs we learned about that wisdom which has its source in GOD. Now, in Ecclesiastes we shall read about that merely natural wisdom, which, apart from GOD, attempts to seek truth and happiness. Both books were written by Solomon; the first, during the early part of his reign, when he walked with GOD; the second, during the latter part of his reign when sin had separated him and his Maker. In Proverbs there is heard from his lips a note of joy and contentment as he meditates upon the blessings of divine wisdom; in Ecclesiastes we hear a note of sadness, despair and perplexity as he sees the failure of natural wisdom to solve human problems and secure perfect happiness.

After his departure from GOD (1 Kings 11:1-8), Solomon still retained riches and wisdom. Possessed of these he began his quest for truth and happiness apart from GOD. The result of this quest is expressed in the ever-recurring phrase "all is vanity" (vanity here means "emptiness, worthlessness").

Solomon learned the following truth which sums up the theme of the book: Without GOD's blessing, wisdom, position, and riches do not satisfy, but rather bring weariness and disappointment.

Author: Solomon (See Ecclesiastes 1:1; Ecclesiastes 1:16; Ecclesiastes 12:9).

CONTENTS:

- I. The Vanity of Human Pleasure and Wisdom (Ecclesiastes 1:11-12, Ecclesiastes 2:1-26).
- II. Earthly Happiness, Its Hindrances, and Means of Advancement (Ecclesiastes 3:1-22, Ecclesiastes 4:1-16, Ecclesiastes 5:1-20).
- III. True Practical Wisdom (Ecclesiastes 6:1-12, Ecclesiastes 7:1-29, Ecclesiastes 8:1-15).
- IV. The Relation of True Wisdom to the Life of Man (Ecclesiastes 8:16-17, Ecclesiastes 9:1-18, Ecclesiastes 10:1-20).
- V. The Conclusion (Ecclesiastes 11:1-10, Ecclesiastes 12:1-14). In reading Ecclesiastes, the student will find together with much sound teaching, much that is at variance with other teaching of the Bible (Read Ecclesiastes 1:15; Ecclesiastes 2:24; Ecclesiastes 3:3-4; Ecclesiastes 3:8; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Ecclesiastes 3:19-20; Ecclesiastes 7:16-17; Ecclesiastes 8:15).

He should remember that the book is the inspired record of the uninspired utterances of a natural man, reasoning about human experience and divine providence. In the same way the Bible contains many utterances of wicked men; the utterances are uninspired, but the record is inspired.

I. The Vanity of Human Pleasure and Wisdom (Ecclesiastes 1:11-12, Ecclesiastes 2:1-26) In Ecclesiastes 1:1-3, Solomon states the theme of his discourse: the vanity of all human effort and endeavor. All effort is vain, for the mind that would try to search out the secrets of life is not satisfied.

Men come and go without discovering the solution of life's problems, but the world still continues to exist with its unsolved mysteries (Ecclesiastes 1:4-18). Thus man's theoretical wisdom fails. Solomon now applies his practical wisdom to the problem of finding happiness (Ecclesiastes 2:1-26). He tries mirth (Ecclesiastes 2:1-2), wine (Ecclesiastes 2:3), building (Ecclesiastes 2:4), wealth and music (Ecclesiastes 2:5-8). The result of his quest is stated in verse Ecclesiastes 2:11 - disappointment. He is filled with despair and weariness as he sees that with all his wisdom, he is not more advanced than a fool in his attempt to solve the problems of life (Ecclesiastes 2:12-19). As he considers that the riches which he has labored so hard to accumulate and which have not satisfied him he will have to leave to one who has not worked for them, he is overwhelmed with the sense of the emptiness and worthlessness of effort (Ecclesiastes 2:20-23).

He comes to the conclusion that the best thing possible for the natural man. is to get the greatest pleasure out of this life, at the same time doing his best to live a moral life (Ecclesiastes 2:24-25).

II. Earthly Happiness, Its Hindrances and Means of Advancement (Ecclesiastes 3:1-22, Ecclesiastes 4:1-16, Ecclesiastes 5:1-20)

Solomon reasons that in order to attain to happiness, one must rejoice in its blessings and make a righteous use of them (Ecclesiastes 3:1-22). At the best human happiness is limited, for all human action and effort is restricted by and depends on an unchangeable higher law. In other words, whatever comes, whether good or evil, must come, for everything has its time.

Man cannot change this order so he must submit to it and derive all the happiness he can from life (Ecclesiastes 3:1-15). Human happiness is restricted because of the natural man's ignorance of the things of the future life. So uncertain to him is the hope of a future life that he wonders whether he is any better than the animals in this respect (Ecclesiastes 3:16-21). Because of this uncertainty of a life beyond, there is nothing better for him to do than enjoy the life that now is (Ecclesiastes 3:22).

He then names the hindrances to happiness (Ecclesiastes 4:1-16), mentioning:

- the personal misfortune of many men (Ecclesiastes 4:1-6), - the evils of social life (Ecclesiastes 4:7-12), and - the evils of civil life (Ecclesiastes 4:13-16).

He suggests that happiness is to be attained by devotion to the worship of GOD (Ecclesiastes 5:1-7), by refraining from injustice, avarice and violence (Ecclesiastes 5:8-17), and by a temperate enjoyment of the pleasures and treasures of life granted by GOD (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20).

III. True Practical Wisdom (Ecclesiastes 6:1-12, Ecclesiastes 7:1-29, Ecclesiastes 8:1-15)

True wisdom does not consist in striving after earthly sources of happiness (Ecclesiastes 6:1-12), for even those who possess wealth do not attain to a true lasting enjoyment of them (Ecclesiastes 6:1-6), and never escape from the feeling of their emptiness and of the uncertainty of the future (Ecclesiastes 6:7-12).

True wisdom consists:

- in a contempt of the world and foolish lusts (Ecclesiastes 7:1-7), - in a patient calm and resigned spirit (Ecclesiastes 7:8-14), and - in an earnest fear of GOD and a sincere acknowledgment of sin (Ecclesiastes 7:15-22). This wisdom must be preserved in spite of the lusts of the world (Ecclesiastes 7:23-29), in spite of the temptations to disloyalty and rebellion (Ecclesiastes 8:1-8), and in spite of oppressions and injustice (Ecclesiastes 8:9-15).

IV. The Relation of True Wisdom to the Life of Man (Ecclesiastes 8:16-17, Ecclesiastes 9:1-18, Ecclesiastes 10:1-20)

GOD's dealings with man are sometimes mysterious (Ecclesiastes 8:16-17, Ecclesiastes 9:1-6), but that should not discourage the wise man from taking an active part in life; rather he should enjoy this life and use it profitably (Ecclesiastes 9:7-10). Though the result of human labor is sometimes uncertain, man should not be discouraged in his search for wisdom (Ecclesiastes 9:11-16). In the presence of the insolence, pride and violence of fortunate fools, the wise man should keep his peace of mind by silence and modesty (Ecclesiastes 9:17-18, Ecclesiastes 10:1-20).

V. The Conclusion (Ecclesiastes 11:1-10, Ecclesiastes 12:1-7) After his reasonings, some of them true, some partially true, and some false, Solomon comes to his conclusions.

These represent the very best that the natural man can do, apart from revelation, to attain to happiness and favor with GOD. They are as follows:

1. Faithfulness in benevolence and in one's calling (Ecclesiastes 11:1-6).
2. A calm and contented enjoyment of this life (Ecclesiastes 11:7-10).
3. The fear of GOD for young and old in view of a coming judgment (Ecclesiastes 12:1-7).
4. The fear of GOD and the keeping of His commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

01.21. Song of Solomon

Song of Solomon

Title: The name of this book in the Hebrew Bible is "Song of Songs," so called evidently from the fact that of all Solomon's songs (1 Kings 4:32) it is the greatest.

Theme: The Song of Solomon is a love story, glorifying pure, natural affection, and pointing to the simplicity and sanctity of marriage. That this story has a typical significance may be inferred from the fact that, under the figure of the marriage relation are described the Lord's love for Israel (Hosea 1:1-11, Hosea 2:1-23, Hosea 3:1-5; Isaiah 62:4), and CHRIST's love for the church (Matthew 9:15; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25; Revelation 19:7; Revelation 21:2). So then the following theme suggests itself: The love of the Lord for His people as typified by the love of the bride and bridegroom.

Note. In reading this book the student should remember that he is reading an oriental poem, and that Orientals are given to a plainness of speech in the most intimate of matters - plainness of speech foreign and sometimes distasteful to most Occidentals. Delicate and intimate as the language is in many places, it should be noted that there is nothing here that would offend the most modest Oriental. Dr. Campbell Morgan says, "In the first place this was undoubtedly an earthly love-song, but it was very pure and very beautiful. There are men and women who would find indecencies in heaven, - if they ever got there, - but they would take them in their own corrupt souls. To those who live lives of simple purity, these songs are full of beauty as they utter the language of human love; and finally, in spiritual experience, they express the relation of such as have been wooed by GOD in CHRIST, and thus have come to love and know Him."

Author: Solomon. (Song of Solomon 1:1).

CONTENTS: Of all the books of the Old Testament, the Song of Solomon is perhaps the most difficult of interpretation and analysis. In this study we shall limit ourselves to giving a brief outline of the story contained in the song, and of the dialogues between Solomon and his bride. For a devotional study of the Song of Solomon, we would recommend a small inexpensive book by Hudson Taylor, "Union and Communion." [eSword module note: this title is available as a free e-Sword module....]

"The story about which this idyll is woven seems to be this: King Solomon visits his vineyard in Mount Lebanon. He comes by surprise upon a beautiful Shulamite maiden. She flees, and he visits her, disguised as a shepherd, and wins her. Soon he comes to claim her as queen. They proceed to the royal palace. Here the poem begins and relates the story of love." - Dr. Haas.

I. The Bride in Solomon's Gardens (Song of Solomon 1:2-17, Song of Solomon 2:1-7) 1. The bride asks for a pledge of love, and praises the bridegroom (Song of Solomon 1:1-4).

2. She makes a plea to the daughters of Jerusalem not to despise her humble origin, and asks where she may find the bridegroom. The maidens in chorus reply (Song of Solomon 1:5-8).

3. Then follows an affectionate conversation between Solomon and his bride (Song of Solomon 1:9-17, Song of Solomon 2:1-7). Solomon speaks, Song of Solomon 1:9-11; the bride, Song of Solomon 1:12-14; Solomon, Song of Solomon 1:15; bride, Song of Solomon 1:16-17; Song of Solomon 2:1; Song of Solomon 2:2; the bride, Song of Solomon 2:3-7.

II. The Bride's Memories (Song of Solomon 2:8-17, Song of Solomon 3:1-5) 1. She recalls her lover's visit one spring (Song of Solomon 2:8-17).

2. She recalls a dream concerning him (Song of Solomon 3:1-5).

III. The Betrothal (Song of Solomon 3:6-11, Song of Solomon 4:1-16, Song of Solomon 5:1) 1. The inhabitants of Jerusalem describe the approach of the king and the bride (Song of Solomon 3:6-11).

2. Then follows a conversation. Solomon, Song of Solomon 4:1-5; bride, Song of Solomon 4:6; Solomon, Song of Solomon 4:7-16 a; bride, Song of Solomon 4:16 b; Solomon, Song of Solomon 5:1.

IV. At the Palace (Song of Solomon 5:2-16, Song of Solomon 6:1-13, Song of Solomon 7:1-13, Song of Solomon 8:1-4)

1. The bride relates a dream she had concerning Solomon. She dreamed that he had departed, and that in her search for him, she had been harshly treated by the watchmen of the city. In her dream she enquired of the daughters of Jerusalem concerning him, and described his beauty (Song of Solomon 5:2-16; Song of Solomon 6:1-3).

2. Solomon enters and praises her (Song of Solomon 6:4-9).

3. Dialogue between chorus of maidens and bride; chorus, Song of Solomon 6:10; bride, Song of Solomon 6:11-12; chorus and bride alternately, Song of Solomon 6:13; chorus, Song of Solomon 7:1-5.

4. Solomon enters and praises the bride. Song of Solomon 7:6-9.

5. The bride invites her beloved to visit her home (Song of Solomon 7:10-13; Song of Solomon 8:1-4).

V. The Bride's Home (Song of Solomon 8:5-14) The inhabitants of the country speak, Song of Solomon 8:5 a; Solomon, Song of Solomon 8:5 b; the bride, Song of Solomon 8:6-7; her brothers, Song of Solomon 8:8-9; the bride, Song of Solomon 8:10-12; Solomon, Song of Solomon 8:13; the bride, Song of Solomon 8:14.

01.22. Isaiah

Isaiah

Theme: Of all the prophetic writings the book of Isaiah is the most beautiful and sublime. In none of the other books do we obtain such a glorious view of the Messiah and of His kingdom. Because of its emphasis of GOD's grace and His redemptive work in relation to Israel and the nations, the book of Isaiah has been called "The Fifth Gospel," and its author, "the Evangelist of the Old Testament." The two main divisions of the book will aid us in finding its Theme. The keynote of the first division (chaps. 1-39) is "Denunciation." As we read this section we hear the rumblings of GOD's wrath against apostate Israel and against the idolatrous nations surrounding them. In these chapters are prophesied Israel's captivity by the Babylonians, and the tribulation and judgments of the last days. The keynote of the second division (chaps. 40-66) is "Consolation." This section contains prophecies of Israel's return from the Babylonian captivity and of their final restoration and gathering to Palestine in the last days. With these two last-named divisions in mind, we may sum up the theme of Isaiah as follows: The wrath of GOD resulting in Israel's condemnation and tribulation; the grace of GOD resulting in their salvation and exaltation.

Author: Isaiah.

Isaiah, the greatest of the prophets, was called to the ministry in the reign of Uzziah (Isaiah 6:1-13). His name, which means "salvation of the Lord," well describes his ministry and message. He prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, and perhaps during the reign of Manasseh (between 757-697 B. C.). He was a statesman as well as a prophet, for we find him speaking and acting in connection with the public affairs of the nation.

Tradition tells us that he was put to death by the wicked Manasseh by being sawed asunder.

Scope: The historical events recorded in Isaiah cover a period of about 62 years from about 760 to 698 B. C.

CONTENTS:

Isaiah naturally divides itself into the following three sections:

- I. The condemnatory section, containing for the most part rebukes of Israel's sins (Chs. 1-35).
- II. The historical section, containing the account of the Assyrian invasion, and GOD's merciful deliverance of Jerusalem and Hezekiah's healing (Chs. 36-39). These chapters form a link between the first and last section. They serve as an appendix to the first section, for they record the prophecy of the Babylonian captivity (Isaiah 39:5-8), which was the penalty of Israel's sins condemned in chapters 1-35. Because of this same prophecy, chapters 36-39 form an introduction to the last section which deals with Israel's restoration from captivity.
- III. The consolatory section, containing words of comfort to chastised Israel and promises of restoration and blessing (Chs. 40-66). As a basis for our study we shall use the following outline:

I. Prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem (Isaiah 1:1-31, Isaiah 2:1-22, Isaiah 3:1-26, Isaiah 4:1-6, Isaiah 5:1-30, Isaiah 6:1-13, Isaiah 7:1-25, Isaiah 8:1-22, Isaiah 9:1-21, Isaiah 10:1-34, Isaiah 11:1-16, Isaiah 12:1-6).

II. Prophecies of judgments on the nations (Isaiah 13:1-22, Isaiah 14:1-32, Isaiah 15:1-9, Isaiah 16:1-14, Isaiah 17:1-14, Isaiah 18:1-7, Isaiah 19:1-25, Isaiah 20:1-6, Isaiah 21:1-17, Isaiah 22:1-25, Isaiah 23:1-18).

III. Prophecies of world judgments ending in Israel's redemption (Isaiah 24:1-23, Isaiah 25:1-12, Isaiah 26:1-21, Isaiah 27:1-13).

IV. Prophecies of judgment and mercy (Isaiah 28:1-29, Isaiah 29:1-24, Isaiah 30:1-33, Isaiah 31:1-9, Isaiah 32:1-20, Isaiah 33:1-24, Isaiah 34:1-17, Isaiah 35:1-10).

V. Invasion and deliverance of Judah (Isaiah 36:1-22, Isaiah 37:1-38, Isaiah 38:1-22, Isaiah 39:1-8).

VI. Deliverance from captivity through Cyrus (Isaiah 40:1-31, Isaiah 41:1-29, Isaiah 42:1-25, Isaiah 43:1-28, Isaiah 44:1-28, Isaiah 45:1-25, Isaiah 46:1-13, Isaiah 47:1-15, Isaiah 48:1-22).

VII. Redemption through suffering and sacrifice (Isaiah 49:1-26, Isaiah 50:1-11, Isaiah 51:1-23, Isaiah 52:1-15, Isaiah 53:1-12, Isaiah 54:1-17, Isaiah 55:1-13, Isaiah 56:1-12, Isaiah 57:1-21).

VIII. The future glory of the people of GOD (Isaiah 58:1-14, Isaiah 59:1-21, Isaiah 60:1-22, Isaiah 61:1-11, Isaiah 62:1-12, Isaiah 63:1-19, Isaiah 64:1-12, Isaiah 65:1-25, Isaiah 66:1-24).

SECTION I: CONDEMNATORY

Before continuing the study of Isaiah let the student read 2 Chronicles 26:1-23, 2 Chronicles 27:1-9, 2 Chronicles 28:1-27, 2 Chronicles 29:1-36, 2 Chronicles 30:1-27, 2 Chronicles 31:1-21, 2 Chronicles 32:1-33, which will give him the historical background of the book.

I. Prophecies Concerning Judah and Jerusalem (Isaiah 1:1-31, Isaiah 2:1-22, Isaiah 3:1-26, Isaiah 4:1-6, Isaiah 5:1-30, Isaiah 6:1-13, Isaiah 7:1-25, Isaiah 8:1-22, Isaiah 9:1-21, Isaiah 10:1-34, Isaiah 11:1-16, Isaiah 12:1-6).

Isaiah begins his prophecy with a vigorous denunciation of the sins of Judah and Jerusalem. In chapter one he strikes the chief keynotes of the entire book. He describes Israel's utter apostasy, an apostasy so great, that were it not for the fact that the Lord in His grace had left a remnant, the nation would have been exterminated as were Sodom and Gomorrah (Isaiah 1:1-9). Apostate Israel has still the form of godliness, but it is simply an empty formality which is a stench in the Lord's nostrils (Isaiah 1:10-15). Then follows a promise of pardon (Isaiah 1:16-23), and a promise of restoration through judgment (Isaiah 1:24-31).

Isaiah 2:1-22, Isaiah 3:1-26, Isaiah 4:1-6 contain three pictures of Zion:

(1) Her exaltation in the last days (Isaiah 2:1-4), after the ushering in of the millennial kingdom.

(2) Her present condition of ungodliness, pride and idolatry (Isaiah 2:5-22, Isaiah 3:1-26, Isaiah 4:1).

(3) Her purification by the fires of judgment in the last days (Isaiah 4:2-6).

Isaiah continues his denunciation of the sins of Judah and Israel (Isaiah 5:1-30). The following is a brief summary of Isaiah 5:1-30 :

1. In the Parable of the Vineyard is shown Israel's punishment for their failure to fulfill the responsibilities that their blessings and peculiar privileges have laid upon them (Isaiah 5:1-7; compare Matthew 21:23-46).
2. Six woes are pronounced against the nation (Isaiah 5:8-24); against the avaricious rich (Isaiah 5:8-9), against lovers of pleasure (Isaiah 5:11-12), against skeptics (Isaiah 5:18-19), against preachers of false doctrine (Isaiah 5:20), against the self-righteous (Isaiah 5:21), against unjust judges (Isaiah 5:22-23).
3. Judgment against the nation is prophesied, in the form of foreign invasion (Isaiah 5:25-30).

Isaiah 6:1-13 contains the account of Isaiah's call to the ministry.

Notice:

1. The vision - the glory of CHRIST (compare John 12:41).
2. The effect of the vision - the prophet's consciousness of his own sinfulness (Isaiah 6:5).
3. His cleansing and his call (Isaiah 6:6-8).
4. His message - the judicial blinding of Israel for their willful rejection of the light (Isaiah 6:9-10; compare Matthew 13:14-15; John 12:39-40; Acts 28:25-28).
5. His cry "How long?" (Isaiah 6:11, i.e., how long Israel's blindness would last). The general import of the answer in verses Isaiah 6:12-13 is that this condition will last until there has been a long captivity and exile and a return of a faithful remnant. (See also Matthew 23:39; Luke 21:24; Romans 11:25).

Isaiah 7:1-25, Isaiah 8:1-22, Isaiah 9:1-7 contain a warning to the king of Judah against forming an alliance with the king of Assyria. The kings of Israel (of the ten tribes) and of Syria had united to invade Judah (Isaiah 7:1) and were planning to place a strange king on the throne of David.

Ahaz, fearing for the safety of Judah and for the continuance of the throne of David was preparing to make an alliance with the king of Assyria (2 Kings 16:1-20). It was at this point that Isaiah was sent to Ahaz to reassure him and to exhort him to trust in the Lord instead of in the king of Assyria, for the plans of his enemies would be frustrated (Isaiah 7:1-9).

Ahaz fears that the line of David will cease if his enemies succeed in capturing Jerusalem (Isaiah 7:6). Therefore the Lord Himself gives him a sign that the house of David will endure forever. This sign is the birth of a child from a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; compare Matthew 1:21), a child who shall be a light to those Israelites sitting in darkness (Isaiah 9:1-2), and who shall reign over the house of David forever (Isaiah 9:6-7).

Isaiah 9:8-21, Isaiah 10:1-4 contain an account of the calamities which the Lord had sent upon the ten tribes, but which have gone unheeded. These calamities were: foreign invasion (Isaiah

9:8-17), anarchy (Isaiah 9:18-21), and impending captivity (Isaiah 10:1-4).

Isaiah 10:5-34 sets forth the Assyrian nation as the instrument of GOD's judgment upon Judah. The nation upon whom Judah once relied for help (Ahaz sought alliance with Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria) has now become a scourge against them. Though the Lord has commissioned the Assyrian nation to chastise Israel, yet He will judge the former for their pride and arrogance against the One who had used them (Isaiah 10:5-19). Israel will then learn not to put their trust in idolatrous nations (Isaiah 10:20). However severe Israel's chastisements may be in any age, GOD in His mercy will always leave a remnant who will form the kernel of a new nation (Isaiah 10:20-23). The Jews are not to fear the king of Assyria, who will march upon Jerusalem, for the Lord will destroy him in a supernatural way (Isaiah 10:24-34; compare 2 Kings 18:1-37, 2 Kings 19:1-37). As the prophet predicts the Lord's deliverance of Israel from the Assyrian, his perspective reaches over to the end-time when Israel will be delivered from the anti-type of the Assyrian - the Antichrist, and when the Messiah, the Son of Jesse, will establish all Israel in their land, and usher in the millennial kingdom (Isaiah 11:1-16, Isaiah 12:1-6).

II. Prophecies of Judgments on the Nations (Isaiah 13:1-22, Isaiah 14:1-32, Isaiah 15:1-9, Isaiah 16:1-14, Isaiah 17:1-14, Isaiah 18:1-7, Isaiah 19:1-25, Isaiah 20:1-6, Isaiah 21:1-17, Isaiah 22:1-25, Isaiah 23:1-18) The events prophesied concerning the nations in Isaiah 13:1-22, Isaiah 14:1-32, Isaiah 15:1-9, Isaiah 16:1-14, Isaiah 17:1-14, Isaiah 18:1-7, Isaiah 19:1-25, Isaiah 20:1-6, Isaiah 21:1-17, Isaiah 22:1-25, Isaiah 23:1-18 were fulfilled in a few generations after their prediction. While these prophecies found a near fulfillment by Israel's return from captivity it should be remembered that many of them have a future fulfillment in the last days. The end of prophetic perspective was the millennium, the age bringing Israel's final restoration and subsequent exaltation. In comforting and exhorting the nation, the prophets generally pointed to that far-off event, for, short of this, they could promise no permanent blessing for the nation. With this thought in mind of Israel's final restoration, the prophet, by the inspiration of the Spirit, predicted the future in the light of the present; i.e., he made present and imminent occurrences a type of future and remote events. For example: when prophesying a soon-coming national tribulation, and restoration he would usually look beyond these events into the future and foretell Israel's final tribulation and final restoration in the last days. The principle which we have just mentioned is known as the "law of double reference," and is found operative in all prophecy in general. The following are the nations mentioned in this section:

1. Babylon (Isaiah 13:1-22, Isaiah 14:1-27). The destruction of the Babylonian Empire by the Medes and Persians is foretold. This event, to the prophet is a foreshadowing of the destruction of the empire of Antichrist together with its emperor and his inspirer, Satan (Isaiah 14:9-17). This to be followed by Israel's restoration (Isaiah 14:1-6).
2. Philistia (Isaiah 14:28-32). The Philistines are warned not to rejoice over Israel's invasion by the Assyrians, for such will be their fate also. Isaiah 14:32 looks forward to Israel's future restoration.
3. Moab (Isaiah 15:1-9, Isaiah 16:1-14). The destruction of Moab by the Assyrians is predicted within three years from the time of the utterance of the prophecy. Note reference to last days in Isaiah 16:5.

4. Damascus, i.e., Syria (Isaiah 17:1-14). In addressing to Syria a warning of coming judgment, the prophet mentions also her ally, Ephraim (the ten northern tribes) . For Israel there gleams a ray of hope of restoration in the last days (Isaiah 17:6-7; Isaiah 17:13).

5. Ethiopia (Isaiah 18:1-7). This chapter describes Ethiopia as in great excitement, sending ambassadors hither and thither, seeking help against the expected Assyrian invader. Isaiah tells these ambassadors to return and quietly watch the Lord bring to nought the attempt of the Assyrians to conquer Judah.

6. Egypt (Isaiah 19:1-25, Isaiah 20:1-6). Here are prophesied the judgments of the Lord upon Egypt-civil war, subjugation beneath an oppressor's yoke and national decadence. Looking forward to the millennial days, the prophet sees Egypt restored, and together with Assyria, forming an alliance with Israel (Isaiah 19:18-25).

7. "The wilderness of the sea," i.e., Babylon (Isaiah 21:1-10). Another prophecy of Babylon's subjugation by the Medes and Persians.

8. Dumah, i.e., Edom (Isaiah 21:11-12). Edom is seen in great anxiety making inquiry concerning the future. The answer is disappointing but sympathetic.

9. "The valley of vision," i.e., Jerusalem (Isaiah 22:1-25). The prophet pauses in his denunciations of the heathen nations to utter a warning against the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who were indulging themselves in luxury and merry-making while the enemy was standing at their door.

10. Tyre (Isaiah 23:1-18). Isaiah predicts that Tyre shall be laid waste, her commercial glory humbled, her colonies become independent of her, and she herself forgotten seventy years. However there is a promise of her restoration.

III. Prophecies of World Judgments Ending in Israel's Redemption (Isaiah 24:1-23, Isaiah 25:1-12, Isaiah 26:1-21, Isaiah 27:1-13) In Isaiah 24:1-23 the prophet announces a general judgment of the land of Palestine and of the kings and nations of the earth, this is to be followed by Israel's restoration.

Isaiah 25:1-12 records the song that Israel will sing after their restoration, a song celebrating the Lord's might in destroying the cities of their enemies and His faithfulness in defending Jerusalem. The Lord will make a feast to all nations in Mount Zion, will remove the covering of spiritual blindness from their eyes, will abolish death, and wipe away all tears. All His enemies of whom Moab is typical and representative, will be destroyed.

Chapter Isaiah 26:1-19 records Israel's song of praise and testimony after their restoration to Palestine. The Lord calls upon the faithful remnant of Israel to hide in the shelter which He has prepared for them to shield them from the great tribulation (Isaiah 26:20-21; Isaiah 27:1). After the tribulation the true vineyard of the Lord will be protected against the briars and thorns of foreign invasion (Isaiah 27:2-6). Israel's chastisements have been light compared to those of the other nations (Isaiah 27:7-11). After their chastisement they will be regathered (Isaiah 27:12-13).

IV. Prophecies of Judgment and Mercy (Isaiah 28:1-29, Isaiah 29:1-24, Isaiah 30:1-33, Isaiah 31:1-9, Isaiah 32:1-20, Isaiah 33:1-24, Isaiah 34:1-17, Isaiah 35:1-10). The above-named chapters contain a series of woes against Samaria, Jerusalem and Edom, interspersed and ending with

comforting promises of Israel's restoration and blessing.

1. Woe to the proud, scoffing, spiritual and civil drunken leaders of Samaria and Jerusalem (Isaiah 28:1-29).
2. Woe to Jerusalem, for the formality and insincerity of her worship (Isaiah 29:1-14).
3. Woe to those who attempt to make plans in secret, thinking to hide them from GOD (Isaiah 29:15-24).
4. Woe to those who go to Egypt for help, instead of trusting the Lord (Isaiah 30:1-33, Isaiah 31:1-9).
5. At this point the prophet introduces a picture of the millennial kingdom, where justice shall prevail, administered by the Lord's righteous King the Messiah (Isaiah 32:1-20).
6. Woe to the Assyrians for their treacherous dealing with Gou's people (Isaiah 33:1-24).
7. Woe to Edom, Israel's implacable foe, and a type of their enemies of the last days (Isaiah 34:1-17).
8. Israel's glorious restoration to the Holy Land (Isaiah 35:1-10).

SECTION II. HISTORICAL V. The Invasion and Deliverance of Judah (Isaiah 36:1-22, Isaiah 37:1-38, Isaiah 38:1-22, Isaiah 39:1-8). This section forms an appendix to chapters 1 to 36 in that it records the fulfillment of the predictions concerning the invasion of Judah by the Assyrians and her deliverance by the Lord (Isaiah 8:1-22; Isaiah 10:5-34; Isaiah 31:5-9). This same section serves as an introduction to chapters 40 to 66 in that it records the prophecy of the Babylonian captivity (Isaiah 39:5-8), thus preparing the way for the promises of restoration.

We may sum up the contents of this section as follows:

1. Sennacherib's invasion (Isaiah 36:1-22).
2. Hezekiah's prayer and the Lord's answer (Isaiah 37:1-38).
3. Hezekiah's sickness and recovery (Isaiah 38:1-22).
4. Hezekiah's folly (Isaiah 39:1-8).

SECTION III: CONSOLATORY

VI. Deliverance from Captivity through Cyrus (Isaiah 40:1-31, Isaiah 41:1-29, Isaiah 42:1-25, Isaiah 43:1-28, Isaiah 44:1-28, Isaiah 45:1-25, Isaiah 46:1-13, Isaiah 47:1-15, Isaiah 48:1-22). The above section predicts Israel's deliverance from Babylon by Cyrus, the king of the Persians, who overthrew the Babylonian empire (See also Ezra 1:4). The main thought running through these chapters is: The greatness of the Lord in contrast with the gods of the nations. The following is a brief summary of their contents:

1. Isaiah 40:1-31 is the key chapter of this section. The prophet is exhorted to comfort Israel in view of the coming Deliverer (Isaiah 40:1-11), the Lord's greatness (Isaiah 40:12-26), and of His power to give strength to the weary (Isaiah 40:13-31).

2. The central thought of Isaiah 41:1-29 is: the Lord's power shown by His ability to predict future events (See Isaiah 41:1-4; Isaiah 41:22-23).

3. The Lord has predicted Israel's temporal deliverance through Cyrus. Now in Chapters Isaiah 42:1-25; Isaiah 43:1-13 He promises spiritual deliverances through His Servant, the Messiah.

4. This spiritual deliverance is to be effected by the blotting out of Israel's sins by the grace of GOD. This is the message of chapters Isaiah 43:14-28; Isaiah 44:1-23.

5. In chapters Isaiah 44:24-28; Isaiah 45:1-25 we are given a description of the mission of Israel's deliverer - Cyrus, king of the Persians, who is here a type of the Messiah. It should be noted that Cyrus was surnamed and commissioned by the Lord 150 years before his birth (Isaiah 45:1-4).

6. Isaiah 46:1-13, Isaiah 47:1-15 describe GOD's judgments on Babylon, Israel's captor and oppressor.

7. The argument of Isaiah 48:1-22 is as follows: Since the Lord, one hundred and fifty years before, had predicted the restoration of Israel from Babylon through a heathen prince, the exiles could not claim that it was the power of idols that caused Cyrus to liberate them.

VII. Redemption through Suffering and Sacrifice (Isaiah 49:1-26, Isaiah 50:1-11, Isaiah 51:1-23, Isaiah 52:1-15, Isaiah 53:1-12, Isaiah 54:1-17, Isaiah 55:1-13, Isaiah 56:1-12, Isaiah 57:1-21). The above-named chapters describe the Author of Israel's spiritual redemption - the Servant of the Lord. The main theme is: redemption through suffering. The following is a brief summary of the chapters:

1. The ministry of Messiah, the Servant of the Lord (Isaiah 49:1-26).

2. The humiliation of the Messiah by rebellious Israel (Isaiah 50:1-11).

3. Encouragement to the faithful remnant of Israel to trust in GOD both for deliverance from their long Babylonian exile and from their present dispersion (Isaiah 51:1-23; Isaiah 52:1-12).

4. The rejection, humiliation, death, resurrection and exaltation of the Messiah (Isaiah 52:13-15; Isaiah 53:1-12).

5. Israel's repentance for their rejection of the Messiah to be followed by their restoration (Isaiah 54:1-17).

6. The result of Israel's restoration - the call of all nations to faith in the Messiah (Isaiah 55:1-13, Isaiah 56:1-12).

7. Comforting promises to the faithful remnant in Israel, and denunciations of the wicked of the nation (Isaiah 57:1-21).

VIII. The Future Glory of the People of GOD (Isaiah 58:1-14, Isaiah 59:1-21, Isaiah 60:1-22, Isaiah 61:1-11, Isaiah 62:1-12, Isaiah 63:1-19, Isaiah 64:1-12, Isaiah 65:1-25, Isaiah 66:1-24). The prevailing thought of the above division is: the establishing of GOD's universal kingdom and its triumph over every form of evil. The following is a brief summary of its contents:

1. An exhortation to practical religion as opposed to mere formality (Isaiah 58:1-14).

2. An exhortation to Israel to forsake their sins which have separated between them and GOD (Isaiah 59:1-15). Seeing the helplessness of Israel in their iniquity and the inability of any of their leaders to help them, GOD Himself, in the person of the Messiah, comes to rescue them from their sins and from their enemies, after which He makes an everlasting covenant with them and puts His Spirit within them (Isaiah 59:16-21).
3. Then follows a picture of Israel's glory after their affliction (Isaiah 60:1-22).
4. Isaiah 61:1-11 sets forth the twofold commission of the Messiah to bring Gospel mercy at His first coming and judgment on unbelievers and comfort to Zion at His second coming.
5. The appointing of intercessory prayers for Zion's restoration (Isaiah 62:1-12).
6. Chapter Isaiah 63:1-6 stands by itself. It gives us a vivid picture of the Messiah as the Avenger of His people at His second coming.
7. Chapters Isaiah 63:7-19; Isaiah 64:1-12 record the intercessory prayers of the faithful Jewish remnant. They remind the Lord of His mercy and grace to their nation in the past, and plead for that same mercy and grace in the forgiveness of their sins and in the restoration of their land.
8. In His answer to the prayer of His people (Isaiah 65:1-16), the Lord justifies His dealings in relation to His people. Because of Israel's apostasy He has cast them off and turned to a people that did not seek Him neither were called by His name - the Gentiles. In Israel, the Lord distinguished two classes: His own servants and the apostates. Only the former will be delivered while the latter will perish.
9. Isaiah closes his prophecy with a glorious prophecy of the coming of the millennial kingdom (Isaiah 65:17-25; Isaiah 66:1-24). People will grow old like the patriarchs; they will enjoy the possession of houses and vineyards (Isaiah 65:17-24). Even the nature of ferocious beasts will be changed (Isaiah 65:25).

Religion will become spiritual and universal and mystic cults will disappear and their adherents will be punished (Isaiah 66:1-5). Zion's population will be marvelously increased and the people will rejoice (Isaiah 66:6-14). After judging those nations that have gathered themselves against Jerusalem (Isaiah 66:15-18), the Lord will send His servants to preach the glad tidings to them (Isaiah 66:19). Those who once persecuted Israel will transport them to Palestine (Isaiah 66:20), and from among those who were once enemies of the true religion, the Lord will choose ministers to serve before Him (Isaiah 66:21), as representatives of a worship which will be universal (Isaiah 66:22-24).

01.23. Jeremiah

Jeremiah

Theme: Isaiah and Jeremiah both carried messages of condemnation to apostate Israel. But whereas the tone of Isaiah is vigorous and severe, that of Jeremiah is mild and gentle. The former carries an expression of the Lord's wrath against Israel's sin; the latter, an expression of His sorrow because of the same. In rebuking Israel, Isaiah dipped his pen in fire; Jeremiah dipped his in tears.

Isaiah, after his denunciation of Israel's iniquity, burst forth into raptures of joy at the prospect of the coming restoration. Jeremiah had a glimpse of the same happy event, but it was not sufficient to dry his tears or dispel the gloom of his sorrow for Israel's sinfulness. Because of this last fact Jeremiah has been known as "the weeping prophet." The following will serve as the theme of his book; the Lord's unchanging love toward His backslidden people and His sorrow for their condition.

Author: Jeremiah. He was the son of Hilkiyah, a priest of Anathoth in Benjamin. He was called to the ministry while still young (Jeremiah 1:6), in the thirteenth year of King Josiah, about seventy years after the death of Isaiah. Later, probably because of persecution of his townspeople and even of his own family (Jeremiah 11:21; Jeremiah 12:6), he left Anathoth and came to Jerusalem. There and in other cities in Judah, he ministered for about forty years. During the reigns of Josiah and Jehoahaz, he was allowed to continue his ministry in peace, but during the reigns of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah he suffered severe persecution. In the reign of Jehoiakim he was imprisoned because of his boldness in prophesying the desolation of Jerusalem.

During the reign of Zedekiah, he was arrested as a deserter, and remained in prison until the taking of the city, at which time he was released by Nebuchadnezzar and allowed to return to Jerusalem. On his return, he tried to dissuade the people from returning to Egypt to escape what they believed to be an impending danger. They ignored his appeals and migrated to Egypt taking Jeremiah with them. In Egypt he continued his efforts to turn the people to the Lord. Ancient tradition tells us that, angered by his continued warnings and rebukes, the Jews put him to death in Egypt.

Scope: From the 13th year of Josiah to the early part of the Babylonian captivity, covering a period of about 40 years.

CONTENTS:

Because of lack of chronological order in the prophecies of Jeremiah, it is difficult to give a satisfactory analysis of them.

We suggest the following:

I. Jeremiah's Call and Commission (Jeremiah 1:1-19).

II. General Message of Rebuke to Judah (Jeremiah 2:1-37, Jeremiah 3:1-25, Jeremiah 4:1-31, Jeremiah 5:1-31, Jeremiah 6:1-30, Jeremiah 7:1-34, Jeremiah 8:1-22, Jeremiah 9:1-26, Jeremiah 10:1-25, Jeremiah 11:1-23, Jeremiah 12:1-17, Jeremiah 13:1-27, Jeremiah 14:1-22, Jeremiah 15:1-21, Jeremiah 16:1-21, Jeremiah 17:1-27, Jeremiah 18:1-23, Jeremiah 19:1-15, Jeremiah 20:1-18, Jeremiah 21:1-14, Jeremiah 22:1-30, Jeremiah 23:1-40, Jeremiah 24:1-10, Jeremiah 25:1-38).

III. More Detailed Message of Rebuke and Judgment and of Restoration (Jeremiah 26:1-24, Jeremiah 27:1-22, Jeremiah 28:1-17, Jeremiah 29:1-32, Jeremiah 30:1-24, Jeremiah 31:1-40, Jeremiah 32:1-44, Jeremiah 33:1-26, Jeremiah 34:1-22, Jeremiah 35:1-19, Jeremiah 36:1-32, Jeremiah 37:1-21, Jeremiah 38:1-28, Jeremiah 39:1-18).

IV. Messages after Captivity (Jeremiah 40:1-16, Jeremiah 41:1-18, Jeremiah 42:1-22, Jeremiah 43:1-13, Jeremiah 44:1-30, Jeremiah 45:1-5).

V. Prophecies Concerning Nations (Jeremiah 46:1-28, Jeremiah 47:1-7, Jeremiah 48:1-47, Jeremiah 49:1-39, Jeremiah 50:1-46, Jeremiah 51:1-64).

VI. Retrospect: the Captivity of Judah (Jeremiah 52:1-34).

Before continuing the study of Jeremiah, read 2 Kings 22:1-20, 2 Kings 23:1-37, 2 Kings 24:1-20, 2 Kings 25:1-30, which will give the historical background of the book.

I. Jeremiah's Call and Commission (Jeremiah 1:1-19) We shall notice as the contents of this chapter:

1. Jeremiah's origin - from a priestly family living in Benjamin (Jeremiah 1:1).
2. The time of his ministry - from the reign of Josiah to the beginning of the Babylonian captivity (Jeremiah 1:2-3).
3. His call - to be a prophet to the nations (Jeremiah 1:4-5).
4. His enduement - inspired by the Lord (Jeremiah 1:6-9).
5. His commission - to prophesy the fall and restoration of nations (Jeremiah 1:10).
6. His message to Israel - to prophesy the coming Babylonian invasion (symbolized by the seething pot) and the imminence of that event (symbolized by the almond tree Jeremiah 1:11-16).
7. Jeremiah's encouragement - protection against persecution (Jeremiah 1:17-19).

II. General Message of Rebuke to Judah (Jeremiah 2:1-37, Jeremiah 3:1-25, Jeremiah 4:1-31, Jeremiah 5:1-31, Jeremiah 6:1-30, Jeremiah 7:1-34, Jeremiah 8:1-22, Jeremiah 9:1-26, Jeremiah 10:1-25, Jeremiah 11:1-23, Jeremiah 12:1-17, Jeremiah 13:1-27, Jeremiah 14:1-22, Jeremiah 15:1-21, Jeremiah 16:1-21, Jeremiah 17:1-27, Jeremiah 18:1-23, Jeremiah 19:1-15, Jeremiah 20:1-18, Jeremiah 21:1-14, Jeremiah 22:1-30, Jeremiah 23:1-40, Jeremiah 24:1-10, Jeremiah 25:1-38) The following are the contents of this section:

1. Jeremiah's first message to Judah (Jeremiah 2:1-37, Jeremiah 3:1-5). In this message the Lord reviews Israel's past, reminds them of their past blessings and deliverances, rebukes them for

their present backsliding, self-righteousness and idolatry, and pleads with them to return to Him.

2. Jeremiah's second message (Jeremiah 3:6-25, Jeremiah 4:1-31, Jeremiah 5:1-31, Jeremiah 6:1-30). The Lord reminds Judah of the fact that He cast the ten tribes out of His sight for their idolatry, and that instead of taking warning from the fate of the ten tribes, they have continued in the same sins (Jeremiah 3:6-10). The Lord then appeals to the Northern kingdom (in captivity) to repent, expressing His love for them and, making promises of restoration in the last days (Jeremiah 3:11-25, Jeremiah 4:1-2). He then addresses to Judah an exhortation to repentance, and this appeal failing, He pronounces upon them the judgment of the Babylonian invasion (Jeremiah 4:3-31, Jeremiah 5:1-31, Jeremiah 6:1-30).

3. Discourse in the temple gate (Jeremiah 7:1-34, Jeremiah 8:1-22, Jeremiah 9:1-26, Jeremiah 10:1-25). The theme of this discourse is as follows: because of Israel's formality in worship, their idolatry, their violation of GOD's law, their rejection of His messengers, their universal and incurable backsliding, the Lord will give the land of Judah over to invasion and will scatter the inhabitants among the nations.

4. The message on the broken covenant (Jeremiah 11:1-23, Jeremiah 12:1-17). The occasion of this message was the finding of the book of the law in the reign of Josiah (2 Kings 22:8-20). The main theme of this message is as follows: GOD's curse upon Judah because of the violation of the Mosaic covenant.

5. The message of the linen girdle (Jeremiah 13:1-27). By the symbolic actions of the prophet's putting on a girdle, burying it by the banks of the Euphrates, and then unearthing it! is typified the Lord's election of Israel to be HIS own people, HIS rejection of them for their rebelliousness, and His humbling of them by the Babylonian captivity.

6. Prophecies on the occasion of a drought in Judea (Jeremiah 14:1-22, Jeremiah 15:1-21).

Jeremiah, recognizing this drought as a judgment of GOD makes intercession for the people (Jeremiah 14:1-22). But so incurable has become Israel's iniquity that intercession will no longer avail, even though Moses and Samuel - two of Israel's greatest intercessors - were to plead for them (Jeremiah 15:1-10). Though the whole nation is to be delivered over to judgment, yet GOD will preserve a remnant, of whom Jeremiah is representative (Jeremiah 15:12-21).

7. The sign of the unmarried prophet (Jeremiah 16:1-21, Jeremiah 17:1-18).

Jeremiah is commanded not to marry, as a sign of the imminence of GOD's judgments, the awfulness of which would make the single estate preferable to the married. As further signs of the same event he is commanded not to mourn (Jeremiah 16:5), for since GOD had taken away peace from His people only a false consolation could be given; he is also commanded not to engage in legitimate merrymaking, for in view of impending Judgment, such would be a mockery (Jeremiah 16:9). Through the calamities prophesied in these chapters, there gleam some rays of hope for Israel (Jeremiah 16:15-21).

8. The message concerning the Sabbath (Jeremiah 17:19-27). The Sabbath was a sign of GOD's covenant between Him and the children of Israel (Exodus 31:16-17). So then a violation of the Sabbath day would be equivalent to a violation of GOD's covenant, and would bring the penalty prophesied by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 17:27).

9. The sign of the potter's house (Jeremiah 18:1-23, Jeremiah 19:1-13).

GOD's power to deal with the nations according to His sovereign will is symbolized by the potter's molding of vessels. GOD can mold Israel as a potter can a vessel. If they are rebellious He can mar them; if they repent He can remake them (Jeremiah 18:1-23). Since Israel persists in their apostasy GOD will cast them away. This is typified by the breaking of a potter's vessel (Jeremiah 19:1-13).

10. Jeremiah's first persecution (Jeremiah 19:14-15, Jeremiah 20:1-18).

Jeremiah's prediction concerning the destruction of Jerusalem angers a priest's son by the name of Pashur, who himself had been prophesying Jerusalem's safety (Jeremiah 20:6). He vents his anger on the prophet by inflicting on him the painful punishment of the stocks. For this act of persecution, the Lord pronounces judgment upon Pashur, at the same time repeating the prophecy of the Babylonian captivity. The latter part of Jeremiah 20:1-18 reveals the effect of this persecution on the timid nature of Jeremiah. He was tempted to seal his lips and refrain from prophesying. But the fire within was stronger than the fire without; so he continued to preach (Jeremiah 20:9).

11. The message to king Zedekiah (Jeremiah 21:1-14, Jeremiah 22:1-30). This was uttered in response to Zedekiah's inquiry concerning Nebuchadnezzar's invasion.

Evidently when inquiring of the Lord he had not the slightest intention of heeding the counselor commandments that might be given, for the response to his inquiry is a message of severe judgment upon him (Jeremiah 21:1-7). The Lord then addresses the people offering to such who are willing to listen to Him, a means of escape from the coming destruction (Jeremiah 21:8-10). He then offers a way of escape to the royal house from the coming judgment - an escape that can be affected by their executing judgment and righteousness (Jeremiah 21:11-14). As examples of the sureness of divine retribution, the Lord reminds Zedekiah of the fate of the three kings preceding him; probably repeating messages that had been delivered to them: Shallum, or Jehoahaz, (Jeremiah 22:11); Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 22:18); Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin (Jeremiah 22:24).

12. The Lord has been speaking about the unrighteous kings of Israel. He now promises the coming of the righteous King, the Messiah who shall restore Judah and Israel (Jeremiah 23:5-6).

Jeremiah 23:1-40 contains for the most part a denunciation of the false prophets, who, instead of exhorting the people to repentance by the warnings of impending judgment, were lulling them into a false security with promises of peace and safety.

13. The sign of the figs (Jeremiah 24:1-10).

Under the figure of good and bad figs is shown the future of those Jews of the first deportation in the reign of Jeconiah and those of the final captivity in the reign of Zedekiah. The former would be restored and replanted in Palestine; the latter would be given up to the sword and would be scattered among the heathen.

14. Chapter Jeremiah 25:1-14 contains a prophecy of the seventy years captivity of Judah, this to be followed by the destruction of Babylon, Israel's oppressors.

15. Under the figure of a wine-cup of fury is set forth GOD's judgment of the nations (Jeremiah 25:15-38).

III. More Detailed Messages of Rebuke and Judgment and of Restoration (Jeremiah 26:1-24, Jeremiah 27:1-22, Jeremiah 28:1-17, Jeremiah 29:1-32, Jeremiah 30:1-24, Jeremiah 31:1-40, Jeremiah 32:1-44, Jeremiah 33:1-26, Jeremiah 34:1-22, Jeremiah 35:1-19, Jeremiah 36:1-32, Jeremiah 37:1-21, Jeremiah 38:1-28, Jeremiah 39:1-18) The following are the contents of this section:

1. Jeremiah's repetition of his message concerning the destruction of Jerusalem endangers his life. However he is protected from the fury of the priests and the people by the judges of the city (Jeremiah 26:1-24).

2. Under the figure of yokes is set forth the subjugation of Judah and the surrounding nations by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (Jeremiah 27:1-22, Jeremiah 28:1-17). This message, which was given in the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, was directed against those false prophets who were encouraging the people to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, and who were promising a speedy return of the exiles of the first deportation.

3. The message to the captives of the first deportation (Jeremiah 29:1-32). This letter was written to instruct the exiles to prepare to make their home in Babylon for a period of seventy years, and to warn them not to give heed to those prophets who were falsely predicting a speedy return.

4. After contemplating Israel's present captivity and coming deliverance, the prophet gazes into the future and sees Israel delivered from the final tribulation at the end of the age, restored to their land, under Messiah the son of David, cleansed from their sins and enjoying the blessings of the New Covenant that GOD will make with them (Jeremiah 30:1-24, Jeremiah 31:1-40).

5. As a sign of the coming restoration of the land, Jeremiah is led by the Lord to purchase a portion of land from one of his relatives (Jeremiah 32:1-44).

Upon seeing the condition of the city surrounded by the Chaldeans, Jeremiah's faith seems to fail concerning the promise of restoration. Whereupon in his perplexity he goes before the Lord in prayer (Jeremiah 32:16-25). Jeremiah is assured that nothing is too hard for the Lord, who is able to pardon and purge Israel's iniquity and restore them to their land (Jeremiah 32:26-44).

6. Jeremiah 33:1-26 continues the theme of Israel's restoration. Their final restoration is assured by the Lord's promise (Jeremiah 33:1-14), by the Lord's Branch, the Messiah (Jeremiah 33:15-18), and by the Lord's faithfulness in keeping His covenant (Jeremiah 33:19-26).

7. Jeremiah 34:1-22 contains a prophecy of Zedekiah's captivity and a denunciation of the people of Jerusalem for the breaking of a covenant. The law of Moses required that Hebrew slaves be released after seven years' service. This command had long been violated. It seems that Jeremiah's preaching and fear of the coming captivity had stirred the people's consciences to the extent of making them willing to sign a covenant to release their slaves. But when Nebuchadnezzar withdrew his armies for a time, and the danger of invasion seemed to be past, the people showed the shallowness of their motives by breaking their agreement. Since they had made captives of others, they, too, would become captives, decreed the Lord.

8. The message concerning the Rechabites (Jeremiah 35:1-19). The Rechabites were descended from Hobab, the brother-in-law of Moses. They were Kenites and migrated with Israel to Canaan (Numbers 10:29; Judges 1:16; Judges 4:11-17; Judges 5:24; 1 Samuel 15:6). They are held up as an example to the Jews, and the disobedience of the Lord's divine law by the latter is contrasted with the Rechabites' unwavering obedience to the simple rules of living laid down by their ancestor.

9. The writing of Jeremiah's prophecies in the days of Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 36:1-32). In a final attempt to bring Israel to repentance the Lord commanded Jeremiah to commit to writing all the prophecies he had uttered since the beginning of his ministry, in order that the same might be repeated to the people. Jehoiakim's treatment of this writing was typical of the attitude of the nation at large and a sealing of their doom.

10. Jeremiah's imprisonment (Jeremiah 37:1-21). The Chaldean army that was besieging Jerusalem raised the siege in order to meet the armies of the king of Egypt who was advancing to attack them. Zedekiah, fearing lest, in the event of the Chaldeans overcoming the king of Egypt, they should return and besiege Jerusalem, sent to inquire of Jeremiah concerning the matter (Jeremiah 37:3). The Lord's answer was that the Chaldeans would certainly return and destroy the city.

Jeremiah taking advantage of the departure of the besieging army, prepared to visit his native town, and in so doing was arrested as a deserter to the enemy. When the Chaldeans returned, as Jeremiah had previously prophesied, Zedekiah again came to inquire of him. Again he was met with a discouraging reply. His treatment of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 37:21) shows how honest reproof in the end gains more than flattery.

11. While Jeremiah was still in the court of the prison (Jeremiah 37:21) a deputation came to Zedekiah asking that Jeremiah be put to death because of the prophet's persistence in preaching that Jerusalem was doomed to destruction and that only those surrendering to the Chaldeans would escape. This message, they claimed, was weakening the courage of the people. Jeremiah was then cast into a dungeon, but was transferred to the prison court on the intercession of Ebedmelech. There he had a secret interview with Zedekiah in which he assured that monarch that his only chance of escape was his surrender to the Chaldeans (Jeremiah 38:1-28).

12. Jeremiah 39:1-18 records the fall of Jerusalem, the final captivity of Judah, the death of Zedekiah, the deliverance of Jeremiah by Nebuchadnezzar, and the reward of Ebed-melech.

IV. Messages After the Captivity (Jeremiah 40:1-16, Jeremiah 41:1-18, Jeremiah 42:1-22, Jeremiah 43:1-13, Jeremiah 44:1-30, Jeremiah 45:1-5)

1. Offered the choice of going to Babylon with the prospect of worldly advancement or returning to his own people, Jeremiah nobly chose the latter. He returned and dwelt with Gedaliah whom the king of Babylon had appointed governor of the land. To the latter was brought news of a plot against his life, which he unwisely ignored (Jeremiah 40:1-16).

2. The plot of which Gedaliah had been notified was carried out and he was assassinated by Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah. The latter gathered the remnant of the people that were in Mizpah and prepared to flee to Moab, but his attempt was frustrated by Johanan and the captains of the

forces that were with him. Fearing that the Chaldeans would take vengeance on the remnant for the murder of Gedaliah, Johanan prepared to lead the people to Egypt (Jeremiah 41:1-18).

3. Though the leaders had made up their mind as to their plans they inquired of the Lord as to what course they should pursue. The Lord's answer was that their safety depended on their staying in Judea, and that their going to Egypt would mean their destruction (Jeremiah 42:1-22).

4. Since this advice was contrary to their plans and intentions, the leaders ignored it and in the face of the Lord's prohibition they went into Egypt, taking the remnant of the people with them. While in Egypt Jeremiah foretold by a type the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 43:1-13).

5. Jeremiah 44:1-30 contains Jeremiah's last message to Judah. The remaining prophecies of the book concern the Gentiles. It was not long before the remnant had yielded to the lure of Egyptian idolatry, and when rebuked for this by the Lord, brazenly expressed their intention of sacrificing to the Queen of Heaven, i.e., Venus. Because of this attitude on their part, their restriction is prophesied and as a sign of this, invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar is predicted.

6. Jeremiah 45:1-5 contains a message to Baruch delivered about 18 years before the fall of Jerusalem. The occasion for the message is stated in verses Jeremiah 45:1-3. The persecution arising from his writing and reading of the prophecies of Jeremiah in the reign of Jehoiakim had evidently discouraged him (Jeremiah 45:3), and perhaps had thwarted some of his cherished plans and ambitions. (Jeremiah 45:5) The Lord tells him that since He is bringing evil on the whole land of Judah, Baruch is not to seek any advancement or good for himself there, but rather to rejoice in the fact that his life will be protected wherever he goes.

V. Prophecies Concerning the Nations (Jeremiah 46:1-28, Jeremiah 47:1-7, Jeremiah 48:1-47, Jeremiah 49:1-39, Jeremiah 50:1-46, Jeremiah 51:1-64) The following nations are addressed:

1. Egypt (Jeremiah 46:1-28). This chapter contains three distinct prophecies. The defeat of Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, by the king of Babylon at the battle of Carchemish, on the Euphrates. (Jeremiah 46:1-1:2).

It was on his way to Babylon that this Egyptian king encountered and slew King Josiah (2 Chronicles 35:20-24). The conquest of Egypt by the king of Babylon (Jeremiah 46:13-26). The restoration of Israel (Jeremiah 46:27-28).

2. Philistia and Tyre (Jeremiah 47:1-7). The invasion of these countries by Nebuchadnezzar is foretold.

3. Moab (Jeremiah 48:1-47, compare Isaiah 15:1-9, Isaiah 16:1-14). Judgment in the form of invasion and devastation by the Chaldeans is pronounced upon Moab for the following reasons: their trusting in their works and treasures (Jeremiah 48:7); their living in ease and luxury (Jeremiah 48:11); their rejoicing at Israel's misfortunes (Jeremiah 48:27); their magnifying themselves against the Lord (Jeremiah 48:42). Their restoration in the last days is prophesied (Jeremiah 48:47).

4. Ammon (Jeremiah 49:1-6). Ammon is to be judged for seizing the land of Gad when the ten tribes went into captivity (2 Kings 17:1-41), when Judah not Ammon was heir to that territory

(Jeremiah 49:1); also for her pride of land and riches and her carnal security (Jeremiah 49:4). This same nation assisted the Chaldeans in their attacks on Judah (2 Kings 24:2) and later exulted at her fall (Psalms 83:1-7). For Ammon restoration is promised in the latter days (Jeremiah 49:6).

5. Edom (Jeremiah 49:7-22). The Lord pronounces the sentence of utter destruction upon a nation which always was Israel's implacable enemy (Numbers 20:18; Ezekiel 25:12-14; Ezekiel 35:1-15; Amos 1:11; Obadiah 1:1-21).

6. Damascus, capital of Syria (Jeremiah 49:23-27). This city was invaded by Nebuchadnezzar five years after the destruction of Jerusalem.

7. Kedar and Hazor (Jeremiah 49:28-33). Kedar was the country of the Arabs; Hazor, a neighboring country.

8. Elam (Jeremiah 49:34-39). The judgment of dispersion is pronounced against this nation, perhaps for helping Nebuchadnezzar against Judah. Their restoration is promised in the latter days, which promise may have found a partial fulfillment on the day of Pentecost when Elamites heard the Gospel (Acts 2:9).

9. Babylon (Jeremiah 50:1-46, Jeremiah 51:1-64, compare Isaiah 13:1-22, Isaiah 14:1-32, Isaiah 47:1-15). In the preceding chapters we learned that the Lord used Babylon as a scourge upon Israel and upon the surrounding nations. But the fact of her being used by the Lord will not save her from judgment for her sins (Jeremiah 27:7). Compare GOD's dealings with the Assyrian nation (Isaiah 10:4-34; Isaiah 37:36-38). For the record of the fulfillment of the prophecies found in Jeremiah 50:1-46, Jeremiah 51:1-64 read Daniel 5:1-31. Remembering what was said concerning the law of double reference, we may regard the fall of Babylon as typical of the overthrow of Antichrist's kingdom and his capital, possibly a rebuilt Babylon. With Jeremiah 50:1-46, Jeremiah 51:1-64 compare carefully Revelation 17:1-18, Revelation 18:1-24.

VI. Retrospect: the Captivity of Judah (Jeremiah 52:1-34) The account of the destruction of Jerusalem recorded in 2 Kings 24:1-20, 2 Kings 25:1-30; 2 Chronicles 36:1-23; and Jeremiah 39:1-18 is repeated here. It is fitting that the record of the event that drew so many tears from Jeremiah and which well-nigh broke his heart, form the conclusion of his book.

01.24. Lamentations

Lamentations

(Read the book)

Theme: The book of Lamentations is an appendix to the prophecy of Jeremiah, recording the keen, heart-breaking sorrow of the prophet for the miseries and desolations of Jerusalem resulting from her siege and destruction. The grief and lamentations expressed in Jeremiah's prophecy find their culmination here; the river of tears that flowed there becomes a torrent in this book. The leading object of the book was to teach the Jews to recognize GOD's chastening hand in their calamities and to turn to Him in sincere repentance.

Jeremiah's mournful dirge has been taken up by the Jewish nation, for they chant this book every Friday at the wailing place in Jerusalem, and they read it in the synagogue on the fast of the ninth day of August, the day set apart to mourn over the five great calamities that had befallen the nation.

We shall sum up the theme of Lamentations as follows: The desolations of Jerusalem, the result of her sins, and a chastisement from a faithful GOD to lead her to repentance.

Author: Jeremiah.

CONTENTS:

We shall give here the outline suggested by Mr. Robert Lee of London. The book consists of five poems.

I. First poem: the city represented as a weeping widow. Lamentations 1:1-22.

II. Second poem: the city represented as a veiled woman mourning midst the ruins. Lamentations 2:1-22.

III. Third poem: the city represented as, and by, the weeping prophet mourning before the Lord the Judge. Lamentations 3:1-66.

IV. Fourth poem: the city represented as gold dimmed, changed, degraded. Lamentations 4:1-22.

V. Fifth poem: the city represented as a suppliant pleading with the Lord. Lamentations 5:1-22. This book is still used by the Jews today to breathe out their sorrow at the sufferings and dispersion of Israel. The Lamentations are still read yearly to commemorate the burning of the Temple. Every Friday, Israelites, old and young, of both sexes, gather at the Wailing Place in Jerusalem, near the southeast corner of the old temple grounds, where an ancient wall 52 yards in length and 56 feet in height, is still revered as a memorial of the sanctuary of the race.

Writes Dr. Geikie: It is a touching sight to watch the line of Jews of many nations, in their black gabardines, as a sign of grief, lamenting aloud the ruin of that House whose very memory is still so

dear to their race, and reciting the sad verses of Lamentations and suitable Psalms, amid tears, as they fervently kiss the stones. On the ninth of the month Ab nearly our July, this dirge, composed about six hundred years before CHRIST, is read aloud in every synagogue over the world.

01.25. Ezekiel

Ezekiel

Theme: Ezekiel prophesied in Babylon during the entire period of his ministry, which began seven years before the destruction of Jerusalem, and which ended about fifteen years after that event. Like that of Isaiah his message was one of denunciation and consolation. "The central point of Ezekiel's predictions is the destruction of Jerusalem.

Before this event his chief object was to call to repentance those living in careless security; to warn them against indulging the hope that, by the help of the Egyptians, the Babylonian yoke would be shaken off (Ezekiel 17:15-17); and to assure them that the destruction of their city and temple was inevitable and fast approaching.

After this event, his principal care was to console the exiled Jews by promises of future deliverance and restoration to their land; and to encourage them with assurance of future blessings." - (Angus Green).

We shall sum up the theme as follows: The departure of GOD's glory from Israel in prospect of coming judgment; and the return of His glory in prospect of future restoration.

Author: Ezekiel. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel was a priest as well as a prophet. He was carried captive together with King Jehoiachim by Nebuchadnezzar about ten years before the destruction of Jerusalem. He made his home at Te1Abib in Babylon. There he ministered to the exiles who, for the most part, resisted his words, clinging to the false hope of a speedy return.

Tradition tells us that he was put to death by one of the exiles whom he had rebuked for idolatry.

Scope: The historical events recorded in this book cover a period of 21 years from about 595 to 574 B. C.

CONTENTS:

I. The Prophet's Call (Ezekiel 1:1-28, Ezekiel 2:1-10, Ezekiel 3:1-27).

II. The Fate of Jerusalem and the Nation (Ezekiel 4:1-17, Ezekiel 5:1-17, Ezekiel 6:1-14, Ezekiel 7:1-27, Ezekiel 8:1-18, Ezekiel 9:1-11, Ezekiel 10:1-22, Ezekiel 11:1-25, Ezekiel 12:1-28, Ezekiel 13:1-23, Ezekiel 14:1-23, Ezekiel 15:1-8, Ezekiel 16:1-63, Ezekiel 17:1-24, Ezekiel 18:1-32, Ezekiel 19:1-14, Ezekiel 20:1-49, Ezekiel 21:1-32, Ezekiel 22:1-31, Ezekiel 23:1-49, Ezekiel 24:1-27).

III. Prophecies Against the Nations (Ezekiel 25:1-17, Ezekiel 26:1-21, Ezekiel 27:1-36, Ezekiel 28:1-26, Ezekiel 29:1-21, Ezekiel 30:1-26, Ezekiel 31:1-18, Ezekiel 32:1-32).

IV. The Restoration of Israel (Ezekiel 33:1-33, Ezekiel 34:1-31, Ezekiel 35:1-15, Ezekiel 36:1-38, Ezekiel 37:1-28, Ezekiel 38:1-23, Ezekiel 39:1-29, Ezekiel 40:1-49, Ezekiel 41:1-26, Ezekiel

42:1-20, Ezekiel 43:1-27, Ezekiel 44:1-31, Ezekiel 45:1-25, Ezekiel 46:1-24, Ezekiel 47:1-23, Ezekiel 48:1-35).

I. The Prophet's Call (Ezekiel 1:1-28, Ezekiel 2:1-10, Ezekiel 3:1-27) We shall notice here:

1. Ezekiel's vision, (Ezekiel 1:1-28). Like that of Isaiah, Ezekiel's call was preceded by a vision of the glory of the Lord (Compare Isaiah 6:1-13). The living creatures mentioned in this chapter are the Cherubim, an order of angelic beings whose ministry seems to be, in relation to mankind, the guardianship and vindication of GOD's holiness (See Genesis 3:24; Exodus 25:18-22; Numbers 7:89; 1 Samuel 4:14; 2 Samuel 6:2; 1 Kings 8:6-7; 2 Kings 19:15, Psalms 18:10; Psalms 80:1; Psalms 99:1; Revelation 4:6-8).

2. His commission and message (Ezekiel 2:1-10; Ezekiel 3:1-9). As in the case of Isaiah, Ezekiel's message was one of condemnation to a disobedient people.

3. His responsibility (Ezekiel 3:10-21). He is appointed as a watchman over the house of Israel, with a solemn warning against neglect of duty.

4. His second vision of the glory of the Lord (Ezekiel 3:22-27). Ezekiel was not to begin immediately his ministry of preaching, but was to refrain from speaking till so instructed by the Lord. He was to abide in his house until he received from the Lord the revelations concerning Israel's fate.

II. The Fate of Jerusalem and of the Nations (Ezekiel 4:1-17, Ezekiel 5:1-17, Ezekiel 6:1-14, Ezekiel 7:1-27, Ezekiel 8:1-18, Ezekiel 9:1-11, Ezekiel 10:1-22, Ezekiel 11:1-25, Ezekiel 12:1-28, Ezekiel 13:1-23, Ezekiel 14:1-23, Ezekiel 15:1-8, Ezekiel 16:1-63, Ezekiel 17:1-24, Ezekiel 18:1-32, Ezekiel 19:1-14, Ezekiel 20:1-49, Ezekiel 21:1-32, Ezekiel 22:1-31, Ezekiel 23:1-49, Ezekiel 24:1-27)

1. Ezekiel has been commanded by the Lord to be silent until instructed to prophesy (Ezekiel 3:26-27); but though silent concerning oral messages, he is commanded to speak to the nation by means of symbolic actions, or signs (Ezekiel 4:1-17, Ezekiel 5:1-17, Ezekiel 6:1-14), as follows:

(a) By a tile and an iron pan Ezekiel acts out the siege of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 4:1-3).

(b) To signify the punishment that Israel was to bear for the period of 390 years in which they had sinned (from Jeroboam's establishment of idolatry till the 23rd year of Nebuchadnezzar); and Judah's punishment for her forty years' iniquity (beginning at Josiah's covenanting, 2 Kings 23:3-27, and ending at the events recorded in Jeremiah 52:30), Ezekiel lies on his side a day for each year of that period of idolatry and sin (Ezekiel 4:4-8).

(c) To signify the famine that is to prevail during the siege, he is to eat his bread by weight and drink his water by measure (Ezekiel 4:9-17).

(d) By the sign of the cutting of the prophet's hair is symbolized the destruction of the people of Jerusalem by famine, pestilence, and the sword (Ezekiel 5:1-17).

2. A series of messages predicting desolations upon the land and judgments upon the people (Ezekiel 6:1-14, Ezekiel 7:1-27).

3. A vision of the destruction of Jerusalem (Ezekiel 8:1-18, Ezekiel 9:1-11, Ezekiel 10:1-22, Ezekiel 11:1-25).

(a) One of the causes of its coming destruction - the idolatry of its inhabitants (Ezekiel 8:1-18). The beast worship of Egypt (Ezekiel 8:10); the immoral rites of the worship of Tammuz (Ezekiel 8:14); Persian sun worship (Ezekiel 8:16).

(b) A vision of the slaughter of the people and the sealing of a faithful remnant (Ezekiel 9:1-11).

(c) A vision of the scattering of the altar fire Over Jerusalem, perhaps symbolic of the burning of the city (Ezekiel 10:1-22).

(d) The departure of GOD's glory from Jerusalem - a sign of coming judgment (Ezekiel 11:1-25).

4. By the signs of Ezekiel's removing as a fugitive and his partaking of his food as if in time of famine, is set forth the nearness of Judah's captivity (Ezekiel 12:1-28). Then follows a denunciation of the prophets who falsely predict peace and a speedy return from captivity (Ezekiel 13:1-23), and of those leaders who with insincere motives inquire of the Lord concerning the same matter (Ezekiel 14:1-23).

5. Israel's worthlessness is set forth under the figure of a burning vine (Ezekiel 15:1-8), and her faithlessness under the figure of a harlot (Ezekiel 16:1-63).

6. In the parable of the great eagle is shown the punishment of Zedekiah's treachery in breaking his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar, and in calling the aid of Egypt in rebelling against him (Ezekiel 17:1-24).

7. The Lord's vindication of Himself against the charge that He was punishing the present generation for the sins of their fathers (Ezekiel 18:1-32).

8. A lamentation over the fall of the house of David (Ezekiel 19:1-14).

9. A review of Israel's history illustrating their faithlessness and the Lord's longsuffering and faithfulness, and teaching that His fidelity is a guarantee of their future restoration, even though that restoration must come through the purging fires of tribulation (Ezekiel 20:1-49).

10. By the sign of the sighing prophet and the sword of GOD, is again repeated the warning of Jerusalem's coming destruction by Nebuchadnezzar (Ezekiel 21:1-32). Notice the prophecy of the overthrowing of the throne of David until Messiah come (Ezekiel 21:26-27).

11. An enumeration of Jerusalem's sins, which will bring her through the fiery furnace of affliction for her purification (Ezekiel 22:1-31).

12. Israel's and Judah's apostasy and punishment is set forth under the parable of Aholah and Aholibah, the two faithless and adulterous women (Ezekiel 23:1-49).

13. Jerusalem is compared to a boiling pot and her inhabitants to the bones and meat within, producing a vile scum; this is typical of the seething wickedness of the city (Ezekiel 24:1-4). The destruction of her temple, the pride of the nation, is symbolized by the Lord's taking away of Ezekiel's wife (Ezekiel 24:15-20).

III. Prophecies Against the Nations (Ezekiel 25:1-17, Ezekiel 26:1-21, Ezekiel 27:1-36, Ezekiel 28:1-26, Ezekiel 29:1-21, Ezekiel 30:1-26, Ezekiel 31:1-18, Ezekiel 32:1-32)

Like Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel has a message for the nations surrounding Israel (Compare Isaiah 13:1-22, Isaiah 14:1-32, Isaiah 15:1-9, Isaiah 16:1-14, Isaiah 17:1-14, Isaiah 18:1-7, Isaiah 19:1-25, Isaiah 20:1-6, Isaiah 21:1-17, Isaiah 22:1-25, Isaiah 23:1-18 and Jeremiah 46:1-28, Jeremiah 47:1-7, Jeremiah 48:1-47, Jeremiah 49:1-39, Jeremiah 50:1-46, Jeremiah 51:1-64).

It is a message of judgment based in most cases on their treatment of Judah. The following nations are mentioned:

1. The Ammonites (Ezekiel 25:1-7).

(a) The cause of judgment: their rejoicing at Judah's calamity (Ezekiel 25:3).

(b) Form of judgment: Invasion and desolation.

2. Moab (Ezekiel 25:8-11).

(a) Cause of judgment: their insinuation that Judah was no better than the heathen who worshiped idols - an indirect thrust at the Lord (Ezekiel 25:8).

(b) Form of judgment: invasion.

3. Edom (Ezekiel 25:12-14).

(a) Cause of Judgment: their attitude toward Judah in the day of their calamity (Ezekiel 25:12).

(b) Form of Judgment: retribution at the hands of Israel.

4. Philistia (Ezekiel 25:15-17).

(a) Cause of judgment: their taking advantage of Judah's calamity to vent their old hatred upon them (Ezekiel 25:15).

(b) Form of judgment: destruction.

5. Tyre (Ezekiel 26:1-21, Ezekiel 27:1-36, Ezekiel 28:1-26).

(a) Cause of Judgment: rejoicing over Jerusalem's fall, an expectation of profiting by their loss (Ezekiel 26:2); the blasphemous exultation of her prince (Ezekiel 28:2; Ezekiel 28:6). Note: in Ezekiel 28:12-19, Ezekiel looks past the prince of Tyre, to the one who is empowering him - Satan, the GOD and prince of this world.

(b) Form of judgment: invasion and destruction by Nebuchadnezzar and perpetual desolation.

6. Sidon (Ezekiel 28:20-24).

(a) Cause of judgment: they were a pricking brier to the house of Israel; i.e., they were the means of ensnaring the Israelites into sin and the instruments for punishing them (Compare Numbers 33:55).

(b) Form of judgment: slaughter and pestilence.

7. Egypt (Ezekiel 29:1-21, Ezekiel 30:1-26, Ezekiel 31:1-18, Ezekiel 32:1-32).

(a) Cause of judgment: the arrogance and pride of her king (Ezekiel 31:1-18); their promising help to Israel and then failing them in the emergency (Ezekiel 29:6-7).

(b) Form of judgment: slaughter, captivity, abasement among the nations, foreign oppression, destruction of idols, and permanent loss of native ruler.

IV. The Restoration of Israel (Ezekiel 33:1-33, Ezekiel 34:1-31, Ezekiel 35:1-15, Ezekiel 36:1-38, Ezekiel 37:1-28, Ezekiel 38:1-23, Ezekiel 39:1-29, Ezekiel 40:1-49, Ezekiel 41:1-26, Ezekiel 42:1-20, Ezekiel 43:1-27, Ezekiel 44:1-31, Ezekiel 45:1-25, Ezekiel 46:1-24, Ezekiel 47:1-23, Ezekiel 48:1-35)

Up to this point Ezekiel's message had been that of impending doom for the city and captivity for the people. But now that his predictions have been fulfilled the element of consolation predominates in his prophesying.

1. Ezekiel's commission is renewed, and after the arrival of the news of the capture of Jerusalem, he is allowed to speak plainly to the people instead of preaching by means of signs and symbols.

2. A rebuke of the false shepherds of Israel who drive and oppress the flock, and the promise of the coming of the true Shepherd who will gather and feed the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Ezekiel 34:1-31).

3. The punishment of Israel's enemies, of whom Edom is representative, the gathering of Israel, their complete restoration to a restored land of Palestine and their conversion (Ezekiel 35:1-15, Ezekiel 36:1-38).

4. By the vision of the valley of dry bones is symbolized Israel's national death and resurrection; however, the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel are yet to be united under King David (either David resurrected or the Messiah Himself, the descendant of David) and as a whole bound to the Lord by an everlasting covenant (Ezekiel 37:1-28).

5. Ezekiel 38:1-23 and Ezekiel 39:1-29 record the attack of the Gentile nations on Israel after they have been restored to Palestine. Read in connection with these chapters Zechariah 12:1-4; Zechariah 14:1-9; Matthew 24:14-30; Revelation 14:14-20; Revelation 19:17-21. Many scholars believe that Russia is referred to in Ezekiel 38:2; Meshech (Moscow), Tubal (Tobolsk). The truth of this opinion is strongly confirmed when we learn that the words "the chief prince" mean "prince of Rosh"; and Rosh, we learn from a great Hebrew scholar, probably refers to Russia.

6. The glory of the Lord which departed from Israel before their captivity, now returns to abide in the Millennial temple, of which we find a detailed description in Ezekiel 40:1-49, Ezekiel 41:1-26, Ezekiel 42:1-20, Ezekiel 43:1-27, Ezekiel 44:1-31, Ezekiel 45:1-25, Ezekiel 46:1-24, Ezekiel 47:1-23, Ezekiel 48:1-35.

01.26. Daniel

Daniel

Theme: The book of Daniel is, for the most part, a prophetic history of Gentile world-power from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar to the coming of CHRIST. The prophets in general emphasize GOD's power and sovereignty in relation to Israel, and they reveal Him as guiding the destinies of His chosen people throughout the centuries until their final restoration.

Daniel, on the other hand, emphasizes GOD's sovereignty in relation to the Gentile world-empires, and reveals Him as the One controlling and overruling in their affairs, Until the time of their destruction at the coming of His Son.

"The vision is that of the overruling GOD, in wisdom knowing and in might working; of kings reigning and passing, of dynasties and empires rising and falling, while GOD enthroned above rules their movements" (Campbell Morgan). The theme of Daniel may be summed up as follows: GOD revealed as the One controlling the rise and fall of the kingdoms of this world, until their final destruction, and establishing His own kingdom.

Because of its many visions, the book of Daniel has been called "The Revelation of the Old Testament."

Author: Daniel was of the tribe of Judah and probably a member of the royal family (Daniel 1:3-6). While yet a youth he was carried captive to Babylon in the third year of King Jehoiakim (2 Chronicles 36:4-7), and eight years before Ezekiel. Together with three other young men he was stationed at the court of Nebuchadnezzar for special training in the learning of the Chaldeans.

There he attained to one of the highest ranks in the kingdom, a position which he retained under the Persian rule, which succeeded the Babylonian. He prophesied during the whole of the captivity, his last prophecy being delivered in the reign of Cyrus, two years before the nation's return to Palestine.

Because of his unblemished life amid the corruptions of an oriental court, he is one of those mentioned by Ezekiel as outstanding examples of piety The same prophet bears witness to his wisdom (Ezekiel 28:3).

Scope: From Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus, covering a period of about 73 years from the year 607 to 534 B. C.

CONTENTS:

I. Introduction: Daniel and his companions (Daniel 1:1-21).

II. GOD's control of the empires of the world in relation to their development and to His kingdom (Daniel 2:1-49, Daniel 3:1-30, Daniel 4:1-37, Daniel 5:1-31, Daniel 6:1-28, Daniel 7:1-28).

III. Daniel's vision in relation to the fortunes of GOD's people (Daniel 8:1-27, Daniel 9:1-27, Daniel 10:1-21, Daniel 11:1-45, Daniel 12:1-13).

I. Introduction: Daniel and his companions (Daniel 1:1-21)

Daniel's resolve. Daniel was a truly great man. As concerning personal holiness, he lived a blameless life amid the sensuality of an oriental court; as concerning wisdom and knowledge, he excelled the greatest of Babylon's wise men; as concerning position, he occupied one of the highest stations of the kingdom. Daniel 1:8 reveals the secret of his success: "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself . . ." It was customary among the Babylonians to throw a small part of food and drink on the earth as an offering to the gods, in order to consecrate to them the whole feast. For Daniel to have partaken of such food would have been to sanction idolatry; therefore, like Moses and Joseph he "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." As in the case of Joseph, Daniel and his companions were well rewarded for their faithfulness.

II. GOD's control of the nations of the world in relation to their development and to His kingdom (Daniel 2:1-49, Daniel 3:1-30, Daniel 4:1-37, Daniel 5:1-31, Daniel 6:1-28, Daniel 7:1-28)

1. In response to an unexpressed desire on the part of Nebuchadnezzar to know the future of his great empire, GOD gave him a dream, which interpreted by Daniel, gave that monarch a revelation of the rise, progress and fall of Gentile world power during that period described by CHRIST as "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). By the "times of the Gentiles" we mean that period of time during which world dominion is in the hands of the Gentiles instead of the Jews, and during which the Jews are under Gentile rule. This period began with the captivity, 606 B. C., and will end with the coming of CHRIST. The succession of world empires is set forth under the figure of a gigantic image composed of various metals. In the diminishing value of the metals composing the Image may be seen the deterioration of world empires in relation to their character of government. The following is the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream:

(a) The head of gold represents the empire of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon (606-538 B. C.). The power of Nebuchadnezzar was absolute, he could do what he willed (Daniel 5:19). His empire was a unit.

(b) The breast and arms of silver represent the inferior empire of Medo-Persia (538-330 B. C.). This kingdom was inferior to the first, for its monarch depended on the support of the nobility, and could not do what he willed, as shown by the inability of Darius to release Daniel (Daniel 6:12-16). This empire was dual, composed of the empires of Media and Persia.

(c) The belly and thighs of brass represent the less valuable empire of Greece (330-30 B. C.). "The government of Alexander was a monarchy supported by the military aristocracy that was as weak as the ambitions of its leaders." This empire was later divided into four parts (Daniel 7:6; Daniel 8:8).

(d) The legs of iron, and the feet and toes, part iron and part clay, represent the Roman empire (B. C. 30 till the return of CHRIST). Here is represented a still inferior form of government, in that the emperor of Rome was elected and his power depended on the good will of the people. This empire will, in the last days, be divided into ten parts. The mingling of the iron with the clay in the ten toes

suggests a further deterioration of this government into that of a democratic monarchy where the monarch carries out the will of the people (Daniel 2:41-43).

(e) The stone cut out without hands falling on the feet of the image signifies the coming of CHRIST at a time when the Roman empire will have been restored, His destruction of Gentile world power, and the setting up of His own kingdom.

2. Nebuchadnezzar's image, the refusal of the three Jews to worship, and their deliverance from the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:1-30).

3. Nebuchadnezzar's tree vision, his abasement and his restoration (Daniel 4:1-37).

4. Daniel's personal history under Belshazzar and Darius (Daniel 5:1-31, Daniel 6:1-28).

(a) Under Belshazzar: his interpretation of the writing on the wall (Daniel 5:1-31).

(b) Under Darius: his deliverance from the lions' den (Daniel 6:1-28).

5. The vision of the four beasts (Daniel 7:1-28). This chapter treats of the same subject as the second chapter - the rise and fall of Gentile power. In Daniel 2:1-49 the empires are viewed from the political viewpoint, in relation to their deterioration in form of government; in Daniel 7:1-28 they are viewed from the moral viewpoint in relation to their fierce and destructive characters as expressed by their symbolization as wild beasts. In chapter two the vision was adapted to the viewpoint of Nebuchadnezzar who saw superficially the world-empire as a splendid human figure and the kingdom of GOD as a mere stone at first. In chapter seven the vision was adapted to the viewpoint of Daniel, who saw the empires in their true character of wild beasts, and who from the first saw the superiority and triumph of the kingdom of GOD. The following is the interpretation of the vision:

(a) The lion signifies Nebuchadnezzar's empire. Daniel 8:4 may have reference to Nebuchadnezzar's experience recorded in Daniel 4:16-34.

(b) The bear symbolizes the Medo-Persian empire. Its being raised on one side is expressive of the superior strength of the Persian empire. The three ribs in its mouth represent three kingdoms this empire subdued - Lydia, Egypt, Babylon.

(c) The leopard represents the Grecian empire. The wings denote the rapidity of its conquests. The four heads signify the four divisions into which the empire was divided after the death of its ruler.

(d) The undescribed beast represents the strong and terrible Roman empire. The ten horns signify the ten kingdoms into which it will be divided in the latter days. Out of these horns comes another - Antichrist. The days of these ten kingdoms will witness the coming of CHRIST in power who will destroy that great world system and its ruler. Revelation 13:1-18 and Revelation 19:1-21 should be read in this connection.

III. Daniel's visions in relation to the fortunes of GOD's people (Daniel 8:1-27, Daniel 9:1-27, Daniel 10:1-21, Daniel 11:1-45, Daniel 12:1-13) 1. The vision of the ram and the goat (Daniel 8:1-27). The following is a brief interpretation of this Vision:

- (a) The two-horned ram represents the empire of Medo-Persia.
- (b) The he-goat signifies the Grecian empire which destroyed the Medo-Persian.
- (c) The notable horn between the eyes of the he-goat represents Alexander the Great, the ruler of the Grecian empire.
- (d) The four horns coming up after the breaking of the great horn represent the four divisions of Alexander's empire after his death.
- (e) The little horn coming out of one of the divisions of Alexander's empire (Daniel 8:9-14; Daniel 8:23-27).

Some scholars believe that the predictions concerning the little horn were fulfilled in a Syrian king named Antiochus Epiphanes, who in his fierce persecution of the Jews, defiled their sanctuary and attempted to abolish their religion. Others contend that the time element mentioned in Daniel 8:17; Daniel 8:19; Daniel 8:23 removes the fulfillment of the prophecy to the end of the age when Antichrist, of whom Antiochus is but a shadow, shall appear.

2. The vision of the seventy weeks (Daniel 9:1-27). On learning from the prophecies of Jeremiah that the seventy years of Israel's captivity were accomplished, Daniel went before the Lord in intercession for his people. While praying an angel was sent to reveal unto him the future of Israel. The nation was indeed to be restored from captivity, but that restoration was not the final one. A period of seventy weeks (more literally, "seventy sevens") was to intervene before the consummation of Israel's history (Daniel 9:24).

These weeks are not weeks of days but prophetic weeks of years. By careful calculation scholars have found that this period sets the exact date of Christ's first coming and fixes the time of the reign of Antichrist. The seventy weeks are divided into three periods (See Daniel 9:25-26):

(a) Seven weeks, or forty-nine years. The entire period of the weeks was to be reckoned from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem which decree was given in March, 445 B. C during the reign Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 2:1-10). The period of the 49 years probably represents the time occupied in the building of the wall as mentioned in Daniel 9:25.

(b) The 62 weeks, or 434 years. After the period of the 49 years, 62 weeks, or 434 years - 483 years in all - were to elapse before Messiah's coming. Reckoning from March, 445 B. C, the year of the decree to build Jerusalem, making allowance for the different calendar used in those days, and allowing for leap years, students have calculated that the 483 years, or the 69 weeks, ended in April, 32 A. D., the exact month and year in which Christ entered Jerusalem as the Messiah Prince (Matthew 21:1-11). After this period Messiah was to be cut off.

(c) Thus far we have accounted for 69 weeks out of the 70, 483 years out of the 490. There remains yet one week or 7 years to be fulfilled. Between the 69 weeks and the last week is a gap, during which period time is not reckoned in relation to Israel. This gap is filled by the church age, which age was not revealed to the prophets. The last week or seven years mentioned in Daniel 9:26 does not find its fulfillment until the appearing of Antichrist at the end of the age. Daniel 9:27 affirms that a certain ruler will make a covenant with the Jews for a period of the 7 years, which covenant he will break after three and a half years, and after which he will wage war against the

religion of the Jews. This implies that the latter three and a half years of the seven will be a time of tribulation for the Jewish people. The book of Revelation mentions a like period of three and a half years (stated under different symbolic numbers - see Revelation 11:2-3; Revelation 11:9; Revelation 12:6; Revelation 12:14; Revelation 13:5), which period it associates with the reign of Antichrist, the tribulation of the Jewish people and the pouring out of GOD's judgments in the earth - a period which is to be followed by CHRIST's coming and the restoration of Israel. Thus we see that the last week of the seventy still awaits fulfillment.

3. Daniel's last vision (Daniel 10:1-21, Daniel 11:1-45, Daniel 12:1-13 Chs. 10-12). These chapters contain a prophetic history of GOD's chosen people from the time of Darius until the coming of the Messiah. The following are the contents of these chapters:

(a) Daniel's vision of the glory of the Lord (Daniel 10:1-21).

(b) The wars between two of the four divisions of Alexander's empire - Egypt and Syria, the kingdom of the South, and the kingdom of the North (Daniel 11:1-20). Palestine had a definite relation to these struggles between these countries for she was a buffer state.

(c) A prophetic description of Antiochus Epiphanes, the great Syrian persecutor of the Jews, and a type of Antichrist (Daniel 11:21-35).

(d) Daniel now looks from Antiochus, the type, to Antichrist, the antitype, and describes the latter (Daniel 11:36-45).

(e) The Great Tribulation and the deliverance of the Jewish people (Daniel 12:1).

(f) The resurrection (Daniel 12:2-3).

(g) The last message to Daniel (Daniel 12:4-13). He is told that the words he has written are closed and sealed unto the time of the end; i.e., the visions are not to find their complete interpretation until the end of the age. The prophecies he had written were not for himself (compare 1 Peter 1:10-12), but for those living at the end-time, at which time the wise - i.e., those having spiritual wisdom would understand (Daniel 12:10; compare Matthew 24:15). With Daniel's instructions contrast those of John in Revelation 22:10.

01.27. Hosea

Hosea The book of Hosea is the first of the minor prophetic books. These books are termed "minor" not in relation to their importance but in relation generally to their length, in which respect they stand in contrast to the writings of the Major Prophets.

Let the student read 2 Kings 14:23-29; 2 Kings 15:1-31, which will give him the historical background of the book.

Theme: The book of Hosea is a great exhortation to repentance addressed to the ten tribes, during the fifty or sixty years preceding their captivity. Their cup of iniquity had been fast filling. The kings and priests were murderers and debauchees; idolatrous priests had lured the people away from the worship of the Lord; when in trouble the government resorted for help either to Egypt or to Assyria; the people in many cases went imitating the moral vileness of the Canaanites; they were living in a careless security, interrupted only in times of danger by a feigned repentance; above all, GOD and His Word were forgotten.

These sins of the nation in her condition of separation from GOD is summed by the prophet as the sin of spiritual adultery, and is illustrated by his own experience in his marrying an unchaste woman and her forsaking him for another lover. Israel's sin is more grievous than that of the nations surrounding her. The sins of the latter are offences committed by those who have had no relation to the Lord. Israel's sin is that of unfaithfulness to her husband the Lord, who delivered her from Egypt, provided for her, and with whom she entered into sacred vows of obedience and faithfulness at Mt. Sinai. But instead of putting this adulterous wife to death as the law prescribed, the Lord manifests love toward her that is above the human - He receives her again unto Himself. The following will serve as the theme of Hosea: Israel, the unfaithful wife abandoning her husband; the Lord, the compassionate Husband receiving her again.

Author: Hosea was a prophet of the northern kingdom (the ten tribes). He prophesied at the same time as Amos in Israel and Isaiah and Micah in Judah. His prophetic ministry, lasting about 60 years, is the lengthiest of all the prophets.

Scope: The historical events referred to in the book of Hosea cover a period of about 60 years from about 785 B. C. to the time of the captivity of the ten tribes.

CONTENTS:

I. Separation: Israel, the Unfaithful Wife of the Lord (Hosea 1:1-11, Hosea 2:1-23, Hosea 3:1-5).

II. Condemnation: Israel, the Sinful Nation (Hosea 4:1-19, Hosea 5:1-15, Hosea 6:1-11, Hosea 7:1-16, Hosea 8:1-14, Hosea 9:1-17, Hosea 10:1-15, Hosea 11:1-12, Hosea 12:1-14, Hosea 13:1-8).

III. Reconciliation: Israel, the Restored Nation (Hosea 13:9-16, Hosea 14:1-9).

I. Separation: Israel the Unfaithful Wife of the Lord (Hosea 1:1-11, Hosea 2:1-23, Hosea 3:1-5) 1. Hosea's marriage to an unchaste woman (Hosea 1:1-11).

GOD often spoke to His people through signs and symbolic actions (compare Jeremiah 13:1-11; Jeremiah 19:1-13; Jeremiah 27:1-22, Jeremiah 28:1-17; Ezekiel 4:1-17). These signs were necessary in order to provide forceful illustrations for the prophet's message and to arouse the people's attention at times when they refused to give heed to the spoken word. Hosea is commanded to marry an unchaste woman as a sign to the people that they are the wife of the Lord, have been unfaithful to their vows of fidelity. This union must have shocked the people; and this it was intended to do, in order that, on their enquiring concerning this union, they might discover that they themselves were represented by Hosea's unfaithful wife. Moreover the prophet's motive in marrying the woman was a pure and lofty one.

He was to give her his name and his protection, and lift her out of her former life of moral degradation unto the same high plane on which he lived. But why does he do this? Is it not clear that Hosea's marriage with this unchaste woman illustrates the Lord's marriage with an unchaste people? Did Israel have anything more to commend her to GOD's love and care when He took her to Himself, than this woman when Hosea married her (Deuteronomy 9:4-6; Isaiah 51:1-2)? - Dr. Gray. The children of this union were given names symbolical of GOD's judgments on the nation:

(a) Jezreel ("GOD will scatter"): a sign of the doom of both the house of Jehu and of the nation of Israel. Jezreel was the royal city of Ahab and his ancestors. Here Jehu exercised his greatest cruelties. It was here that the Assyrians routed the armies of Israel.

(b) Lo-ruhamah ("unpityed"): a sign of GOD's withdrawal of mercy from His people.

(c) Lo-amini ("not my people"): a sign that GOD would disclaim His people.

2. The restoration of Israel in the last days and their union with Judah under the Messiah (Hosea 1:10-11).

3. Israel, the unfaithful wife (Hosea 2:1-23). Hosea 2:1-23 gives us a more expanded view of Israel's guilt and misery and their final restoration. It contains an explanation of the signs of chapter one. After enjoying the Lord's goodness and protection, Israel deserted Him and joined herself in an idolatrous union to Baal (Hosea 2:1-8). Because of this the Lord will strip her of all His gifts and bring her land into desolation (Hosea 2:9-13). Through tribulation Israel will return to her husband the Lord to whom she will be betrothed forever (Hosea 2:14-23).

4. The Lord the faithful husband (Hosea 3:1-5). As a sign of the Lord's mercy and love toward His people Hosea is commanded to take back his unfaithful wife who had deserted him (Hosea 3:1).

It seems that she had been sold in slavery from whence Hosea redeemed her (Hosea 3:2). But before full restoration to conjugal rights there were to intervene many days during which she was to live free from impurity (Hosea 3:3). In like manner Israel is to remain for a long period free from all idolatry until the time of her restoration to full covenant privileges under Messiah (Hosea 3:4-5). This last prophecy has been remarkably fulfilled in the Jewish people. For hundreds of years they have been without a king or prince, without priest or sacrifice, and since the return from the Babylonian captivity, they have been free from idolatry.

II. Condemnation: Israel the Sinful Nation (Hosea 4:1-19, Hosea 5:1-15, Hosea 6:1-11, Hosea 7:1-16, Hosea 8:1-14, Hosea 9:1-17, Hosea 10:1-15, Hosea 11:1-12, Hosea 12:1-14, Hosea 13:1-8) In the first three chapters the Lord spoke of Israel's unfaithfulness to Him by means of the sign of Hosea's marriage. In Hosea 4:1-19, Hosea 5:1-15, Hosea 6:1-11, Hosea 7:1-16, Hosea 8:1-14, Hosea 9:1-17, Hosea 10:1-15, Hosea 11:1-12, Hosea 12:1-14, Hosea 13:1-16 He speaks in plain language to the nation, mentioning the different sins that went to make up Israel's apostasy. This section consists of many discourses that do not lend themselves readily to analysis. We may sum up the theme of this section as follows: Israel's sin and guilt and the Lord's exhortation to them to repent.

III. Reconciliation: Israel, the Restored Nation (Hosea 13:9-16, Hosea 14:1)

1. Though Israel has destroyed herself through sin and died as a nation, GOD will bring about her national resurrection (Hosea 13:9-16. Compare Ezekiel 37:1-28).
2. As one teaching a child to pray, the Lord gives Israel the very words she should use in returning to Him (Hosea 14:1-3).
3. As soon as Israel is ready with words of repentance the Lord is ready with words of blessing and restoration (Hosea 14:4-9).

01.28. Joel

Joel

Theme: The occasion for Joel's prophecy was an unusually severe invasion of destructive insects - locusts - which devastated the land, destroying the harvests, and bringing on a general famine. The prophet sees in this calamity a visitation from GOD and refers to it as a type of the final world-judgment - the day of the Lord (Joel 1:15). Like many of the other prophets, Joel predicts the future in the light of the present, regarding a present and imminent event as a type of a future event. Therefore he sees in the invasion of the locusts a foreshadowing of the coming invasion of the Assyrian army (Joel 2:1-27; compare Isaiah 36:1-22, Isaiah 37:1-38).

Looking still farther into the future he sees the invasion by the locusts and Assyrians as typical of the final invasion of Palestine by the confederated armies of Antichrist. Taking the "Day of the Lord" as the central thought, and remembering that the same expression is used as referring to the invasion of the locusts and the Assyrians, we shall sum up the theme of Joel as follows: The Day of the Lord, seen as immediate (in the invasion of the locusts), as imminent (in the coming Assyrian invasion), and as future (in the final invasion).

Author: Little is known concerning Joel. It is believed that he prophesied during the time of Joash, king of Judah (2 Kings 12:1-21).

CONTENTS:

I. The day of the Lord seen as immediate: the Invasion of the locusts (Joel 1:1-20).

II. The day of the Lord seen as imminent: the Assyrian invasion (Joel 2:1-27).

III. The day of the Lord seen as future: the final invasion (Joel 2:28-32, Joel 3:1-21). The first section (Joel 1:1-20) describes the literal plague of locusts. The terribleness of the plague may be judged of by the following description of the locusts: "The land over which their devastating hordes have passed at once assumes the appearance of sterility and dearth. Well did the Romans call them 'the burners of the land' which is the literal meaning of the word 'locust.' On they move, covering the ground so completely as to hide it from sight, and in such numbers that it often takes three or four days for the mighty host to pass by. When seen at a distance this swarm of advancing locusts resembles a cloud of dust or sand, reaching a few feet above the ground as the myriads of insects leap forward. The only thing that momentarily arrests their attention is a sudden change of weather, for cold benumbs them while it lasts. They also keep quiet at night swarming like bees on the bushes and hedges until the morning sun warms and revives them and enables them to proceed on their devastating march.

They 'have no king' nor leader, yet they falter not, but press on in serried ranks, urged in the same direction by an irresistible impulse and turn neither to the right nor to the left for any sort of obstacle. When a wall or house lies in their way, they climb straight up, going over the roof to the other side and blindly rush in at open doors and windows. When they come to water be it a puddle

or river, a lake or an open sea, they never attempt to go round it, but unhesitatingly leap in and are drowned; and their dead bodies floating on the surface form a bridge for their companions to pass over. The scourge thus often comes to an end, but it as often happens that the decomposition of millions of insects produces pestilence and death." -Van Lennep. The contents of the second section may be summed up as follows:

1. The invasion of the Assyrians typified by the locust invasion (Joel 2:1-11). The Assyrians were like locusts because of their number and destructive influence.
2. A call to repentance (Joel 2:12-17).
3. A promise of deliverance (Joel 2:18-27). In Joel 2:28-32, Joel 3:1-21 the prophet projects his vision into the time of the end, and he sees:
 1. The outpouring of the Spirit upon the Jewish nation (Joel 2:28-29). This prophecy had a partial fulfillment on the Day of Pentecost.
 2. The signs preceding the Lord's coming (Joel 2:30-32).
 3. Armageddon and the judgment of the nations (Joel 3:1-16).
 4. The restoration of Israel (Joel 3:17-21).

01.29. Amos

Amos

Theme: The message of Amos is that of judgment to come and restoration to follow. It will be noted that there is a certain sameness in the themes of many of the prophets. This is explained by the fact that there was one predominating cause that brought forth their message, namely, national sin; therefore their message was in most cases one of condemnation. But while they had a message of rebuke for the nation at large, they had also a message of consolation and restoration for a faithful remnant.

Amos views the sin of Israel in relation to the great privileges granted them, and shows that because of the great privileges that were theirs and because of their failure to walk worthy of the favors the Lord had bestowed upon them, their punishment will be greater than that of the heathen who have not had the same advantages as they (Amos 3:2).

Theme: The theme of Amos may be stated as follows: The setting forth of the sins of a privileged people, whose privileges brought them great responsibility and whose failure under that responsibility brought them a judgment according to the light they had received.

Author: Amos was a native of Tekoa, about six miles south of Bethlehem, inhabited chiefly by shepherds, to which class he belonged, being also a gatherer of sycamore fruit. He had not been officially ordained as a prophet, neither had he attended the school of the prophets; his only reason for preaching was a divine call (Amos 7:14-15). His ministry was primarily to the Ten Tribes, although he had also a message for Judah and the surrounding countries. He prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah (2 Chronicles 26:1-23) and of Jeroboam II, king of Israel (2 Kings 14:23-29), from 60 to 80 years before the captivity of the Ten Tribes.

Bethel was the principal scene of his preaching, perhaps the only one. When he had delivered several addresses there Amaziah, the chief priest of the royal sanctuary, sent a message to the king, who seems not to have been present, accusing the preacher of treason, and at the same time ordered the latter to quit the realm. Evidently there was some reason to fear that the oppressed poor might be stirred up to revolt against their lords and masters. The threats of coming judgment would disturb many hearers. The denunciations of cruelty and injustice would awaken many echoes. Yet the priest's language evinces all the contempt which a highly placed official feels towards an interfering nobody, a fellow who thinks he gains a precarious livelihood by prophesying

(Amos 7:10-17). On reaching home Amos doubtless put into writing the substance of his speeches. - J. Taylor.

CONTENTS:

I. Judgment on the Nations (Amos 1:1-15, Amos 2:1-16).

II. Judgment on Israel (Amos 3:1-15, Amos 4:1-13, Amos 5:1-27, Amos 6:1-14, Amos 7:1-17, Amos 8:1-14, Amos 9:1-6).

III. The Restoration of Israel (Amos 9:7-15).

I. Judgment on the Nations (Amos 1:1-15, Amos 2:1-16)

Israel and Judah are included in this denunciatory message against the nations, for the Lord is seen as the Judge of all nations administering impartial judgment. Notice how each of these messages begins: "For three, . . . yea, for four." This is a figurative way of declaring that GOD does not act immediately in judgment; but that He waits in order to give every nation the chance of repentance."

Dr. Campbell Morgan sums up briefly the sin of each nation as follows.

1. The sin of Syria: cruelty (Amos 1:3-5).
2. The sin of Philistia: slave trade (Amos 1:6-8).
3. The sin of Phoenicia: slave agents in spite of covenant (Amos 1:9-10).
4. The sin of Edom: determined and revengeful unforgiveness (Amos 1:11-12).
5. The sin of Ammon: cruelty based on cupidity (Amos 1:13; Amos 1:15).
6. The sin of Moab: violent and vindictive hatred (Amos 2:1-3).
7. The sin of Judah: the Lord's laws despised (Amos 2:4-5)
8. Israel: corruption and oppression (Amos 2:5-16)

II. Judgment on Israel (Amos 3:1-15, Amos 4:1-13, Amos 5:1-27, Amos 6:1-14, Amos 7:1-17, Amos 8:1-14, Amos 9:1-6). The judgments are set forth in three discourses (Amos 3:1-15, Amos 4:1-13, Amos 5:1-27, Amos 6:1-14) and by five visions (Amos 7:1-17, Amos 8:1-14, Amos 9:1-6)

1. The three discourses, each beginning with the words "hear this word":

(a) The theme of the first discourse (Amos 3:1-15), is as follows:

Israel's ingratitude for GOD's love and favor and their failure under responsibility calls for punishment (Amos 3:1-3); which the prophets announced, not at random, but by GOD's commission which they cannot but fulfill (Amos 3:4-8). From this judgment only a remnant (Amos 3:12) will escape (Amos 3:9-15).

(b) The theme of the second discourse (Amos 4:1-13).

Because of the oppression of the nobles (Amos 4:13) and the general idolatry of the nation (Amos 4:4-5) they have been chastised (Amos 4:6-11). Because these chastisements have been unheeded Israel is to prepare to meet their GOD in the last and worst judgment of all (Amos 4:12-13).

(c) The theme of the third discourse (Amos 5:1-27, Amos 6:1-14).

Impending judgment may be averted by seeking the Lord (Amos 5:1-15). For those who scornfully wish to see the day of the Lord, it will come in all its awfulness and terror (Amos 5:16-20); because

of the nation's deserting of GOD's true service in imitation of their fathers in the wilderness they will be led into captivity (Amos 5:21-27); woe to those who live in carnal security as though that captivity were not impending (Amos 6:1-14).

2. The five visions of judgment.

(a) The locusts (Amos 7:1-3).

These were typical of the Assyrians who were constantly ravaging Israel. At the intercession of the prophet, the Lord promises that all Israel shall not be utterly destroyed.

(b) The burning up of the deep (Amos 7:4-6). This probably refers to the drying up of the waters and a consequent drought.

(c) The plumbline (Amos 7:7-9). As a sign that judgment is about to be meted out according to righteousness. This last message brought persecution upon the prophet from Israel's high priest (Amos 7:10-17).

(d) The basket of summer fruit (Amos 8:1-3). This was symbolical of Israel's ripeness for judgment! Then follows a message (Amos 8:4-14) the Theme of which is as follows: because Israel has despised the Word of GOD, GOD will bring on a famine of that same Word.

(e) The Lord standing upon the altar (Amos 9:1-6). The Lord is seen commanding to smite and slay, showing that the order is being given for the Judgment to begin.

III. The Restoration of Israel (Amos 9:7-15) 1. The dispersion of Israel is for their sifting and purification (Amos 9:7-10).

2. After that is accomplished the Davidic kingdom will be re-established (Amos 9:11).

3. Then the whole nation Israel will be the head of the nations (Amos 9:12).

4. The land of Palestine will prosper (Amos 9:13-14).

5. And Israel will inherit it forever (Amos 9:15).

01.30. Obadiah

Obadiah (Read the book of Obadiah)

Theme: The theme of Obadiah can be clearly seen at the first reading of the book. It is: Edom's great sin-violence against Judah; their punishment-national extinction. Edom was descended from Esau, and Israel, from Jacob. The antagonism between them is patent throughout the Bible. In the book of Genesis occurs a simple and yet most suggestive declaration, "The children struggled within her" (Genesis 25:22-23). From that hint of the consciousness of Rebekah the story of the antagonism continued. The antagonism obtained in the family circle and continued when the descendants of each had expanded into a nation. The Edomites were a proud, bitter, resentful people, ever seeking an opportunity to harm Jacob's descendants.

Israel and Edom were perpetually at war. When Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, Edom rejoiced over Israel's downfall, and cruelly took part in the plundering and massacre (Psalms 137:7). In days gone by GOD had commanded His people to treat Edom kindly (Deuteronomy 23:7), but now their atrocious conduct had filled up their cup of iniquity, and sentence of condemnation and annihilation was passed upon them.

After Israel's restoration, Cyrus, king of Persia, overcame them, slaughtering thousands of them. They received another crushing defeat by the Jews under the Maccabees (109 B. C.). The antagonism of Edom and Judah came to a head in the time of CHRIST.

JESUS CHRIST was a Jew, a descendant of Jacob; Herod, an Edomite, a descendant of Esau. To him CHRIST never spoke (Matthew 14:6-9; Luke 23:9). After the siege of Jerusalem, 70 A. D., the Edomites are lost sight of. Verses Obadiah 1:10-14 indicate that the book was written after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Author: Absolutely nothing is known concerning Obadiah. There are many of that name mentioned in the Old Testament.

CONTENTS:

- I. The Sin of Edom: Pride (Obadiah 1:1-9).
- II. Their Greatest Sin: Violence against Judah in the Day of Their Calamity (Obadiah 1:10-14).
- III. Their Punishment: National Destruction (Obadiah 1:15-21).

01.31. Jonah

Jonah

Theme: The book of Jonah is peculiar among the prophets in that it contains no direct message to Israel, the message of the prophet being addressed to the Ninevites. But though not directly stated, there is a great lesson in this book for the Jewish nation; namely, that GOD is the GOD, not only of the Jews but also of the Gentiles, and that it is the duty of His chosen people to bring the light of Divine revelation to them.

Thus the book of Jonah is a rebuke of the exclusiveness of the Jews who held themselves aloof from, and considered themselves superior to the Gentiles. Because of its description of a prophet's preaching to the Gentiles, Jonah has been referred to as the missionary book of the Old Testament. The theme of the book may be summed up as follows: GOD's love for the Gentiles seen in His sending of a prophet to turn them to repentance.

Author: Jonah was a Galilean from the town of Gath-hepher, near Nazareth. The Pharisees in CHRIST's time evidently overlooked this when they asserted that no prophet ever came from Galilee (John 7:52). He ministered to the Ten Tribes during the reign of Jeroboam II during whose reign he prophesied concerning the restoration of some Israelitish territory (2 Kings 14:25-27). When Elisha's ministry closed, his began. JESUS Himself bore witness to Jonah's personal existence, miraculous fate, and prophetic office (Matthew 12:40).

CONTENTS:

I. Jonah's First Commission, His Disobedience and Its Results (Jonah 1:1-17, Jonah 2:1-10).

II. Jonah's Second Commission, His Obedience and Its Results (Jonah 3:1-10).

III. Jonah's Complaint and GOD's Answer (Jonah 4:1-11).

I. Jonah's First Commission, His Disobedience and Its Results (Jonah 1:1-17, Jonah 2:1-10) 1. Jonah's destination: Nineveh.

Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian empire, and at the time of Jonah it was at the height of its pride and prosperity it had a circumference of about 54 to 60 miles, and was surrounded by a wall a hundred feet high, so broad that three chariots could ride abreast on it. The population must have been about one million. The walled towns of Babylon seem to have enclosed large spaces for cultivation and pasture so that they were able to stand a prolonged siege. That Nineveh was a city of this kind is attested by the reference to its having much cattle.

2 Jonah's disobedience.

Many believe that Jonah's motive in disobeying GOD was a personal and selfish one - namely fear of being branded a false prophet, knowing as he did that GOD would spare the city if it repented, and its repentance would bring a result that would contradict his message of impending

destruction.

Others, however, do not believe this motive strong enough to account for Jonah's flight from duty. They assert that he was inspired by patriotism, though that patriotism blinded him to mercy. Being a prophet he knew that Assyria would some day invade the land of Israel and practice on its inhabitants the cruelties for which it was noted. Therefore he chose rather to risk GOD's displeasure than to be the means of preserving a nation that would bring untold suffering on his people.

John Urquhart, a noted scholar, thus states the matter:

Assyria had been laying her hand for some generations upon the nations on the Mediterranean coast, and it was the hand of a fierce and ferocious mastery. No considerations of pity were permitted to stand in the way of Assyrian policy. It could not afford to garrison its conquests and it practiced a plan which largely dispensed with leaving garrisons behind the Assyrian army.

There was unsparing slaughter to begin with. The kings in their inscriptions seem to gloat over the spectacle presented by the field of battle. They describe how it was covered by the corpses of the vanquished. This carnage was followed by fiendish inflictions on individual cities. The leading men, as at Lachish when Sennacherib conquered that city, were led forth, seized by the executioners and subjected to various punishments, all of which were filled to the brim with horror. Some of the victims were held down while one of the band of torturers, who are portrayed upon the monument gloating fiendishly over their fearful work, inserts his hand into a victim's mouth, grips his tongue, and wrenches it out by the roots. In another spot pegs are driven into the ground. To these, another victim's wrists are fixed with cords. His ankles are similarly made fast, and the man is stretched out unable to move a muscle. The executioner then applies himself to his task; and beginning at the accustomed spot, the sharp knife makes its incision, and the skin is raised inch by inch until the man is flayed alive. The skins are then stretched out upon the city walls, or otherwise disposed of, so as to terrify the people and leave behind long-enduring impressions of Assyrian vengeance. For others long sharp poles are prepared. The sufferer, taken, like the rest, from the leading men of the city, is laid down; the sharpened end of the pole is driven in through the lower part of the chest; the pole is then raised, bearing the writhing victim aloft; it is planted in the hole dug for it and the man is left to die. No man in Israel was ignorant of these things, Jonah may have witnessed them. Without doubt, too, Jonah knew that Assyria, the spoiler of the nations was the appointed executioner of GOD's vengeance on the ten tribes. . . . The word of the Lord came: 'Arise, go to Nineveh that great city and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.' Nineveh's cup, then, was full.

Sentence was about to be pronounced. Happier news than this, Jonah's ears had never heard. If Nineveh perished then Israel was saved! There was only one thing to be feared: GOD's mercy might arrest the smiting of GOD's justice. Jonah knew that the Lord was a merciful GOD and that if Nineveh cried unto Him, Assyria might be saved, and then Israel would perish. But what if Nineveh were left without warning? What if she and her princes were now abandoned to reap the reward of their atrocities?

It was a choice between vengeance on him, a rebellious prophet, and vengeance on his people. He would sacrifice himself, let Nineveh perish and so save Israel! This seems to have been

Jonah's purpose and the reason for his sorrow at Nineveh's escape. Paul said he was willing to be accursed - cast out from GOD's presence - if by that means Israel could be saved. It was CHRIST's resolve when He saved us; for He was made a curse for us. The Lord told us that Jonah was a type of Himself. The type may have begun here.

Compare in this connection 2 Kings 8:7-13, where it is recorded that Elisha wept, when, looking into the future, he saw the atrocities that an invading army would perpetrate upon his people.

3. Jonah's punishment No miracle in the Bible has evoked the unbelief of scientists and the ridicule of infidels as the story of Jonah's being swallowed by a whale. The main objection against the possibility of the miracle is the fact that it is claimed that the throat of the whale is not sufficiently wide to permit the passage of a man. From the standpoint of Scripture the miracle is an established fact, its veracity being confirmed by CHRIST (Matthew 12:40). The following quotations will show the possibility of the miracle from the natural standpoint:

Anyone who will read Frank Bullen's 'Cruise of the Cachalot' will have some idea of the size and habits of that mighty sea monster, the sperm whale. Mr. Bullen is an experienced whaler and speaks of what he has actually seen. He tells us in more places than one, how they caught whales of 'such gigantic proportions as over seventy feet long, with a breadth of bulk quite in proportion to such a vast length,' the head of which alone 'the skipper himself estimated to weigh fifteen tons!' And the idea of a whale's gullet being incapable of admitting any large substance, Mr. Bullen characterizes as 'a piece of crass ignorance.' He tells how on one occasion 'a shark fifteen feet in length has been found in the stomach of a sperm whale,' and adds this remarkable piece of evidence, 'that when dying the sperm whale always ejects the contents of it's stomach.'

He tells of one full-grown whale which has been caught and killed: 'the ejected food from whose stomach was in masses of enormous size, larger than any we have yet seen on the voyage, some of them being estimated to be of the size of our hatch house' - viz. eight feet by six feet by six feet. And yet we are asked to believe that a whale could not swallow a man! - Sydney Collett: All About the Bible. The following is from the Springfield Leader Dec. 7, 1924.

Dr. Straton, famous New York fundamentalist, and the enemy of evolution, believes that he has discovered a man who actually - in modern times (1891) - suffered the same fate as Jonah. This man James Bartley, able British seaman and member of the whaling ship Star of the East. In the attempt to capture a gigantic sperm whale, in a whaling expedition off the coast of Labrador, a whale upset one of the boats. The men were saved by the other boat with the exception of two; these were thought to have been drowned.

They finally succeeded in killing the whale and towed it to the shore. Then they proceeded to cut it up, and the second day after it was captured, they opened the whale's stomach, and to their amazement found one of their comrades, whom they thought drowned unconscious but still alive.

He suffered intensely afterwards but finally made a complete recovery after a long stay in a British hospital. Dr. Straton says that the account was fully investigated by one of the most careful, and painstaking journalists of Europe, M. de Parville, editor of the Journal des Debats, who said that the statements given by the captain and the crew of the English vessel coincided perfectly and were worthy of belief.

Note: Let the student make himself well acquainted with the above facts.

4. Jonah's prayer and deliverance (Jonah 2:1-10). In his prayer Jonah quotes copiously from the Psalms. He identifies himself with the saints of old, appropriating their experiences as recorded in the Word of GOD.

"There seems to be a strong probability that Jonah actually did die and was raised from the dead. If he actually did die, this only adds one more to the resurrections recorded in the Bible and makes Jonah a still more remarkable type of CHRIST. To those who believe in GOD, there is no difficulty in believing in the resurrection if sufficiently well attested." - Dr. Torrey.

III. Jonah's Second Commission, His Obedience, and Its Results (Jonah 3:1-10)

"To grasp the significance of the events in this chapter it is necessary to know that the Ninevites worshiped the fish-god, Dagon, part human and part fish. They believed that he came out of the sea and founded their nation, and that messengers came to them from the sea from time to time. If GOD, therefore, would send a preacher to them, what more likely that He would bring His plan down to their level and send a real messenger from the sea? Doubtless great numbers saw Jonah cast up from the sea and accompanied him to Nineveh as his witnesses and credentials.

"There are two side arguments that corroborate the historicity of this event. In the first place, 'Oannes' is the name of one of the incarnations of the fish-god, but this name with 'J' before it is the spelling for Jonas in the New Testament. In the second place, there was for centuries an Assyrian mound named 'Yunnas,' a corrupted Assyrian form for Jonas, and it was this mound's name that first gave the suggestion to the archaeologists that the ancient city of Nineveh might be buried beneath it. Botta associated 'Yunnas' with Jonah, and so pushed in his spade and struck the walls of the city." - From Dr. Gray's Christian Worker's Commentary. In this chapter we shall answer three questions asked by modern critics of the book of Jonah. The quotations are from Urquhart's New Biblical Guide.

1. Is it possible that a great heathen city like Nineveh should be so moved by the preaching of an obscure Hebrew preacher? In answer let it be noted that Jonah preached to them at a time when they were experiencing an alarming decline of power. There was possibly an expectation of coming calamity, and the presence of a prophet who had been thrown up by a fish would be sufficient to stir the superstitious people, who believed that their GOD sent messengers from the sea.

2. But was it at all likely that the state would interfere and a royal edict be issued enjoining a prolonged fast? Was action of this kind in accord with Assyrian custom?

"It was just such a fast," says Professor Sayee, "as was ordained by Esarhaddon II, when the northern foe was gathering against the Assyrian empire, and prayers were raised to the sun-god to 'remove the sin' of the king and people. 'From this day,' runs the inscription, 'from the third day of the month even the month Iyyar, to the fifteenth day of Ab of this year, for these hundred days (and) hundred nights the prophets have proclaimed (a period of supplication).' The prophets of Nineveh had declared that it was necessary to appease the anger of heaven, and the king accordingly issued his proclamation enjoining the solemn service of humiliation for one hundred days."

3. Was it the Assyrian custom to cause even the beasts to share in the humiliation (Jonah 3:7)?

"Herodotus has answered that question long ago. He tells us that, when the Persians were in Greece, a battle was fought in which a general, endeared to the whole army, was slain. 'On their arrival at the camp,' says Herodotus, 'the death of Masistius spread a general sorrow through the army, and greatly afflicted Mardonius himself. They cut off the hair from themselves, their horses, and their beasts of burden, and all Boeotia resounded with their cries and lamentations. The man they had lost was, next to Mardonius, most esteemed by the Persians and their king. Thus the barbarians in their manner honored the deceased Masistius.'"

IV. Jonah's Complaint and GOD's Answer (Jonah 4:1-11)

Jonah still had a lingering hope that the city might be destroyed (Jonah 4:5). He was still influenced by a misguided patriotism that had blinded him to mercy. GOD dealt gently with His servant and by an object lesson rebuked the petulant and vindictive spirit of the prophet. Jonah was willing to spare a worthless gourd yet was angry because GOD had spared a great city and its teeming population. If Jonah was willing to spare the gourd should not GOD spare Nineveh?

01.32. Micah

Micah

Micah prophesied about the same time as Isaiah, with whom he may have come into contact, since there are marked resemblances in their prophecies (i.e., compare Isaiah 2:1-4 with Micah 4:1-5). One has said that the prophecy of Isaiah is an enlargement of that of Micah. Like that of Isaiah the prophecy of Micah may be divided into two main sections: denunciatory (Micah 1:1-16, Micah 2:1-13, Micah 3:1-12) and consolatory (Micah 4:1-13, Micah 5:1-15, Micah 6:1-16, Micah 7:1-20). In the first division the prophet presents a picture of a sinful nation doomed to captivity; in the second, of a redeemed people enjoying millennial blessings. In the first division he shows us Israel as misled and destroyed by false rulers; in the second, he presents us the same people restored by Messiah, the true Ruler. The theme may be summed up as follows: Israel, destroyed by false leaders, and saved by the true Leader, the Messiah.

Author: Micah was a native of Moresheth-gath, a village about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem. He was a prophet from the country. "No prophet dated his birth from Jerusalem, though it was the city in which many witnessed and many were slain. Jerusalem killed the prophets but did not send them. They were sent from the mountain regions and rural towns."

Micah prophesied during the reigns of Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea over Israel, and of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah over Judah (2 Kings 15:23-30). He had a message for both Judah and Israel, of which kingdoms he predicted the captivity. His largest work was done in the reign of Hezekiah who was deeply moved by his prophecies (Jeremiah 26:10-19). His prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem was an indirect means of saving the life of Jeremiah when the latter was about to be put to death for making a similar prediction (Jeremiah 26:10-19).

CONTENTS:

I. Denunciation (Micah 1:1-16, Micah 2:1-13, Micah 3:1-12).

II. Consolation (Micah 4:1-13, Micah 5:1-15, Micah 6:1-16, Micah 7:1-20).

I. Denunciation (Micah 1:1-16, Micah 2:1-13, Micah 3:1-12) 1. Judgment upon Samaria for her incurable disposition to idolatry (Micah 1:1-8).

2. Judah has been affected by her sinfulness and has become involved in her guilt (Micah 1:9-16).

3. Because of the wickedness of rulers and people the nation will go into captivity (Micah 2:1-11). Yet there will be a restoration (Micah 2:12-13).

4. A rebuke of the leaders of the people for their indifference to truth and righteousness, and for their mercenary motives (Micah 3:1-12). A denunciation of (a) Civil rulers (Micah 3:1-4), (b) Prophets (Micah 3:5-10), (c) Priests (Micah 3:11).

5. The nation will suffer for the sins of its leaders, for it evidently shares in their iniquity (Micah 3:12; compare Jeremiah 5:31).

II. Consolation (Micah 4:1-13, Micah 5:1-15, Micah 6:1-16, Micah 7:1-20)

1. Though Zion will be destroyed (Micah 3:12), yet in the last days it will be restored and exalted (Micah 4:1-8). (The following outline is suggested by Mr. Tucker.) Those days will witness:

(a) Universal administration. "The mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains."

(b) Universal visitation. "The people shall flow into it."

(c) Universal education. "He will teach us of His ways."

(d) Universal legislation. "The law shall go forth from Zion."

(e) Universal evangelization. "The word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

(f) Universal pacification. "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation."

(g) Universal adoration. "We will walk in the name of our God."

(h) Universal restoration. "And I will make her that halted a remnant; and her that was cast off a strong nation."

(i) Universal coronation. "And the Lord shall reign over them."

2. But this vision is for the future. For the present, there is dismay, helplessness and captivity (Micah 4:9-10).

3. Yet ultimately Israel's enemies and captors will be punished (Micah 4:11-13).

4. Israel's trouble will last until the second coming of Messiah, their true ruler (Micah 5:1-2). Foreordained from eternity to be Israel's Saviour, He is a pledge of Israel's deliverance from all their enemies and their final restoration (Micah 5:3-15).

5. The Lord challenges His people to testify, if they can, if the Lord ever did aught but acts of kindness to them from the earliest times of their history - if they can produce any excuse for their forsaking Him (Micah 6:1-5)

6. They are religious, but their religion is a mere formality (Micah 6:6-7) that does not produce that practical righteousness which the Lord requires (Micah 6:8). Their conduct proves that they are keeping the statutes of Omri and works of Ahab - wicked kings of Israel (Micah 6:9-16).

7. The corruption of the nation is universal (Micah 7:1-6). It seems almost impossible to find a good man, an honest ruler, or a faithful friend. A man's enemies are those of his own household.

8. Yet there remains a faithful remnant, represented by the prophet, who lift up their voice in intercession for their nation (Micah 7:1-14). Their prayer is answered by the Lord who promises restoration (Micah 7:15-17). Looking through the gloom of his own times, the prophet praises the faithful GOD who will yet restore Israel and purge them from their sins and thus fulfil the covenant made to the fathers (Micah 7:18-20).

01.33. Nahum

Nahum

Theme: The book of Nahum has but one outstanding theme; namely, the destruction of Nineveh. It is a sequel to the message of the prophet Jonah, by whose ministry, the Ninevites were lead to repentance and saved from impending doom. It is evident that they repented of their former repentance, and so gave themselves to idolatry, cruelty, and oppression, that one hundred and twenty years later, Nahum pronounced against them the judgment of GOD in the form of utter destruction.

"Nahum's object was to inspire his countrymen, the Jews, with the assurance that, however alarming their position might seem, exposed to the attacks of the mighty Assyrian, who had already carried away the Ten Tribes, yet that not only should the Assyrian fail in his attack on Jerusalem (Isaiah Chs. 36, 37), but Nineveh his own capital would be taken and his empire overthrown; and this not by arbitrary exercise of the Lord's power, but for the iniquities of the city and its people."

Author: Practically nothing is known concerning Nahum. He was a native of Elkosh, a village which some believe to have been in Galilee. He prophesied most during the early part of the reign of Josiah since he mentions the fall of No-Amon or Thebes (Nahum 3:8) which occurred in the latter part of Manasseh's reign.

CONTENTS:

- I. The Lord the Righteous Judge (Nahum 1:1-15).
- II. The Lord's Righteous Judgment (Nahum 2:1-13, Nahum 3:1-19).
- I. The Lord the Righteous Judge (Nahum 1:1-15)

Before describing the judgment of Nineveh, the prophet describes the judge, the Lord, whom he shows to be, not an unjust, capricious executioner, but one who is slow to anger, who waits patiently for the fruits of repentance before punishing.

"Nahum is the complement of Jonah. Jonah reveals the judgment on Nineveh withdrawn, and Nahum, the judgment on Nineveh executed. The Ninevites repented of their repentance described in Jonah, whereupon GOD repented of His mercy shown them at that time, and poured out His wrath on them. Of that wrath one says, 'The permanent value of the book is that it sets before the mind as no other book of the Old Testament, the picture of the wrath of GOD.' Do not let us imagine when we think of the anger of GOD, that it is anything like the hot, passionate, blind, foolish, blundering of a man in a temper. He is slow to anger; yet once having crossed over in the presence of things which demand a new attitude of vengeance, He is as irresistible as a hurricane that beats the sea into fury, or the simoom that sweeps the land with desolation.

Note how the words, 'jealous, vengeance, wrath, anger, indignation, fierceness, fury,' describe the overwhelming fact of the anger of GOD. In man, wrath becomes his master, and drives him; GOD is always master of His wrath and uses it." The following are the contents of this section:

1. The theme of the book: the burden of Nineveh (Nahum 1:1).
2. GOD is a jealous GOD visiting judgment on His adversaries, yet He is slow to anger, and in judgment remembers those that trust Him (Nahum 1:2-8).
3. It is vain for the Assyrians to imagine that they can resist the Lord and destroy His people (Nahum 1:9-11).
4. For GOD will surely deliver His own (Nahum 1:12-14) 5 Because the Lord will deliver His people, they are to remain loyal to Him and to His service (Nahum 1:15).

II. The Lord's Righteous Judgment (Nahum 2:1-13, Nahum 3:1-19)

"Nineveh, the destruction of which is foretold by the prophet, was at that time the capital of a great and flourishing empire. It was a city of vast extent and population, and was the center of the principal commerce of the world. Its wealth, however was not altogether derived from trade. It was 'a bloody city' 'full of lies and robbery' (Nahum 3:1).

It plundered the neighboring nations; and is compared by the prophet to a family of lions, which 'fill their holes with prey, and their dens with ravin' (Nahum 2:11-12). At the same time it was strongly fortified: its colossal walls are said by Diorus Siculus to have been a hundred feet high, and wide enough on the summit for three chariots to be driven abreast on them; with fifteen hundred towers bidding defiance to all enemies. Yet, so totally was it destroyed that in the second century after CHRIST, not a vestige remained of it; and its very site was long a matter of uncertainty - Angus-Green.

"Extensive excavations and marvelous discoveries have of late years been made in the mounds of Nineveh. Botta began his labors in 1842; Layard, in 1845; Rassam, in 1852; and Loftus, in 1854. The results of their researches as to extent, character and variety of marbles, sculptures, and inscriptions, brought to light, have confounded cavilers at the sacred Scriptures, entranced with delight antiquaries and archaeologists, and astonished the whole world." The following is the contents of this section:

1. The siege and capture of the city (Nahum 2:1-13).
2. The sins of the city (Nahum 3:1-7)
3. Her doom will be as sure as that of the Egyptian city of No-Amon, a city that was once populous and powerful (Nahum 3:8-19).

01.34. Habakkuk

Habakkuk

Theme: The book of Habakkuk presents a picture of a man of GOD, perplexed by the problem of the seeming toleration of evil on the part of the Lord. The Prophet is surrounded on every hand by wickedness unpunished and triumphant. At first his cry for judgment is apparently unheeded by GOD. When his prayer is at last answered and judgment pronounced, he is further perplexed that the agents of GOD's judgments, the Chaldeans, are more wicked and more worthy of punishment than the victims. Habakkuk is full of doubt and questionings. But happily he takes his perplexities to the Lord who quickly dispels them, and who presents a solution to his problems summed up in a statement which is the heart of the book - "The just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:4). That is, no matter how gloomy the outlook and how triumphant evil may seem, the just man must not judge by appearances, but rather by GOD's Word; though the wicked may live and prosper in their wickedness and the righteous suffer, the latter are to live a life of faithfulness and trustfulness. The prophet learned this lesson well, for, whereas his prophecy begins with mystery, questioning and doubt, it ends with certainty, affirmation and faith. We shall sum up the theme as follows: the conflict and ultimate triumph of faith.

Author: Practically nothing is known of Habakkuk save what may be learned from conflicting traditions. From Habakkuk 3:1; Habakkuk 3:19, it has been inferred that he was a Levite, and participated in the music of the temple. As Nahum predicted the destruction of the Assyrian nation, and Obadiah, of the Edomite, so Habakkuk prophesied of the downfall of the Chaldean empire. Since he speaks of the growing power of the last-named nation and of the imminence of their invasion of Judah, it has been concluded that Habakkuk prophesied during the reigns of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim.

CONTENTS:

1. The Conflict of Faith (Habakkuk 1:1-17, Habakkuk 2:1-20).

II. The Triumph of Faith (Habakkuk 3:1-19).

I. The Conflict of Faith (Habakkuk 1:1-17, Habakkuk 2:1-20)

1. Habakkuk's first conflict (Habakkuk 1:1-4). The prophet sees evil and violence on every side, the law violated, and the righteous persecuted. He cries out to the Lord to visit judgment on Judah because of this condition, but seemingly his cry is unheeded. He pours forth his perplexity in these words: "O Lord, how long shall I cry and thou wilt not hear! even cry out to thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!"

2. The Lord's first answer (Habakkuk 1:5-11). Though it may sometimes appear that the Lord is silent and indifferent, yet He is working. In due time He will visit judgment upon wicked Judah, using as His agents the terrible Chaldeans.

3. The prophet's second conflict (Habakkuk 1:12-17; Habakkuk 2:1). The first problem is solved; GOD will punish the evil doers in Zion, by bringing upon them the fierce Chaldeans. But this solution suggests another problem to Habakkuk. Viewing the pride, false confidence, and destructiveness of the invaders, he cannot understand why GOD should punish His people by a nation less righteous than they (Habakkuk 1:13). Though the Lord has ordained the Chaldeans to judge His people (Habakkuk 1:12), can it be the will of Him who is too pure to behold iniquity (Habakkuk 1:13), to allow that nation to trample as recklessly upon Judah as upon the other nations (Habakkuk 1:14-17)?

4. The Lord's second answer (Habakkuk 2:2-5). Though the Chaldeans have been commissioned to execute Judgment on Judah, yet, in their arrogant pride they have exceeded their commission (Habakkuk 2:4, first part). Though the wicked, as represented by the Chaldeans, may prosper in his iniquity, and the righteous suffer, yet the latter is to live by a life of faithfulness to the Lord, a life inspired by faith in His promises and justice (Habakkuk 2:4 second part).

Though the Lord will use the Chaldeans as a Scourge upon His people, yet the former shall not go unpunished (Habakkuk 2:5-20). The prophet is to write this prophecy of the Chaldeans' ultimate overthrow and post it where all may read (Habakkuk 2:2). Though its fulfillment may be delayed: the righteous are to wait patiently for it, trusting in the Lord's word (Habakkuk 2:3).

II. The Triumph of Faith (Habakkuk 3:1-19) The following are the contents of this section:

1. At first the prophet was wondering why the Lord seemed to delay judgment on the wicked of His people (Habakkuk 1:2-3). Now he has heard the Lord's sentence, he is afraid and prays that He may repeat on behalf of His people His work of deliverance as of old, and that He may remember mercy In the midst of judgment (Habakkuk 3:1-2).

2. He presents a vivid picture of the Lord's going forth in the days of old to save His people, the implication being that His past mercies to Israel are a pledge of His future mercies toward them (Habakkuk 3:3-16).

3. Habakkuk has learned his lesson of faith. Whatever be his circumstances or that of his people, however dark and hopeless the outlook, he will rejoice in the Lord, the GOD of his salvation (Habakkuk 3:17-19).

01.35. Zephaniah

Zephaniah

Theme: The frequent recurrence of the phrase "the day of the Lord," will suggest immediately that Zephaniah has a message of judgment. But in common with most of the other prophets, he has also a message of restoration. "It has been said that this prophecy of Zephaniah is peculiarly desert and barren - no life, no flower, no fruit, none of the beauties of nature; nothing but a world swept by a simoom. If this is so, what is the reason of it? Look at the conditions described. Men settled on their lees in luxury denying the interference of GOD. A city that did not obey His voice, received not correction, did not trust in the Lord, did not draw near to GOD. Men and city materialized, self-centered, luxurious; the rulers, princes; judges, prophets, and priests alike, corrupt. The whole condition may be expressed In one word - chaos. What, then, is the story of "the day of the Lord"? That of chaos consumed, disorder disorganized evil conditions destroyed, until the city appears before the eye of the astonished prophet as a simoom-swept landscape with never a blade of grass . . . A modern expositor has said that "it is perfectly patent that this last chapter (ch. 3) was not written by Zephaniah, because the contrast is too great between the picture of the awful, sweeping, irrevocable judgment, and that of the restoration. No one can imagine, he declares, that the same man wrote both. All of which is the result of the expositor's blindness. The last picture is that of the enthroned the Lord, the picture of a new order; songs instead of sorrow, service instead of selfishness, solidarity instead of scattering. That is the intent of judgment . . .

"The very contrast demonstrates the unity of authorship." - Campbell Morgan.

We shall sum up the theme as follows: The night of judgment on Israel and the nations, followed by the morning of restoration for the former, and conversion for the latter.

Author: Contrary to common usage, Zephaniah carries his descent back to His great-great-grandfather, Hizkiah (Hezekiah).

Some believe that this fact indicates that either he was descended from Hezekiah or that he was of noble descent. He prophesied during the reign of Josiah, king of Judah. In the period between the cessation of the prophecies of Isaiah, Micah, and Nahum, and the days of Zephaniah and Jeremiah, there was a period of 55 years, during which the wicked Manasseh reigned (2 Chronicles 33:1-20), and during which the spirit of prophecy was dormant. It revived during the reign of Josiah (2 Chronicles 34:1-33, 2 Chronicles 35:1-27) when that monarch began the great reformation, in which Zephaniah probably played an important part (compare 2 Chronicles 34:4-5 and Zephaniah 1:4-5).

CONTENTS:

I. A Warning of Judgment (Zephaniah 1:1-18).

II. A Call to Repentance (Zephaniah 2:1-15, Zephaniah 3:1-7).

III. A Promise of Restoration (Zephaniah 3:8-20).

I. A Warning of Judgment (Zephaniah 1:1-18) Note the contents of this chapter:

1. A sweeping, destructive judgment announced (Zephaniah 1:1-3).
2. A prophecy of the overthrow of idolatry (Zephaniah 1:4-6). Fulfilled in Josiah's reign.
3. The coming punishment of Judah is set forth under the figure of a sacrifice, the victims representing the people, and the guests, the Chaldean invaders (Zephaniah 1:7).
4. The judgment will fall on all classes: on the rulers and their children (Zephaniah 1:8); on their servants who plunder the people (Zephaniah 1:9); on the merchants (Zephaniah 1:10-11); on those who live in luxury, indifference and skepticism (Zephaniah 1:12-13).
5. A description of the day of the Lord, the day of His vengeance on the guilty (Zephaniah 1:14-18).

II. A Call to Repentance (Zephaniah 2:1-15, Zephaniah 3:1-7) 1. A warning to the wicked to repent in order to escape judgment (Zephaniah 2:1-2).

2. An exhortation to the just to persevere in meekness and righteousness in order that they may be hid in that day (Zephaniah 2:3).
3. This call to repentance enforced by the certainty of judgments on the surrounding nations (Zephaniah 2:4-15).
4. Jerusalem shall not escape, for she has failed to heed the warning conveyed by the fate of those nations whom the Lord had punished (Zephaniah 3:1-7).

III. A Promise of Restoration (Zephaniah 3:8-20) The following are the contents of this section:

1. The judgment of the nations, in the last days, will be followed by their conversion and the institution of the universal worship of the Lord (Zephaniah 3:8-9).
2. The Lord will purge from Israel those who reposed in a self-righteous pride of their covenant privileges; and purged from these sinners, Israel will be a humble, trustful and holy nation (Zephaniah 3:12-13).
3. The Lord will lift His chastening hand from Israel will bless the remnant, punish Israel's enemies and will dwell in the midst of a restored and exalted nation (Zephaniah 3:14-20).

01.36. Haggai

Haggai

Author: Little is known of the personal history of Haggai, "the prophet of the second temple," except that he prophesied after the captivity and that his mission was to encourage the people in the rebuilding of the temple. Haggai's work was intensely practical and important. The Lord employed him to awaken the conscience and stimulate the enthusiasm of his compatriots in the rebuilding of the temple. No prophet ever appeared at a more critical juncture in the history of the people, and, it may be added, no prophet was more successful."

Haggai is the first of the prophets known as the post-Exilic; i.e., prophesying after the captivity. Zechariah and Malachi are the other two.

Read Ezra 1:1-11, Ezra 2:1-70, Ezra 3:1-13, Ezra 4:1-24, Ezra 5:1-17, Ezra 6:1-22, Ezra 7:1-28 for the historical background of this prophecy.

Theme: Under the favorable decree of Cyrus, the Jewish remnant returned to their land under the leadership of Zerubbabel, their governor and Joshua, their high priest. After settling in the land, the people set up an altar of burnt offerings on the site of the temple.

Two years later amid great rejoicings, the foundations of the temple were laid. Their rejoicing soon turned into sadness, for through the efforts of the hostile Samaritans, the work was ordered discontinued by an imperial decree. For sixteen years the temple remained unfinished until the reign of Darius, when that king issued an order permitting its completion. But in the meantime the people had become indifferent and selfish, and instead of building the temple, they were occupied with the beautifying of their own homes. As a result of this negligence they were punished with drought and barrenness: Their enquiry concerning the reason for these calamities gave Haggai the occasion for his message, in which he declared that the people's selfish indifference in regard to the needs of the temple was the cause of their misfortunes. We shall sum up the theme as follows: The result of the neglect of the temple's completion - divine displeasure and punishment; the result of the temple's completion - divine blessing and promises of future glory.

CONTENTS: The book divides itself naturally into four distinctly mentioned messages:

- I. First message: the neglect of the second temple's completion (Haggai 1:1-15).
 - II. Second message: the glory of the second temple (Haggai 2:1-9).
 - III. Third message: sacrifice. Without obedience (to rebuild the temple) will not sanctify (Haggai 2:10-19).
 - IV. Fourth message: the safety and perpetuity of the house of Israel (Haggai 2:20-23).
- I. First message: the neglect of the second temple's completion (Haggai 1:1-15)

1. The excuse for the neglect (Haggai 1:1-2). "The time is not come that the Lord's house should be built." The people were probably waiting for some special revelation from GOD before they would perform what they knew to be their duty.

2. The cause of the neglect - the people's selfishness (Haggai 1:3-4). They did not wait for any special command to build and embellish their own homes.

3. The punishment for the neglect - drought and barrenness (Haggai 1:5-11).

4. The repentance for the neglect (Haggai 1:12-15). The people set to work on the temple.

II. The second message: the glory of the second temple (Haggai 2:1-9)

1. The people's discouragement (Haggai 2:1-3). Remembering the magnificence of Solomon's temple, the people were evidently discouraged by the thought that the present temple would not equal it in beauty and glory. They knew that it would lack the Shekinah glory that filled the first temple.

2. The Divine encouragement (Haggai 2:4-9). The glory of the second temple will be greater than that of the first, declares the Lord, for Messiah Himself, the Lord of glory, will enter it. This was fulfilled at CHRIST's first coming when He entered the temple (John 2:13-25; compare Malachi 3:1).

There may be a more complete fulfillment at His second coming.

III. Third message: sacrifice. without obedience (to rebuild the temple) will not sanctify (Haggai 2:10-19)

1. A parable (Haggai 2:10-14). The lesson contained in these scriptures is as follows: holiness is not contagious, but evil is. The sacrifices offered on the altar were not sufficient to sanctify a land which the disobedience of the people had polluted.

Therefore the land was barren. "The faint aroma of sanctity coming from the altar was too feeble to pervade the secular atmosphere of their lives. Haggai argues that Israel's sacrifices for sixteen years had been unclean in GOD's sight, and had brought them no blessing, because the temple was in ruins."

2. A warning (Haggai 2:15-18). The blight upon the land was caused by disobedience.

3. A promise (Haggai 2:19). Now that the people have set themselves to the work in earnest, the Lord will bless them.

IV. Fourth message: the safety and perpetuity of the house of Israel (Haggai 2:20-23)

1. The coming world commotions (Haggai 2:20-22). Comparing Haggai 2:6-7 and Hebrews 12:26-28, we see here a reference to the final world upheaval preceding CHRIST's second coming.

2. The assurance of safety (Haggai 2:23). The national disturbances in Zerubbabel's time had perhaps made him fear for the safety of his nation. As a representative of the house of David and an ancestor of the Messiah, he receives a promise of protection and safety for himself and his

people.

All the nations of the world shall be shaken, but the Jewish nation under Messiah, of whom Zerubbabel is a type, shall be established.

01.37. Zechariah

Zechariah

Theme: The historical background of the prophecy of Zechariah is the same as that of Haggai, both prophets ministering during the same period and having a similar mission. Zechariah's mission was to encourage by the promise of present success and future glory, the Jewish remnant, who were disheartened by present distresses and who were slow to rebuild their temple. The people had good reasons for being discouraged.

They had once been a free nation, having king and constitution. But now they had returned to a country under foreign rule, to a country without a king, and stripped of power. Their present condition presented a dark picture, but Zechariah made this serve as a dark background of a more glorious scene, as he, by a series of visions and prophecies, depicted a restored Jerusalem protected and indwelt by the Messiah, and capital of a nation exalted above all others.

Besides the promise of future glory, the prophet gave promises of present success and achievement, for he assured the remnant that their temple would be rebuilt in spite of opposition. But Zechariah could offer no permanent encouragement short of the promise of Messiah's coming.

Israel's present experience is but a foreshadowing of their future experience. As it was through the chastisement of the Babylonish captivity that the nation was purged of the sin of idolatry, so it will be by the fires of the great tribulation that Israel will be purified from its sin of sins - the rejection of its Messiah and King (Zechariah 13:8-9; Zechariah 12:10; Zechariah 13:1).

We shall sum up the theme as follows: An encouragement to the nation to serve their GOD faithfully through present distress, in view of the future glories of the times of the Messiah.

Author: Zechariah was probably born in Babylon. He entered the ministry while yet a young man (Zechariah 2:4), and began prophesying a short time later than Haggai, whose colleague he was. His mission was to stir up the flagging zeal of the people and encourage them by taking their eyes off the dark present and directing them to the bright future.

CONTENTS:

We shall divide the book into the following three sections:

I. Symbolical: Visions of Hope (Zechariah 1:1-21, Zechariah 2:1-13, Zechariah 3:1-10, Zechariah 4:1-14, Zechariah 5:1-11, Zechariah 6:1-15).

II. Practical: Exhortations to Obedience and Piety (Zechariah 7:1-14, Zechariah 8:1-23).

III. Prophetical: Promises of Glory through Tribulation (Zechariah 9:1-17, Zechariah 10:1-12, Zechariah 11:1-17, Zechariah 12:1-14, Zechariah 13:1-9, Zechariah 14:1-21).

I. Symbolical: Visions of Hope (Zechariah 1:1-21, Zechariah 2:1-13, Zechariah 3:1-10, Zechariah 4:1-14, Zechariah 5:1-11, Zechariah 6:1-15)

Zechariah 1:1-6 forms the introduction to the book. The remnant are admonished to take warning from the fate of their fathers, who disobeyed the voice of the prophets, and suffered in consequence. The people are to obey the message of the present prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, whose words will be fulfilled as surely as those of the former prophets.

Then follows a series of visions conveying messages of GOD's care and protection of His people.

1. The vision of the rider among the myrtle trees (Zechariah 1:7-17). The rider who, together with the horses represents GOD's agents in the earth, informs the angel of the Lord that the whole world is at rest and still, thus symbolizing that the time had come for the fulfillment of GOD's promises in relation to Israel's restoration. In response to the angel's intercession, the Lord says that He is displeased with the heathen who have exceeded their commission in regard to punishing Israel. He will return and rebuild the cities of Judah.

2. The vision of the four horns and the four carpenters (Zechariah 1:18-21), teaching the destruction of those who are Israel's oppressors.

3. The vision of the man with the measuring line (Zechariah 2:1-13), symbolizing the rebuilding of Jerusalem. It will be rebuilt without walls because of the coming increase in population and because the Lord Himself will be as a wall of fire round about her.

4. The vision of Joshua the high priest (Zechariah 3:1-10). The high priest, divested of his filthy garments, and reclthed with clean raiment, typifies the cleansing of the Jewish remnant, whose representative he is (Zechariah 3:1-7). Joshua and his fellow priests are a type of the Messiah, who will effect the final purification of Israel (Zechariah 3:8-10).

5. The vision of the golden candlestick and the olive trees (Zechariah 4:1-14). By the Spirit working through Zerubbabel and Joshua (the two olive trees), will the rebuilding of the temple (the golden candlestick) and the restoration of the nation be effected, and not by human power (Zechariah 4:6).

6. The vision of the flying roll (Zechariah 5:1-4), teaching that, after the completion of the temple, GOD will punish those violating His laws.

7. The vision of the ephah (Zechariah 5:5-11). The teaching of this vision seems to be as follows: Israel's sins will be removed - especially the sins of idolatry and rebellion - and they will be carried to Babylon, the center of idolatry and the scene of the first rebellion, and probably the scene of the final apostasy and rebellion.

8. The vision of the four chariots (Zechariah 6:1-8) teaching the swiftness and extent of the Lord's judgments against Israel's former oppressors.

9. The symbolic crowning of Joshua, the high priest (Zechariah 6:9-15), signifying the crowning of the Messiah as King-priest, and the building of His spiritual temple in which He shall be enthroned as ruler and intercessor.

II. Practical: Exhortations to Obedience and Piety (Zechariah 7:1-14, Zechariah 8:1-23) The above exhortations were partly occasioned by the enquiry of representatives of the people as to whether they should continue to fast in commemoration of the fall of Jerusalem (Zechariah 7:1-3). The following lessons are contained in the prophet's answer:

1. GOD desires obedience rather than fasting. It was the disobedience of the people that brought on the Judgments that were the occasion for the fasts (Zechariah 7:1-14).
2. When the cause of fasting and mourning is removed, then Israel's fasts will be turned into feasts (Zechariah 8:19). That day is coming, for Israel will be finally regathered and Jerusalem will become the religious center of the earth (Zechariah 8:1-23).

III. Prophetical: Promises of Glory through Tribulation (Zechariah 9:1-17, Zechariah 10:1-12, Zechariah 11:1-17, Zechariah 12:1-14, Zechariah 13:1-9, Zechariah 14:1-21)

Following Dr. Gray's suggestion, we shall divide this section according to the periods of Israel's history: Israel under Grecian rule (Zechariah 9:1-17, Zechariah 10:1-12); Israel under Roman rule (Zechariah 11:1-17); Israel under Messiah's rule (Zechariah 12:1-14, Zechariah 13:1-9, Zechariah 14:1-21).

1. Israel under Grecian rule (Zechariah 9:1-17, Zechariah 10:1-12).

(a) A prophecy concerning the conquests of Alexander, emperor of Greece, a king who lived about three hundred years before CHRIST (Zechariah 9:1-8).

Zechariah 9:1-7 record his conquests along the west coast of Palestine; and Zechariah 9:8, the deliverance of Jerusalem out of his hands.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, gives us an account of the last-named event. He tells us that, after the conquest of Tyre and Gaza (mentioned in Zechariah 9:1-7), Alexander set out for Jerusalem to punish Jaddus, the high priest, who had refused to submit to him. The Lord, in a dream, commanded Jaddus to open the gates to the conqueror, and dressed in his high-priestly garments, and attended by his priests, to receive Alexander in triumph. Jaddus obeyed, and Alexander, seeing this imposing procession, saluted the high priest and adored the GOD whose name was on the golden plate attached to the priest's headgear.

Alexander then explained that, while in Macedonia, he had had a vision of this procession, and this vision had been brought to his mind by what he had just seen. He afterwards treated the Jews with great kindness.

(b) The coming of Messiah, who in contrast to Alexander, is the true King and world conqueror (Zechariah 9:9-12).

(c) A prophecy of the defeat of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria (about 165 B. C.), one of the divisions of Alexander's empire (Zechariah 9:13-17). Antiochus, seeing that the Jews' religion stood in the way of their perfect submission to him conceived the plan of abolishing it and substituting the cults of Greece. He captured Jerusalem, defiled the temple, and interdicted the worship of the Lord.

Persecution ensued and continued until Judas Maccabeus and his brothers, the sons of the high priest placed themselves at the head of a Jewish army that drove the Syrians from the land. We may look upon this deliverance as the foreshadowing of Israel's final deliverance (Zechariah 10:1-12).

2. Israel under Roman rule (Zechariah 11:1-17). This chapter deals mainly with the rejection of the Messiah and the judgments following. Many of the predictions were through symbolic actions, such as the breaking of the staffs, etc. (Zechariah 11:10; Zechariah 11:14). Taking this entire chapter as Messianic, we shall note as its contents:

- (a) A picture of judgment, probably the one following CHRIST's rejection (Zechariah 11:1-6).
- (b) Messiah's ministry - that of a Shepherd to Israel (Zechariah 11:7-8).
- (c) Messiah's rejection by the flock (Zechariah 11:9-11).
- (d) Messiah's valuation by His people-thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave (Zechariah 11:12-13; compare Matthew 26:14-16; Matthew 27:3-10).
- (e) The rejection of the true shepherd followed by the rise of a false shepherd-a type of Antichrist (Zechariah 11:15-17).

3. Israel under Messiah's rule (Zechariah 12:1-14, Zechariah 13:1-9, Zechariah 14:1-21).

- (a) The siege of Jerusalem and her deliverance by the appearance of Christ (Zechariah 12:1-14).
- (b) The purification of Israel (Zechariah 13:1-9).
- (c) The exaltation of Israel (Zechariah 14:1-21).

01.38. Malachi

Malachi

Theme: In Nehemiah we read the last page of Old Testament history; in the book of the prophet Malachi, Nehemiah's contemporary, we read the last page of Old Testament prophecy.

Malachi, the last of the prophets, testifies, as do his predecessors, to the sad fact that Israel has failed.

He presents us a picture of a people outwardly religious, but inwardly indifferent and insincere, a people to whom the service of the Lord has become an empty formality, performed by a corrupt priesthood whom they did not respect.

Under the ministry of Haggai and Zechariah the people were willing to acknowledge their faults and make amends; but now, so hardened have they become, that to the charges of the Lord they offer insolent denials (Malachi 1:1-2; Malachi 2:17; Malachi 3:7). Worse still, many profess a skepticism as to the existence of a GOD of judgment, and others question the value of serving the Lord (Malachi 2:17; Malachi 3:14-15). As a ray of light shining upon this dark scene is the promise of the advent of the Messiah, who will come to the deliverance of the faithful remnant and to the judgment of the nation. The book closes with a prophecy of the coming of Elijah, Messiah's forerunner, and then the curtain drops on Old Testament revelation, not to be lifted again until four hundred years later, when the angel of the Lord announces the coming of Him who is to go before the coming One in spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17).

We shall sum up the theme as follows: the last prophecy of the Old Testament, a revelation of a rebellious and insincere people, of a loyal remnant, and of a coming Messiah who will judge and purify the nation.

Notice the recurrence of the word "wherein" which expresses the defiant attitude of the people in regard to the Lord's accusations.

Author: Of the personal history of Malachi nothing is known. It is believed that he prophesied during the time of Nehemiah and supported him, as Haggai and Zechariah supported Zerubbabel. "The book of Malachi fits the situation round which Nehemiah worked as snugly as a bone fits a socket." The prophet denounced the very evils that existed in Nehemiah's time (Compare Nehemiah 13:10-12 and Malachi 3:8-10; Nehemiah 13:29 and Malachi 2:4-8; Nehemiah 13:23-27 and Malachi 2:10-16).

He wrote so much about CHRIST that one has said, "Old Testament prophecy expired with the Gospel on its tongue."

CONTENTS:

I. Warning and Rebuke: Messages to the Rebellious (Malachi 1:1-14, Malachi 2:1-17, Malachi 3:1-15).

II. Prediction and Promises: Messages to the Faithful (Malachi 3:16-18, Malachi 4:1-6).

I. Warning and Rebuke: Messages to the Rebellious (Malachi 1:1-14, Malachi 2:1-17, Malachi 3:1-15).

1. A message to the whole nation (Malachi 1:1-5). His love for them, and their ingratitude. The people insolently question the Lord's love for them, evidently thinking of their past afflictions, but forgetting that these were the chastenings of the Almighty to purify them. As a proof of His love to the nation, the Lord points to His gratuitous election of their father Jacob and the rejection of his brother. (Note the word "hate," does not signify hatred in the sense that we now understand it, but is here used in the sense of rejecting. Compare Luke 14:26 and Matthew 10:37 where the word "hate" means to love with a lesser affection).

Edom is forever rejected of GOD and will be forever desolate. But Israel, forever chosen of GOD, will live to see Edom's desolation, and will glorify GOD's' grace and love (Malachi 1:4-5).

2. Messages to the priests (Malachi 1:6-14, Malachi 2:1-9). The following sins are rebuked:

(a) Lack of reverence for the Lord (Malachi 1:6). Note the spirit of self-satisfied insensibility to sin, revealed in the reply of the priests: "Wherein have we despised thee?" This attitude is manifest in all of the answers of people and priests to the Lord's reproofs.

(b) The offering of blemished sacrifices (Malachi 1:7-12). Darius and his successors had probably liberally supplied the priests with victims for the sacrifices (Ezra 6:8-10), yet they presented none but the worst. They offered to the Lord that which they would not have dared to offer to their governor (Malachi 1:8). But though polluted sacrifices are offered in Palestine, yet among the heathen there are and will be those who will bring a pure offering before the Lord (Malachi 1:11).

(c) The performing of GOD's service in the spirit of indifference and discontent (Malachi 1:11-12). They regarded GOD's service as irksome, and dishonored it by presenting the most worthless offerings.

(d) The violation of the Levitical covenant (Malachi 2:1-9). The Lord mentions those qualities that the covenant required in a priest; namely, a close walk with the Lord, zeal to turn many from iniquity, and ability to teach (Malachi 2:5-7). In all these qualities the priesthood of Malachi's time were sadly lacking (Malachi 2:8).

3. Messages to the people (Malachi 2:11-17, Malachi 3:1-15). The following sins are rebuked:

(a) Sins of the family (Malachi 2:10-16). Many of the people had divorced their Israelitish wives in order to marry foreign women (Compare Nehemiah 13:23-28).

(b) Skepticism (Malachi 2:17). This verse forms the transition to Malachi 3:1. The skeptics of the day were insinuating that GOD delighted in evil-doers since the latter seemed to prosper. Then, if that was the case, why should they serve GOD (Malachi 3:14-15)? Where is the GOD of judgment, they ask. The answer is forthcoming (Malachi 3:1-6). The Lord whom they seek (Malachi 3:1) (whom they challenge to appear) will come suddenly (when they least expect it) to His temple and will visit judgment on priests and people. Not because the Lord had changed was judgment delayed, but because He had not changed in regard to His covenant promises and because of His

unchanging mercy (Malachi 3:6).

(c) The withholding of the tithe (Malachi 3:7-12; compare Nehemiah 13:10-14).

II. Predictions and Promises: Messages to the Faithful (Malachi 3:16-18, Malachi 4:1-6)

1. A message to the righteous (Malachi 3:16-18, Malachi 4:1-3). In the darkest days of Israel's apostasy there has always been a remnant that have remained faithful to GOD. In Malachi's day, when the fire of religion was burning low, these faithful ones gathered to keep the holy flame alive. As the kings of Persia kept a record of those who had rendered them service, so that they might reward them (Esther 2:23; Esther 6:1-2; Ezra 4:5), so GOD is keeping His record (Malachi 3:16).

These loyal ones are His jewels, His own peculiar treasure, whom He will preserve from the day of tribulation. In that day both the righteous and the wicked will be recompensed, and then will be silenced the skeptic's sneer (Malachi 3:18, compare Malachi 2:17; Malachi 3:14-15). The Sun of righteousness will rise, to burn the wicked, but to shed healing rays upon the righteous (Malachi 4:1-3).

2. The last exhortation of the Old Testament (Malachi 4:4): "Remember ye the law of Moses." Until Messiah came revelation was to cease temporarily. The people are to remember the law, for, in the absence of the living prophets they are likely to forget it. The law is to be their rule of life and conduct during the four hundred years of silence intervening between the last Old Testament prophet and the coming of the Prophet of prophets.

3. The last prophecy of the Old Testament (Malachi 4:5-6). Before the coming of the great day of wrath, GOD will send the forerunner of the Messiah, Elijah, who will prepare the people for His coming. This prophecy was fulfilled in John the Baptist (Luke 1:17; Matthew 11:14; Matthew 17:11-12). That it will have a future fulfillment is probable, for as the Messiah had a forerunner at His first advent, so He may have one at His second.

Chapter 43

02.00.1. Through the Bible Book by Book, New Testament

Through the Bible Book by Book

New Testament by

Myer Pearlman

02.00.3. Copyright Information

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02.00.4. FOREWORD

FOREWORD The reader has, no doubt, watched a grocery salesman fill an order, and noted how well acquainted he was with the sections where the various articles were kept. This homely illustration will serve to describe the purpose of this course, which is to impart a general knowledge of the contents of each Book of the Bible so that the Sunday school teacher with his lesson before him, may know from which of the sixty-six "compartments" of the Bible to select his material. This purpose has made necessary the method used in this course, which is not to deal primarily with details, but with the main facts of each book. **The Four Gospels** The first question that confronts us before commencing the study of the Gospels is, Why four Gospels? Why not two, three, or just one? This can best be answered by stating the fact that, in apostolic times, there were four representative classes of people - the Jews, the Romans, the Greeks, and that body taken from all three classes - the Church.

Each one of the evangelists wrote for these respective classes, and adapted himself to their character, needs, and ideals.

- Matthew, knowing that the Jews were eagerly looking forward to the coming of the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, presents JESUS as that Messiah.

- Luke, writing to a cultured people - the Greeks, whose ideal was the perfect Man, makes his Gospel center around CHRIST as the expression of that ideal.

- Mark writes to the Romans, a people whose ideal was power and service, so he pictures CHRIST to them as the Mighty Conqueror. - John has in mind the needs of Christians of all nations, so he presents the deeper truths of the Gospel, among which we may mention the teachings concerning the deity of CHRIST and the Holy Spirit. The principle of adaptation referred to here was mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:19-21, and was illustrated in his ministry among Jew and Gentile. (Compare his message to the Jews in Acts 13:14-41, and that to the Greeks in Acts 17:22-31). This adaptation is a fine indication of a Divine design in the four Gospels. In this connection we must remember that since humanity is just the same in one age as in another the message of the Gospels is addressed to mankind in general. The foregoing facts reveal another reason for the writing of four Gospels; namely, that one gospel would not have been sufficient to present the many-sidedness of CHRIST's person. Each of the evangelists views Him from a different aspect.

- Matthew presents Him as King, - Mark as Conqueror (and Servant), - Luke as Son of Man, - John as Son of God. This viewing of CHRIST is like the viewing of a huge building - only one side can be taken in at one time. The fact that the evangelists wrote their records from different viewpoints will explain the differences between them, their omissions and additions, the occasional seeming contradiction, and their lack of chronological order. The writers did not attempt to produce a complete biography of CHRIST, but taking into consideration the needs and character of the people to whom they were writing, they selected just those incidents and discourses which would

emphasize their particular message. For example, Matthew writing for the Jew, makes everything in his Gospel - the selection of discourses and incidents, the omissions and additions, the grouping of events - serve to stress the fact of JESUS' Messiahship. As an illustration of the way each evangelist emphasizes some particular aspect of CHRIST's person, let us take the following:

Four authors undertake to write a biography of a person who has acquired fame as a statesman, soldier and Author. One might wish to emphasize his political career, so he would gather together records of his campaigns and speeches to incorporate in the biography. Another would lay stress on his literary successes, and would describe his different writings. The third, with the thought in view of emphasizing his prowess in the military world, would describe his promotions, his decorations, and the battles in which he distinguished himself. The fourth might wish to enhance his virtues as manifested in home life, so he would relate those incidents that would tend to set him forth as the ideal parent, husband, or friend. The first three Gospels are called synoptical, because they give us a synopsis (common view) of the same events and have a common plan. The Gospel of John is written on an entirely different plan from the other three. The following are the points of difference between the Synoptics and the Gospel of John:

- (1) The Synoptics contain an evangelistic message for unspiritual men; John contains a spiritual message for Christians.
- (2) In the three, we are taken over the ground of His Galilean ministry; but in the fourth, over the ground of His Judean ministry mainly.
- (3) In the three, His more public life is displayed; but in the fourth, we are shown His private life.
- (4) In the three, we are impressed with His real and perfect humanity; in the fourth, with His true and awful deity.

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02.01. MATTHEW

MATTHEW

Theme: The central theme of this Gospel is, JESUS the Messiah-King. Matthew, writing to the Jews, and knowing their great hopes, sets forth JESUS as the One fulfilling the Old Testament Scriptures relative to the Messiah. By the use of numerous Old Testament quotations, he shows what the Messiah ought to be; by a record of the words and deeds of JESUS, he proves that He was that Messiah. The frequent recurrence of the words "kingdom" and "Kingdom of Heaven" reveals another important theme of Matthew's Gospel. He sets forth the kingdom of Heaven as promised in the Old Testament (Matthew 11:13), as proclaimed by John the Baptist and JESUS (Matthew 3:2; Matthew 4:17), represented now by the Church (Matthew 16:18-19), and as triumphant at JESUS' second coming (Matthew 25:31; Matthew 25:34).

Author: Reliable tradition credits Matthew with the writing of this book. Very little is said concerning him in the New Testament. We learn that he was a tax-gatherer under the Roman government but was called by the Lord to be a disciple and apostle. To Whom Written: To all mankind in general, but to the Jews in particular. That it was intended primarily for the Jew may be seen by the following facts:

1. The great number of Old Testament quotations - there are about 60. One preaching to the Jews would have to prove his doctrine from the ancient Scriptures. Matthew makes these quotations the very basis of his Gospel.
2. The first words of the book "The book of the generations of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham," would suggest immediately to the Jew, those two covenants that contained promises of the Messiah - the Davidic and the Abrahamic. 2 Samuel 7:8-16; Genesis 12:1-3.
3. There is a complete absence of explanations of Jewish customs showing that he was writing to a people acquainted with them.

Contents:

- I. Advent of the Messiah - Matthew 1:1-25, Matthew 2:1-23, Matthew 3:1-17, Matthew 4:1-11.
- II. Ministry of the Messiah - Matthew 4:12-25, Matthew 5:1-48, Matthew 6:1-34, Matthew 7:1-29, Matthew 8:1-34, Matthew 9:1-38, Matthew 10:1-42, Matthew 11:1-30, Matthew 12:1-50, Matthew 13:1-58, Matthew 14:1-36, Matthew 15:1-39, Matthew 16:1-12.
- III. Claim of the Messiah - Matthew 16:13-28, Matthew 17:1-27, Matthew 18:1-35, Matthew 19:1-30, Matthew 20:1-34, Matthew 21:1-46, Matthew 22:1-46, Matthew 23:1-39.
- IV. Sacrifice of the Messiah - Matthew 24:1-51, Matthew 25:1-46, Matthew 26:1-75, Matthew 27:1-66.
- V. Triumph of the Messiah - Matthew 28:1-20.

I. The Advent of the Messiah - Matthew 1:1-25, Matthew 2:1-23, Matthew 3:1-17, Matthew 4:1-11

1. Genealogy. Matthew 1:1-17.

2. Birth. Matthew 1:18-25.

3. The Wise Men. Matthew 2:1-12.

4. Flight to Egypt and Return. Matthew 2:13-23.

5. Baptism of JESUS. Matthew 3:1-17.

6. Temptation of JESUS. Matthew 4:1-11. The Jews paid great attention to genealogies. Before a person could be ordained to the priesthood, he was required to prove his descent from Aaron. In the time of Ezra some were rejected because of their failure to prove their right to the priesthood.

Matthew, setting forth JESUS as Messiah, is obliged to prove from the Old Testament that He is Son of David - the One having a right to be king of Israel. Psalms 132:11. This he does in the genealogy found in Matthew 1:1-17, which is that of Joseph. The Old Testament teaches that Messiah is to be born of a virgin, and that He must be, not only the Son of David, but the Son of GOD. Isaiah 9:6. Matthew then records the virgin birth of CHRIST to show how these scriptures were fulfilled in Him. The Wise Men are believed to have been a priestly tribe of Medes, whose chief functions were the study of astrology and the interpretation of dreams. They are representative of that class of Gentiles who worship the true GOD according to all the light they have. They may have been led to look for Messiah's coming by the testimony of the Jews living in their country.

Herod, though an able king, was a monster of cruelty. Knowing his own unpopularity and constantly fearing the loss of his throne, he ruthlessly slayed any whom he suspected in the least of aspiring to rulership. This will explain his perturbation at the news of the birth of a king of the Jews, and his act of slaying the children of Bethlehem. His murderous plan to kill the infant CHRIST was thwarted by a Divine warning.

Matthew 3:1-17 records the ministry of John the Baptist. His ministry was to prepare the nation for the coming of the Messiah, by the rite of baptism, which rite was symbolical of the cleansing from sin to be affected by the death of Messiah. The question arises here, Why was JESUS baptized, since He did not require repentance?

Matthew 3:15 will give us one answer: "For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." This signifies that JESUS wished to identify Himself with the Jewish nation and take upon Himself the obligation of keeping the whole law. See Galatians 4:4. From the Gospel of John we learn that another reason for JESUS' baptism was that John the Baptist might have a revelation of His deity. John 1:31; John 1:33.

Since CHRIST came as a representative of humanity and since His mission was to destroy the works of the devil, it was fitting that He should begin His ministry by a victory over the great adversary of the race. Matthew 4:1-25 records His great triumph. One writer has remarked that Satan did not corner CHRIST, but CHRIST cornered Satan.

II. The Ministry of the Messiah - Matthew 4:12-25, Matthew 5:1-48, Matthew 6:1-34, Matthew 7:1-29, Matthew 8:1-34, Matthew 9:1-38, Matthew 10:1-42, Matthew 11:1-30, Matthew 12:1-50, Matthew 13:1-58, Matthew 14:1-36, Matthew 15:1-39, Matthew 16:1-12

1. Starting point of ministry; first disciples; first works. Matthew 4:12-25.

2. The Laws of Messiah's Kingdom - the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 5:1-48, Matthew 6:1-34, Matthew 7:1-29.

3. Messiah's power manifested over disease, nature, demons, and death. Matthew 8:1-34, Matthew 9:1-35.

4. The sending out of the twelve apostles. Matthew 9:36-38, Matthew 10:1-42, Matthew 11:1.

5. John the Baptist's question. Matthew 11:2-30.

6. Opposition of Pharisees. Matthew 12:1-45.

7. Teaching in parables. Matthew 13:1-58.

8. Herod's opposition; feeding of 5000. Matthew 14:1-36.

9. Opposition from leaders in Judea and Galilee. Matthew 15:1-39, Matthew 16:1-12.

Matthew shows Galilee to be the starting point of JESUS' ministry in fulfillment of prophecy. Notice how often the expression "that it might be fulfilled" occurs in this Gospel. JESUS takes up John the Baptist's message; namely, the coming of the kingdom of Heaven. By the expression "Kingdom of Heaven" we mean GOD's rule in and through CHRIST. This was promised in the Old Testament, is represented now by the church, and will be triumphant at CHRIST's second coming.

Having proclaimed the nearness of His kingdom, JESUS explains its laws in that discourse known as the Sermon on the Mount. There we learn about the character of the members of that kingdom (Matthew 5:1-16), the principles governing it (Matthew 5:17-48, Matthew 6:1-34, Matthew 7:1-6), and requirements for entering it (Matthew 7:7-29).

Matthew now shows JESUS presenting His credentials to the nation; i.e., manifesting His power as a proof of His Messiahship. But though the miracles were signs of His deity and proofs of His mission, they were never performed for mere display or to satisfy curiosity, but for the relief of suffering humanity. We may regard His miracles as symbols of His saving power.

1. His power over disease symbolized His power over sin.

2. His power over demons was typical of the complete overthrow of Satan's kingdom.

3. His power over death reveals Him as the One who will quicken all the dead.

4. His power over nature shows Him as the One who shall deliver the whole earth from the curse.

JESUS has already chosen some disciples. Matthew 4:18-22. No doubt many more have gathered about Him. Out of these He chooses twelve to help Him in preaching the Gospel, and to train them for their future work as leaders of the church. For the purpose of confirming their message, He imparts the power to work miracles. Since the time of Gentile evangelization has not yet come, He limits their ministry to Israel. Matthew 10:6. The Jews' conception of the Messiah was that of a

mighty prince who would set up a great temporal kingdom. JESUS did not measure up to their ideals for He proclaimed the coming of a spiritual kingdom. Though John the Baptist's conception of the Messiah was a spiritual one, it is possible that he expected Messiah's kingdom to be set up immediately with power. Feeling disappointed in his expectations, and seeing no signs of the Messiah's delivering him from prison, he yields to doubt and despondency. But fortunately he takes his doubts to JESUS, who quickly confirms his faith.

Chapter twelve records the Pharisees' opposition to JESUS. Their reasons for opposing Him were as follows: His lowly origin; His consorting with sinners; and His opposing their traditions.

Matthew 12:1-50 describes opposition for the last-named reason. The Pharisees, though accepting the whole of the Old Testament, accepted as authoritative a mass of tradition which obscured the true meaning of the Scriptures. In Matthew 12:1-13 the Sabbath question is dealt with. By their traditional interpretation the Jewish teachers had made this day of rest a burden to man, whereas GOD had intended it to be a blessing.

Because His disciples plucked corn on the Sabbath, and because He Himself healed a man on that day, He was accused of breaking the law. In His answer our Lord taught that the Sabbath gives way before human necessity (Matthew 12:3-4; Matthew 12:12); that GOD desires practical goodness rather than outward observances (Matthew 12:7); and that He, as Lord of the Sabbath, had the right to decide how it should be kept (Matthew 12:8). In their bitterness to JESUS the Pharisees went the length of accusing Him of performing His works by the power of Satan, whereupon the Lord uttered a warning against blaspheming the Spirit.

Up to this point our Lord had been teaching in plain language, but on seeing the opposition to His message, He began teaching in parables when speaking of His Kingdom. He did this to prevent their distorting His words and using them against Him. See Luke 23:2. (A parable is a saying which teaches a heavenly truth by using an earthly illustration). His object in thus doing was to conceal the truth from the mocker and the opposer (Matthew 13:13-15), and to reveal it to the earnest seeker (Matthew 13:11; Matthew 13:16). The general truths taught in the parables are that during the absence of CHRIST, the whole world will not be converted, that all the Gospel seed sown will not bear fruit; that good and evil will continue side by side until the second coming of CHRIST. The parables are intended to show the growth and development of the Church during this dispensation and its relation to sinners, professors, and the world in general.

Chapter Matthew 15:1-20 records further opposition of the leaders towards JESUS. They accuse Him of transgressing their traditions, whereupon in stern language He rebukes them for burying the true interpretation of Scripture beneath man-made traditions. In response to their request for a sign (Matthew 16:1), He points them to signs of the times; i.e., the ripeness of the nation for judgment, the presence in their midst of preachers proclaiming the kingdom of GOD, and the working of the supernatural.

JESUS had already given them signs (Matthew 11:5), but they want something spectacular. Since CHRIST always performed His miracles for the relief of suffering humanity, He refuses their request.

III. The Claim of the Messiah - Matthew 16:13-28, Matthew 17:1-27, Matthew 18:1-35, Matthew 19:1-30, Matthew 20:1-34, Matthew 21:1-46, Matthew 22:1-46, Matthew 23:1-39

1. His claim before the disciples. Matthew 16:13-28, Matthew 17:1-27, Matthew 18:1-35, Matthew 19:1-30, Matthew 20:1-28.

2. His claim before the nation. Matthew 20:29-34, Matthew 21:1-46, Matthew 22:1-46, Matthew 23:1-39.

Thus far JESUS has not measured up to the people's ideal of the Messiah, for instead of proclaiming a temporal kingdom, He has been proclaiming a spiritual one. But though the people do not accept Him as Messiah, they consider Him a great prophet (Matthew 16:13).

Because of the people's attitude, JESUS does not make a public proclamation of His Messiahship, for to do so would lead the Jews to look for the setting up of an earthly kingdom and their deliverance from the Romans. Because of this He makes His claim in private to His disciples (Matthew 16:15-19) and forbids them to tell anyone that He is the Messiah (Matthew 16:20).

Following He makes known the means by which His kingdom is to be ushered in; namely, through His death and resurrection (Matthew 16:21). Peter, sharing the common views of the people cannot conceive of a suffering and dying Messiah and tries to dissuade JESUS from submitting to death. JESUS rebukes him, and teaches the disciples that before the crown comes the cross (Matthew 16:24-27).

Matthew 16:28 of the same chapter refers to the transfiguration, which was a forelearning of CHRIST's entering into His glory. The news of His coming humiliation and death has so disheartened the disciples that, in order to encourage them, He allows them to see Him for a short time in His glorified state, and to hear the voice of the Father approving His purpose. This takes place at the transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-27). Notice that He charges His disciples to maintain silence concerning this event in order not to raise false hopes among the people (Matthew 17:9). He later repeats the prophecy of His coming death (Matthew 17:23) in order to impress that fact on the minds of His disciples.

Though JESUS has not made a public proclamation of His Messiahship, it is necessary, in order that the scriptures be fulfilled, and that the nation have an opportunity of accepting or rejecting Him, that He take some kind of public claim. This took place at the triumphal entry in Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-16). But notice that this was not a warlike demonstration, but the peaceful entry of a King, "meek and sitting upon an ass and a colt the foal of an ass" (Matthew 21:5). As such it was not calculated to alarm the Romans who were always fearing an uprising, neither did it cause the nation at large to believe that JESUS was the great conquering Messiah they were expecting. Those who acclaimed JESUS at this time were mostly His disciples and those who had benefited by His ministry.

JESUS' claims are rejected by the nation as represented by the leaders (Matthew 21:15; Matthew 21:23; Matthew 21:32; Matthew 21:45-46; Matthew 22:15). Following this He foretells, in parables, the rejection of the Jewish nation by GOD and His turning to the Gentiles (the Parables of the Wicked Husbandman and the Marriage Supper). Matthew 23:1-39 marks JESUS' final break with the religious leaders, and His weeping over Jerusalem.

IV. The Sacrifice of the Messiah - Matthew 24:1-51, Matthew 25:1-46, Matthew 26:1-75, Matthew 27:1-66
1. Discourse concerning CHRIST's second coming. Matthew 24:1-41.

2. Judgments to take place at the second coming. Matthew 24:42-51, Matthew 25:1-46.
3. Betrayal, arrest, and trial of JESUS. Matthew 26:1-75.
4. The crucifixion. Matthew 27:1-66.

Concerning CHRIST's discourse in Matthew 24:1-41, we quote from Professor Moorehead:

"Two supreme objects occupy the field of this marvelous prophecy, one of which lies near to the Divine speaker, and the other remote from Him in point of view. But both are perfectly clear to His omniscient vision. The near is the fall of Jerusalem, the remote is His second advent. The first took place within forty years after the prediction - viz., 70 A. D.; the second is still future. The one was restricted to a very limited area, though it affected the whole world in its issues; the other embraces the planet.

"Some of the predictions apply to both these events but in different degrees. The fall of Jerusalem is insignificant in comparison with the coming of the Lord JESUS CHRIST. Yet there is a striking resemblance between these two events; the destruction of the Holy City prefigures the more tremendous scenes which are to accompany the advent of the Lord. The one answers to the other as type to antitype.

"To illustrate: In chapter Matthew 24:14, our Lord says, 'And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.' That this prediction was fulfilled before Jerusalem's destruction Paul attests. Colossians Matthew 1:6; Matthew 1:23. The like world-wide proclamation is immediately to precede the final. Revelation Matthew 14:6-7. So likewise the unequalled tribulation spoken of in Matthew 24:21 appears to belong to both the events referred to. That scenes of suffering, horror and crime almost indescribable took place at the siege and capture of Jerusalem by the Roman army is well known. But that another 'time of trouble,' an unparalleled tribulation immediately precedes the advent is certain. (Compare Matthew 24:21; Matthew 24:29; Daniel 12:1-2; Jeremiah 30:7). Israel and the Gentiles alike will be in the tribulation."

Notice the Judgments mentioned in Matthew 24:42-51, Matthew 25:1-46.

- Judgment on unwatchful servants (Matthew 24:42-51);
- judgment on unprepared servants (Matthew 25:1-13);
- judgment on unprofitable servants (Matthew 25:14-30);
- judgment on the nations (Matthew 25:14-46).

Isaiah's prophecy of the suffering Messiah (Isaiah 53:1-12), finds its fulfillment in Matthew 26:1-75, Matthew 27:1-66.

V. The Triumph of the Messiah. Matthew 28:1-20 The Gospel of Matthew reaches a happy consummation in the resurrection of the Messiah from the dead.

All power is given to Him in Heaven and in earth, for this reason He is able to send His followers into all the world with the message of salvation. Thus are fulfilled the words of Isaiah, "Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him; he

shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles . . . he shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." Isaiah 42:1; Isaiah 42:4. "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth." Isaiah 49:6. For the purpose of fixing the contents of Matthew in his mind, let the student learn the following chapter and word outline:

Matthew 1:1-25. Genealogy and birth.

Matthew 2:1-23. Flight.

Matthew 3:1-17. Baptism.

Matthew 4:1-25. Temptation.

Matthew 5:1-48, Matthew 6:1-34, Matthew 7:1-29. Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 8:1-34, Matthew 9:1-38. Miracles.

Matthew 10:1-42. The Twelve Sent Forth.

Matthew 11:1-30, Matthew 12:1-50. Discourses.

Matthew 13:1-58. Parables.

Matthew 14:1-36, Matthew 15:1-39. Feeding the multitude.

Matthew 16:1-28. Peter's Confession.

Matthew 17:1-27. Transfiguration.

Matthew 18:1-35, Matthew 19:1-30, Matthew 20:1-34. Discourses.

Matthew 21:1-46. Triumphal Entry.

Matthew 22:1-46. Plots of Enemy.

Matthew 23:1-39. Woes.

Matthew 24:1-51, Matthew 25:1-46. Second Coming.

Matthew 26:1-75. Betrayal.

Matthew 27:1-66. Crucifixion.

Matthew 28:1-20. Resurrection.

02.02. MARK

MARK

Theme: Written for a military people (the Romans), the Gospel of Mark gives a brief narrative of that three years' campaign of the Captain of our salvation, carried on and completed for the deliverance of our souls and the defeat of Satan, by His (CHRIST's) labors, sufferings, death, resurrection and final triumph. In this narrative, JESUS is set forth as the mighty Conqueror.

Author: Mark was the son of Mary, a woman of Jerusalem, whose house was open to the early Christians. Acts 12:12. He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary tour. The contemplation of the dangers facing the party as they journeyed to unknown regions. seems to have unnerved him so that he returned to Jerusalem. Acts 13:13. Later, Barnabas' proposal to take Mark with him on their second tour brought about a sharp contention between him and Paul. The apostle, viewing the matter from the standpoint of good judgment, thought it best not to take with them one who had proved himself to be a "slacker." The sympathetic Barnabas thought that Mark should have an opportunity to redeem himself, so separating himself from Paul he took him with him to Cyprus. Acts 15:36-41.

John Mark justified the confidence of Barnabas in him, for later records show that he made a success in the ministry. Peter makes favorable mention of him (1 Peter 5:13) and Paul changed his opinion concerning him to the extent of writing: "Take Mark and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry." 2 Timothy 4:11. The abundant testimony of the Church Fathers makes it fairly certain that Mark accompanied Peter to Rome as his interpreter, and that he compiled this Gospel from Peter's preaching. His Roman name - Mark - seems to point to the fact that he was brought up in Roman circles. These facts would make him peculiarly fitted to write a Gospel for the Romans. To Whom Written: The following facts will indicate how the Gospel is adapted to the Romans in particular:

1. The briefness of the Gospel, its vivid depicting of scenes marked by energy and movement reveal it as peculiarly adapted to such an active, energetic people as the Romans. The main characteristic of this book is the constant recurrence of the words "straightway," and "forthwith," conveying the idea of military activity and promptness. One writer has remarked that the style of Mark resembles that used by Julius Caesar in his history of some of his campaigns.
2. Money is reduced to Roman currency.
3. Roman division of time is used.
4. Explanation of Hebrew customs are given (Mark 7:3-4). This shows, at least, that the book was written to Gentiles.
5. There are practically no references to O. T. prophecies after Chapter 1. The Romans, who were unacquainted with those Scriptures would not be likely to understand them.

Contents:

Since Mark contains the same matter as Matthew (though in different arrangement), we will not give an extended outline. We suggest that the student read the entire book and then learn the following analysis:

Keeping in mind that Mark is portraying CHRIST as the mighty Conqueror, let us go through the Gospel and see how this thought is carried out.

First of all, Mark describes the coming of the great Conqueror by recording - 1. His name and heralding. Mark 1:1-8.

2. His initial victory over Satan. Mark 1:9-13.

3. The first proclamation of His kingdom. Mark 1:14-20.

4. His first works of power. Mark 1:21-45, Mark 2:1-12.

He describes the conflict of the mighty King by exhibiting Him as - 1. Enlisting subjects for His kingdom - apostles, publicans and sinners, the sick and needy. Mark 2:13-28, Mark 3:1-35.

2. Explaining the growth of His kingdom. Mark 4:1-34.

3. Conquering nature, demons, disease and death. Mark 4:35-41, Mark 5:1-43.

4. Opposed by the people (Mark 6:1-6), Herod (Mark 6:7-56), and by the scribes and Pharisees (Mark 7:1-23; Mark 8:10-21).

He exhibits the Conqueror claiming His right to the kingdom of power and presents Him -

1. Teaching His followers how victory was to be won in His kingdom - by suffering and death. Mark 8:31-38; Mark 10:28-45.

2. Claiming His right to the kingdom, in Jerusalem, - by His triumphal entry (Mark 11:1-11), - by His cleansing of the temple (Mark 11:15-19), - by His defeat of those leaders who questioned His authority (Mark 11:27-33, Mark 12:1-44), - by the prophecy of His coming again in glory (Mark 13:1-37).

Mark shows how CHRIST prepares for the setting up of His kingdom by His - 1. Preparing for death. Mark 14:1-72.

2. Yielding to death. Mark 15:1-47.

Finally he shows JESUS taking the kingdom (spiritual) by His - 1. Conquering death. Mark 16:1-14.

2. Sending His followers to proclaim His triumph. Mark 16:15-20.

02.03. LUKE

LUKE Theme: Luke's Gospel gives us a historical narrative setting forth JESUS CHRIST as the perfect Divine Man.

Luke wrote especially for the Greek people whose mission was to improve man morally, intellectually, and physically, and whose ideal was the perfect man. Just as the Jews failed to attain to salvation through the law and its ceremonies, so the Greeks failed to do so through their culture and philosophy.

Education was for the Greeks what the law was for the Jews - it was their schoolmaster to bring them to CHRIST. Seeing their inability to save humanity by their learning, many philosophers among the Greeks saw that their only hope of salvation was the coming of a divine man. Luke, to meet the need of the Greek, sets forth JESUS as the perfect Divine Man, the representative and Saviour of humanity.

Author: Luke, a companion of Paul the apostle. Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24; 2 Timothy 4:11. Christian writers of the early centuries tell us that Luke wrote the Gospel that bears his name; that it was substantially the same which he and Paul had preached among the Greeks; and that it was produced and published among the Greek people. To Whom Written: The Gospel of Luke is addressed to the Greeks in particular. Dr. Gregory tells us that it is suited to the Greeks in various ways:

1. In authorship. It is thought that Luke was a Greek. He was a highly educated man, indicated by the fact that he was a physician and by the style of his writing.
2. In plan. It is considered the most orderly history of the sayings and doings of JESUS. By careful reading we find passages that are written by a thoughtful man to a meditative and philosophic people.
3. In style. Luke's Gospel is peculiarly attractive because of its poetic eloquence. Note the songs given in the first chapter. Throughout the Gospel we find the discourses of JESUS recorded in direct contrast to Mark's Gospel which laid emphasis on the deeds of JESUS rather than His teachings.
4. Its omissions. Portions that are distinctly Jewish are omitted. Little or nothing is said about Old Testament prophecy.

Contents:

I. The Introduction. Luke 1:1-4.

II. The Advent of the Divine Man. Luke 1:5-80, Luke 2:1-52, Luke 3:1-38, Luke 4:1-13.

III. His Ministry in Galilee. Luke 4:14-44, Luke 5:1-39, Luke 6:1-49, Luke 7:1-50, Luke 8:1-56, Luke 9:1-50.

IV. His Ministry in Perea. Luke 9:51-62, Luke 10:1-42, Luke 11:1-54, Luke 12:1-59, Luke 13:1-35, Luke 14:1-35, Luke 15:1-32, Luke 16:1-31, Luke 17:1-37, Luke 18:1-43, Luke 19:1-28.

V. His Crucifixion and Resurrection. Luke 19:29-48, Luke 20:1-47, Luke 21:1-38, Luke 22:1-71, Luke 23:1-56, Luke 24:1-53.

Luke contains many incidents and discourses found in Matthew and Mark. We shall deal, therefore with only those details that are not found in the other Gospels.

I. The Introduction. Chap. Luke 1:1-4 As was common with Greek historians, Luke begins His Gospel, with a preface. He tells us that many in his time had undertaken to write an account of CHRIST's ministry (Luke 1:1). Dissatisfied evidently with these attempts, he undertakes to write an account of the Lord's life "in order."

He states his qualifications for undertaking such a work; namely, the fact of his having received his information from eyewitnesses (Luke 1:2), and his having a perfect knowledge of all the facts of the Lord's life and ministry from the very beginning (Luke 1:3). He then dedicates his Gospel to one Theophilus for the purpose of confirming his faith (Luke 1:4).

II. The Advent of the Divine Man. Luke 1:5-80, Luke 2:1-52, Luke 3:1-38, Luke 4:1-13 Under this heading we shall study the following details that are not found in the other Gospels:

1. The annunciation of John the Baptist's birth. Luke 1:5-25.
2. The annunciation of JESUS' birth to Mary. Luke 1:26-38.
3. Mary's visit to Elisabeth. Luke 1:39-55.
4. The birth and childhood of John the Baptist. Luke 1:56-80.
5. The journey to Bethlehem. Luke 2:1-7.
6. The message of the angels. Luke 2:8-20.
7. The circumcision of JESUS and His presentation in the temple. Luke 2:21-39.
8. JESUS' childhood. Luke 2:40-52.
9. The genealogy of JESUS. Luke 3:23-38.

Luke opens his narrative with an event not found in other Gospels - the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist. His father, who was a priest, was performing his ministry in the temple, which at that particular time was the offering up of incense. The office of incensing was held so honorable that no one was allowed to perform it twice, since it brought the officiating priest nearer the Divine presence in the Holy of Holies than any other priestly act. The rising cloud of incense was a symbol of Israel's prayers arising to GOD. While engaged in this ministry an angel appeared and announced the coming birth of a son. It should be noted that this annunciation was the first recorded Divine message since the time of the prophet Malachi (about 400 B. C).. Whom did Malachi's last message mention? Malachi 4:5. Whom did the angel mention in his message? Luke 1:17.

Then follows the annunciation to Mary. Note that Matthew records the annunciation to Joseph. Matthew gives the story from Joseph's viewpoint; Luke, from Mary's. The fact that Luke is telling the story from Mary's viewpoint, furnishes us with a good reason for believing that the genealogy given by Luke is that of Mary.

Mary, probably at the suggestion of the angel (Luke 1:36) visits her cousin Elisabeth. In response to her salutation, she gives utterance to that beautiful song commonly known as the "Magnificat" (Luke 1:46-55). This song is based on Old Testament scriptures. (See Genesis 30:13 and 1 Samuel 2:1-10)

John the Baptist is born. Contrary to the usual custom among the Jews, he is not named after a dead relative. His name means "The Lord is gracious" - an appropriate name for the forerunner of the Lord of grace. Zacharias' tongue is loosened, and, filled with the Spirit of GOD, he praises GOD in that song commonly known as the "Benedictus" (Luke 1:68-79).

Matthew records the simple fact that CHRIST was born at Bethlehem. Luke goes into details, and records the circumstances that led to Joseph and Mary's taking the journey to that town; namely, a Roman registration for taxing, which required the presence of each person in his native town. Who preached the first Gospel message (Luke 2:10-12)? Who were the first evangelists (Luke 2:15-17)?

Paul tells us in Galatians 4:4 that GOD's Son was made "under the law;" i.e., He fulfilled its requirements. So we see His parents in Luke 2:21-24 fulfilling the law in regard to Him in the performance of two ceremonies - that of circumcision and presentation to the Lord. By the former, He became a member of the Jewish nation, and by the latter Jehovah's claim upon Him as the first-born of the family was recognized. (See Exodus 13:2-15; Exodus 34:19).

Luke is the only Evangelist who records any incident of JESUS' childhood. He does so in order to emphasize His humanity - to set Him forth as the "Seed of the woman." (Genesis 3:15). He wishes to show that though JESUS was the Son of GOD, He grew in a natural way (Luke 2:40; Luke 2:52). He records JESUS' visit to Jerusalem in order to show that JESUS, from childhood, had a consciousness of His Divine mission (Luke 2:49).

Luke, like Matthew, records a genealogy of JESUS. But on examination it will be seen that they differ.

Matthew traces JESUS' descent through David's son Solomon (Matthew 1:6); Luke, through David's son Nathan (Luke 3:31). The simple explanation is that the one in Matthew is that of Joseph; that in Luke, of Mary.

Matthew shows that JESUS had the legal right to the throne of David; this makes Him David's heir. But since the Messiah must be the seed of David according to the flesh, and since JESUS' was not Joseph's real son it follows that His natural right to the throne must be proved. Since it is Luke's purpose to emphasize the humanity of CHRIST - to set Him forth as the Seed of woman, and since He describes the birth of CHRIST from Mary's viewpoint, we conclude that the genealogy given in Luke is that of Mary, given to prove that JESUS had the natural right to David's throne by being born of a virgin of the house of David.

It may be objected that Luke 3:23 shows Joseph to be the son of Heli and that Mary is not mentioned. This may be explained by the fact that among the Jews the descent was not reckoned through the wife, so that Joseph, though really the son-in-law of Heli, is reckoned as his son.

III. His Ministry in Galilee. Luke 4:14-44, Luke 5:1-39, Luke 6:1-49, Luke 7:1-50, Luke 8:1-56, Luke 9:1-50 This section contains the following details peculiar to Luke:

1. The first rejection at Nazareth. Luke 4:14-30.
2. The miraculous draught of fishes. Luke 5:1-11.
3. The raising of the widow's Son. Luke 7:11-18.
4. The anointing of JESUS by a sinful woman. Luke 7:36-50.
5. The women who ministered to the Lord. Luke 8:1-3.
6. Zeal without knowledge rebuked. Luke 9:49-50.

Chapter Luke 4:14-32 records JESUS' first rejection at Nazareth.

After the successful beginning of His ministry (Matthew 4:23-25), He returns to His native town. Sabbath finds Him attending the synagogue. After the reading of the Scriptures it was the custom to call upon some teacher or preacher, if one were present, to deliver a message. (Compare Acts 13:15). The leader, having heard of JESUS' ministry, calls Him to the pulpit.

Taking as His text Isaiah 61:1, our Lord sits down (after the manner of oriental teachers) and preaches that text as being fulfilled in Him. The people at first are moved by His gracious words, but later stumbled over the fact that He was only the Son of Joseph.

How could He, the son of a carpenter, be the fulfillment of the Scriptures? JESUS reminds them that a prophet is usually not accepted in his own country and illustrates this by citing two Old Testament incidents where, GOD's prophets, unappreciated in general by Israel, were received by the Gentiles. The action of the people shows that they understood this as an implied reference to their rejection and the Gentiles' reception.

Luke supplements Matthew's account of the calling of the first disciples (Matthew 4:17-22) by recording a miracle in that connection - namely the miraculous draught of fishes. Such a revelation of CHRIST's power brings Peter to his knees in deep conviction of his own sinfulness. This miracle may be considered as typical of Peter's great draught on the day of Pentecost. (Compare Luke 5:10; Acts 2:41). A funeral at Nain gives the Lord an opportunity to reveal Himself as the One who "shall wipe away all tears." Revelation 21:4.

While JESUS was seated in the house of a Pharisee, a woman who had been a great sinner, comes and anoints Him. The Pharisee, who considered the touch of such a woman defiling, is surprised. JESUS, in the parable of the Two Debtors, teaches Simon that the attentions of this woman were bestowed upon Him in gratitude for sins forgiven. Simon, He said, had not given Him these attentions. This statement is a thrust at the self-righteous Pharisee for it implies that he had not felt the burden of sin as the woman had, and therefore felt no gratitude. In chapter Luke 8:1-3, Luke gives us an insight into the ministry of women in relation to the Lord. He mentions some who

helped to support Him. Our Lord teaches His disciples a lesson in tolerance (Luke 9:49-50). We here see the other side of the "beloved disciple's" character. Though loving and gentle, he was at the same time zealous, and had a hatred for anything he believed to be wrong.

IV. His Ministry in Perea. Luke 9:51-62, Luke 10:1-42, Luke 11:1-54, Luke 12:1-59, Luke 13:1-35, Luke 14:1-35, Luke 15:1-32, Luke 16:1-31, Luke 17:1-37, Luke 18:1-43, Luke 19:1-28 In this section we notice the following details peculiar to Luke:

1. JESUS' rejection by the Samaritans. Luke 9:51-56.
2. The sending forth of the Seventy. Luke 10:1-24.
3. The Good Samaritan. Luke 10:25-37.
4. Martha and Mary. Luke 10:38-42.
5. The Parable of the Rich Fool. Luke 12:13-21.
6. A lesson on repentance. Luke 13:1-10.
7. The healing of the woman with an infirmity. Luke 13:11-17.
8. Discourse On the strait gate. Luke 13:23-30.
9. Herod's warning. Luke 13:31-35.
10. Healing of the man with dropsy. Luke 14:1-6.
11. True hospitality, and the parable of the Great Supper. Luke 14:12-24.
12. Discourse on counting the cost. Luke 14:25-35.
13. Parables of grace and warning. Luke 15:1-32, Luke 16:1-31.
14. A lesson on faith. Luke 17:1-10.
15. The ten lepers. Luke 17:11-19.
16. Parables of the Unjust Judge and of the Pharisee and the Publican. Luke 18:1-14.
17. The conversion of Zaccheus. Luke 19:1-10.
18. Parable of the Talents. Luke 19:11-28. The prejudice of the Samaritans toward the Jews is seen in their refusal to receive JESUS because His face was set towards Jerusalem. John and James, the "Sons of Thunder" (Mark 3:17), in an overzealous spirit, wish to emulate Elijah's example in calling down fire from Heaven. This zeal without knowledge receives a severe rebuke from the Master.

Besides sending forth twelve apostles, JESUS sent forth a large party of seventy disciples. Such a large number was necessary because the time for the Lord's departure was at hand, and the large territory of Perea was yet unevangelized. Their instructions are similar to those of the Twelve.

JESUS takes advantage of a question put to Him by a Jewish lawyer to strike a blow at Jewish prejudice. In answer to the man's question, Who is my neighbor? JESUS utters the parable of the

Good Samaritan, choosing as an example of the perfect neighbor, one of a race hated by the Jews. The lesson contained in the parable is that anybody in need, be he Jew or Gentile, is our neighbor.

Chapter Luke 10:38-42 gives a little insight into the social life of JESUS, describing two intimate friends of His - Martha and Mary. It is interesting to note here how much Luke emphasizes the ministry of women in his Gospel. (See also Luke 1:26-55; Luke 2:36; Luke 8:1-3). In the parable of the Rich Fool the Lord sounds out a warning against covetousness.

JESUS is referred to certain calamities which had befallen the Galileans, the inference drawn from these calamities being that they were the result of sin on the part of the people (Luke 13:1-10). Our Lord taught His informants that exceptional suffering was not necessarily the result of exceptional sin, and that they, if they did not repent, would perish. To show the longsuffering of GOD toward Israel and toward sinners in general, He utters the parable of the Barren Fig Tree.

JESUS' method of dealing with merely speculative questions is seen in Luke 13:23-30. The disciples raise the question as to the number of those who will be saved. Instead of giving a direct answer JESUS warns them to see to it that they themselves were found in the narrow way that leads to life everlasting.

Herod, ruler of Galilee and Perea, fearing that the immense crowds that JESUS was drawing might cause a disturbance in his territory, employs some Pharisees to warn JESUS to leave his dominions. Seeing through the scheme of the "Fox," JESUS assures him that he has nothing to fear from Him since He is working for the relief of humanity. Herod need not seek to kill Him; Jerusalem, "the prophet's slaughter-house" will do that. At the remembrance of Jerusalem, CHRIST breaks forth into tears, and prophesies its destruction (Luke 13:31-35). Our Lord, teaching a lesson on true hospitality, counsels His hearers to invite to their feast the poor and needy, for which acts of charity, they would be rewarded at the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:12-14). On hearing of that resurrection, one of the company breaks forth into an exclamation of joy at the happy prospect of the coming of GOD's kingdom (Luke 14:15). JESUS takes advantage of this utterance to teach, that blessed as that event will be, many will refuse the invitation to the Great Supper (Luke 14:16-24).

Luke 14:25-35 show how JESUS treated prospective disciples. He did not promise them a life of ease, but required the most severe self-denial. His measure of a disciple was the cross. In answer to the taunt of the Pharisees charging Him with consorting with sinners, JESUS utters the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son, to teach the love of GOD toward sinners (Chap. 15). Notice that all these parables contain the same line of thought; namely, loss, restoration, and joy.

Luke 16:1-31 contains the parables of the Unjust Steward, and the incident of the Rich Man and Lazarus. The former is intended to teach Christians foresight in relation to money matters. A dishonest steward is about to be dismissed from his position.

Unwilling to work and ashamed to beg, he resolves to use his master's money in such a way that it will ensure him a happy future. The application is as follows: Christians are stewards; i.e., they are entrusted with their Master's property. The time is coming when their stewardship will cease (through death). Because of this, they should so Use their money on earth (by supporting

missions, etc)., that when they reach heaven, they may enjoy an eternal interest on their investments. (Compare Luke 16:9 and 1 Timothy 6:17-18). The incident of the Rich Man and Lazarus shows the fate of those who, unmindful of the sufferings of their neighbor, live entirely for self. An injunction to forgiveness on the part of CHRIST (Luke 17:1-4) leads the disciples to desire a deeper spiritual experience - namely, an increase of faith (Luke 17:5). They have in mind the quantity of faith; JESUS emphasizes its quality, showing the efficacy of faith as small as a mustard seed. Then He proceeds to teach them that though they might have the faith that would pluck up sycamine trees, they were not to glory in it, but rather consider themselves unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10); for to believe GOD is only their duty.

Luke's Gospel is the Gospel of humanity. He emphasizes in his choice of parables, GOD's love for all mankind.

It is interesting to note how he stresses JESUS' love for the Samaritans - a people hated and despised by the Jews. (See Luke 9:52-56; Luke 10:25-37). In the incident of the healing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19), he uses the ingratitude of the Jewish lepers as a dark background for the faith and thankfulness of one Samaritan (Luke 17:17-18). To teach importunity in prayer, JESUS utters the parable of the Unjust Judge. The lesson is:

If an unjust judge will be moved by the importunity of a woman in whom he feels no interest how much more will GOD, the righteous judge, respond to the prayers of those whom He loves. The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican is a fine illustration of Romans 3:19-21.

Chapter Luke 19:1-10 records the conversion of a member of that despised class - the publicans. The publicans were Jewish tax-gatherers in the employ of the Roman government. Because of their serving the Jews' oppressors, and the fact that they were usually dishonest, they were hated by the people. Zaccheus manifested the genuineness of his conversion by an offer of complete restitution of all he acquired by dishonest means. Is the parable of the Talents (Luke 19:11-28) the same as that parable found in Matthew 25:14-30? Compare them.

V. His Crucifixion and Resurrection. Luke 19:29-48, Luke 20:1-47, Luke 21:1-38, Luke 22:1-71, Luke 23:1-56, Luke 24:1-53 We shall notice here the following details peculiar to Luke:

1. CHRIST's weeping over Jerusalem. Luke 19:41-44.
2. Strife among the disciples for chief positions. Luke 22:24-30.
3. Warning to Peter. Luke 22:31-34.
4. Instructions to disciples. Luke 22:35-38.
5. JESUS before Herod. Luke 23:8-12.
6. The lamentation of the women of Jerusalem. Luke 23:27-31.
7. The repentant thief. Luke 23:39-43.
8. The walk to Emmaus. Luke 24:13-35.
9. The command to tarry. Luke 24:49. With what feelings does the Deity pronounce judgment? Our Lord's weeping over Jerusalem will answer the question. He prophesies its destruction by the

Romans and attributes its coming calamities to spiritual ignorance - "Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." In spite of their teaching by the Lord, the disciples were still dull of understanding. The fact of their striving among themselves for the greatest position in the kingdom shows that they had not clearly apprehended the true nature of that kingdom. The thought of a temporal kingdom still occupied their minds. JESUS takes advantage of this to bring home a lesson in humility.

Chapter Luke 22:31-32 gives us a glimpse behind the scenes and shows us the cause of Peter's great fall. His over-confidence had made it necessary for GOD to permit Satan to sift him. (Compare Satan's temptation of Job). We also learn why Peter rose again after his fall - CHRIST prayed for him.

We offer a paraphrase of the words found in Luke 22:35-38. JESUS as much as says to the disciples, "When you went forth the first time, I was popular with the people, and consequently, you, My representatives lacked nothing. But conditions have changed. The nation is against Me; I am about to be crucified - to be 'reckoned among the transgressors.' Therefore you need not expect to be received kindly by the people. For this reason, provide yourselves with purse and scrip. As symbolical of the spiritual warfare you are about to be engaged in, provide yourselves with swords...."

Pontius Pilate, having examined JESUS, and having learned that He is of Galilee, sends Him to Herod, the ruler of that province. Herod has heard of JESUS' miracles and is anxious to witness His power. He treats Him as He would treat a magician whose tricks he wished to witness. JESUS has nothing to say to this cruel ruler and maintains a dignified silence. Whereupon Herod and his soldiers mock and send Him back to Pilate. On His way to the cross, JESUS is met by the women of Jerusalem who bewail Him. He tells them that He does not ask for their pity; rather, they are the ones to be pitied. For He asks them, if the innocent suffer, as He is about to, what will happen to the guilty (Luke 23:31)?

Matthew tells that both thieves, crucified with CHRIST, railed on Him. Luke adds one more detail and tells us that one of these repented. They offer a type of two classes of humanity in relation to CHRIST. Both were sinners, both condemned by the law, both paying the penalty of the law, and both were without hope, yet one is saved and the other lost. The destiny of these men was decided by their attitude to the innocent One hanging on the cross.

Luke 24:13-35, we get an insight into the feelings of the disciples before the resurrection of CHRIST. The death of their Master had proved a great blow to them. Though He had prophesied His resurrection, they had not grasped fully the truth that the Messiah may first suffer and then rise again, so influenced were they by the Jewish idea that the coming of the Messiah could be nothing but a glorious one. In an exposition of the Old Testament that causes the hearts of the two disciples to burn, JESUS, who at first concealed His identity from them, showed them how it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer before entering into His glory.

Luke concludes his Gospel with the record of JESUS' command to the disciples to tarry, and His ascension. The record of events repeated in the first chapter of the book of Acts, is written by the same Author.

02.04. JOHN

JOHN John 1:1-51, John 2:1-25, John 3:1-36, John 4:1-54, John 5:1-47, John 6:1-71

Theme: The Gospel of John is an accumulation of testimony to prove that JESUS is the CHRIST, the Son of the living GOD. It was written by John in response to an appeal from the Church - already possessing the other Gospels - for the deeper truths of the Gospel, and written with a view to furthering the spiritual life of the Church. It contains the substance of John's preaching to the Church of those spiritual truths that he had received from the Lord. John's purpose in this Gospel is to present CHRIST to all Christians as the incarnate Word of GOD.

Author: John the apostle. Reliable writers of the early centuries tell us that John wrote his Gospel at the end of the first century, and that it was substantially the embodiment of his preaching of the deeper truths that he had learned from intimate communion with CHRIST. Of all the apostles, John enjoyed the closest intimacy with the Master. He belongs to the inner circle consisting of himself, Peter and James, the members of which alone JESUS permitted to be present during the great crises of His ministry - such as the transfiguration and the agony in Gethsemane. It was John who leaned upon his Master's breast during the Passover Supper; he it was, who, when the other disciples had fled, followed his Lord to the judgment (John 18:15); of all the apostles, he was the only one who stood by the cross to receive the Lord's dying message. John 19:25-27. This intimacy and communion with the Lord together with a half century of experience as a pastor and evangelist, well qualified him to write that Gospel which contains the most spiritual and sublime teachings concerning the person of CHRIST. To Whom Written: To the Church in general. The Gospel of John was written many years later than the other Gospels. The latter, speaking generally, contained an evangelistic message for unspiritual men; they were missionary Gospels. After churches had been established by the labors of the apostles, there came a request from Christians everywhere for a statement of the deeper truths of the Gospel. To meet this demand, John wrote his Gospel. That this Gospel was written primarily for Christians may be seen by the following facts:

1. The teaching it contains concerning some of the profoundest themes of the Gospel - the preexistence of CHRIST, His incarnation, His relation to the Father, the person and work of the Holy Spirit - indicate that it was written for spiritual people.
2. The writer takes for granted that those to whom he is writing are acquainted with the other three Gospels, for he omits most of the well-known incidents of the Lord's life, excepting, of course, those relating to the passion and resurrection, without which no Gospel could be complete.

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IV. CHRIST's Manifestation to His Disciples. John 13:1-38, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33, John 17:1-26.

V. CHRIST's Humiliation and Glorification. John 18:1-40, John 19:1-42, John 20:1-31, John 21:1-25.

I. The Foreword. John 1:1-18

1. CHRIST's manifestation in eternity. John 1:1-5.

2. CHRIST's manifestation in time. John 1:6-18. The Synoptics begin their history by recording the earthly origin of CHRIST. Matthew and Luke both record His virgin birth.

John takes it for granted that Christians everywhere are acquainted with these facts, and omitting the record of His earthly origin, describes His heavenly origin. Although John does not give a direct account of the virgin birth of CHRIST, he refers indirectly to it in John 1:14.

Notice the name by which John refers to CHRIST - the Word.

CHRIST is called the Word, because, as our words are the expression of our thoughts and character, so CHRIST was the expression of GOD's thought for us and of His character, yea, of His very essence.

How did the world receive its Creator (John 1:10)? Which may be called the saddest verse in the Bible (John 1:11)? What was given to those who did receive Him? To what event does verse John 1:14 refer (Compare Php 2:6-8)? What did John say the disciples received (John 1:16; Compare Colossians 1:19; Colossians 2:9)? What contrast is brought out in verse John 1:17?

II. CHRIST's Manifestation to the World. John 1:19-51, John 2:1-25, John 3:1-36, John 4:1-54, John 5:1-47, John 6:1-71.

1. John the Baptist's testimony. John 1:19-34.

2. Testimony of the first disciples. John 1:35-51.

3. The first miracle and first cleansing of the temple. John 2:1-25.

4. Interview with Nicodemus. John 3:1-21.

5. John's testimony to his disciples. John 3:22-36.

6. JESUS' ministry in Samaria. John 4:1-42.

7. The healing of the nobleman's Son. John 4:43-54.

8. The healing of the impotent man, followed by discourse. John 5:1-47.

9. Feeding of the multitude; discourse on the Bread of Life. John 6:1-71.

John, like the other evangelists, mentions the ministry of John the Baptist. Since the Baptist was attracting large crowds by his ministry and was ministering a rite which was new to the Jewish religion; - namely, baptism, - the Jewish authorities felt it their duty to investigate the claims of this

new preacher. They sent a delegation to question him as to his identity and authority. He humbly confesses that he is nothing but a voice crying in the wilderness (John 1:23); that his mission is that of the engineers of that day before the coming of an Eastern king; namely, the preparing of the roads before him (John 1:23); that his baptism was only symbolical and typical of the baptism to be administered by the Messiah (John 1:26-27; John 1:33). The next day, John, like a true minister of the Gospel points his hearers a way from himself to JESUS, saying "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He then reveals one of his reasons for baptizing the Lord; namely, that he might have a revelation of His deity (John 1:33).

There is no jealousy in John the Baptist. The next day he repeats his message and encourages his followers to follow JESUS. One of the two who heard the message was Andrew, the brother of Peter. The other whose name is not mentioned may have been the author of the Gospel, John.

Andrew shows the reality of his spiritual experience by leading his brother Peter to the Messiah. JESUS, seeing in this last-named person one who was destined to become the first living stone of His church, gives him the prophetic name of Cephas (John 1:42). JESUS then calls Philip, who with enthusiasm, testifies to Nathanael that he has found the Messiah, JESUS of Nazareth. Nathanael can hardly believe that the Messiah has come out of the despised Galilean town. of Nazareth, but he is quickly convinced by JESUS' supernatural knowledge that He indeed is the King of Israel. A marriage at Cana gives JESUS an opportunity to manifest His power. His attendance at such a function shows His love for mingling with the people and sanctifying their gatherings with His presence. The joy of this marriage in particular was in danger of being marred and the giver of the feast being disgraced, for the wine had run out.

Mary, knowing her Son's miraculous powers, and desiring with natural motherly pride to see Him manifest them, informs Him of the fact that there is no wine, this reminder carrying with it the indirect suggestion that He supply some.

JESUS tenderly reminds her that though He has been subject to her until the time of the beginning of His ministry, their relations are now changed (John 2:4). He is now guided by His heavenly Father, who has timed every event in His life. The Jews had allowed the spirit of commercialism to violate the sanctity of the temple precincts. For scattered over the Court of the Gentiles, were sellers of sacrificial animals and moneychangers. Such a desecration of His Father's house causes JESUS to drive out these merchants from the temple.

Since only a prophet or the Messiah Himself could cleanse the temple, the leaders ask the Lord to prove His authority by a sign. He gives them the sign of His death and resurrection. His words respecting this sign were later made the basis of a false charge. Matthew 26:61.

JESUS' miracles had gained Him many followers (John 2:23), but JESUS did not trust a faith that depended merely on signs.

One of those who had been impressed by His miracles was a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus. He begins his conversation with JESUS by acknowledging that He is a teacher come from GOD. JESUS ignores this compliment and abruptly tells Nicodemus that he must be born again. It seems that Nicodemus was convinced that the kingdom of GOD that JESUS was proclaiming was about to be ushered in and therefore wished to join it. Our Lord therefore explains that he must be born into it. Nicodemus, sharing the common Jewish view, believed that the kingdom would come with

outward show. JESUS shows him that it comes by the mysterious working of the Spirit in the heart (John 3:8).

Nicodemus believed, together with other Jews, that the kingdom was to be ushered in by the glorious appearing of the Messiah. JESUS taught him that it must be ushered in by the death of the Messiah (John 3:14).

John the Baptist's disciples, seeing the crowds leaving him and going to JESUS, complain to their master (John 3:25-26).

John tells them that this is entirely according to GOD's plan. He was only the friend of the bridegroom; i.e., the one, who according to Jewish custom asks for the hand of the bride and arranges the marriage. His mission was to lead the bridegroom (the Messiah) to the bride (the Jewish nation) (John 3:29); this done, his mission was ended (John 3:30).

John 4:1-54 records JESUS' interview with a woman of Samaria. Dr. Torrey draws an interesting contrast between her and Nicodemus: A woman. A Samaritan. A prostitute. Came at noon day. Confessed JESUS at once. Brought a whole city to CHRIST. A man. A Jew. A teacher of Israel. Came at night. A secret disciple. Brought (?) to CHRIST. A common need - the Holy Spirit. John 3:5; John 4:14 : "There is no difference."

John 5:1-47 records the beginning of JESUS' conflicts with the Jews respecting His divine claims. He is criticized for healing a man on the Sabbath day. He defends Himself by affirming that GOD His Father is associated with Him in the work of healing on the Sabbath (John 5:17). Because of that fact, and because He did nothing apart from the Father (John 5:19), He was perfectly justified in healing suffering humanity on the Sabbath.

JESUS then makes some astounding claims. He claims to be the raiser of the dead (John 5:21-29); the One having equal honor with the Father (John 5:23); the Judge of all men (John 5:22; John 5:27). As witnesses to His claims He appeals to John the Baptist (John 5:33); to His works (John 5:36); to the Father (John 5:37); to the Scriptures (John 5:39); to Moses (John 5:46). The feeding of the multitude recorded in chapter 6 marks the culmination of CHRIST's popularity. So convinced are the people that He was the Prophet they had been so long waiting for, that they attempt to make Him King. But JESUS refuses this honor for He has come not to reign but to die. In the discourse following this incident (John 6:26-65), JESUS strikes a death blow at His popularity, for while they believe that their salvation is to be brought about by a glorious Messiah, He teaches them that it was to be effected by a dying Messiah.

He first of all rebukes them for seeking for the natural food instead of the spiritual (John 6:26-27). On their asking Him what they were to do in order to obtain this true food, He replies that they were to believe in Him (John 6:28-29). The people then ask for a sign in order that they might believe Him (John 6:30), and they mention the fact that Moses gave them the manna from Heaven (John 6:31). Our Lord tells them that the manna was simply a type of Himself, the true Manna (John 6:32-33; John 6:35). He tells them that as Israel rejected the earthly manna so they have rejected the heavenly (John 6:36). But though the nation at large has rejected Him, there is a faithful remnant that will come to Him (John 6:37), and these He will not cast out, for it is His Father's will to give them everlasting life (John 6:38-40). The Jews murmur that the Son of a carpenter should claim to come down from Heaven (John 6:42).

JESUS tells them that a divine revelation is necessary to convince them of His deity (John 6:44-45). He then shows how they may obtain eternal life - by eating His flesh and drinking His blood; i.e., by believing in Him as the atonement for their sins. The Jews do not understand this figurative language; they take it literally (John 6:52; John 6:60). JESUS then tells them that His words are to be taken not literally, but spiritually (John 6:63).

Notice the result of this discourse - a sifting of JESUS' disciples (John 6:60-71).

III. Rejection of CHRIST's Claims. John 7:1-53, John 8:1-59, John 9:1-41, John 10:1-42, John 11:1-57, John 12:1-50.

1. JESUS at the Feast of Tabernacles. John 7:1-53.

2. The woman taken in adultery. John 8:1-11.

3. Discourses on the Light of the World, and spiritual freedom. John 8:12-59.

4. The healing of the man born blind. John 9:1-41.

5. The discourse on the Good Shepherd. John 10:1-21.

6. JESUS at the Feast of the Dedication. John 10:22-42.

7. The raising of Lazarus. John 11:1-46.

8. The final rejection of CHRIST by the nation. John 11:47-57, John 12:1-50. The brethren of JESUS urge Him to attend the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem and manifest His works before the people; for they reason that if He really is the Messiah, He ought to make a public proclamation of His claims instead of lingering in an obscure Galilean town (John 7:1-5). As yet they did not believe His claims, although the time came when they did. Acts 1:14.

JESUS replies that the hour for His going to Jerusalem had not yet come. He later goes to the feast in secret (John 7:10), in order to avoid the caravans of Galilean pilgrims who would recognize Him and perhaps make a public demonstration. As JESUS begins teaching in the temple, the people are astonished at His preaching, for they know that He had not passed through their theological schools (John 7:15). JESUS explains that His teaching comes direct from GOD (John 7:16), and if anyone be really willing to do GOD's will he will find that His teaching is true.

JESUS then defends His sincerity, showing that He is not seeking His own glory (John 7:18).

Looking into the hearts of the people, He sees their hatred for Him, and accuses them of the violation of Moses' law (John 7:19). He then defends His action in healing the man on the Sabbath day (John 7:21-24; compare John 5:1-47). Seeing JESUS speaking so boldly, some of the people wonder whether the rulers have accepted Him (John 7:26). Others cannot believe that He is the Messiah for they know the place of His residence and parents (John 7:27). JESUS acknowledges that they know these things, but He tells them that they are ignorant of the fact that He was sent by GOD (John 7:28).

Some of the people, remembering JESUS' miracles, are inclined to believe that He is the Messiah (John 7:31). The Pharisees hearing this, send officers to arrest Him (John 7:32). Whereupon JESUS tells them that their desire to get rid of Him will shortly be gratified (John 7:33); but that the

time will come when they will seek a Deliverer and will not find any (John 7:34).

During the Feast of Tabernacles, it was customary for the priests to go to the Pool of Siloam and draw water in a golden pitcher, at the same time chanting Isaiah 12:1-6. The water was then poured out upon the altar. This was considered commemorative of the water given in the wilderness, and typical of the future outpouring of the Spirit upon Israel. It was probably at this point that JESUS arose and proclaimed Himself the Fountain of living waters, the Rock smitten that the whole world might drink (John 7:37-39). On hearing this claim many people acknowledged that He was the Messiah (John 7:40), but others objected that He could not be He for He came from Galilee. The officers of the temple, impressed and awed by JESUS' majestic utterances, do not arrest Him (John 7:46). The Pharisees rebuke them, saying that none of the rulers had believed on Him, but only the ignorant people (John 7:47-50). At this point Nicodemus defends the Lord, whereupon the Pharisees angrily affirm that according to the Scriptures, no prophet came out of Galilee (John 7:52). This was untrue for both Jonah and Elijah were from that region. The scribes and Pharisees bring before JESUS a woman caught in adultery and ask JESUS whether or not she should be visited with the penalty laid down in Moses' law. This was an attempt to involve the Lord in a dilemma. If He ruled that the woman should be freed it would be a contradiction of His statement that He had not come to destroy, but to fulfill the law of Moses. Matthew 5:17. If He ruled that the woman should be stoned according to the law, it might be considered a contradiction of His statement that He had come not to judge, but to save sinners. Our Lord settles this question by transferring the case to the court of their conscience. At that court, His questioners found out that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

JESUS then proclaims Himself the Light of the world - a claim truly Divine (John 8:12). The Pharisees object that His own testimony does not prove the truth of His claims (John 8:13). JESUS answers that He is able to bear witness of Himself for He has a perfect consciousness of His Divine origin and nature (John 8:14).

He then refers them to His Father's testimony (John 8:18); i.e., to the miracles by which GOD had confirmed His Son's word. JESUS then accuses the Pharisees of ignorance of the Father (John 8:19). Though they reject Him, the day will come when they will seek a Messiah (John 8:21), but will not find one. He tells them that after His crucifixion and resurrection, when the Spirit should have been outpoured and mighty works wrought in His name - then they would have abundant evidence of His deity (John 8:28).

These sayings caused many of the people to believe on Him (John 8:30), but JESUS, seeing the weakness of their faith exhorts them to continue in His teaching, which teaching would set them completely free from sin (John 8:31-32).

Some of the disciples take offense at this saying, for as Jews, they considered themselves free men (John 8:33). JESUS explains that the servitude He referred to was the servitude of sin (John 8:34-37). He then shows that they were not Abraham's seed, because they did not perform Abraham's works; namely, the work of faith (John 8:37-40).

He proves the falsity of their claim to be the children of GOD, by showing them they have rejected GOD's representative (John 8:42). He tells them that their repugnance to the truth and the hatred in their hearts show them to be the children of the devil (John 8:44). He challenges them to either

convict Him of sin or believe His claims (John 8:46). On His promise of exemption from spiritual death to those who believe on Him, He is accused of exalting Himself above Abraham (John 8:53).

JESUS tells them that Abraham foresaw His coming (John 8:56). This statement astonishes the Jews who cannot understand how He and Abraham could ever have met (John 8:57).

JESUS then affirms His preexistence (John 8:58). The Jews understand this to be a claim to deity, and attempt to stone Him as a blasphemer (John 8:59).

JESUS' healing of a blind man on the Sabbath day again draws upon Him the hatred of the leaders. After an attempt to prove JESUS a sinner, they are confounded by the arguments of the poor, unlettered man who had been healed (John 9:1-41).

Possibly to draw a contrast between the false shepherds who had cast out the healed man from the synagogue (John 9:34), and the true shepherds, JESUS utters the discourse recorded in John 10:1-21. Read Ezekiel 34:1-31 in this connection. In John 10:1-2, He has reference to true pastors, who enter the fold through Himself the door; meaning those who have a Divine call. In John 10:8-9; John 10:12, JESUS evidently refers to false messiahs and prophets who had misled the people and caused their destruction. At the Feast of the Dedication, the Jews come to JESUS asking Him whether He is the CHRIST (John 10:23-24). JESUS tells them that His works and words have proved Him to be the CHRIST (John 10:25), but they have not believed for they are not of His sheep; they have not obeyed the voice of the Divine Shepherd (John 10:26-27).

JESUS then describes the security of His sheep, and concludes with a claim of oneness with GOD (John 10:30). The Jews attempt to stone Him for claiming to be equal with GOD. JESUS vindicates His right to call Himself the Son of GOD by an Old Testament reference. He maintains that in those days rulers and judges were sometimes referred to as gods (John 10:34-35; Psalms 82:6). Therefore if unjust judges, who were temporary representatives of GOD were called gods, why should not He who was the righteous and eternal Judge call Himself the Son of GOD (v. 36)? He tells them that they need not believe Him if His works are not divine (John 10:37-38). The sensation caused by the raising of Lazarus (Chap. 11) brings the priests and Pharisees together in council for the purpose of determining on JESUS' death (John 11:47).

Caiaphas wishes to put JESUS out of the way for political reasons. He argues that if JESUS is allowed to continue His ministry, His popularity will cause a popular tumult which will excite the suspicion of the Romans, and which will result in the loss of power and office on the part of the rulers, and calamity on the part of the nation.

He therefore reasons that it is better for one man to suffer, rather than the whole nation (John 11:49-50). This is what He meant by His words in verse John 11:50. But GOD meant them as a prophecy of the atoning death of the Messiah (John 11:51-52).

John 12:1-50 records two events mentioned by the other Evangelists: the anointing of JESUS, and the triumphal entry.

During the Feast of the Passover, a request of some Gentiles to see Him (John 12:20) calls forth a prophecy of His death which was to bring salvation to the Gentile world (John 12:24). He then marks out the path which His disciples must follow - that of self-denial and even death (John 12:25-26).

Though the thought of a shameful death is utterly repulsive to Him, yet He does not shrink from it (John 12:27). He announces His death to be the judgment of the world (John 12:31), the defeat of Satan (John 12:31), and the means of attracting sin-sick humanity (John 12:32).

Chapter John 12:37-41 records the general result of CHRIST's ministry to Israel - rejection of the light followed by spiritual blindness on their part. The remaining verses of this chapter contain JESUS' last appeal to the nation.

IV. CHRIST's Manifestation to His Disciples. John 13:1-38, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33, John 17:1-26

1. Farewell discourses. John 13:1-38, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33, John 17:1-26.

2. Intercessory prayer. John 17:1-26.

Chapter John 13:1-17 contains the supreme example of CHRIST's humility. With full knowledge of His deity (John 13:3), He stoops to the most menial of tasks, the washing of His disciples' feet. The reason for this act is explained by Him (John 13:13-17); it was done in part as an example to His followers that they should humble themselves and serve one another. And they needed that lesson. (See Luke 22:24).

There is room for much doubt whether our Lord intended to establish an ordinance of literal foot-washing for all time, particularly since it was the custom of the day for the host to provide water and towel, with a servant to wash his guests' feet, in view of the fact that open sandals were worn and naturally the feet would become soiled by the journey over the dirty street or dusty road. A much deeper meaning seems to lie here, because what CHRIST did was altogether in view of His cross and His subsequent session as our High Priest and Advocate at the Father's right hand. "When Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father" (John 13:1), knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God; He riseth from supper and laid aside His garments and took a towel and girded Himself" (John 13:3-4). The context here, then, clearly shows that what He did was a type of His future redemptive and priestly work. We take it that He here enacted symbolically this ministry of His to keep clean the feet (the daily walk) of His saints. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2:1).

He says to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Peter surely knew that CHRIST was about literally to wash his feet, but the Lord indicates that the meaning of this act, he would not understand till later in his experience.

Peter, after his terrible lapse in denying CHRIST, knew then what CHRIST's words, "I have prayed for you that your faith fail not," really meant, when he was cleansed and restored to fellowship with his Lord.

After the announcement of His betrayal, and the exit of the betrayer, JESUS reveals the spirit that is to characterize the relations of His disciples to one another during His absence; namely, love (John 13:34). This fact that they love one another is to be the badge of Christian discipleship (John 13:35).

After hearing about the Lord's coming death and departure, the disciples are saddened. It is then that He speaks the comforting words mentioned in John 14:1-31. As a cure for their troubled

condition, He suggests three things:

- that they have faith in Him (John 14:1);
- the fact that He is going to prepare a place for them (John 14:2);
- the fact that He is coming again (John 14:3). In reply to Thomas' question as to the way to heaven (John 14:5), he replies that He Himself is the way. He is the way because He is the image and the Revealer of the Father (John 14:7; John 14:9). His complete union with the Father is shown by the fact that even the words He spoke and the works He wrought were through the direct power of the Father. And such was to be their union with Him that the disciples were to perform the same works (John 14:12). This was to be accomplished through prayer (John 14:13).

Obedience to His commandments and love toward Him would result in His sending to them the Comforter, who was now dwelling with, but who would later be in them (John 14:16-17); it would also result in the Father and the Son manifesting Themselves to them (John 14:21-25). In John 14:26 He explains the ministry of the Spirit in relation to the disciples. He makes His last legacy to His disciples - His peace (John 14:27-28). In the next chapter JESUS explains the relation of the disciples to Him during His absence - a vital, organic union typified by a vine and its branches. He shows how this true vine is kept clean and fruitful; namely by taking away unfruitful branches, and purging the sound branches (John 15:2).

They have already been purged by His teaching (John 15:3), but He exhorts them to abide in Him in order to maintain this vital union (John 15:4-6). He shows them how their prayers may be answered; by abiding in Him, and His words abiding in them (John 15:7).

If they bear fruit two results will follow:

- the Father will be glorified, - they will prove themselves to be true disciples (John 15:8).

He exhorts them to continue in His love (John 15:9), this to be accomplished by keeping His commandments (John 15:10).

Unity among themselves is to be maintained by the spirit of love (John 15:12-13). By keeping His commandments, they come into a closer relationship with Him that of friends (John 15:15). Contrary to the usual order, He, the teacher has chosen them His disciples (John 15:16). He has chosen them for a specific purpose that of bearing fruit and enjoying a peculiar fellowship in prayer with the Father (John 15:16). The remaining verses of John 15:1-27 reveal the attitude of the world toward the disciples. In order that they may not be thrown into consternation and discouragement when persecutions arise, He tells them what to expect from the world (John 16:1-4). They are sad at His leaving them, but it is necessary that He go in order that the Comforter might come (John 16:7). For while He is in the flesh, He can be present only in one place at a time, but seated at the right hand of the Father and sending forth the Spirit, He can be present with everyone of His followers, "even unto the end of the age."

He then explains the threefold ministry of the Spirit in relation to the world:

- He will convict the world of the fact that unbelief in Him is a sin;

- He will reveal the fact that He, the Crucified, is the righteous One; though the evil may prosper and the righteous suffer, - He will convince the world that there is a judgment to come that will set things right (John 16:8-12).

He then explains the ministry of the Comforter in relation to the disciples (John 16:12-15). JESUS tells them that His departure in death will make them sad but that they will see Him again and their mourning will be turned to rejoicing (John 16:16-22).

They would see Him again first after His resurrection; second, with the eye of faith; and finally, face to face.

After His ascension, it would not be necessary to make their requests to Him (John 16:23), neither would it be necessary for Him to ask on their behalf (John 16:26), for they would have direct access to the Father (John 16:23; John 16:27).

John 17:1-26 records the great high priestly prayer of JESUS. We give a simple outline of this prayer:

I. Prayer for Himself. John 17:1-5.

1. For His own glorification.

II. Prayer for His disciples. John 17:6-19.

1. For preservation. John 17:11.

2. For sanctification. John 17:17.

III. Prayer for all believers. John 17:20-26.

1. For unity. John 17:21-22.

2. For their presence with Him. John 17:24 .

V. CHRIST's Humiliation and Glorification. John 18:1-40, John 19:1-42, John 20:1-31, John 21:1-25

1. The betrayal and arrest. John 18:1-18.

2. The trial before Caiaphas and Pilate. John 18:19-40, John 19:1-16.

3. The crucifixion. John 19:17-42.

4. The resurrection. John 20:1-10.

5. The appearances of JESUS to His disciples. John 20:10-31, John 21:1-25.

JESUS is first brought before Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas for a preliminary hearing (John 18:19-23). He is questioned as to His doctrine because they believed that He had been spreading dangerous secret teachings. JESUS defends Himself by asserting that all His teaching has been done openly and in public (John 18:20-21). He is then sent to the high priest for the formal trial, which is described by the other writers.

After His condemnation for blasphemy (Matthew 26:65), JESUS is led to Pilate for the execution of the sentence. The Jews evidently hope that Pilate will ratify their sentence without asking

questions, but he is in no mood to gratify the desire of the priests whom he heartily despised. He tells them to judge Him according to their law; he does not care to judge religious cases (John 18:31). But since the power of inflicting capital punishment had been taken away from the Jews years before, they could not now execute the sentence of death (John 18:31).

JESUS had been accused of declaring Himself king. Luke 23:2. This was a serious offense in the eyes of the Romans. Pilate therefore questions JESUS concerning His kingdom (John 18:33-35). Our Lord makes it clear that His kingdom is a spiritual one, not a temporal one (John 18:36) and that the members of His kingdom are those whose hearts are open to the truth (John 18:37).

Pilate makes several attempts to release JESUS, but the determination of the Jews to crucify Him, is stronger than his determination to release Him, and upon the Jews' threatening to report him to the emperor, he yields (John 19:12-13).

John, in his account of the crucifixion, mentions some details additional to those found in the other Gospels; namely, Pilate's writing of the accusation (John 19:19-22); the parting of JESUS' garments (John 19:23-24), the committing of His mother to John (John 19:26-27), the two utterances on the cross (John 19:28; John 19:30) and the piercing of JESUS' side. Sometimes the bones of crucified criminals were broken in order to hasten death. In JESUS' case this was not necessary for He was already dead. A fulfillment of prophecy was involved in this incident (John 19:36-37). The fact that JESUS had died so soon, seems to show that it was spiritual sufferings and not physical, that caused His death, for persons crucified usually lingered for about three days (See Mark 15:44). Physicians tell us that the water and blood issuing from JESUS' side indicated a broken heart.

Note how John, in his description of the empty tomb is careful to mention sufficient details to refute the false report that the disciples had stolen JESUS' body. Matthew 28:11-15.

We shall notice here the appearances of JESUS after His resurrection.

1. To Mary Magdalene. John 20:11-18.
2. To the apostles, Thomas being absent (John 20:19-23). In order to convince the fearful and unbelieving disciples of the reality of His resurrection, JESUS shows them His wounds. He then gives them their commission (John 20:21), their equipment (prophetically and symbolically, John 20:22), and their authority (John 20:23). Note that the last mentioned verse refers to church discipline. (Compare Matthew 18:15-18).
3. To the apostles, Thomas being present (John 20:24-29). Though loyal in character (John 20:11-16), Thomas is skeptical. He will not believe until he sees. His unbelief had evidently delayed the disciples' going into Galilee. Matthew 28:7. Though a skeptic, Thomas' heart is honest; he wants to know the truth. JESUS meets his desire, and Thomas becomes as intensely believing as he was once unbelieving.
4. To the Seven at the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-25). After the miraculous draught of fishes and the meal, JESUS gives Peter his commission as shepherd of His sheep. The thrice-repeated question may refer to Peter's three denials. Verses John 21:20-24 of the same chapter were written by John to correct a false impression that had been produced among the disciples by JESUS' words to Peter (John 21:22). It was believed that JESUS meant that John should not die

(John 21:23). John shows those words did not mean that he should not die, but that, if JESUS willed that John should tarry till He comes, it was none of Peter's concern.

02.05. ACTS

ACTS Acts 1:1-26, Acts 2:1-47, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-37, Acts 5:1-42

Theme: The book of Acts gives the history of the establishment and growth of the Christian church, and of the proclaiming of the Gospel to the then known world according to CHRIST's command and by the power of His Spirit. It is a record of CHRIST's ministry as it was continued through His servants. Leon Tucker suggests the following key words:

- Ascension,

- Descension,

- Extension. The ascension of CHRIST is followed by the descension of the Spirit, and the descension of the Spirit is followed by the extension of the Gospel.

Author: Luke. As we consider the dedication of the book to Theophilus (Acts 1:1; compare Luke 1:3), the reference to a former treatise (Acts 1:1), its style, the fact that the author was a companion of Paul as shown by the fact that portions of the book are written in the first person (Acts 16:10), and that this companion accompanied Paul to Rome (Acts 27:1; compare Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24; 2 Timothy 4:11), we conclude that the Acts was written by Luke. Ancient writers bear out this fact. To Whom Written: It was written in particular to Theophilus, a Christian gentleman, but in general for the whole church.

Contents:

I. The Church of Jerusalem. Acts 1:1-26, Acts 2:1-47, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-37, Acts 5:1-42, Acts 6:1-15, Acts 7:1-60, Acts 8:1-4.

II. The Transition Period. The church of Palestine and Syria. Acts 8:5-40, Acts 9:1-43, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 11:1-30, Acts 12:1-23.

III. The Church of the Gentiles. Acts 12:24-25, Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28, Acts 15:1-41, Acts 16:1-40, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-28, Acts 19:1-41, Acts 20:1-38, Acts 21:1-17.

IV. Closing Scenes in Paul's Life. Acts 21:18-40, Acts 22:1-30, Acts 23:1-35, Acts 24:1-27, Acts 25:1-27, Acts 26:1-32, Acts 27:1-44, Acts 28:1-31.

I. The Church of Jerusalem. Acts 1:1-26, Acts 2:1-47, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-37, Acts 5:1-42, Acts 6:1-15, Acts 7:1-60, Acts 8:1-4.

1. Introductory chapter. Acts 1:1-26.

2. The outpouring of the Spirit. Acts 2:1-13.

3. Peter's sermon and its results. Acts 2:14-47.

4. The healing of the lame man, and Peter's sermon. Acts 3:1-26.

5. Peter and John before the council. Acts 4:1-22.
6. The first prayer meeting. Acts 4:23-31.
7. The consecration of the early church. Acts 4:32-37.
8. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5:1-16.
9. The arrest of Peter and John. Acts 5:17-42.
10. The first church difficulty and its settlement. Acts 6:1-7.
11. The ministry of Stephen. Acts 6:8-15.
12. Stephen's discourse before the council. Acts 7:1-60.
13. The first persecution of the church. Acts 8:1-4. The book of Acts really begins at Acts 2:1-47, which chapter describes the outpouring of the Spirit and the empowerment of the Church. Acts 1:1-26 is simply introductory and describes events leading up to the great event of the Day of Pentecost. To what writing does the author refer in Acts 1:1?

What does he say concerning JESUS in the same verse? Which is mentioned first, "do" or "teach"? When did JESUS give commands unto the apostles through the Spirit (Acts 1:2; compare Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:44-53; John 20:19-23)?

Mention one of the "infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3) of CHRIST's resurrection. Luke 24:39-43.

What command was then given (Acts 1:4)? When did the Father promise the Holy Spirit? Joel 2:28. When did JESUS promise Him? John 14:16-17; John 15:26; John 16:7-15. Did JESUS mention the exact day on which the Spirit would be outpoured (Acts 1:5)? Why not? (Compare Mark 13:37).

What question did the disciples ask at this time (Acts 1:6)? Had the kingdom been taken from Israel? Matthew 21:43. Did JESUS answer this question directly? Will the kingdom ever be restored to Israel? Romans 11:25-27.

When? Matthew 23:39; Luke 21:24; Romans 11:25; Acts 3:19-20; Zechariah 12:10.

What must take place before that event? Acts 1:8; Acts 15:14; Romans 11:25. Where was the ministry of the apostles to begin and end (Acts 1:8)? In what city does the book of Acts begin? In what city does it end?

What Old Testament scripture should be quoted with the last-named verse? Zechariah 4:6.

What happened after JESUS had given His commands to the apostles? From what mountain did JESUS ascend (Acts 1:12)? On what mountain will He descend at His second coming? Zechariah 14:4.

What company is mentioned in verse Acts 1:13? Who is mentioned first? Why?

What other companies are mentioned in verse Acts 1:14? Was there a time when JESUS' brethren did not believe on Him? John 7:5. Who was the spokesman of the apostles (Acts 1:15)?

How many disciples were gathered at that time?

What Old Testament scriptures does Peter quote in relation to Judas? Psalms 69:25; Psalms 109:8.

Chapter Acts 1:18 seems to contradict Matthew 27:5, but the logical inference from a comparison of the two verses is that Judas hanged himself and then fell to earth. A true incident is recorded of a man who committed suicide by sitting on the window sill in the fourth story of a house and then shooting himself. One writer might have described the whole event; another might have recorded only the shooting; another might have mentioned just the fact of his fall from the window. All three would have been right.

Why was Peter anxious that the complete number of the apostles should be made up? Matthew 19:28; Revelation 21:14. What two qualifications were necessary for an apostle (Acts 1:21; Acts 1:23)? The two qualifications necessary for an apostle were: first, that he should have walked with the Lord during His earthly ministry; second, that he should have seen Him after His resurrection. The question has often been raised whether or not Matthias was divinely appointed as an apostle or whether Paul is the twelfth apostle. It is the writer's opinion that Matthias was the twelfth apostle. Though Paul was an apostle who had seen the Lord, and had been divinely appointed to his office, he did not possess the first qualification - that of having walked with the Lord during His earthly ministry. He did not bear that peculiar relation to JESUS that the Twelve did. (See John 15:27).

We now come to the events of the Day of Pentecost. The death and resurrection of CHRIST, and the outpouring of the Spirit represent the fulfilling of the types of three feasts which followed one another in succession; namely, Passover, (Leviticus 23:5), the Feast of the First-fruits (Leviticus 23:10-14), and the Feast of Pentecost (Leviticus 23:15-21). The Passover was typical of CHRIST's atoning death. Following the Passover, was the Feast of the Firstfruits, on which feast the first-fruits of the harvest were waved before the Lord. This ceremony was typical of CHRIST's resurrection as "the firstfruits" from the dead. From this feast fifty days were counted, and on the last day the Feast of Pentecost was celebrated (hence the name "Pentecost," meaning fifty). On this feast two loaves - the first loaves of the wheat harvest - were waved before the Lord, this being typical of the consecration of the first members of the church. Did the Holy Spirit inspire and empower people in Old Testament times? Numbers 11:26; 1 Samuel 10:6; Psalms 51:11; Micah 3:8. Were people filled with the Spirit before CHRIST died? Luke 1:15; Luke 1:41; Luke 1:67. Compare John 7:39.

What then was the difference between the imparting of the Spirit in those days and that in New Testament times? We will answer this question.

1. In Old Testament times the Spirit was given to only a few - to persons in some particular office, as prophet, priest or judge. Now He is poured out upon all flesh. Joel 2:28.
2. In those days the impartation of the Spirit was temporary; now He abides with us forever.

It is interesting to note that for every manifestation of the Spirit mentioned in the New Testament, a counterpart may be found in the Old, except for one - the speaking in other tongues. The inference drawn from this fact is that the speaking in other tongues is the manifestation of the Spirit that is

intended to be peculiar to this dispensation.

What three manifestations accompanied the outpouring of the Spirit? Was the speaking in other tongues for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to everyone in his own language (Acts 2:8-11, compare Acts 10:46)? In this instance languages were spoken, it was necessary to convince the unbelieving Jews that this was a genuine manifestation of the Spirit, and not mere gibberish, as some might have supposed.

What two effects did this manifestation produce on the hearers (Acts 2:12-13)? In what sense were the disciples drunk? Ephesians 5:18.

Note how Peter defended them against the charge of being drunk. The Jews did not generally eat or drink before the hour of prayer which came about 9 A. M.

How did Peter explain this manifestation (Acts 2:16-21)? Did Joel's prophecy find its complete fulfillment at this time? When will it be completely fulfilled in relation to Israel? Zechariah 12:10.

Who, in Old Testament times, prayed for this event? Numbers 11:29. In his sermon, does Peter declare immediately that JESUS is the Messiah (Acts 2:22, compare Acts 2:36)?

What does he do first?

What first proof does he offer of CHRIST's Messiahship (Acts 2:22)?

What second proof (Acts 2:24)?

What third proof (Acts 2:33)?

What was the effect of this sermon?

What did Peter tell the Jews to do (Acts 2:38)?

What two things would follow their repentance (Acts 2:38)?

What else did he tell them to do besides repenting (Acts 2:40)?

What can you say concerning the unity of the first Christians (Acts 2:44-47)?

What was the outward manifestation of their unity (Acts 2:45)? Do you believe that they were commanded to have all things in common, or was this act spontaneous, born of Spirit-inspired love for the brethren? Are we, under the conditions in which we now live, to follow literally their example, or are we to manifest the same Spirit?

Acts 3:1-26 records the first apostolic miracle.

Notice its characteristics. It was performed upon a man whose infirmity was incurable, and it was performed openly so it could be verified by all. Were the actions of the healed man in the temple very dignified? In New Testament times, when people wanted or received something from GOD the Lord, did they always consult their dignity? Luke 17:15; Luke 19:3-4. From whom did Peter point the people (Acts 3:12)? To whom did he point them (Acts 3:13)?

What contrast does he draw between GOD's treatment of CHRIST and their treatment (Acts 3:13-15)? As what kind of person did the Jews consider JESUS? Matthew 26:65; John 9:24.

What did Peter say had been done in His name (Acts 3:16)?

What was the logical conclusion from this fact, as to JESUS' character? John 9:33. Did the Jews have some excuse for their action in crucifying CHRIST (Acts 3:17)? Was this ignorance entirely excusable? John 12:37-38. Who was a type of the Jewish nation in this respect? 1 Timothy 1:13. Was the Jewish nation rejected because they crucified CHRIST, the Son, or because they rejected the Spirit, who testified of His resurrection and exaltation? Compare Acts 13:46.

What appeal did Peter make to the nation (Acts 3:19)?

What does he say will follow their repentance as a nation (Acts 3:19-20)? Will they ever repent? Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 23:39; Romans 11:26.

What is meant by "the restitution of all things" promised by the prophets? Isaiah Chap. 11; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Amos 9:11-15; Zechariah 14:16-21. Did the prophets ever predict the final restitution of the wicked and of the devil and his angels? To which prophets does Peter refer them?

Why should they be the first to believe the prophets (Acts 3:25)?

What privilege was Israel's (Acts 3:26; compare Matthew 15:24; Acts 13:46; Romans 1:16; Romans 15:8)?

Acts 4:1-37 records the first persecution of the apostles on the part of religious authorities.

What was the central theme of the apostles' preaching (Acts 4:2)?

Why did this grieve the Sadducees? Matthew 22:23.

What was the result of Peter's last sermon (Acts 4:4)?

What explains the boldness of an uneducated fisherman in the presence of the religious leaders (Acts 4:8)? Of what did Peter accuse them (Acts 4:10)? To what Old Testament scripture did he refer them (Acts 4:11, compare Psalms 118:22)? Where did Peter probably learn this scripture together with its meaning and application? Matthew 21:42.

What warning did he utter to them (Acts 4:12)? Whose image did the priests see in Peter and John (Acts 4:13)?

Why could they not take action against the apostles (Acts 4:14)?

What admission did they make (Acts 4:16)?

What should this admission have led them to do? When did the same people make a similar admission? John 11:47. Did their attempt to intimidate the apostles succeed (Acts 4:19-20)?

What was the effect of this miracle on the people (Acts 4:21)?

What did the opposition of the leaders lead the disciples to do (Acts 4:24)?

What psalm did they quote in their prayer (Acts 4:25-26; see Psalm 2)?

What three petitions did they make (Acts 4:29-30)?

How long was it before the answer came?

What three things happened (Acts 4:31)?

What can you say concerning the consecration of the early church (Acts 4:32-37)? Who is mentioned at this point as an example of a consecrated Christian (Acts 4:36)? Who wanted to have the same honor without paying the same price (Acts 5:1)?

What was probably at the bottom of their sin? 1 Timothy 6:10.

What sin did it lead to? Luke 12:1. In what sin did it finally culminate?

What was the penalty of their sin? Does God always punish similar offenders in this way, or did He punish these two as an example to others, and to show that the Church was a holy institution where no deceit would be tolerated?

What was the effect of this judgment on the Church (Acts 5:11)? On the people (Acts 5:13)? Would hypocrites care to join such a church?

What promise of the Lord found its fulfillment in Acts 5:15-16? John 14:12.

What effect did the ministry of Peter have on the Sadducees (Acts 5:17)?

How did they try to hinder the Word of life?

What did GOD have to say in the matter (Acts 5:20)?

What was making the Sadducees uneasy (Acts 5:28)? Was the blood of the Lord really upon them? John 11:47-53. Did Peter tell them that JESUS' blood was upon them (Acts 5:30-31)?

What two witnesses to JESUS' resurrection did Peter cite (Acts 5:32)? Who showed more wisdom than the other leaders (Acts 5:34)? Who was his distinguished pupil (Acts 22:3)? Was his advice wise as far as natural wisdom was concerned? In the above incident, Dr. Griffith-Thomas notices three representative forces - the spirit of error (the Sadducees);

- the spirit of compromise (Gamaliel);

- the spirit of truth (Peter).

Acts 6:1-15, Acts 7:1-60, Acts 8:1-40, Acts 9:1-43, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 11:1-30 Acts 6:1-15 records the first church difficulty and its solution.

Notice that this difficulty was unavoidable because the organization of the church had not increased in proportion to its growth (Acts 6:1). Notice also that it was serious, for it threatened a division in the church between those Jews brought up in Palestine (Hebrews) and those who had received a Greek education, or who had lived in Greek-speaking countries (Grecians). This difficulty was settled in the spirit of love and co-operation, and found its solution in increased organization - the instituting of a new order in the church ministry (deacons). To what ministry did the apostles wish to limit themselves (Acts 6:4)?

What three qualifications for a deacon are mentioned here (Acts 6:3)?

Note that though it is not recorded that these were called deacons, their ministry shows them to be such (deacon comes from a Greek word meaning servant). Who was the most distinguished of all these deacons?

How did the Lord witness to His pleasure at the amiable settlement of the difficulty (Acts 6:7)? Is it necessary for one to be an apostle in order to work miracles (Acts 6:8)? With whom did Stephen dispute?

Why were they not able to resist his arguments and preaching (Acts 6:10. Luke 21:15)?

Verbal arguments failing, to what did they resort (Acts 6:11-14)?

What was the charge against him? Did he look like a blasphemer (Acts 6:15)? In his defense, Stephen reviews Israel's history from Abraham to Solomon. Running through his discourse are the following thoughts:

1. Divine revelation is progressive. Stephen had been accused of preaching that the law of Moses would pass away (Acts 6:14).

Though his words had been misquoted and their meaning perverted, Stephen had evidently been preaching the passing of the age of law, and the ushering in of the age of grace. So he shows that GOD has always been giving new revelations of Himself.

- First He revealed Himself to Abraham, through the institution of the altar;
- to Moses in the burning bush and on Mount Sinai;
- then to Israel, through the tabernacle, - and finally through the temple.

Stephen shows that GOD's dwelling in the tabernacle and temple was only symbolical (Acts 7:48-49). GOD now dwells in and reveals Himself in reality through a new institution - the Church.

2. He had been accused of declaring that the temple would be destroyed (Acts 6:14). He shows that the temple is not the only holy place, but that GOD reveals Himself anywhere He finds an open heart.

- He revealed Himself to Abraham in Mesopotamia (Acts 7:2);
- to Joseph in Egypt (Acts 7:9-12);
- to Moses in Egypt (Acts 7:25), - and in the wilderness (Acts 7:30-33; Acts 7:38).

3. Israel has always rejected GOD's first offer of mercy, suffered for it, and then has accepted it the second time. They rejected Joseph and Moses the first time, but accepted them the second time (Acts 7:9-13; Acts 7:24-35). In like manner they have rejected JESUS but after they have suffered, they will accept His second offer. With what two charges against the Jewish leaders did Stephen conclude his discourse (Acts 7:51-52)?

What Old Testament Scriptures bear out these charges? Isaiah 63:10; 2 Chronicles 36:15-16; Nehemiah 9:30. Did JESUS bring a similar accusation against them? Matthew 5:12; Matthew 23:34-39. Who were the real breakers of the law (Acts 7:53)?

What vision did Stephen behold (Acts 7:55-56)?

What did he say? Who had uttered similar words before the same council? Matthew 26:64.

What were Stephen's last two utterances (Acts 7:59-60)? Who spoke similar words on a like occasion? Luke 23:34; Luke 23:46. Who is mentioned at this point? Was Stephen's prayer for his slayers answered in this young man? (Compare 1 Timothy 1:13).

Chapter Acts 8:1-4 records the first general persecution against the whole church. Saul appears here as the most active agent in this persecution. Borne along by his characteristic zeal and energy, he became the champion of Judaism against what he believed to be the heresy of Christianity. What did Saul think he was doing in persecuting the Christians? John 16:2. What was his moral and religious character? Php 3:5-6. In spite of his morality, zeal and sincerity, what was he while he was persecuting the Christians? 1 Timothy 1:13. Did GOD ever forgive him? Did Paul ever forgive himself? 1 Corinthians 15:9. Did this persecution hinder or advance the work of the Lord (Acts 8:4; Acts 8:19-21)?

II. The Transition Period: the Church of Palestine and Syria. Acts 8:5-40, Acts 9:1-43, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 11:1-30, Acts 12:1-23.

1. The Gospel in Samaria. Acts 8:5-25.
2. The Ethiopian eunuch. Acts 8:26-40.
3. The conversion of Saul. Acts 9:1-22.
4. Saul's ministry in Jerusalem and flight to Tarsus. Acts 9:23-31.
5. Peter's ministry in Lydda and Joppa. Acts 9:32-43.
6. Cornelius' vision. Acts 10:1-8.
7. Peter's vision. Acts 10:9-18.
8. The first sermon to the Gentiles. Acts 10:19-48.
9. Peter's defense for his preaching to the Gentiles. Acts 11:1-18.
10. The establishment of the church at Antioch. Acts 11:19-30.
11. Herod's persecution of the church. Acts 12:1-25. Who is the Philip mentioned in Acts 8:5 (Acts 21:8)? Who had first sown the seed in Samaria (John 4:1-54)?

What did Philip preach (Acts 8:5)? With whom does he stand in contrast in this respect (Acts 8:9)?

What accompanied Philip's preaching (Acts 8:6-7)?

What was the general effect of this great revival (Acts 8:8)? Was Simon really converted? (Compare Acts 8:21-23).

What kind of faith was his? (Compare John 2:23-24).

What motive evidently was at the root of his following Philip (Acts 8:18-19)? Had Simon seen manifestations of the Spirit's power (Acts 8:6-7)? Had he seen joy (Acts 8:8)?

What was there in the Baptism of the Spirit that impressed him (Acts 8:18-19)? Did Simon manifest true repentance (Acts 8:24)? Was he really sorry for his sin, or was he afraid of what might happen to him? Where was Philip told to go (Acts 8:26)?

Why was it necessary that he leave the scene of a great revival to go to a desert? Was anyone else willing to go out of his way to speak to one soul? John 4:1-54. By whom was Philip led (Acts 8:29)?

What very important question did he put to the eunuch (Acts 8:31)? Of what did the man feel the need?

How has JESUS supplied this need? John 16:13; Luke 24:45.

What passage of Scripture was the eunuch reading?

What could he not understand (Acts 8:34)? On what condition did Philip baptize the eunuch (Acts 8:37)?

What mode of rapid transportation was used here (Acts 8:39)? Of what is that typical? 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Had Saul's hatred for the Christians abated (Acts 9:1-4)? To what city was he about to extend his activities? Where was he when he saw the Lord? Whom did JESUS say that Saul was persecuting?

What does this teach concerning the believers' relation to the Lord? Matthew 10:40.

"It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks (or goads)." In the East, when an animal became refractory, the driver would prod it with an iron-pointed rod. The animal's movements then would increase the pain. JESUS wished to teach Paul that he was fighting against GOD, and that in so doing he was but hurting himself.

How long was it before Saul repented (Acts 9:6)?

How did he address JESUS? Did Saul really see the Lord? 1 Corinthians 9:1.

What could he always claim? Galatians 1:1. Who was now commissioned to minister to Saul? Was the Lord very specific in giving directions (Acts 9:11)?

What was Saul's occupation during the three days of his blindness (Acts 9:11)? To what three classes was Saul to preach (Acts 9:15)?

What was JESUS to reveal to Saul (Acts 9:16)?

What side of the ministry did JESUS always show first to prospective disciples? Luke 14:25-33. Does He show the other side? Matthew 19:28-29.

How did Ananias address Saul (Acts 9:17)?

What did Saul receive at this time? What did Paul immediately do (Acts 9:19)?

What happened between verses Acts 9:22-23?

Galatians 1:15-17. What was the attitude of the disciples to Paul when he came to Jerusalem (Acts 9:26)? Who befriended him at this time? In what danger was Paul (Acts 9:29)?

What vision did he have at this time (Acts 22:17-18)? Where was Paul sent (Acts 9:30)?

How long did he stay there (Acts 11:25)? About 8 years.

What was the effect on the church of the removal of its great persecutor (Acts 9:31)?

What was Peter's destination on this journey (Acts 9:32; Acts 9:43)?

What events happened during this time?

What actions of Peter in raising Tabitha resemble those of the Lord when He raised the ruler's daughter (Acts 9:40-42; compare Mark 5:40-41)?

What was the effect of Peter's miracles in Lydda and Joppa?

What was the main purpose of Peter's visit at Joppa (Acts 10:6)?

What three things are said concerning Cornelius' character (Acts 10:2)?

What was his position? To whom did JESUS prophesy the salvation of the Gentiles? Matthew 8:5-13. Was Cornelius a saved man (Acts 11:14)? But what in the condition of his heart made it sure that GOD would reveal CHRIST unto him (Acts 10:2; Acts 10:35)? Had Cornelius been praying along this line (Acts 10:31)?

What was he doing when he saw a vision (Acts 10:3)? Where does GOD usually meet men? Daniel 9:3; Daniel 9:21; Acts 22:17-18. At what hour was Cornelius praying (Compare Acts 3:1)?

Why did not the angels preach the Gospel to Cornelius instead of telling him where to find a preacher (Acts 10:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:18)? Did angels ever preach the Gospel? Luke 2:10-11.

Notice the meaning of Peter's vision. He was told by a voice from heaven to do something that was contrary to the Mosaic law (Acts 10:12-14). This was symbolical that the dispensation of law was to pass away. The fact that the command was repeated signifies that GOD's purpose was established. (Compare Genesis 41:32). The fact that the sheet was taken up into heaven signifies that the purpose symbolized by the sheet and animals was divine. Did Peter understand at the time the meaning of the vision (Acts 10:17)? When did he understand (Acts 10:22)? Whom did Peter take with him (Acts 10:23)? Why (Acts 10:45-46; Acts 11:12)?

What verse condemns saint worship of the Roman church (Acts 10:25)?

What did Peter say was the attitude of Jews toward Gentiles (Acts 10:28)? Did the Old Testament prophesy the salvation of the Gentiles? Psalms 22:27; Isaiah 49:6; Hosea 2:23. Did JESUS prophesy their salvation? Matthew 8:11; Matthew 21:23; John 10:16. Did the Old Testament ever teach that the Jew and the Gentile would belong to the same body? Ephesians 3:3-6.

What had Peter learned (Acts 10:34-35)?

What does verse Acts 10:38 say concerning JESUS? When was He anointed? Matthew 3:16. For what purpose? Compare Luke 4:18.

How did Peter know that (Acts 10:39)?

What happened as Peter was speaking?

What was the effect on the Jews who were with Peter?

What proved conclusively to these prejudiced Jews that the Gentiles had received the Spirit?

How were these Gentiles saved (Acts 15:9; compare Romans 10:17)?

What shows the prejudice of the Jews against the Gentiles (Acts 11:2-3)?

How did Peter defend himself?

How did he show that GOD put no difference between Jew and Gentile (Acts 11:15)?

What were the Jews compelled to admit (Acts 11:18)?

How far did those who had been scattered by Paul's persecution travel (Acts 11:19)? To whom did they limit their ministry (Acts 11:20)? To whom did some of them preach? (Note that the word "Grecians" is the same as the "Greeks"; i.e., Gentiles).

What was the spiritual condition of the church at Antioch (Acts 11:23)? Who was sent to preach to them?

What three things are said concerning him? Where did he go for help (Acts 11:25)?

How long did they remain at Antioch?

What characterized the disciples at that time (Acts 11:26)?

What gift of the Spirit was exercised at this time (Acts 11:28)?

What shows the liberality of the church at Antioch (Acts 11:29)? The Herod mentioned in Acts 12:1 is Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great. Matthew 2:1. Had James' martyrdom been indirectly prophesied? Matthew 20:22-23.

Why did Herod have Peter arrested? To what did the church have recourse (Acts 12:5)?

What happened the last time the church prayed during a crisis (Acts 4:31)?

What happened this time? Does it look as if those praying really expected an answer to their prayers (Acts 12:15)?

What may have been their condition? Luke 24:44.

What was GOD's judgment on Herod?

Acts 12:1-25, Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28, Acts 15:1-41

III. The Church of the Gentiles - Acts 12:24-25, Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28, Acts 15:1-41, Acts 16:1-40, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-28, Acts 19:1-41, Acts 20:1-38, Acts 21:1-17.

1. Paul's first missionary journey. Acts 12:24-25, Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28.

2. The council at Jerusalem. Acts 15:1-35.

3. Paul's second missionary journey. Acts 15:36-41, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-22.

4. Paul's third missionary journey. Acts 18:23-28, Acts 19:1-41, Acts 20:1-38, Acts 21:1-17.

NOTE: In the sections dealing with Paul's journeys, the use of a map is almost a necessity. Let the student so study each journey that he will be able to trace from memory Paul's itinerary, mentioning briefly what occurred at each place. Whom did Paul and Barnabas bring from Jerusalem at this time? Acts 12:25.

What relation was he to Barnabas? Colossians 4:10.

What church sent forth Paul and Barnabas?

How was this church started (Acts 11:19)? Who called these two to their ministry? Is it said that Mark was called also?

What may this explain (Acts 13:13)? Where does Paul stand in the list of workers at Antioch (Acts 13:1)?

Let us now trace together Barnabas' and Paul's journey step by step. If possible, have a map before you.

Antioch. This was the missionary headquarters of the Church.

Seleucia. This was the seaport of Antioch. Cyprus. An island in the Mediterranean Sea. The early home of Barnabas (Acts 4:36).

Salamis. What did the missionaries do in this town. (Acts 13:5)?

Paphos. Who was the first person the missionaries met at this town?

What did he attempt to do (Acts 13:8)? What struggle is exemplified here? 1 John 4:6; compare 2 Timothy 3:8. By what power did Paul pronounce judgment upon the sorcerer (Acts 13:9)?

What was the effect of this judgment (Acts 13:12)?

What change of name occurs at this point (Acts 13:9)?

Perga. Who has been leader up to this point (Acts 13:1; Acts 12:25)? Who assumes the leadership now (Acts 13:13)?

What happened at this town? How can we explain Mark's action? (Compare Acts 13:2). Did Mark ever "make good"? 2 Timothy 4:11.

Antioch in Pisidia The service of the Jewish synagogue consisted usually of prescribed prayers and the reading of the Law and the Prophets. If a preacher or teacher were present, he was called upon to give a message. (Compare Luke 4:16-21). Paul began his message with a review of Israel's history up to the time of David (Acts 13:17-25). He then showed that JESUS was of the seed of David (Acts 13:25-33). He based JESUS' claims as Son of GOD and Messiah on His resurrection from the dead (Acts 13:26-37). He then offered the Gospel to the Jews and warned them against rejecting it (Acts 13:38-41). Who were particularly anxious to hear the Gospel (Acts 13:42)?

How great a hunger for the Word of GOD was there (Acts 13:44)?

What were the feelings of the Jews on seeing the Word of GOD preached to Gentiles (Acts 13:45)? Of what prophecy was this attitude a fulfillment? Deuteronomy 32:21.

What was their attitude toward the Gospel (Acts 13:45)?

What did Paul and Barnabas say was necessary (Acts 13:46)? Why? Matthew 10:6; Matthew 15:24; John 4:22; Romans 1:16; Romans 15:8.

What did he say that their rejection of the Gospel would mean to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46; compare Romans 11:11)?

Though persecuted by them, what were always Paul's feelings toward his people? Romans 9:1-3; Romans 10:1.

How did the Gentiles receive the Gospel (Acts 13:48)?

Arguments failing, what did the Jews then do? What did Paul and Barnabas do (Acts 13:51)? Was there any command to this effect? Matthew 10:14.

Iconium What shows that Paul had not yet forsaken his people (Acts 14:1)?

What were the two results of his preaching in this town (Acts 14:2-3)?

How did the Lord confirm their preaching (Acts 14:3)?

What did their ministry cause in the city (Acts 14:4)?

What did they do when they heard of coming persecution (Acts 14:6)? Had they any command to this effect? Matthew 10:23.

Lystra Who was healed through Paul's ministry at this town?

Through what other apostles was an impotent man healed (Acts 3:1-6)?

What did the people wish to do to Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:13)? Which apostle had a somewhat similar experience (Acts 10:25-26)?

What talent of Paul is noted here (Acts 14:12)?

How lasting was their popularity (Acts 14:19)?

Derbe What did Paul do in this town (Acts 14:21)?

Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. What exhortation did Paul give to the disciples in these towns (Acts 14:22)?

What did he tell them to expect (Acts 14:22)?

What did he do before he left (Acts 14:23)?

Pisidia This is the province where Antioch was located.

Perga What had happened here before (Acts 13:13)?

What work was done in this town (Acts 14:25)?

Attalia - A seaport.

Antioch

Here the apostles reported their work. Be able to name from memory the different places visited by Paul on his first journey, mentioning briefly what occurred at each place.

Acts 15:1-41 records the convening of the first Christian council, called to settle a very important problem; namely, the relation of the Gentiles to the Jews and the grounds on which the former were to be saved. The two questions to be settled were: Are the Gentiles to keep the Law of Moses in order to be saved? And, are the Gentiles to have religious equality with the Jews?

"It must be remembered that the separation between Jew and Gentile was both religious and social. The Jews had a divine law which sanctioned the principle, and enforced the practice of national isolation. They could not easily believe that this law, with which all the glorious passages of their history was connected, was meant to endure only for a limited period; and we cannot but sympathize with the difficulty they felt in accepting the notion of a cordial union with the uncircumcised, even after idolatry was abandoned and morality observed. And again, the peculiar character of the religion which isolated the Jews was such as to place insuperable obstacles in the way of social union with other men. Their ceremonial observances precluded the possibility of their eating with the Gentiles. The nearest parallel we can find to this barrier between the Jew and Gentile is the institution of the caste among the populations of India, which presents itself to our politicians as a perplexing fact in the government of the presidencies, and to our missionaries as the great obstacle to Christianity in the East. A Hindoo cannot eat with a Parsee, or a Mohammedan - and among the Hindus themselves the meals of a Brahmin are polluted by the presence of a Pariah, - though they meet and have free intercourse in the ordinary transaction of business. So it was in the patriarchal age.

It was an abomination for the Egyptians to eat bread with the Hebrews. Genesis 43:32. The same principle was divinely sanctioned for a time in the Mosaic institutions. The Israelites who lived among the Gentiles, met them freely in their places of public resort, buying and selling, conversing and disputing; but their families were separated. In the relations of domestic life, it was "unlawful," as Peter said to Cornelius, "for a man that was a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation." When Peter returned from the centurion at Caesarea to his brother Christians at Jerusalem, their great charge against him was that he had gone unto men uncircumcised and had eaten with them; and the weak compliance of which he was guilty, after the true principle of social unity had been publicly recognized, and which called forth the rebuke of his brother apostle, was that, after eating with the Gentiles, he "withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision." Galatians 2:11-12.

"How these two difficulties, which seemed to forbid the formation of a united church, were ever to be overcome - how the Gentiles were to be religiously united without the enforced obligation of the whole Mosaic Law, - how they were to be socially united as equal brethren in the family of a common Father, - the solution in that day must have seemed impossible. And without the direct intervention of divine grace it would have been impossible." - Conybeare and Howson. The question was made an issue by a certain party of Jewish believers, who, though acknowledging that GOD had granted eternal life unto the Gentiles, insisted that the observance of the Law of

Moses was obligatory in their case, and that it was necessary to their salvation. The members of this party later became Paul's bitterest enemies, and at different periods of his ministry did all in their power to undermine his authority. Galatians 2:4. It was this class of men that caused the church of the Galatians to go back to the observance of the Mosaic law. Galatians 5:1-7. It should be remembered that these men, known as the Judaizers had the authority of Old Testament Scriptures to support their assertions. (The New Testament was not yet written). The Old Testament predicted the salvation of the Gentiles (Psalms 22:7; Psalms 86:9; Isaiah 49:6) but the Old Testament taught that the submitting to the rite of circumcision, and the observance of other Mosaic ceremonies was necessary for union with GOD's people. Genesis 17:14. So then there comes before us another aspect of the problem; namely, as to how the liberty of the Gospel and the authority of the Scriptures were to be preserved. This and the other problems find their solution in the speeches made by those present at the council. Note Peter's discourse (Acts 15:7-11).

Peter's main argument is that the impartation of the HOLY GHOST was the true test of GOD's acceptance of the Gentiles. The fact that the last-named received the gift of the Spirit as well as the Jews proves that GOD does not place any difference between Jewish and Gentile believers (Acts 15:8). The fact that the Gentiles received the Spirit before submitting to any external ceremony shows that no outward observance of the Mosaic law was necessary to salvation.

Though under the old covenant, circumcision was required as a condition for belonging to the chosen people, GOD's action in saving and baptizing the Gentiles without the observance of such a rite indicated that He had made a new covenant, and that the old was passing away. Jeremiah 31:31. It was by faith, not by the works of the law, that the Gentiles were justified (Acts 15:9).

GOD had delivered all believers from the heavy yoke of the Law; therefore to impose that burden on the Gentiles was tempting GOD (Acts 15:10). The Jewish believers themselves were not saved by the law, but by grace (Acts 15:11).

Paul and Barnabas contented themselves with telling what GOD had wrought among the Gentiles (Acts 15:12). The fact that GOD was saving Gentiles, filling them with the Spirit and working miracles among them apart from any attempt on their part to keep the law, would prove that the latter was unnecessary to their salvation.

Peter had declared the equality of Jew and Gentile. But, the Pharisees might object, "How is this fact to be reconciled with the Scriptures that teach the supremacy of the Jews over the Gentiles?" Isaiah 61:5-6; Zechariah 14:18.

James anticipates this objection and answers it by outlining the divine program for the age.

He first of all explains that not all the Gentiles will be saved during this age, but only certain individuals to make up, together with the Jewish elect, the Church (Acts 15:14). Then will follow the restoration of Israel as a nation, and their consequent exaltation over nations (Acts 15:16). After this, all the nations will turn to the Lord (Acts 15:17).

Notice the decision of the council (Acts 15:19-29). The Gentiles were not required to be circumcised or keep the law of Moses. However, certain prohibitions were laid upon the Gentiles: they were to abstain from idolatry and fornication, and they were not to eat animals strangled, or the blood of those animals. Leviticus 7:22-27. The first two prohibitions were dictated by the moral

law; the other two, by the ceremonial. The sins of fornication and idolatry are mentioned because they are the two sins which would prove a special temptation to those saved from among the heathen. The last two prohibitions represented a concession to Jewish beliefs.

However, there was no compromise in any fundamental matter. "The most shameless violations of purity took place in connection with the sacrifices and feasts celebrated in honor of the heathen divinities. Everything, therefore, which tended to keep the Gentile converts even from accidental or apparent association with those scenes of vice, made their recovery from pollution more easy, and enabled the Jewish converts to look on their new Christian brethren with less suspicion and antipathy. This seems to be the reason why we find an acknowledged sin mentioned in the decree along with ceremonial observances which were meant to be only temporary and perhaps local.

We must look on the whole subject from the Jewish point of view, and consider how violations of morality and contradictions of the ceremonial law were associated together in the Gentile world. It is hardly necessary to remark that much additional emphasis is given to the moral part of the decree, when we remember that it was addressed to those who lived in proximity to the profligate sanctuaries of Antioch and Paphos." - Conybeare and Howson.

Notice the outcome of the council: it resulted in a victory for Paul's party and a recognition of his call and ministry. Galatians 2:9.

We shall conclude this subject by giving the four phases of that great truth - the union of Jew and Gentile in one body:

1. This truth was, in past ages, a mystery. Ephesians 3:5-6. The Old Testament taught the salvation of the Gentiles, but not their forming together with the Jews, one body.
2. It became a revelation. Acts 10:11-18; Acts 10:34-35; Acts 15:7-9.
3. It became a problem. Acts 15:1-41.
4. It afterwards became a reality. Galatians 3:28.

Acts 15:36-41, Acts 16:1-40, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-28, Acts 19:1-41, Acts 20:1-38, Acts 21:1-17.

What unfortunate occurrence marked the beginning of the second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-39)? Did this hinder GOD's work at all? Was Barnabas or Mark ever mentioned again in the book of Acts? Who received the endorsement of the brethren (Acts 15:40)?

Let us now trace Paul's second journey (Acts 15:36-41, Acts 16:1-40, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-22). Following Dr. Hurlbut's arrangement we shall divide the journey into three sections:

- The stations in Asia, - the stations in Europe, - the stations of the return.

Syria and Cilicia. In these two provinces Paul visited the churches that had already been established there.

Derbe. What happened the last time they were in this city (Acts 14:21)?

Lystra. Whom did Paul meet here? What was his nationality? What is said concerning his character?

Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia. What limitation was placed upon Paul's ministry in these provinces? Why (Acts 16:9)?

Troas. What call did Paul receive here?

Philippi. Notice the humble beginning of the church in Europe - at a small prayer meeting. Then notice the first conflict of the apostles with heathendom (Acts 16:19-40).

Here we find first mention of the fact of Paul's Roman citizenship (Acts 16:37). This citizenship served him to good purpose later in his ministry.

Those entitled to the privilege of Roman citizenship were:

- those born in Rome (except slaves);
- those born in a Roman colony, i.e., a town to which was extended the rights of Roman citizenship (Philippi was such a town);
- those whose fathers were citizens (Paul may have obtained his citizenship this way);
- and those who purchased their citizenship. Acts 22:28. The following were the privileges of a Roman citizen:
 - he could always claim protection by uttering the phrase, "I am a Roman citizen;"
 - he could not be condemned without a trial;
 - he could not be scourged;
 - he could not be crucified;
 - he could appeal from the common courts to the emperor.

Amhipolis, Apollonia. Paul did not stay very long in either of these towns.

Thessalonica. To whom did Paul preach first in this town? What was his message to them (Acts 17:3)? What two effects followed his preaching (Acts 17:4-5)?

Berea. To whom did Paul preach first? What was the character of these Jews? What two effects followed the preaching of the Word (Acts 17:12-13)? Who remained in Berea while Paul left for Athens?

Athens. Notice Paul's encounter with members of two schools of philosophy - the Epicureans and the Stoics.

(Philosophy is that branch of knowledge which has for its object the discovery of the truth concerning GOD, man, and the universe, as far as those truths can be ascertained by the human reason). The Epicureans were skeptics who rejected all religion.

- They believed that the world rose from chance, - that the soul is mortal, - and that pleasure is the ultimate end of life. The Stoics were pantheists; i.e., they believed that everything is part of GOD.
- They believed that virtue is the chief end of life, and should be practiced for its sake alone.

Notice Paul's message. He shows GOD's relation to the universe (Acts 17:24-25) and to man (Acts 17:26-29). He then declares GOD's moral government of the world, this government to be perfectly manifest at the last judgment (Acts 17:31).

What were the two effects of the preaching (Acts 17:32-34)?

Corinth. Whom did Paul meet at this city? Who joined Paul here?

What was the effect of his preaching to the Jews?

What encouragement did Paul have to remain in spite of opposition (Acts 18:9)?

How long did Paul remain at Corinth? Who protected Paul at this time (Acts 18:12)?

It was from Corinth that Paul wrote his two epistles to the Thessalonians. These were written for the purpose of:

- confirming the young converts, - comforting them in the face of persecution, - exhorting them to holiness, - comforting them concerning their dead.

Cenchrea. This was a seaport near Corinth from which Paul sailed. Had a church been established here? Romans 16:1.

Ephesus. Whom did Paul leave here (Acts 18:19)?

What ministry did Priscilla and Aquila have there later (Acts 18:26)?

Why was he in a hurry to return to Jerusalem (Acts 18:21)?

What did he promise to do before he left (Acts 18:21)?

Caesarea. This was the Roman capital of Palestine, and a harbor.

Jerusalem. Paul stopped here to salute the church (Acts 18:22).

Antioch. Here he reported the results of his missionary journey.

We shall now trace Paul's third missionary Journey.

Antioch. The starting point of all Paul's missionary Journeys.

Galatia and Phrygia. Paul traveled through these provinces confirming and encouraging the believers of the churches he had established there.

Ephesus. Notice the preparation for Paul's three years' ministry in this town (Acts 18:24). Apollos, a cultured Alexandrian Jew, had been preaching John the Baptist's message, thus paving the way for Paul's fuller revelation of CHRIST and His salvation.

What was Paul's earnest desire for all believers (Acts 19:2)?

What did he later write to the believers of this city? Ephesians 5:18. Were these men really saved before receiving the Spirit (Acts 19:5; compare Acts 8:36-37)?

What happened after they were saved (Acts 19:6)?

How long did Paul preach in the synagogue?

What did he do when opposition arose?

How long did he continue preaching in the school of Tyrannus (Acts 19:10)?

How far did the Word of GOD spread from Ephesus (Acts 19:10)?

Notice that special miracles were wrought by Paul at Ephesus. This was granted Paul, because Ephesus was the headquarters of idolatry in Asia, It was a stronghold of the powers of darkness. Because of this GOD gave additional power to His servant to triumph over Satan.

Some professional exorcists (those who made a business of casting out demons) attempted to use that name through which Paul had performed miracles. They suffered severely for their rashness. Their punishment taught the Ephesians that the name of JESUS was a powerful name, a sacred name which could not be taken in vain (Acts 19:17). Many believers were affected by this incident and confessed some of their sins, especially the sin of dabbling in the occult sciences (Acts 19:18-19).

Then followed a great revival (Acts 19:20). Notice that Paul's missionary vision is widening; he must preach at Rome (Acts 19:21). Verses Acts 19:23-41 record an incident which testifies in a concrete way of Paul's success in Ephesus. He had struck such a blow at this great fortress of Satan that the worship of Diana was waning. This alarmed the makers of idols who raised an uproar against Paul.

During his stay at Ephesus, Paul wrote the first epistle to the Corinthians. After Paul's departure, serious disorders broke out in the Corinthian church.

- The church was divided;

- immorality was tolerated.

- brother was suing brother at law.

- The Lord's Supper had been degraded to the level of a common meal, where drunkenness was common. To correct these abuses, and to answer some questions they had asked concerning marriage, meat and the gifts of the Spirit, Paul wrote them a letter.

Macedonia (Acts 20:2). It is probable that Paul visited Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea at this time. It was here that Paul wrote his second letter to the Corinthians. It was written to encourage the great body of the church which had repented on receiving his first letter, and to warn a small party that persisted in despising his commands.

Greece (Acts 20:2). Paul's chief mission in this country was to visit the church of Corinth to correct abuses, and to deal with a rebellious minority that refused to acknowledge his authority. While at Corinth he wrote the epistles to the Galatians and the Romans. The former was written to restore the church of the Galatians which, influenced by legalistic preachers, had begun to observe the law of Moses as a means of salvation and sanctification. The second was written to give the Roman church a statement of the great truths which Paul preached and to make known his intention of visiting them.

Philippi. Leaving Greece, Paul set out for Jerusalem (Acts 19:21). Paul's party went ahead of him to Troas (Acts 20:4-5).

Troas. How long did Paul remain here? On what day was it customary for the church to gather for its weekly services (Acts 20:7)? Is there any other scripture that bears this out? 1 Corinthians 16:1-2. What incident occurred here?

Assos. While the rest of the party sailed from Troas, Paul went on foot to this town, where he was picked up by the ship.

Mitylene, Chios, Samos. Small islands where Paul's ship touched.

Trogyllium. A town on the coast of Asia Minor Miletus. While the ship was delayed here, Paul called the elders of the Ephesian church and gave them a farewell address. In verses Acts 20:17-21 Paul reviews his ministry among them.

How had he served the Lord (Acts 20:19)?

How thorough was his ministry (Acts 20:20)?

What was his message (Acts 20:21)?

What was facing him (Acts 20:22-23)?

What were his feelings in the face of this (Acts 20:24)? Had Paul fulfilled his responsibility among them (Acts 20:26)? How (Acts 20:27, compare Ezekiel 33:1-9)?

What admonition does he give to the elders (Acts 20:28)? In view of what coming dangers (Acts 20:29)? Had Paul merely preached the Gospel among them (Acts 20:35)?

Coos, Rhodes. Two small islands off the coast of Asia Minor.

Patara. Here the apostle changed ships.

Tyre. What message did Paul receive here? Acts 21:4.

Ptolemais. How long did Paul remain here?

Cæsarea. Here Paul's coming persecutions in Jerusalem were prophesied. Before answering in the negative the question as to whether Paul was in the Lord's will in going to Jerusalem, the following fact should be noted: Paul was ever obedient to the Lord's leading (Acts 16:6-10); his words in Acts 21:13 are those of a person who feels he is then in GOD's will; others saw in Paul's attitude GOD's will (Acts 21:14); it was not natural for a man like Paul to expose himself needlessly to danger; the things that he suffered in Jerusalem were not necessarily a sign that he was out of GOD's will (Acts 9:16; Acts 23:11); it was the Lord's will that Paul appear before Nero (Acts 27:24). It may be possible that the disciples of Tyre (Acts 21:4) predicted through the Spirit Paul's coming persecution, and then added their own advice.

Jerusalem. As soon as Paul arrived in this city, the church council gathered to hear Paul's report.

Acts 21:1-40, Acts 22:1-30, Acts 23:1-35, Acts 24:1-27, Acts 25:1-27, Acts 26:1-32, Acts 27:1-44, Acts 28:1-31

IV. The Closing Scenes of Paul's life. Acts 21:18-40, Acts 22:1-30, Acts 23:1-35, Acts 24:1-27, Acts 25:1-27, Acts 26:1-32, Acts 27:1-44, Acts 28:1-31

1. Paul and the Jewish Christians. Acts 21:18-26
2. Paul and the non-Christian Jews. Acts 21:27-31
3. Paul's arrest. Acts 21:32-40
4. Paul's defense before the Jews and the result. Acts 22:1-30
5. Paul before the Jewish council. Acts 23:1-10
6. His removal to Caesarea. Acts 23:11-35
7. Paul before Felix. Acts 24:1-27
8. Paul before Festus. Acts 25:1-27
9. Paul before Agrippa. Acts 26:1-32
10. Paul's journey to Rome. Acts 27:1-44, Acts 28:1-31

Paul was well received by the church at Jerusalem (Acts 21:17-18), but they felt anxious for his safety, for the rumor had spread that Paul was preaching against the law of Moses and that he was persuading the Jews to forsake it.

Because of this rumor (which was false) the Jews of Jerusalem felt towards Paul as we would feel towards an anarchist - one opposed to law and order. In order to disarm the Jews' hostility, and to prove the falsity of the rumor, Paul consented to the observance of a Jewish ceremony. In doing this, he did not compromise in any fundamental matter, but acted upon the following principles laid down by himself in his writings: he became a Jew to the Jews that he might win the Jews, as willingly as he became as a Gentile in order to win the Gentiles (1 Corinthians 9:20-21); he had given it as a rule that no man should change his external observances because he became a Christian. 1 Corinthians 7:17-19.

Paul's action in regard to testimony to Timothy (Acts 16:3) proved the falsity of the accusation that he was persuading the Jews to forsake the law of Moses. In advising Paul to perform a ceremony of the Jewish ritual, James assured him that no compromise in the matter of the grounds of Gentile salvation was implied (Acts 21:25).

Paul's action did not save him from the enmity of the non-Christian Jews (Acts 21:27-31). Certain ones who had heard him preach in Asia Minor (Acts 21:27), recognized him and immediately stirred up the population against him. But for the intervention of the Roman soldiers Paul would have been killed.

Notice Paul's defense (Acts 22:1-21).

He assured them that his present beliefs and life could not be the result of an original difference between himself and his hearers, for he was a true Jew (Acts 22:3), taught by the greatest Jewish teacher of the day (Acts 22:3), and he was just as zealous for the law, and opposed to the Christians as they were (Acts 22:4-5). Paul then showed what caused his change of belief, and his attitude toward the Christians; namely, a vision of the Lord Himself (Acts 22:6-16). The reason why he was preaching to the despised Gentiles was that the Lord Himself had sent him (Acts 22:17-21). Notice what happened at the mention of the Gentiles (Acts 22:22).

Notice how Paul's Roman citizenship protected him at this time (Acts 22:25). The words "I am a Roman citizen," uttered in any part of the empire were sufficient to bring protection to the one speaking them.

Paul was then brought before the Jewish council, and there he declared his innocence (Acts 23:1). The unjust and cruel action of the high priest in commanding him to be smitten, caused him to break forth into a severe denunciation against him. In the heat of his indignation he forgot the high

priest and saw only a tyrannical ruler. Though he could not honor the man, he honored the office he occupied (Acts 22:5).

It is interesting to note that Paul's denunciation of the high priest was prophetic, for some twelve years later, the latter died a violent death.

Seeing that the council was prejudiced against him, and there was no hope of justice and mercy from them, Paul resorted to a stratagem. He knew that the Pharisees and Sadducees were divided on the doctrine of the resurrection. Therefore he appealed to the Pharisaic section of the council, and appealed for their clemency on the ground that he was on trial because of the preaching of a doctrine which they themselves accepted. This appeal divided the council, and led to Paul's escape and his protection by the Romans. Later, the discovery of a plot to assassinate Paul led to his being escorted to Caesarea by a company of Roman soldiers. At this town he appeared before the governor, Felix.

We shall notice here the accusations brought against Paul and his answers to them (Acts 24:1-21). In this discourse and the one made before Agrippa we shall follow the analysis given by Dr. Stiffler. The accusation was three-fold (Acts 24:5-6);

- sedition, "a mover of sedition among the Jews";
- heresy, "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes";
- sacrilege, "who also hath gone about to profane the temple."

He disproved the accusation of sedition by showing the time was too short (Acts 24:11), that his conduct disproved it (Acts 24:12), and that there was no proof of it (Acts 24:13). In answer to the charge of heresy, he affirmed his belief in the Jewish scriptures (Acts 24:14), and professed to having the same hope as the Jews themselves (Acts 24:15-16). That he had not committed sacrilege was evident, for he had brought alms and offerings to his nation (Acts 24:17), he was found in the temple purified (Acts 24:18), and there were no witnesses present to prove the charge (Acts 24:19).

Notice Felix's attitude toward Paul in public (Acts 24:22-23), in private (Acts 24:25), and the outcome of the trial (Acts 24:27).

Paul was then brought before Festus, the new governor (Acts 25:1). Seeing that Festus was friendly toward the Jews (Acts 25:9), he availed himself of his right as a Roman citizen to appeal to the emperor (Acts 25:11). This took the case completely out of the hands of Festus.

Notice Paul's defense before Agrippa (Acts 26:1-32). It is an argument to justify his belief and preaching of the resurrection. This belief, Paul affirms is no crime, for Paul has always been a Pharisee whose prime article of faith has been the same hope (Acts 26:4-6). His accusers believe this same doctrine and are inconsistent in attacking him (Acts 26:7).

Paul did not come of himself to the preaching of the Gospel, for he was formerly opposed to it (Acts 26:8-12). It was a revelation of JESUS that brought him into the ministry (Acts 26:13-18). It was an obedience to this divine revelation that was the only cause of the Jewish opposition (Acts 26:19-22). His teaching concerning CHRIST's death and resurrection agrees with the teaching of

Moses and the prophets (Acts 26:22-23).

What was the effect of this discourse on Felix? On Agrippa?

We shall now trace Paul's journey to Rome (Acts 27:1-44, Acts 28:1-31)

Caesarea. From this port, where he had been a prisoner two years, Paul sailed to Rome. As companions he had Aristarchus (Acts 27:2) and Luke (indicated by the use of the pronoun "we").

Sidon. Here Paul was allowed to visit his friends.

Myra. A city on the south coast of Asia Minor, where Paul changed ships.

Cnidus. A port on the coast of Asia Minor. The vessel was unable to enter because of contrary winds.

Crete. An island south of Greece.

Fair Havens. Here the ship remained for some time. Paul's advice was that they should remain in this harbor during the winter, and so escape a danger which he foresaw. The master of the ship did not accept this advice, but attempted to reach the port of Phoenice. Their attempt was thwarted by a storm which arose. Paul's prediction was fulfilled. For fourteen days and nights they were driven about until they came to the Island of Melita.

Melita. How long did Paul remain in this island (Acts 28:11)?

Syracuse. A town on the eastern shore of the island of Sicily. The ship remained here three days.

Rhegium. A town at the extreme end of the Italian mainland.

Puteoli. One of the leading ports of Italy. Here Paul found some brethren.

Appii Forum, the "Three Taverns." Two villages where the Roman brethren came to meet Paul.

Rome. The first thing that Paul did after arriving at Rome was to call the Jewish leaders in order that he might clear himself from the charge against him, and to obtain a friendly hearing. It was his last recorded attempt to win the Jews. Notice the result of his preaching to them (Acts 28:24-28; compare Matthew 13:13-15; John 12:40; Matthew 21:43).

Dr. Griffith-Thomas notices GOD's providence in Paul's imprisonment in the following way:

1. He was safe from all the Jews.
2. He became conspicuous to all. Php 1:12-13
3. He had an opportunity of witnessing to the soldiers who guarded him.
4. He was visited by friends from various churches. (Php 2:25; Php 4:10).
5. He was able to write some of his choicest epistles: Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians. From tradition and some references, it has been concluded that Paul was released for about a period of two years (see Php 1:24-26; Php 2:24; Philemon 1:24 : 2 Timothy 4:17), and then was rearrested and finally executed during the persecution of the Christians by Nero. During this period of liberty it is believed that he wrote the epistles to Timothy and to Titus.

Because of its importance we have covered the book of Acts somewhat more thoroughly than the preceding books. We shall now ask the student to learn the following chapter outline in order to impress upon his mind the contents of the book:

Chapter Acts 1:1-25. Power Acts 2:1-47. Pentecost Acts 3:1-26. Peter and John Acts 4:1-37. Priests and prayer Acts 5:1-42. Punishment Acts 6:1-15. Poor Christians Acts 7:1-60. Persecuted Stephen Acts 8:1-40. Philip Acts 9:1-43. Paul's conversion Acts 10:1-48. Peter's vision Acts 11:1-30. Peter's explanation Acts 12:1-25. Peter's imprisonment Acts 13:1-52. Paul's first missionary journey Acts 14:1-28. Paul's return Acts 15:1-41. Paul at Jerusalem Acts 16:1-40. Paul's second journey Acts 17:1-34. Paul at Athens Acts 18:1-28. Priscilla and Aquila Acts 19:1-41. Paul's third journey Acts 20:1-38. Paul in Europe Acts 21:1-40. Paul's arrest Acts 22:1-30. Paul's staircase address Acts 23:1-35. Paul's escape Acts 24:1-27. Paul before Felix Acts 25:1-27. Paul before Festus Acts 26:1-32. Paul before Agrippa Acts 27:1-44. Paul shipwrecked Acts 28:1-31. Paul at Rome

02.06. ROMANS

ROMANS

Theme: The Epistle to the Romans is a complete, logical, inspired answer to the great question of the ages, "How should a man be just with God?" (Job 9:2). In the Old Testament, the Gospels, and the Acts, are found scattered in different places teachings concerning that great doctrine which forms the very foundation of Romans - justification by faith. It has remained for the apostle Paul to gather up these teachings and adding thereto the special revelations vouchsafed unto him, to give us the most complete statement of doctrine found in the New Testament, embodied in an Epistle which has been called "the cathedral of Christian doctrine."

We shall sum up the theme of Romans as follows:

- The justification of sinful men, - The sanctification of justified men - The glorification of sanctified men, through faith and by the power of GOD.

Occasion and Reason for Writing: While at Corinth on his last visit there Paul met a Christian lady named Phoebe who was going to Rome. Romans 16:1-2. He took advantage of this circumstance to send by her a letter to the church there telling them of his coming visit and giving them a statement of the distinctive truths which had been revealed to him. When Written: During Paul's last visit to Corinth. 2 Corinthians 13:1; Acts 20:1-2.

Contents: The Epistle may be divided into the following three broad divisions:

1. Doctrinal, unfolding Paul's argument of justification by faith. Romans 1:1-32, Romans 2:1-29, Romans 3:1-31, Romans 4:1-25, Romans 5:1-21, Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25, Romans 8:1-39.

2. Dispensational. Romans 9:1-33, Romans 10:1-21, Romans 11:1-36. In Romans 1:1-32, Romans 2:1-29, Romans 3:1-31, Romans 4:1-25, Romans 5:1-21, Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25, Romans 8:1-39 and Romans 12:1-21, Romans 13:1-14, Romans 14:1-23, Romans 15:1-33, Romans 16:1-27 Paul deals with the church. In Romans 9:1-33, Romans 10:1-21, Romans 11:1-36 he turns aside for a short while to speak about Israel and to show their relation to God's plan of salvation. This section answers the question, What place does the Jewish nation have in God's plan of salvation.

3. Practical, containing exhortations relative to Christian living. Romans 12:1-21, Romans 13:1-14, Romans 14:1-23, Romans 15:1-33, Romans 16:1-27.

We shall use the following outline as the basis of our study:

I. Condemnation. Romans 1:1-32, Romans 2:1-29, Romans 3:1-20.

II. Justification. Romans 3:21-31, Romans 4:1-25, Romans 5:1-21.

III. Sanctification. Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25, Romans 8:1-39.

IV. Dispensation. Romans 9:1-33, Romans 10:1-21, Romans 11:1-36.

V. Exhortation. Romans 12:1-21, Romans 13:1-14, Romans 14:1-23, Romans 15:1-33, Romans 16:1-27.

I. Condemnation. Romans 1:1-32, Romans 2:1-29, Romans 3:1-20.

Before beginning the study of Paul's main argument notice - 1. The salutation. Romans 1:1-7.

2. The introduction (Romans 1:8-15), where Paul expresses his intention of visiting the Roman church.

3. The theme (Romans 1:16-17). Romans 1:16 contains in brief the subject of the whole Epistle. The Gospel is- (1) the power of God unto salvation, (2) to everyone that believeth, (3) to the Jew first, and also (4) to the Greek.

Paul now begins his great argument for justification by faith by laying down his first premise; namely, the whole world is guilty before GOD and under condemnation.

He shows that- 1. The heathen are under condemnation (Romans 1:18-32).

Because, having had a revelation of GOD in the beginning (Romans 1:19-20), they rejected it (Romans 1:21). This rejection of the light led to spiritual ignorance (Romans 1:22), spiritual ignorance led to idolatry (Romans 1:23-25), and idolatry led to moral corruption (Romans 1:26-32).

2. The Jew is under condemnation (Romans 2:1-29).

Instead of being humbled by his knowledge of the law as he should have been, he has become self-righteous and critical, his self-righteousness blinding him to the fact that in the sight of GOD he is no better than the heathen who have not the law (Romans 2:1-16). In fact his knowledge of the law increases his condemnation and makes him more guilty than the heathen who have not had the light (Romans 2:17-29).

3. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile.

Both are under sin, without any hope of being justified by the works of the law or by any human means (Romans 3:1-20).

II. Justification. Romans 3:21-31, Romans 4:1-25, Romans 5:1-21. The last section concluded with a picture of the whole world guilty before GOD, shut up in the prison-house of sin, and awaiting the penalty of the law. From the human side there is no way of escape; it must come from the Divine side. The way of escape is now revealed - justification by faith. By justification we mean that judicial act of GOD whereby those who put their faith in CHRIST are declared righteous in His eyes and free from guilt and punishment.

It may be illustrated by a judge's acquittal of a prisoner and declaring him innocent.

We shall notice in this section:

1. The fact of justification by faith (Romans 3:21-31). The Jew could not conceive of righteousness apart from the law. But since the law condemned instead of justified, it could not bring salvation. But now GOD reveals a righteousness which is apart from the law, a gift (Romans 3:24), obtained by all who believe in CHRIST (Romans 3:22), and made possible by His atoning death (Romans 3:25). Because CHRIST died and paid the penalty of the law, GOD can be just and a justifier (Romans 3:26); i.e., He can acquit a guilty sinner without setting aside the demands of His holy law.

2. Old Testament illustrations of justification by faith (Romans 4:1-25). By referring the Jew to his own Scriptures Paul shows him that the above named doctrine is not new. He first of all mentions Abraham. If any Jew would have a right to claim justification by his works it was Abraham, the "father of all them that believe," the "friend of God." This patriarch was righteous in the sight of GOD; but this righteousness was by faith and not by works (Romans 4:1-3). David was "a man after God's own heart." He received this testimony not because of his own righteousness, for he committed many sins, but because of his faith (Romans 4:6-8).

3. The results of justification by faith. Romans 5:1-11.

4. The security brought by justification by faith (Romans 5:12-21).

Just as surely as union with the first Adam brings sin, condemnation and death, so surely does union with the second Adam bring righteousness, justification, and life.

III. Sanctification. Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25, Romans 8:1-39. In Romans 1:1-32, Romans 2:1-29, Romans 3:1-31, Romans 4:1-25, Romans 5:1-21 Paul has been dealing with sins, the outward manifestation of sin in our nature, and with the guilt following those sins. In Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25, Romans 8:1-39 he deals with sin; i.e., with the sinful nature itself. The first section speaks of our deliverance from the guilt and penalty; the second section, of our deliverance from the power of sin. The first deals with our actions; the second with our nature. Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25, Romans 8:1-39 answer the question: now that he has been justified, what is the Christian's relation to sin? The answer to this question may be reduced to one word-Sanctification, i.e., separation from sin and separation unto GOD. In this section we learn that-

1. The Christian is dead to sin (Romans 6:1-23). His baptism was symbolical of his identification with CHRIST in death and resurrection (Romans 6:1-10). The Christian by faith is to reckon himself dead to sin (Romans 6:11-12); and this reckoning finds its practical application in his turning from every known sin and his yielding to GOD (Romans 6:13).

2. The Christian is freed from the law as a means of sanctification (Romans 7:1-25). As death dissolves the marriage relation, so the believer's death to sin releases him from the law (Romans 7:1-6), that he might be married to CHRIST. This relationship to the law brought him constantly under condemnation, for it required a righteousness that corrupt human nature could not yield. This was not so much the fault of the law, for it was good, holy and spiritual. The fault lay with the carnal nature that could not fulfill its requirements. After describing his own experience when he discovered the spiritual nature of the law and his own inability to keep it, Paul utters a cry which is both a call for help and a question: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

3. The answer to this cry is found in chapter 8 where we learn that the righteousness which the law requires is worked out in us by the Holy Spirit who comes to dethrone sin, produce the fruits of righteousness, bear witness to our sonship, and help us in prayer.

IV. Dispensation. Romans 9:1-33, Romans 10:1-21, Romans 11:1-36. So far Paul has been unfolding GOD's plan of salvation, and has come to the conclusion that salvation is by faith in CHRIST to all who believe, whether of Jew or Gentile.

He has been dealing with salvation in relation to the individual, but what is its relation to Israel as a nation?

- If they as a nation have been rejected what becomes of the Old Testament promises of national restoration?

- If Israel is GOD's chosen people, to whom were committed His Word and to whom were given the covenants, and the law, why is it that they as a nation have rejected their Messiah?

- Will Israel ever be restored?

- What is to be the attitude of the Christians toward them?

These questions are anticipated by Paul and are answered by him in the section we are about to study.

Let us sum up the contents of this section:

1. The theme of chapter Romans 9:1-29 is as follows:

Though the greater part of the Jewish nation have rejected CHRIST, yet GOD's promises concerning their national redemption have not failed, for within the nation there is a faithful remnant, who, when the time comes for Israel's complete restoration, will form the nucleus of the new nation.

2. The theme of Romans 9:30-33, Romans 10:1-21 is as follows: Israel's rejection is entirely their own fault.

3. The central thought of Romans 11:1-36 is as follows: The rejection of Israel is neither total nor final. It is not total for there is a remnant of the nation who are true to GOD and their salvation is a pledge of the salvation of the entire nation (Romans 11:1-10). It is not final, for after that the fullness of the Gentiles has come into the church, GOD will send the Redeemer who shall bring the entire nation into that condition of Millennial blessedness and glory foretold by the prophets (Romans 11:11-36).

V. Exhortation. Romans 12:1-21, Romans 13:1-14, Romans 14:1-23, Romans 15:1-33, Romans 16:1-27.

Like most of Paul's doctrinal Epistles, Romans contains a practical section. The apostle may carry his readers to the highest heights of Christian doctrine, but he never fails to bring them back to earth where they are to apply the doctrine to daily life. The above section really follows Romans 8:1-39.

Chapters 9-11 are parenthetical; i.e., they are inserted because of their great importance, but are not necessary to complete the sense of the Epistle. Romans would be complete - at least in form - without these chapters. The "therefore" of Romans 12:1 is the link that connects this section with the first eight chapters.

Because of what has been set forth in those chapters - their justification, sanctification and hope of coming glorification - Christians are to consecrate themselves to GOD, serve one another in love, and walk in wisdom and holiness before the world.

We shall sum up the contents of this section as follows:

1. The Christian's duty as a member of the church (Romans 12:1-21):

- Consecration (Romans 12:1-2);
- Service (Romans 12:3-8);
- Love to the brethren (Romans 12:9-21).

2. His duty as the member of the state (Romans 13:1-7): obedience to authority.

3. His duty toward other members of the state (Romans 13:8-14): love.

4. His duty toward weaker brethren (Romans 14:1-23, Romans 15:1-13): forbearance.

5. Conclusion (Romans 15:14-33, Romans 16:1-27).

- Paul's ministry among the Gentiles (Romans 15:14-21);
- His proposed visit (Romans 15:22-33);
- Salutations (Romans 16:1-23);
- Benediction. (Romans 16:24-27).

Learn the following chapter outline of Romans:

Chapter Romans 1:1-32. The heathen's guilt.

Romans 2:1-29. The Jew's guilt.

Romans 3:1-31. Universal condemnation.

Romans 4:1-25. Justification by faith.

Romans 5:1-21. Results of justification.

Romans 6:1-23. Freedom from sin.

Romans 7:1-25. Freedom from the law.

Romans 8:1-39. Freedom from condemnation.

Romans 9:1-33. The election of Israel.

Romans 10:1-21. The rejection of Israel.

Romans 11:1-36. The restoration of Israel.

Romans 12:1-21. Consecration.

Romans 13:1-14. Duties to the state.

Romans 14:1-23. Duties to weak brethren.

Romans 15:1-33. Paul's labor and coming visit.

Romans 16:1-27. Salutations.

02.07. FIRST CORINTHIANS

FIRST CORINTHIANS

Theme: The Epistle was written for the purpose of correcting disorders that had arisen in the Corinthian church, and of setting before the believers a standard of Christian conduct. We may therefore state its theme as follows: Christian conduct in relation to the church, the home and the world.

Why Written: Paul visited Corinth on his second missionary journey. (Compare Acts 18:1-28.) While at Ephesus, he heard of disorders that had broken out in the Corinthian church, and it is believed that he made a hurried visit to Corinth at that time. (This visit is inferred from the statement in 2 Corinthians 12:14 that he was about to visit them a third time. The first visit was made during his second missionary journey, and the last, after writing II Corinthians.)

After returning to Ephesus, he wrote them an Epistle (now lost) instructing them as to their attitude toward sinning members of the church 1 Corinthians 5:9. Later members of a Corinthian family visited Paul and informed him concerning divisions that had broken out in the church. A reply came to Paul's first letter (1 Corinthians 7:1) making certain inquiries relative to Christian conduct. To correct the disorders that had broken out, and to answer the inquiries, Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians.

We may thus sum up Paul's purpose in writing this Epistle:

1. To correct the following disorders:

- (1) Divisions.
- (2) Immorality.
- (3) Disputes among saints.
- (4) Disorders during the Lord's Supper.
- (5) Disorders during worship.

2. To answer the following questions:

- (1) Concerning marriage.
- (2) Concerning the eating of meats offered to idols.
- (3) Concerning the gifts of the Spirit. When Written: At the close of Paul's three years' residence at Ephesus (Acts 20:31; 1 Corinthians 16:5-8).

Contents:

I. Correction of Social and Moral Disorders. 1 Corinthians 1:1-31, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16, 1 Corinthians 3:1-23, 1 Corinthians 4:1-21, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 1 Corinthians 6:1-20, 1 Corinthians 7:1-40, 1 Corinthians 8:1-18.

II. Apostolic Authority. 1 Corinthians 9:1-27.

III. Church Order. 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, 1 Corinthians 11:1-34, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40.

IV. The Resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:1-58.

V. Conclusion. 1 Corinthians 16:1-24.

I. Correction of Social and Moral Disorders. 1 Corinthians 1:1-31, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16, 1 Corinthians 3:1-23, 1 Corinthians 4:1-21, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 1 Corinthians 6:1-20, 1 Corinthians 7:1-40, 1 Corinthians 8:1-18.

Under this head we shall study the subjects contained in the following outline:

1. Introduction. 1 Corinthians 1:1-9.

2. Divisions. 1 Corinthians 1:10-16.

3. The wisdom of GOD and the wisdom of man. 1 Corinthians 1:17-31, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16.

4. Christian ministers, their relation to each other and to believers. 1 Corinthians 3:1-23, 1 Corinthians 4:1-21.

5. Immorality. 1 Corinthians 5:1-13.

6. Saints at law. 1 Corinthians 6:1-8.

7. The sanctity of the body. 1 Corinthians 6:9-20.

8. Marriage. 1 Corinthians 7:1-40.

9. Concerning meats offered to idols. 1 Corinthians 8:1-18.

Paul denounces the divisions existing among the Corinthians. The party spirit had well-nigh destroyed Christian love. The Corinthians possessed with an undue admiration for human leadership, had ranked themselves under the names of the different ministers, whom they attempted to set up against one another as rival leaders.

- Some admired the zeal and power of Paul;

- Others saw in the cultured Apollos the ideal preacher;

- Others belonging perhaps to the Judaizing party, held up Peter, the apostle to the Jews, as the model leader;

- Others again, evidently discouraged by these divisions, styled themselves simply followers of CHRIST (1 Corinthians 1:12).

Paul devotes quite a large section to a comparison of GOD's wisdom and man's wisdom, and to a demonstration of the inability of the latter to reveal the things of GOD (1 Corinthians 1:17-31, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16). His rebuke and renunciation of mere human wisdom and philosophy will be understood when we consider the Greeks had a profound admiration for learning and culture, and that there was a danger of their reducing Christianity to a merely intellectual system, and of making it one of the many schools of philosophy that existed in their country.

It was this very love of human wisdom that had led to an undue regard for human leadership, and that, in turn, had resulted in divisions among them. In 1 Corinthians 3:1-23 and 1 Corinthians 4:1-21 Paul strikes at the root of the matter by clearly showing the ministers' relation to GOD, to one another and to the people.

While the Corinthians were glorying in their intellectuality, and were divided over leadership, they were all tolerating in their midst immorality of the basest kind (1 Corinthians 5:1-2). Paul, using to the full his apostolic authority (see Matthew 16:19; Matthew 18:17-18), excommunicates the offender (that is, cuts him off from communion with the church), and delivers him over as it were, to the chastening hand of Satan (compare Job 1:12; 2 Corinthians 12:7), in order that he might be brought to repentance (1 Corinthians 5:5). From the second Epistle to the Corinthians we learn that this man did repent. 2 Corinthians 2:6-8.

Some of the Corinthians had been exposing the cause of CHRIST to reproach because of their going to law with one another before unbelieving judges (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Paul tells them plainly that if they are to reign with CHRIST and judge the world and even angels, they should be able to judge their own cases and settle their own disputes- The words found in chapter 1 Corinthians 6:9-20 are directed against a class of people known in church history as Antinomians.

These were professed believers, who, going to the other extreme from legalism, declared themselves free from the law altogether. From certain of Paul's statements to the effect that believers are not under law, and that they are not justified by any external observances, these heretics had falsely inferred that all outward acts were indifferent and one could be criminal. In refuting this error, Paul emphasizes the sanctity of the body. In 1 Corinthians 7:1-40 Paul answers an enquiry from the Corinthians concerning marriage. In studying this chapter it should be remembered that all the statements contained therein are not made by way of commandments (1 Corinthians 7:6), but many of them are the suggestions of a Spirit-guided man, who is viewing marriage in relation to local conditions in Corinth (the prevalence of immorality, 1 Corinthians 7:1), and in relation to coming persecutions of the church (1 Corinthians 7:26-29).

It should be noted also that this chapter does not contain all of the New Testament teachings on marriage. For a complete study of the question, all the N. T. scriptures on the subject should be investigated.

1 Corinthians 8:1-13 deals with the question of Christian liberty.

Some of the Corinthian believers, who had been saved from heathenism, felt free in their conscience to accept invitations to feasts in idol temples, for, reasoned they, "An idol is nothing in the world, and there is none other God but one" (1 Corinthians 8:4).

Paul acknowledged these reasons, but warns the last-named believers that there were weaker Christians who were not acquainted with those facts, and who would be stumbled and fall into sin if they saw an enlightened believer eating in an idol temple.

II. Apostolic Authority. 1 Corinthians 9:1-27. In this chapter Paul defends himself against a small section of the church who were denying his authority as apostle (1 Corinthians 9:1-3).

One of their charges was that he was not asking for financial support because he lacked authority to do so. Paul mentions as proof of his apostleship the fact that he had seen the Lord (1 Corinthians 9:1), and refers to them as a church as the fruit of his ministry (1 Corinthians 9:2). He claims equal authority with other apostles (1 Corinthians 9:4-6). He proves that he, as a minister of the Gospel, has a right to financial support, by a natural illustration (1 Corinthians 9:7), by a quotation from the law (1 Corinthians 9:9-10), by an illustration from the temple (1 Corinthians 9:13).

Then he tells why he has not availed himself of this right: he did not wish to hinder the Gospel by becoming a burden to the people (1 Corinthians 9:12, compare 2 Thessalonians 3:8-9); the fact of his preaching the Gospel without price was his reward (1 Corinthians 9:18); in preaching the Gospel he considered himself simply an unprofitable servant (1 Corinthians 9:16, compare Luke 17:10), for he was but doing his duty (1 Corinthians 9:16).

Paul is willing to forego his rights and adapt himself to all conditions, and to all classes of men in order that he might save a few souls (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). He has a good reason for making these sacrifices. For as Greek athletes, during their period of training, denied themselves many pleasures and comforts and subjected themselves to hardship in order to win a crown of leaves, so he was willing to make sacrifices in order to win an imperishable crown. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

III. Church Order. 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, 1 Corinthians 11:1-34, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40.

Under this heading we shall study the following subjects:

1. A warning against falling from grace. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13.
2. Christian liberty and idolatry. 1 Corinthians 10:14-33.
3. Conduct of women in assemblies. 1 Corinthians 11:1-16.
4. Disorders during the Lord's Supper. 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.
5. The gifts of the Spirit, their diversity and distribution. 1 Corinthians 12:1-31.
6. The spirit that is to regulate the use of these gifts. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.
7. The rules for their regulation in assemblies. 1 Corinthians 14:1-40.

Though the Corinthians have been partakers of great spiritual blessings and have been recipients of the grace of GOD, Paul warns them that there is a possibility of their falling from their high spiritual standing. He proves this by a comparison of them with Israel. In Chapter 1 Corinthians 10:14-33 Paul continues the subject dealt with in chapter 8; namely, Christian liberty in relation to

the frequenting of heathen feasts. To those Christians who felt free to attend heathen feasts (compare 1 Corinthians 8:10), Paul utters a warning against falling into the snare of idolatry. Though Christians might feel free to indulge in some liberties, they are to consider whether such indulgences make for edification of believers as a whole (1 Corinthians 10:24). When purchasing meat in a market, Christians are not to enquire whether the meat has been offered to idols, in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance of their conscience (1 Corinthians 10:25). But if a Christian accepts an invitation to dine with a heathen acquaintance, and he is told that the meat served has been offered to idols, he is not to touch it, for to partake of it under those circumstances would make it appear that he was condoning idolatry, and his action would be a stumbling block to many (1 Corinthians 10:27-29).

Chapter 1 Corinthians 11:1-16 deals with conduct of women in assemblies. On the surface, the verses seem to deal with the question as to whether or not a woman should wear a veil in church. But reading deeper, we discover that they deal with the God-ordained relationship of the woman to the man.

1 Corinthians 11:3 seems to be the key verse to this section. In Paul's day, women wore a veil as a symbol of their subjection to the man. The Gospel had given women a liberty they had never realized before, abolishing in regard to salvation and standing in grace, the distinction of the sexes. (Galatians 3:28).

It seems that on the ground of this liberty, the Corinthian women claimed equality with the man in every respect, and as an open declaration of this claim, came forward to prophesy and pray without the veil. In so doing, they violated the divine order which is as follows: GOD is the head of CHRIST; CHRIST, of man; and man, of the woman (1 Corinthians 11:3). The remaining verses of this chapter deal with disturbances in the Lord's Supper.

It seems that, before partaking of the Lord's Supper, the believers partook of a common meal together, commonly known as the love feast. During the last mentioned feast many of the Corinthians had yielded to gluttony and drunkenness (1 Corinthians 11:20-22), with the result that they were not in a fit condition to partake of the Sacrament.

After explaining the sacredness and significance of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-26), Paul warns the Christians against partaking of it unworthily (1 Corinthians 11:27-29), lest they fall under divine chastisement (1 Corinthians 11:30-32).

1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40 deal with the subject of spiritual gifts.

- 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 treats of the diversity and distribution of the gifts;
- 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, of the spirit that should characterize their use;
- 1 Corinthians 14:1-40, of the rules regulating their manifestation in the assembly.

IV. The Resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:1-58.

1 Corinthians 15:1-58 is the great resurrection chapter of the Bible. Paul was compelled to treat the doctrine of the resurrection in a fairly thorough manner, for there had been a denial of this

doctrine. Some perhaps, misunderstanding Paul's teaching concerning the spiritual resurrection of the sinner had thought of this as the only resurrection; others possibly, belonging to the antinomian party (see notes of Chap. 1 Corinthians 6:9-20) did not care to look forward to the resurrection of a body which they had abused by sins of impurity.

V. Conclusion. 1 Corinthians 16:1-24.

We shall sum up the contents of 1 Corinthians 16:1-24 as follows:

1. Concerning the collection for the needy Jewish saints. 1 Corinthians 16:1-4.
2. Concerning Paul's intended visit. 1 Corinthians 16:5-9.
3. Concerning Timothy's visit to them. 1 Corinthians 16:10-11.
4. Concerning Apollos. 1 Corinthians 16:12.
5. Exhortations and greetings. 1 Corinthians 16:13-24. In order to impress the contents of I Corinthians on his mind, let the student memorize the following chapter outline:

Chapter 1 Corinthians 1:1-31. Divisions.

1 Corinthians 2:1-16. Wisdom of GOD and wisdom of man.

1 Corinthians 3:1-23, 1 Corinthians 4:1-21. Ministers.

1 Corinthians 5:1-13. Immorality.

1 Corinthians 6:1-20. Saints at law.

1 Corinthians 7:1-40. Marriage.

1 Corinthians 8:1-13. Christian liberty.

1 Corinthians 9:1-27. Apostolic authority.

1 Corinthians 10:1-33. Idolatry.

1 Corinthians 11:1-34. Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 12:1-31. Gifts.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13. Love.

1 Corinthians 14:1-40. Disorders in worship.

1 Corinthians 15:1-58. Resurrection.

1 Corinthians 16:1-24. Salutation.

02.08. SECOND CORINTHIANS

SECOND CORINTHIANS

Theme: Of all Paul's Epistles, II Corinthians is the most personal. It is a revelation of his heart, of his innermost feelings and deepest motives. This baring of his heart was not a welcome task to the apostle, but rather a reluctant one. The presence of false teachers at Corinth, who were questioning his authority, impugning his motives, and undermining his authority, had made it necessary for him to defend his ministry. In making this defense, he was compelled to relate experiences about which he would rather have been silent; and through his Epistle he is careful to inform his readers of this fact.

Bearing in mind that II Corinthians is Paul's personal vindication of his ministry, we will sum up its theme as follows:

Paul's ministry:

- Its motives, - Its sacrifices, - Its responsibilities - Its effectiveness.

Occasion for Writing:

1. After writing the first letter at Ephesus, Paul went to Troas, where he waited for Titus to bring him an answer from Corinth (2 Corinthians 2:13).
2. Disappointed in his expectation, Paul went to Macedonia where he met Titus who brought him news that the church as a whole had responded to his exhortations, but that there was a small minority that refused to acknowledge his authority.
3. To comfort and encourage the former, and to threaten the latter, Paul wrote his second letter.

Why Written:

1. To comfort the repentant members of the church.
2. To warn the rebellious minority.
3. To warn against false teachers.
4. To resist the attacks made on his ministry by these false teachers. Where Written:

Probably at Philippi, during the third missionary journey.

Contents: The book is exceedingly difficult of analysis. As one writer puts it, "It is almost impossible to analyze this letter, as it is the least systematic of Paul's writings. It resembles an African river. For a time it flows smoothly on, and one is hopeful of a satisfactory analysis, then suddenly there comes a mighty cataract and a terrific upheaval, when the great depths of his heart are broken up."

We shall divide the book into four sections, as follows:

I. Backward Glance. 2 Corinthians 1:1-24, 2 Corinthians 2:1-13.

II. The Dignity and Effectiveness of Paul's ministry. 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, 2 Corinthians 3:1-18, 2 Corinthians 4:1-18, 2 Corinthians 5:1-21, 2 Corinthians 6:1-18, 2 Corinthians 7:1-16.

III. The Collection for the Needy Saints of Judea. 2 Corinthians 8:1-24, 2 Corinthians 9:1-15.

IV. Paul's Vindication of His Apostleship. 2 Corinthians 10:1-18, 2 Corinthians 11:1-33, 2 Corinthians 12:1-21, 2 Corinthians 13:1-14.

I. The Backward Glance. 2 Corinthians 1:1-24, 2 Corinthians 2:1-13.

1. GOD sustains Paul in tribulation in order that he may in turn comfort others. 2 Corinthians 1:1-11.

2. My motives are pure! 2 Corinthians 1:12-14.

3. Why Paul delayed his visit. 2 Corinthians 1:15-24, 2 Corinthians 2:1-11.

4. Paul's anxious waiting for news from Corinth. 2 Corinthians 2:12-13.

II. The Dignity and Effectiveness of Paul's Ministry. 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, 2 Corinthians 3:1-18, 2 Corinthians 4:1-18, 2 Corinthians 5:1-21, 2 Corinthians 6:1-18, 2 Corinthians 7:1-16.

1. Paul's triumphs in the Gospel. 2 Corinthians 2:14-17.

2. Paul defends himself against the Judaizers and shows that the New Covenant is better than the Old. 2 Corinthians 3:1-18, 2 Corinthians 4:1-6.

3. In sickness, danger, and persecution Paul's strength comes from the power of GOD and the hope of eternal life. 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, 2 Corinthians 5:1-10.

4. The secret of Paul's earnestness is his sense of responsibility to CHRIST. 2 Corinthians 5:11-21.

5. Paul defends his faithfulness in preaching the Gospel. 2 Corinthians 6:1-13.

6. Be ye separate! 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, 2 Corinthians 7:1.

7. Paul pleads with his converts to ignore the malicious and untruthful reports about him. 2 Corinthians 7:2-4.

8. Why Paul waited for Titus - 2 Corinthians 7:5-16.

III. The Collection for the Jewish Saints. 2 Corinthians 8:1-24, 2 Corinthians 9:1-15.

1. Remember the example of the poor Macedonians and above all the example of JESUS! 2 Corinthians 8:1-15.

2. Paul commends the bearers of the funds. 2 Corinthians 8:16-24.

3. Be ready to give liberally and so reap GOD's blessing! 2 Corinthians 9:1-15.

IV. Paul's Defense of His Apostleship. 2 Corinthians 10:1-18, 2 Corinthians 11:1-33, 2 Corinthians 12:1-21, 2 Corinthians 13:1-14.

1. Paul contrasts himself with false teachers. 2 Corinthians 10:1-18.
2. Bear with one who loves you! 2 Corinthians 11:1-6.
3. Why Paul did not ask for support. 2 Corinthians 11:7-15.
4. Divine signs and visions, faithful service and sufferings, prove Paul's right to apostleship. 2 Corinthians 11:16-33, 2 Corinthians 12:1-13.
5. Please do not make it necessary for me to use my power to discipline you! 2 Corinthians 12:14-21, 2 Corinthians 13:1-10.
6. Conclusion. 2 Corinthians 13:11-14.

02.09. GALATIANS

GALATIANS

Theme: The question as to whether the Gentiles were to keep the law of Moses had been settled at the council at Jerusalem. The decision was that the Gentiles were justified by faith without the works of the law. But this decision did not seem to satisfy the Judaizing party, who still insisted that though the Gentiles were saved by faith, their faith was perfected by the observance of the: law of Moses.

Preaching this message of the mingling of law and grace, they did their utmost to turn Paul's converts against him and against the message he preached. In this they succeeded to the extent of bringing under the bondage of the law the whole church of the Galatians - a Gentile church. To restore this church to their former standing in grace, Paul wrote his Epistle to them, the theme of which is, Justification and sanctification are not by the works of the law, but by faith.

Occasion for Writing: Passing through Galatia on his second missionary journey, Paul was detained on account of sickness. Acts 16:6; Galatians 4:13. He was well received by the Galatians, and established a church there. Galatians 1:6; Galatians 4:14. While in Greece on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:2), he received the news that the Galatians had taken upon themselves the yoke of the law. This led to the writing of his Epistle.

Why Written:

1. To oppose the influence of the Judaizing teachers who were attempting to undermine Paul's authority.
2. To refute the following errors that they taught:
 - (a) Obedience to the law mingled with faith is necessary to salvation.
 - (b) The believer is made perfect by the keeping of the law.
3. To restore the Galatians who had fallen from grace. When Written: During Paul's third missionary journey.

Contents:

I. The Apostle of Liberty. Galatians 1:1-24, Galatians 2:1-21.

II. The Doctrine of Liberty. Galatians 3:1-29, Galatians 4:1-31.

III. The Life of Liberty. Galatians 5:1-26, Galatians 6:1-18.

I. The Apostle of Liberty. Galatians 1:1-24, Galatians 2:1-21. In the first two chapters, Paul defends himself against the following charges made against him on the part of the Judaizers.

1. They denied that he was a true apostle of CHRIST, for he had not, like the Twelve, received his commission personally from the Lord.
2. They claimed that he was only a teacher sent out by the apostles, therefore his teaching should be accepted only as it agreed with theirs.
3. They charged him with spreading teachings not approved by the council at Jerusalem.

Notice how Paul answered these charges:

1. In Galatians 1:1, Paul emphasizes his divine commission as apostle. He then greets the believers (Galatians 1:2-5). Notice there is an absence of the thanksgiving that characterizes his other Epistles, for he is writing to a church which has fallen from grace. He is amazed that they have so soon turned from the true Gospel to what he terms a different gospel (Galatians 1:6); yet this different gospel is not another gospel, for there is but one; but this message they have obeyed is a perversion of the gospel (Galatians 1:7). Upon those who would preach a different gospel he pronounces a curse (Galatians 1:8-9).
2. In verses Galatians 1:10-24 he refutes the charge that he received his teaching and commission from the apostles. He received them from the Lord Himself.
3. In chapter Galatians 2:1-10, Paul shows that his ministry and message were endorsed by the leaders of the church council at Jerusalem.

Fourteen years after his conversion, Paul went to Jerusalem to attend the council and there defended his preaching of the justification of the Gentiles by faith alone (Galatians 2:1; compare Acts 15:1-2).

4. Instead of the Twelve finding fault with Paul, as had been charged, Paul affirms that he found fault with one of their number (Galatians 2:11-21). After his vision (Acts 10:11-16), and his experience at Cornelius' house Peter cast off his Jewish prejudices and mingled freely in social intercourse with the Gentiles. But when certain of the strict Jewish Christians came from Jerusalem, who evidently looked with a criticizing eye on his conduct, (and those Jews with him) he separated himself from the Gentiles (Galatians 2:11-13). This course of action Paul condemned as a cowardly compromise.

II. The Doctrine of Liberty. Galatians 3:1-29, Galatians 4:1-31.

Paul rebukes the Galatians for turning from the truth of justification by faith, and tells them that their spiritual experience had no connection with their observing the law (Galatians 3:1-5). He then takes up the argument that justification is by faith, apart from the works of the law (Galatians 3:6-29, Galatians 4:1-7). The following are its main points.

1. Even Abraham, the friend of GOD, was not justified by his works, but by his faith (Galatians 3:6). So that instead of the observers of the law of Moses being the children of Abraham (Compare Matthew 3:9), it is those who are justified by faith who can claim that right (Galatians 3:7).
2. The covenant that GOD made with Abraham was a covenant of faith (Galatians 3:8-9). This has no connection with the Mosaic covenant which was a covenant of works (Galatians 3:10). The Abrahamic covenant was made first; but the law, with its curse was added, and so blocked the

way for the blessing of Abraham to come to the world. But CHRIST by His death removed the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13), so that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles as well as the Jews (Galatians 3:14).

3. Paul then explains the relation between the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants (Galatians 3:15-18).

If the blessing of Abraham is to come by the works of the law, then reception of that blessing is conditional upon keeping the law; but the covenant made with Abraham is unconditional (Galatians 3:18). The inference from the last verse is that if it is by the keeping of the law that the blessing of Abraham is to come upon the world, then that blessing will never come; for no one can be justified by the law.

4. Paul now explains the purpose of the law and its relation to the believer (Galatians 3:19-29, Galatians 4:1-7).

Paul's foregoing arguments call forth the question on the part of the Jew, If the law cannot save why then did GOD give it to man (Galatians 3:19)? The Abrahamic covenant promised salvation through faith without the works of the law. But how could GOD teach man that salvation was only by faith, and not by any effort on his part? Only by placing him under law and showing him that his sinful nature could not keep perfectly its precepts, thus shutting him up to faith as a means of salvation (Galatians 3:19). The law does not stand in opposition to the Abrahamic covenant, for it was never intended to save man (Galatians 3:21); it was given to educate man to his need of salvation by faith (Galatians 3:22-23). Paul pleads with them to return to the full liberty of the Gospel. Galatians 4:8-31.

III. The Life of Liberty. Galatians 5:1-26, Galatians 6:1-18. This section may be summed up by the following exhortations:

1. Hold fast to the liberty of grace for the law cannot save you. Galatians 5:1-6.
2. Turn away from the false teachers who have perverted the Gospel and made you slaves to legalism. Galatians 5:7-12.
3. Though free from the Mosaic law, you are not free to sin. Walk in love and you will thereby fulfill the law. Galatians 5:13-14.
4. You will be tempted though by the lower nature, but obey the promptings of the Spirit and you will be victorious. Galatians 5:16-26.
5. Bear one another's burdens, and be patient with the erring. Galatians 6:1-5.
6. Be mindful to support your ministers and you will thereby reap the Divine blessing. Galatians 6:6-10.
7. Conclusion (Galatians 6:11-18). Beware of the Judaizers. I know quite well that they desire to win you simply in order to get a reputation for zeal. Glory only in the Cross in which alone there is real salvation.

02.10. EPHESIANS

EPHESIANS Theme: For depth and sublimity of teachings, Ephesians stands supreme among all of Paul's Epistles.

It has been "Paul's third heaven Epistle," "for he soars from the depths of ruin to the heights of redemption" - and "the Alps of the New Testament," for "here we are bidden by GOD to mount step by step, until we reach the highest possible point where man can stand, even in the presence of GOD Himself." The Epistle to the Ephesians is a great exposition of a fundamental doctrine of Paul's preaching, namely, the unity of all the universe in CHRIST, the unity of Jew and Gentile in His body, the church, and GOD's purpose in that body for time and eternity. The Epistle is divided into two sections: doctrinal (Ephesians 1:1-23, Ephesians 2:1-22, Ephesians 3:1-21) and practical (Ephesians 4:1-32, Ephesians 5:1-33, Ephesians 6:1-24).

- In the first section Paul sets forth the grandeur and glory of the Christian's calling;

- In the second he shows what should be the conduct of the Christian in view of this calling. In brief he teaches that a holy calling demands a holy walk. "He calls upon his readers to rise to the highest dignity of their calling, and as he does so, there emerges a picture of the church as a body predestined before the ages, to unite Jew and Gentile together, which, through the ages to come has to exhibit before the universe the fullness of the Divine life, living the life of GOD, imitating GOD's character, wearing GOD's armor, fighting GOD's battles, forgiving as GOD forgives, educating as GOD educates, and all this that it may fulfill the wider work whereby CHRIST is to be center of the universe."

We shall sum up the theme as follows: the Church is chosen, redeemed, and united in CHRIST; therefore the Church should walk in unity and in newness of life, in the strength of the Lord and by the armor of GOD.

Why Written: There were two dangers that threatened the church at Ephesus:

- A temptation to sink to heathen standards; and - A lack of unity between Jew and Gentile. To offset the first danger, Paul sets forth the holiness of the Christian's calling in contrast with their former sinful condition as heathen. To guard against the second, he presents the Lord JESUS as making peace between Jew and Gentile by the blood of His cross, and making of the twain a new body. When Written: During Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. It was sent by Tychicus who also bore letters to the Colossians and to Philemon.

Contents: The student will notice as he studies the outline with its main divisions and subheads, that the Epistle yields itself to an arrangement in triplets, as suggested by Dr. Riley in his book "Ephesians the Threefold Epistle."

Doctrinal Section: The Church's Calling. Ephesians 1:1-23, Ephesians 2:1-22, Ephesians 3:1-21.

I. The threefold source of our salvation. Ephesians 1:1-18.

II. The threefold manifestation of GOD's power. Ephesians 1:19-23, Ephesians 2:1-22.

III. A threefold statement concerning Paul. Ephesians 3:1-21.

Practical Section: The Church's Walk Ephesians 4:1-32, Ephesians 5:1-33, Ephesians 6:1-24.

I. A threefold exhortation to the whole church. Ephesians 4:1-32, Ephesians 5:1-21.

II. A threefold exhortation to the family. Ephesians 5:22-33, Ephesians 6:1-9.

III. A threefold expression of spiritual life. Ephesians 6:10-24.

DOCTRINAL SECTION: THE CHURCH'S CALLING. Ephesians 1:1-23, Ephesians 2:1-22, Ephesians 3:1-21.

I. The threefold source of our salvation. Ephesians 1:1-18. Our salvation, which is the sum of all blessings, finds its source in:

1. Predestination - by the Father, who chose us before the foundation of the world to be His children and to be without spot or blemish. Ephesians 1:4-6.

2. Redemption - by the Son, through whom is given unto us a knowledge of GOD's eternal plan for the universe, and an eternal inheritance. Ephesians 1:7-12.

3. Sealing - by the Spirit, which is an earnest - a first payment - of the complete redemption which will be ours in the future. Ephesians 1:13-14.

Paul utters a prayer that the Ephesians may have a still fuller and deeper knowledge of the privilege and power of their salvation Ephesians 1:15-18.

II. The threefold manifestation of GOD's power. Ephesians 1:19-23, Ephesians 2:1-22.

1. GOD's power was manifested in relation to CHRIST (Ephesians 1:19-23) in three ways:

(a) Resurrection.

(b) Ascension.

(c) Exaltation.

2. His power was manifested in relation to the individual in the following three ways:

(a) Spiritual resurrection. Ephesians 2:1-5.

(b) Spiritual ascension. Ephesians 2:6.

(c) Power to do good works and show forth GOD's grace throughout eternity. Ephesians 2:7-10.

3. His power was manifested in relation to the whole of humanity (Ephesians 2:11-22).

It involved three classes:

(a) The Gentiles (Ephesians 2:11-13).

- In relation to Israel, they were foreigners;

- In relation to the covenants, they were strangers, for all the covenants were made with Israel;
- In relation to GOD they were condemned. But now they are made nigh by the blood of CHRIST.

(b) The Jews (Ephesians 2:14-17). Between Jew and Gentile there existed a rigid line of demarcation in regard to religion. In the temple at Jerusalem, there was a special court for the Gentiles, separated from the "court of Israel" by a wall (the middle wall of partition, Ephesians 2:14), this wall bearing notices to the effect that Gentiles were forbidden to proceed farther under penalty of death. But in the spiritual temple of GOD there is no longer a dividing line; Jew and Gentile have "access by one Spirit unto the Father."

(c) The Church of GOD (Ephesians 2:19-22). The Gentile worshipped in his idol temple, the Jew in the great sanctuary at Jerusalem. Now, both have left these buildings made with hands, to form one great spiritual temple, whose chief cornerstone is CHRIST, whose foundation, the apostles and New Testament prophets, and whose stones are individual Christians - the whole forming a great temple inhabited by GOD through the Spirit.

III. A threefold statement concerning Paul. Ephesians 3:1-21.

1. Paul's ministry - to preach the mystery of the Gospel. The mystery was the great truth that Jew and Gentile should be fellow-heirs and members of the same body (Ephesians 3:6). It was hid in GOD from the foundation of the world, and not revealed under the Old Testament dispensation (Ephesians 3:5; Ephesians 3:9). The Old Testament Scriptures taught the salvation of the Gentiles, but not their forming one body with the Jews.

2. Paul's prayer. Ephesians 3:13-19.

3. Paul's praise. Ephesians 3:20-21.

PRACTICAL SECTION: THE CHURCH'S WALK. Ephesians 4:1-32, Ephesians 5:1-33, Ephesians 6:1-24.

I. A threefold exhortation to the whole church. Ephesians 4:1-32, Ephesians 5:1-21.

1. An exhortation to unity (Ephesians 4:1-16).

Notice three facts concerning unity:

(a) Qualities essential to unity;

- Lowliness and meekness, - Long-suffering, - Forbearance. Ephesians 4:1-3.

(b) A description of the unity. Ephesians 4:4-6.

(c) The method of producing unity: by the use of the gifts, and by the ministry, whose office is to bring the body into spiritual perfection and oneness with CHRIST. Ephesians 4:7-16.

2. An exhortation to live a new life - to put off the old man and not live like other Gentiles; to put on the new man and live in conformity to GOD's plan. Ephesians 4:17-32.

3. An exhortation to a new walk (Ephesians 5:1-20).

Dr. Riley suggests three features of the believer's walk as suggested by the threefold mention of the word "walk."

(a) Walk in love. Ephesians 5:1-7.

(b) Walk in the light. Ephesians 5:8-14.

(c) Walk circumspectly. Ephesians 5:15-20.

II. A threefold exhortation to the family. Ephesians 5:21-33, Ephesians 6:1-9.

1. Wives and husbands. Ephesians 5:21-33.

2. Children and parents. Ephesians 6:1-4.

3. Slaves and masters. Ephesians 6:5-9.

III. A threefold expression of spiritual life. Ephesians 6:10-24.

1. Power (Ephesians 6:10-17). An exhortation to put on the whole armor of GOD (this figure was probably suggested by the armor of the Roman soldiers who were guarding Paul) that the Christian may realize His strength and fight His battles.

2. Prayer (Ephesians 6:18-19). The "when," "how," and "for whom" of prayer.

3. Peace (Ephesians 6:20-24). After a personal reference to Tychicus the apostle closes with a benediction.

02.11. PHILIPPIANS

PHILIPPIANS

Theme: The Epistle to the Philippians has been called "the sweetest of all of Paul's writings," and "the most beautiful of all of Paul's letters, in which he bares his very heart and every sentence glows with a love more tender than woman's."

Throughout the Epistle there breathes forth a spirit of love on the part of Paul for the Philippians; and their attitude toward him shows that his love was mutual. There are no controversial matters discussed. no severe rebukes, no aching heart on the part of Paul because of any serious disorders. There were some divisions, it is true, but they did not seem to be of any serious nature. In dealing with them the apostle uses rare tact and judgment. Instead of hurling severe denunciations against the parties involved, he creates an atmosphere of unity and love by the frequent use of words suggesting fellowship and co-operation-such words as "yoke fellow," "fellow soldier," and like words suggesting the thought of unity and fellowship.

He creates an atmosphere of faith and worship by the repeated use of the name of the Lord, and makes them forget their petty differences as he paints for them a wonderful pen-picture of the One, who, though He was in the form of GOD, emptied Himself and humbled Himself for the salvation of others. In seeking for the theme we shall be guided by the frequent use of certain words. A great scholar said the sum of Philippians is "I rejoice, rejoice ye." The letter is full of joy. In every chapter, like the tinkle of silvery bells sound forth the words "joy," "rejoice," "rejoicing." In spite of imprisonment and in spite of the fact that he is resting in the shadow of the executioner's block, the apostle can rejoice.

We shall sum up the theme as follows: the joy of Christian life and service, manifested under all circumstances.

Occasion for Writing: Epaphroditus, the messenger of the Philippian church, and the one entrusted with a gift to the apostle, fell sick on his arrival at Rome. On his recovery he returned to Philippi and Paul took advantage of this circumstance to send a letter of thanks and exhortation to the church about whose condition Epaphroditus had notified Paul. When Written: About 64 A. D. during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome.

Contents:

I. Paul's Situation and Labors at Rome. Php 1:1-30.

II. Three Examples of Self-Denial. Php 2:1-30.

III. Warnings Against Error. Php 3:1-21.

IV. Concluding Exhortations. Php 4:1-23.

I. Paul's Situation and Labor at Rome. Php 1:1-30.

1. Paul's salutation (Php 1:1-11).

2. His joyfulness in prison (Php 1:12-30).

(a) His joyfulness in spite of bonds (Php 1:12-14). His imprisonment has turned out to the furtherance of the Gospel. The news of his imprisonment and preaching has been spread all over the military quarters and from thence to other parts of the city. The Christians at Rome have been inspired to evangelistic effort by his boldness.

(b) His joyfulness in spite of those who, in the spirit of party are preaching the gospel from insincere motives (probably the Judaizers) (Php 1:15-18). But since CHRIST is being proclaimed, the apostle will rejoice.

(c) His joyfulness in spite of the prospect of death (Php 1:19-30).

It matters little to the apostle whether he lives or dies, for in either case his desire is to glorify CHRIST. It would be better for him to die and be with CHRIST; yet he would rather live and finish his work, and further the faith of the Philippians. He has hopes that he will be released and so be able to visit them. But whether he sees them or not, he desires that they walk worthy of the Gospel, proclaiming its message in spite of persecution.

II. Three Examples of Self-denial. Php 2:1-30.

Paul begins with an exhortation to unity, which was in danger of being marred by some minor differences among the believers (Php 2:1-2). This unity was to be effected on their part by the spirit of humility and self-denial (Php 2:3-4). "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." The apostle then mentions three examples of those whose principle of life was sacrifice for others.

1. The example of CHRIST (Php 2:5-16), who, though He was on equality with GOD, emptied Himself of His glory, stripped Himself of His power and humbled Himself even to the death of the cross-for others. The apostle then adds a threefold exhortation:

(a) An exhortation to perseverance in the faith (Php 2:12-13).

(b) An exhortation to obedience (Php 2:14-16).

(c) An exhortation to missionary activity (Php 2:16).

2. The example of Timothy (Php 2:17-24). He was a minister who fully exemplified Paul's exhortation in verse Php 2:4. Compare Php 2:20-21.

3. The example of Epaphroditus (Php 2:25-30). In this Christian, we have an example of one who freely poured out his life for others. Having been brought nigh unto death through overwork, he was troubled, not because of his own affliction but because the news of his sickness had caused sorrow to others.

III. Warnings Against Error. Php 3:1-21.

1. A warning against legalism (Php 3:1-14). To one not acquainted with these teachers it would seem unduly severe to refer to them as "dogs" and "evil-workers," but Paul saw in their teaching of

salvation by the externals of the law something that would undermine Christian life and faith.

Accordingly he denounces the Judaizers as enemies of the gospel. Paul had as much to boast of in the way of social and religious privileges as these Judaizing teachers (Php 3:4-6), but he has rejected all those things and counts them as refuse (Php 3:7-8) that he may win CHRIST and be found in Him having the righteousness, not of the law, but of faith (Php 3:9-10). His justification and sanctification by faith in CHRIST has not lulled him into a careless security, for he still presses toward the goal of that perfection which will be consummated at the first resurrection (Php 3:11-14).

2. An exhortation to unity in doctrine (Php 3:15-16).

Those who are spiritually mature are to take this same attitude toward Christian perfection mentioned by Paul, and to agree on it. If there are minor differences, in non-essentials, GOD will make even these clear. These verses reveal the subject that was causing divisions among the Philippians; namely, the subject of Christian perfection.

3. A warning against Antinomianism (lawlessness) (Php 3:17-19). From the Jewish side the church was exposed to the danger of legalism. From the Gentile side, to the danger of antinomianism, a doctrine which taught that the believer was under no law whatsoever. Adherence to this teaching often resulted in shipwreck of faith and purity.

4. An exhortation to holiness (Php 3:20-21). They are to maintain a heavenly walk, for they have a heavenly hope - a hope of glorification at the coming of the Lord.

IV. Concluding Exhortations. Php 4:1-23.

1. Exhortations to:

(a) Steadfastness. Php 4:1.

(b) Like-mindedness. Php 4:2.

(c) Co-operation with Christian workers. Php 4:3.

(d) Rejoicing. Php 4:4.

(e) Forbearance and gentleness. Php 4:5.

(f) Freedom from anxiety Php 4:6-7.

(g) Holy-mindedness. Php 4:8.

(h) Practical Christianity. Php 4:9.

2. Thanks to the believers for their gifts. Php 4:10-20.

3. Salutations and benedictions. Php 4:21-23.

02.12. COLOSSIANS

COLOSSIANS

Theme: The occasion for the writing of the Epistle to the Colossians was the introduction of erroneous teaching in the church.

It seems that there had appeared in their midst a teacher who was propagating a doctrinal system that was a mixture of Jewish legalism and pagan philosophy. It was the pagan element in the system - after Paul's time known as Gnosticism - that constituted the greatest danger to the faith of the church. The Gnostics prided themselves on their possession of a wisdom far deeper than that revealed in the sacred Scriptures, a wisdom which was the property of a favored few. ("Gnostic" comes from a Greek word meaning "knowledge"). They believed that matter was inherently evil, therefore a holy GOD could not have created it. Angels, claimed they, were the creators of matter. A pure GOD did not have direct communication with sinful man, but communicated with him through a chain of intermediary angels who formed, as it were, a ladder from earth to heaven.

Dr. Jowett thus describes one form of their belief:

"Flesh is essentially evil, GOD is essentially holy; between the essentially evil and the essentially holy there can be no communion. It is impossible, says the heresy, for the essentially holy to touch the essentially evil. There is an infinite gulf between the two and the one cannot touch and be intimate with the other. The heresy then had to devise some means whereby this gulf could be crossed, and by which the essentially holy GOD could come into communion with the essentially evil state in which mankind was dwelling. What could it do? It said that out of the essentially holy GOD there emanated a being slightly less holy, and then out of the second holy one there emanated a third one less holy still and out of the third, a fourth, and so on, with increasing dilution of holiness, with divinity more and more impoverished, until one appeared (JESUS), who was so emptied of divinity, holiness, so nearly like man, that he could touch man."

It will be clearly seen that this heresy dealt a blow at the sovereignty, deity and mediatorship of JESUS, and placed Him in the same class as mediating angels.

Paul meets this error by showing that JESUS, instead of being a mere intermediary angel, is the Creator of the universe, the Creator of the angels themselves.

He exalts the Lord JESUS to His God-appointed place as Head of the universe, and the one mediator reconciling the entire creation to GOD.

We shall sum up the theme as follows: The pre-eminence of CHRIST: He is first in nature, first in the church, first in resurrection, ascension and glorification; He is the only mediator, Saviour and source of life.

Occasion for Writing: The Colossians, having heard of Paul's imprisonment, sent Epaphras, their minister, to inform the apostle concerning their state. (Colossians 1:7-8). From Epaphras Paul

learned that false teachers were trying to supplement the Christian faith by a doctrine which was a mixture of Judaism and heathen philosophy. To combat this error he wrote the Epistle. When Written: Colossians, being sent by the same messenger who bore Ephesians and Philemon - Tychicus - was probably written about the same time.

Note - Colossians was a city of Phrygia, a province of Asia Minor.

Contents:

I. Introduction: Greetings. Colossians 1:1-12.

II. Explanation: True Doctrine Declared. Colossians 1:13-29, Colossians 2:1-3.

III. Refutation: False Doctrine Exposed. Colossians 2:4-23.

IV. Exhortation: Holy Conduct Required. Colossians 3:1-25, Colossians 4:1-6.

V. Conclusion: Salutations. Colossians 4:7-18.

I. Introduction: Greetings. Colossians 1:1-12.

1. Paul's greeting. Colossians 1:1-2.

2. His thanksgiving (Colossians 1:3-8).

He thanks GOD for the love and fruitfulness of the Colossian church, which was made known to him by Epaphras, the minister, and the probable founder of the church.

3. His prayer. Colossians 1:9-12.

II. Explanation: True Doctrine Declared. Colossians 1:13-29, Colossians 2:1-3.

1. The person and position of CHRIST. Colossians 1:14-19.

(a) He is our Redeemer because of His atoning blood. Colossians 1:13-14.

(b) He is the head of the natural creation - the universe - for He is its Creator. Colossians 1:15-17.

(c) He is the head of the spiritual creation - the Church - because as the resurrected One He brought it into being. Colossians 1:18.

(d) He is the pre-eminent One, for in Him dwells the fulness of the divine powers and attributes. Colossians 1:19.

2. The work of CHRIST - a work of reconciliation. Colossians 1:20-29, Colossians 2:1-3.

(a) The full extent of the reconciliation - the entire universe, material as well as spiritual. Colossians 1:20.

(b) The subjects of the reconciliation - those who were once enemies of GOD. Colossians 1:21.

(c) The purpose of the reconciliation - that men may be presented holy, flawless and irreproachable in the sight of GOD. Colossians 1:22.

(d) The condition for the full consummation of the reconciliation - a continuance in the faith. Colossians 1:23.

(e) The minister of the message of reconciliation - Paul (Colossians 1:24-29, Colossians 2:1-3). By his sufferings he is filling up the measure of CHRIST's sufferings. (In a sense, CHRIST still suffers through the persecuted members of His church. See Acts 9:4.) His ministry is to reveal the great mystery of the ages; namely, that CHRIST is in them, the hope of glory. This explains his interest for the Colossians though he has never seen them (Colossians 2:1-3).

III. Refutation: False Doctrine Exposed. Colossians 2:4-23.

Paul warns the Colossians not to be led astray by the false reasonings of philosophers (Colossians 2:4-7), for in CHRIST they have the fullness of divine revelation (Colossians 2:3).

He warns against the following errors:

1. Gnosticism (Colossians 2:8-10). The believers are to beware of being entrapped by the arguments of human philosophy, which is simply the "A-B-C" (rudiments) of worldly knowledge (Colossians 2:8). They have no need of further perfection of the so-called higher knowledge of the Gnostics, for as Christians they are filled with the fullness of Him in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form, and who is the head of all angelic powers.

2. Legalism (Colossians 2:11-17). In these verses Paul shows:

(a) The believer's relation to the rite of circumcision (Colossians 2:11-12). They have undergone a spiritual circumcision, which represents a death to the sins of the body, which death is outwardly expressed by the Christian ordinance of baptism.

(b) Their relation to the moral law (Colossians 2:13-15). Dead in trespasses and sins, they were condemned by the Law, but CHRIST, by His death, paid the penalty of the Law and cancelled the debt against them. (Compare Galatians 3:13-14).

(c) Their relation to the ceremonial law (Colossians 2:15-16). The feasts, holy days and other Jewish ceremonial observances were but types and shadows pointing forward to CHRIST. Now since CHRIST has come and fulfilled the types, the latter are unnecessary. Therefore the Christian is not bound to observe any Jewish holy days or feasts.

3. A false mysticism (Colossians 2:18-19). Mysticism is the teaching that, by direct communion with GOD, a deeper knowledge of divine truths may be acquired, than that afforded by the Scriptures. The Colossians are not to be deceived by those who teach that angels are to be worshiped, and who base their doctrine upon fancied revelations from the other world.

4. Asceticism (Colossians 2:20-23). By asceticism we mean that doctrine which teaches that mortification of body and the renunciation of physical comforts are necessary to holiness. Those prohibitions against tasting certain foods and enjoying physical comforts are simply man-made rules for the attainment of holiness (Colossians 2:21-22). These restrictions though lending a show of humility and piety to those practicing them, cannot in themselves mortify the deeds of the flesh (Colossians 2:23). The Christian does not need these prohibitions, for he has died to sin and is living a new life with CHRIST (Colossians 2:20).

IV. Exhortation: Holy Conduct Required. Colossians 3:1-25, Colossians 4:1-6.

1. The believer's union with CHRIST, and his conduct in view of this fact. Colossians 3:1-4.

2. Death to the "old man" - the putting off of lusts of the lower nature. Colossians 3:5-9.

3. The putting on of the "new man" - the cultivating of the graces and virtues of the new life in CHRIST. Colossians 3:10-17.

4. Admonitions to the family. Colossians 3:18-25, Colossians 4:1.

5. Concluding exhortations. Colossians 4:2-6.

V. Conclusion: Salutations. Colossians 4:7-18.

1. The mission of Tychicus and Onesimus. Colossians 4:7-9.

2. Salutations from different individuals. Colossians 4:10-14.

3. Salutations from Paul. Colossians 4:15-17.

4. Benediction. Colossians 4:18.

02.13. FIRST THESSALONIANS

FIRST THESSALONIANS (Read through the entire Epistle, comparing Acts 17:1-9).

Theme: The first reading of this Epistle will reveal the fact that there is one theme that stands out above all others - the second coming of the Lord. It will be noticed that each chapter ends with a reference to that event. Paul deals with this truth more in its practical than doctrinal aspect, applying it directly to the attitude and life of the believer. So we may sum up the theme of this Epistle as follows: The coming of the Lord in relation to the believer's encouragement, comfort, watchfulness, and sanctification.

Why Written: The Epistle was written for the following purposes:

1. To comfort the believers during persecution. 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5.
2. To comfort them concerning some of their dead who had died in the faith (1 Thessalonians 4:13). The Thessalonians feared that the departed ones would lose the joy of witnessing the Lord's return.
3. It seemed that some, in expectation of the Lord's soon coming had fallen into the error of supposing that it was not necessary to work. 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12. When Written: Written from Corinth shortly after Paul's departure from Thessalonica.

Contents: Mr. Robert Lee, of London, gives the following helpful outline: The coming of the Lord is

- I. An inspiring hope for the young convert. 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10.

- II. An encouraging hope for the faithful servant. 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20.

- III. A purifying hope for the believer. 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12.

- IV. A comforting hope for the bereaved. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

- V. A rousing hope for the sleepy Christian. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28.

Paul with true humility and Christian courtesy mentions his co-workers, placing them on a level with himself (1 Thessalonians 1:1).

- For what three things did Paul commend the believers (1 Thessalonians 1:3, compare 1 Corinthians 13:13 and contrast the first words of Revelation 2:2)?
- How did Paul preach the Gospel to these believers (1 Thessalonians 1:5)?
- Of whom did they become followers (1 Thessalonians 1:6, compare 1 Corinthians 11:1)?
- How did they receive the gospel (1 Thessalonians 1:6, compare Acts 13:50-52)?
- What was their relation to the other churches (1 Thessalonians 1:7)?
- What was their relation to the evangelization of the surrounding country (1 Thessalonians 1:8)?

- What attitude on their part in relation to sin and to GOD secured their salvation (1 Thessalonians 1:9)?
- What was their present attitude (1 Thessalonians 1:10)?
- To what event does Paul have reference in 1 Thessalonians 2:2? Acts 16:19-40.
- What is said concerning his motives in preaching the Gospel (1 Thessalonians 2:3-6)?
- What is said concerning his attitude toward these believers (1 Thessalonians 2:7-12)?
- Could Paul, as an apostle, have claimed financial support? 1 Corinthians 9:6; 1 Corinthians 9:14?
- Why did he not require it from the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 2:2:6; 1 Thessalonians 2:9)?
- What testimony should every true minister of the Gospel have (1 Thessalonians 2:10)?
- How did the Thessalonians receive the Gospel (1 Thessalonians 2:13)?
- With whom does Paul compare them (1 Thessalonians 2:14)?
- What did he say was the culminating sin of the Jewish nation (1 Thessalonians 2:16, compare Matthew 23:13)?
- What was Paul's desire when he was at Athens (1 Thessalonians 2:18, compare Acts 17:15)?
- What will be a source of rejoicing of the minister of the Gospel in heaven (1 Thessalonians 2:19)?
- Who joined Paul at Athens (1 Thessalonians 3:1-2, compare Acts 17:15)?
- Why did Paul send Timothy from there to the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 3:2-3)?
- What had Paul told them to expect (1 Thessalonians 3:4, compare Acts 14:22)?
- What did he fear (1 Thessalonians 3:5)?
- What news did Timothy bring back (1 Thessalonians 3:6)?
- What was very life to the apostle (1 Thessalonians 3:8)?
- What was his earnest desire (1 Thessalonians 3:10)?
- His prayer (1 Thessalonians 3:11-12)?
- Was that in verse 1 Thessalonians 3:12 an important prayer (John 13:34-35; Romans 13:9; 1 Corinthians 13:13; Galatians 5:6)?
- What would be the consummation of their love (1 Thessalonians 3:13)?
- Against what sin common among the Gentiles, does Paul warn them (1 Thessalonians 4:1-7)?
- What does Paul say concerning his authority (1 Thessalonians 4:8)?
- By what power does he exercise his authority (1 Thessalonians 4:8, compare Acts 15:28)?

- What truth should a believer know naturally as a child of GOD (1 Thessalonians 4:9, compare 1 John 3:18)?
- To what command does Paul have reference in verse 1 Thessalonians 4:11 (2 Thessalonians 3:10)?
- For what two reasons was this command given (1 Thessalonians 4:12)?
- Where did Paul learn the truths set forth in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (1 Thessalonians 4:15)?
- How will the day of the Lord come in relation to the unbeliever (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3)?
- Will it come as a thief in the night to the believer (1 Thessalonians 5:4)?
- Though we may not know the exact time of the Lord's coming, may we know when it is "at the door"? Matthew 24:32.
- To what does Paul liken the sinful condition of the world (1 Thessalonians 5:7)?
- What relation has 1 Thessalonians 5:9 to the teaching that the church will pass through the tribulation?
- What is to be the believer's attitude toward their leaders (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)?
- What admonition is given to those who might be inclined to suppress the genuine manifestations of the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19)?
- What admonition is given to those who would exalt manifestations above the preaching of the Word (1 Thessalonians 5:20)?
- What is to be our attitude toward prophesyings and messages in other languages (1 Thessalonians 5:21)?
- What is GOD's perfect plan for every believer (1 Thessalonians 5:23)?
- When will that work be consummated (1 Thessalonians 5:23, compare Php 3:21; 1 John 3:2)?
- What makes possible of fulfillment the prayer uttered in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (1 Thessalonians 5:24)?

02.14. SECOND THESSALONIANS

SECOND THESSALONIANS (Read the entire Epistle)

Theme: Second Thessalonians sets forth the second coming of the Lord in its relation to persecuted believers, unrepentant sinners, and an apostate church.

Why Written: The Epistle was written for the following purposes:

1. To comfort believers during a new outbreak of persecutions. 2 Thessalonians 1:4.
2. To correct a false teaching to the effect that the day of the Lord had already come (2 Thessalonians 2:1). The severe persecutions had led some to believe that the great tribulation had begun.
3. To warn some who were walking disorderly. 2 Thessalonians 3:6. When Written: The Epistle was written soon after Paul's first Epistle to the same church.

Contents: These center round the teaching of the second coming of the Lord in relation to:

- I. Persecuted Believers. 2 Thessalonians 1:1-7.
- II. The Unrepentant. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-12.
- III. Apostasy. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.
- IV. Service. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17, 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18.

Paul begins this Epistle with the usual salutation (2 Thessalonians 1:1-2). He thanks GOD for the fact that the believers are growing in grace and love (2 Thessalonians 1:3), and commends them for their patience in persecutions (2 Thessalonians 1:4). Their patience in these persecutions shows that they believe that GOD's justice will finally prevail (2 Thessalonians 1:5), when the wicked will suffer (2 Thessalonians 1:6), and the righteous will be given rest (2 Thessalonians 1:7). This will take place after that CHRIST has taken away His people (2 Thessalonians 1:10).

2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 is the heart of the Epistle. The words "day of Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:2) is the same as the "day of the Lord." The words "day of the Lord" refer to that period of time during which GOD will deal in judgment with Israel and the nations, which period will be one of great tribulation (compare Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1; Joel 3:14; Isaiah 2:10-22).

It appears that some false teachers had been spreading the belief that the day of the Lord had already come (2 Thessalonians 2:2). This teaching they bolstered up by pretended spiritual revelations, and a forged letter, supposedly from Paul (2 Thessalonians 2:2). This teaching caused great consternation among the believers, who were fearful that they had missed the rapture about which Paul had spoken in the first Epistle. To correct the false belief Paul mentioned the following events that must precede the coming of the day of the Lord:

1. A falling away on the part of the professed church. 2 Thessalonians 2:3.

2. The catching away of GOD's people (2 Thessalonians 2:7). This is not directly stated, but the implication is very strong. "He that letteth (i.e., hinders) will let, until he be taken out of the way." Here reference is made to a power that is hindering the mystery of iniquity from coming to its consummation.

- The direct reference is to the Holy Spirit;

- The indirect to the church in which the Spirit dwells. Our Lord referred to believers as the salt of the earth, i.e., the element that preserves, and that hinders corruption. Matthew 5:13. Once this preserving element is removed, iniquity and lawlessness will flood the earth.

3. The revelation of Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4). What is the general teaching of the Scriptures concerning this man? Daniel 7:8; Daniel 7:11; Daniel 7:21; Daniel 7:25; Daniel 8:23; Daniel 9:27; John 5:43; 1 John 4:3; Revelation 13:4-8; Revelation 19:19.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-18 contains sundry exhortations that require no especial explanation.

02.15. FIRST TIMOTHY

FIRST TIMOTHY

Theme: The first Epistle to Timothy is the first of those known as the Pastoral Epistles (the others are Titus and II Timothy), so called because they are addressed to ministers for the purpose of instructing them in church government. The Epistle we are now studying was written to Timothy, Paul's faithful companion and disciple. It was written after the apostle's release following his first imprisonment. His movements after this event cannot be traced with certainty.

- It is believed that he visited Spain. Romans 15:24.
- He then sailed to Miletus and came to Colosse. Philemon 1:22.
- From there he went to Ephesus where he left Timothy to take charge of the church, which was imperiled by false teaching. 1 Timothy 1:3.
- Passing north, Paul came to Troas where he took ship for Macedonia. 1 Timothy 1:3. From Macedonia he wrote the Epistle to instruct Timothy concerning his duties and also to encourage him, for the young man was of a sensitive and retiring disposition, and consequently inclined to be backward in asserting his authority.

We shall sum up the theme as follows: The qualifications and duties of the Christian minister, and his relation to the church, the home and the world.

Why Written: To instruct Timothy in the duties of his office, to encourage him, and to warn him against false teachers. When Written: Probably in Macedonia during the interval between Paul's two imprisonments.

Contents:

- I. Sound Doctrine. 1 Timothy 1:1-20.
 - II. Public Prayer. 1 Timothy 2:1-15.
 - III. Ministerial Qualifications. 1 Timothy 3:1-13.
 - IV. False Doctrine. 1 Timothy 3:14-16, 1 Timothy 4:1-11.
 - V. Pastoral Instructions. 1 Timothy 4:12-16, 1 Timothy 5:1-25, 1 Timothy 6:1-2.
 - VI. Concluding Exhortations. 1 Timothy 6:3-21.
- I. Sound Doctrine. 1 Timothy 1:1-20.
 - 1. Salutation (1 Timothy 1:1-2).
 - 2. Timothy's special work at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3-11).

He was to contend for sound doctrine. The church was menaced by the following errors:

(a) Gnosticism (1 Timothy 1:4). The theories and endless genealogies of Gnosticism (genealogies of celestial powers and of mediating angels) simply led to useless speculation.

(b) Legalism (1 Timothy 1:5-11). The object of Paul's charge ("the end of the commandment") is to teach love springing from a pure conscience and genuine faith (1 Timothy 1:5). But some have swerved from the principle of love as the ruling power in the believer's life. They have been teaching justification by the law, although they have no qualifications as teachers (1 Timothy 1:6-7). They are ignorant of the fact that the law was not intended for those in whose hearts it is written; but its purpose is to awaken the conscience of sinners (1 Timothy 1:8-11).

3. Paul's testimony (1 Timothy 1:12-17). The chief of sinners has become the chief of saints; the blasphemer has become the preacher; the destroyer of the church has become its builder. Unto him, the chiefest of sinners was mercy shown, in order that he might be a living example of GOD's mercy.

4. The charge to Timothy (1 Timothy 1:18-20). The exhortation of 1 Timothy 1:5 is repeated, enforced by two facts:

(a) The reminder of the prophecies that had been uttered at his ordination (1 Timothy 1:18; compare Acts 13:1-2).

(b) The warning drawn from the doctrinal shipwreck of two teachers whom Paul had excommunicated (1 Timothy 1:19-20).

II. Public Prayer. 1 Timothy 2:1-15.

1. For whom to pray. Christians are to pray for all men, especially for kings and those in authority. 1 Timothy 2:1-7.

2. The attitude of men and women in public prayer. 1 Timothy 2:8-15.

(a) The men are to pray, lifting up hands unsullied by sin, and having hearts free from secret grudges and unbelief. 1 Timothy 2:8.

(b) Women are to dress modestly, adorning themselves with good works rather than with gaudy apparel (1 Timothy 2:8-10). Women are to observe the God-appointed order of the sexes; namely, that the man is the head of woman, and the one exercising authority in the home and in the church (1 Timothy 2:11-14).

Generally speaking woman's sphere of activity is in the home rather than in the ministry (1 Timothy 2:15). Note that in order to have a well balanced interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:12 it is necessary to bear in mind the following two facts:

(1) The emphasis in 1 Timothy 2:12 seems to be on the woman's usurping of authority over the man; i.e., taking to herself an authority that GOD has not given her.

(2) Paul is speaking in general terms and particularly of married women. Other scriptures show plainly that GOD, in particular cases grants a ministry to women. Exodus 15:20-21; Judges 4:4; 2 Kings 22:14; Joel 2:28; Acts 21:8-9; Romans 16:1; 1 Corinthians 11:5; Php 4:3.

III. Ministerial Qualifications. 1 Timothy 3:1-13.

1. Necessary qualifications for bishops (1 Timothy 3:1-7). The local churches of Paul's time, instead of being ruled by one pastor, were governed by a group of elders or bishops (overseers). Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Php 1:1. This was evidently the best arrangement for those days.

Later, one of the elders was appointed to a place of leadership over the others, and finally each local church came to be governed by one elder or overseer, in co-operation with deacons. This change was perfectly permissible because the New Testament does not lay down a hard and fast system of church government. It sets forth fundamental principles and then allows every church to organize itself according to the needs of the particular age and land.

2. The necessary qualifications for deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13). The deacons were those entrusted with the temporal affairs of the church, such as the handling of funds, etc.

IV. False Doctrine. 1 Timothy 3:14-16, 1 Timothy 4:1-11.

1. The purpose of Paul's instructions is now mentioned in the verses that form the key to the Epistle (1 Timothy 3:14-15). It is that Timothy may know how to act in all matters pertaining to the house of GOD, which is the church of the living GOD and the repository of the truth.

2. The mystery of godliness (1 Timothy 3:16). The foundation of this truth of which the church is the guardian, is the mystery of godliness, which mystery comprises the following fundamentals of the Gospel:

(a) CHRIST's incarnation: "God was manifest in the flesh."

(b) CHRIST's resurrection: "justified in the Spirit." (Compare Romans 1:4.) The world by crucifying CHRIST declared Him unrighteous; GOD, by raising Him from the dead declared Him righteous (justified Him).

(c) CHRIST's manifestation: "seen of angels." 1 Corinthians 15:5-8.

(d) CHRIST's proclamation: "preached unto the Gentiles."

(e) CHRIST's acceptance: "believed on in the world."

(f) CHRIST's exaltation: "received up into glory."

3. In contrast to the mystery of godliness, Paul mentions the mystery of ungodliness (1 Timothy 4:1-5). In the last days there will be an apostasy from the faith (1 Timothy 4:1). In Paul's days this apostasy was represented by the Gnostic heresy.

"The special error herein attacked is the Gnostic heresy; and seven features of this false doctrine are apparent in the pastoral Epistles: The claim to superior knowledge, insight, illumination; a spurious religion with profitless and barren speculation; a practical lawlessness; cauterizing the conscience with a hot iron; an allegorical interpretation of Scripture, explaining away the resurrection, etc.; an empty form of godliness in which words took the place of works; a compromise between GOD and Mammon reducing godliness to a matter of worldly gain; a pretense of superior sanctity that licensed even flagrant sins by profession of a pure motive."

4. Timothy's attitude toward erroneous teaching (1 Timothy 4:6-11).

He is to avoid those religious theories and speculations that teach a fruitless asceticism. Bodily exercise (in a religious sense), such as fasting and abstaining from certain foods, has a limited temporal value; but godliness is profitable for all things both in time and in eternity (1 Timothy 4:7-11).

V. Pastoral Instructions. 1 Timothy 4:12-16, 1 Timothy 5:1-25, 1 Timothy 6:1-2.

1. Instructions relating to Timothy himself 1 Timothy 4:12-16.

2. Instructions relating to different classes in the church:

(a) Old and young men and old and young women (1 Timothy 5:1-2).

(b) Widows (1 Timothy 5:3-16).

It was the custom of the early church to care for destitute widows (Acts 6:1). Timothy is instructed to see to the support of those widows who are needy and who are of blameless character (1 Timothy 5:3-8).

Many commentators believe that another class of widows is mentioned in 1 Timothy 5:9-10; namely those who took service with the church as deaconesses and who pledged themselves to devote themselves to different forms of charitable service. The younger widows were to be refused for they would in many cases break their agreement with the church and marry (1 Timothy 5:11-16).

(c) Elders (1 Timothy 5:17-25).

Those elders who governed well and who taught were to receive generous remuneration (1 Timothy 5:17-18). Any accusation against them not substantiated by two or more witnesses was to be ignored (1 Timothy 5:19). Where it is proved that an elder has been guilty of gross sin, he is to be rebuked publicly (1 Timothy 5:20). Timothy is not to be hasty in ordaining elders (1 Timothy 5:22). To lay hands on a man is to identify himself with his sin. Timothy is to exercise caution in ordaining elders, for though the sins and failings of some men are apparent, in others they do not come immediately to light (1 Timothy 5:24-25).

(d) Slaves (1 Timothy 6:1-2).

Slaves are to perform conscientious service to believing and unbelieving masters.

VI. Concluding Exhortations. 1 Timothy 6:3-21.

Timothy is exhorted -

1. To separate himself from those false teachers who teach contrary to Paul's doctrine, and who suppose that religion is for purpose of material gain. 1 Timothy 6:3-10.

2. To flee the love of money and to follow after the true riches which consist of Christian virtues. 1 Timothy 6:11.

3. To fight in the glorious struggle for the faith and to grasp the prize of life eternal. 1 Timothy 6:12.

4. To keep Paul's charge to him flawless and irreproachable. 1 Timothy 6:13-16.
5. To charge the rich not to trust in their wealth but in GOD who is the Owner of all things; and to so use their money here as to bring for them interest throughout eternity. 1 Timothy 6:17-19.
6. To guard the sacred trust, avoiding the philosophic theories of Gnosticism. 1 Timothy 6:20-21.

02.16. SECOND TIMOTHY

SECOND TIMOTHY

Theme: After Paul had left Titus at Crete, he sailed north intending to pass on to Nicopolis by the way of Troas and Macedonia (Titus 3:12). Trophimus, his traveling companion, fell sick on the voyage, and was left at Miletus (2 Timothy 4:20).

Sailing to Troas the apostle stayed in the house of one named Carpus. About that time persecution arose against the Christians, instigated by the emperor Nero, who accused them of burning Rome. Paul, the acknowledged leader of the Christians, was probably arrested at Troas, and so sudden must his arrest have been, that some of his belongings were left behind (2 Timothy 4:13). On arriving at Rome, the apostle was placed in close confinement. Knowing that his martyrdom was approaching, he wrote this, his last letter to Timothy, begging the latter to visit him. Paul was sorely in need of his son in the faith, for those in Asia who should have supported him had deserted him; because of the recent persecution, most of the Christians were afraid to befriend him.

Knowing that the timidity of Timothy's disposition might cause him to shrink from the risk of persecution that a visit to the capital might entail, Paul exhorts him not to fear persecution, nor to be ashamed of him the apostle, but to be bold in his testimony and to endure hardness like a good soldier of JESUS CHRIST. He also advises him as to his attitude toward false teachers and their doctrines. The following theme has been suggested for the Epistle: Loyalty to the Lord and the truth in view of persecution and apostasy.

Why Written: The Epistle was written for the following reasons:

- to request Timothy's presence at Rome;
- to warn him against false teachers;
- to encourage him in his duties;
- to strengthen him against coming persecution. When Written: Shortly before Paul's martyrdom at Rome.

Contents:

- I. Introduction. 2 Timothy 1:1-5.
- II. Exhortations in View of coming Suffering and Persecution. 2 Timothy 1:6-18, 2 Timothy 2:1-13.
- III. Exhortations in View of Present Apostasy. 2 Timothy 2:14-26.
- IV. Exhortations in View of Future Apostasy. 2 Timothy 3:1-17, 2 Timothy 4:1-8.
- V. Conclusion. 2 Timothy 4:9-22.

I. Introduction. 2 Timothy 1:1-5. The following are the contents of the introduction:

1. Paul's calling - an apostle appointed by GOD's will to proclaim the promise of life centered in CHRIST. 2 Timothy 1:1.
2. Paul's greeting to Timothy. 2 Timothy 1:2.
3. Paul's ceaseless prayer for him. 2 Timothy 1:3.
4. Paul's desire to see him again, remembering Timothy's tears at their last parting. 2 Timothy 1:4.
5. Paul's memories - the unfeigned faith of Timothy, a faith that first had its home in the heart of his mother and grandmother. 2 Timothy 1:5.

II. Exhortations in View of coming Suffering and Persecution. 2 Timothy 1:6-18, 2 Timothy 2:1-13.

Paul exhorts Timothy-

1. To stir up - kindle into a living flame - the gift of GOD which was bestowed upon him at his ordination, and to put away the spirit of cowardice as inconsistent with the spirit of that gift (2 Timothy 1:6-7).
2. To be bold in the face of persecution. 2 Timothy 1:9-11.
3. To hold fast the trust committed to him by the power of the indwelling Spirit. 2 Timothy 1:13-14.
4. To recognize the attitude that believers were taking toward the apostle:
 - (a) Some like those of Asia, were forsaking him. 2 Timothy 1:15.
 - (b) Others like Onesiphorus were supporting him. 2 Timothy 1:16-18.
5. To be strong in the power of GOD's grace. 2 Timothy 2:1.
6. To commit to others the instructions he had received from Paul. 2 Timothy 2:2.
7. To be ready to face hardship -
 - (a) Like a soldier, yielding whole-hearted service. 2 Timothy 2:3-4.
 - (b) Like an athlete, abiding by the rules of the game. 2 Timothy 2:5.
 - (c) Like a farmer, receiving the reward of patient toil. 2 Timothy 2:6-7.
8. To remember two facts:
 - (a) The gospel of the risen CHRIST which enables Paul to endure suffering for the elects' sake. 2 Timothy 2:8-10.
 - (b) The faithful saying - to suffer with CHRIST is to reign with Him; to deny Him is to suffer loss. 2 Timothy 2:11-13.

III. Exhortations in View of Present Apostasy. 2 Timothy 2:14-26.

Timothy is exhorted:

1. To urge Christians to avoid idle discussions. 2 Timothy 2:14.

2. To be a true teacher of the Word of GOD, avoiding the empty, irreverent talk of false teachers. 2 Timothy 2:15-21.

3. To flee, not only evil doctrine, but also evil living; to follow, not only true doctrine, but also true living. 2 Timothy 2:22.

4. To avoid foolish and superficial speculations that cause contentions, and which hinder the work of a preacher. 2 Timothy 2:24-26.

IV. Exhortations in View of Future Apostasy. 2 Timothy 3:1-17, 2 Timothy 4:1-8.

Timothy is exhorted:

1. To avoid false teachers, for -

(a) In the future there will arise an empty profession of religion, combining an utter lack of power with a low moral standard. 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

(b) The ministers of this religion will be characterized by their lack of principle and opposition to the truth. 2 Timothy 3:6-9.

2. To abide loyally by his convictions, remembering:

(a) The lesson that suffering is the Christian's lot in this world, as illustrated by Paul's example. 2 Timothy 3:11-13.

(b) The lessons learned from Paul's holy life. 2 Timothy 3:10; 2 Timothy 3:14.

(c) The lessons he has learned from the Holy Scriptures. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

3. To do his full duty as an evangelist, preaching the Word with tireless patience, adapting his teaching to every capacity, preaching, pleading, and reproving, whether the opportunities seem favorable or unfavorable (2 Timothy 4:1-2).

He is to do this for two reasons:

(a) The people in the future, will grow impatient of sound teaching and reject it. 2 Timothy 4:3-4.

(b) Paul's ministry is about to close; he is trusting Timothy to continue his work as far as he is able. 2 Timothy 4:5-6.

V. Conclusion. 2 Timothy 4:9-22.

1. An urgent request (2 Timothy 4:9-10). Like the message of an aged and dying father to his only son, comes Paul's request to Timothy, "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me" (2 Timothy 4:9). The apostle is lonely. Demas has forsaken him; the others are absent on various missions; only Luke is with him.

2. Special instructions. 2 Timothy 4:11-13.

(a) Timothy is to bring Mark, who had proved himself worthy of the apostle's confidence. 2 Timothy 4:11.

(b) Timothy was to bring his cloak, books and parchments (2 Timothy 4:13). The apostle must have been in a fireless cell, and facing a cold winter. "The pathos of Paul's position is vivified by quoting from a letter of William Tyndale (an English translator of the Scriptures, who was martyred in the sixteenth century) when he was in prison for CHRIST's sake in the damp cells of Vivoorde, 'I entreat your Lordship,' he wrote, 'and that by the Lord JESUS, that if I must remain here for the winter, you would beg the commissary to be so kind as to send me, from the things of mine which he hath, a warmer cap. I feel the cold painfully in my head. Also a warmer cloak, for the one I have is very thin. Also some cloth to patch my leggings. My overcoat is worn out, my shirts even are worn out. He has a woolen shirt of mine if he will send it. But most of all, I entreat and implore your kindness to do your best with the commissary to be as good as to send me my Hebrew Bible, grammar and vocabulary, that I may spend my time in that pursuit.' " - Percy G. Parker.

3. A bitter opponent (2 Timothy 4:14-15). Timothy is warned against Alexander, perhaps one who had testified against Paul in court.

4. Paul's trial and first defense (2 Timothy 4:16-17).

Paul's second imprisonment was more rigorous than his first.

- During the first imprisonment he had his own hired house; during the second, he was kept in close confinement.

- During the first he was surrounded by his friends; during the second, he was almost alone.

- In the first he was expecting a speedy release; in the second, he was looking forward to death.

He was evidently arraigned on a serious charge, probably that of being one of the chief instigators of the burning of Rome.

"This alteration in the treatment of Paul exactly corresponds with that which the history of the times would have led us to expect. We have concluded that his liberation took place early in A.D. 63; he was therefore far distant from Rome when the first imperial persecution of Christianity broke out, in consequence of the great fire in the following year . . . When the alarm and indignation of the people were excited by the tremendous ruin of the conflagration which burnt down almost half of the city, it answered the purpose of Nero (who was accused of causing the fire) to avert the rage of the populace from himself to the already hated votaries of a new religion.

"Tacitus, a Roman historian, describes the success of this expedient, and relates the sufferings of the Christian martyrs, who were put to death with circumstances of the most aggravated cruelty. Some were crucified; some disguised in the robes of beasts, and hunted to death with dogs; some were wrapped with ropes impregnated with inflammable materials, and set on fire at night, that they might serve to illuminate the circus of the Vatican and the gardens of Nero, where this diabolical monster exhibited the agonies of his victims to the public, and gloated over them himself, mixing among the spectators in the costume of a charioteer.

"Brutalized as the Romans were by the spectacle of human combats in the amphitheater, and hardened by popular prejudice against the 'atheistical' sect, yet the tortures of the victims excited their compassion. 'A very great multitude,' as Tacitus informs us, perished in this manner; and it appears from his statement that the mere fact of professing Christianity was sufficient to justify

their execution; the whole body of Christians being considered involved in the crime of firing the city. This, however, was in the first excitement which followed the fire; and even then, but few among those who perished were Roman citizens. Since that time, some years had passed, and now a decent respect would be paid to the forms of law in dealing with one, who, like Paul, possessed the privilege of citizenship. Yet we can understand that a leader of so abhorred a sect would be subjected to severe punishment.

"We have an account of the first hearing of Paul's cause from his own pen. 'At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion' (2 Timothy 4:16-17).

"We see from this statement that it was dangerous even to appear in public as the friend or adviser of the apostle. No advocate would venture to plead his cause, no 'Procurator' to aid him in arranging the evidence, no 'patronus' to appear as his supporter and to deprecate, according to ancient usage, the sentence. But he had a more powerful Intercessor and a wiser Advocate, who could never leave him nor forsake him. The Lord JESUS was always near him, but now was felt visibly present in the hour of need . . . From the above description we can realize in some measure the external features of his trial. He evidently intimates that he spoke before a crowded audience, so that all the Gentiles might hear; and this corresponds to the supposition, which historically we should be led to make, that he was tried in one of those great basilicas which stood in the Forum . . . The basilicas were rectangular buildings of great size, so that a vast multitude of spectators was always present at any trial which excited public interest. Before such an audience it was that Paul was called to speak in his defense. His earthly friends had deserted him, but His heavenly Friend stood by him. He was strengthened by the power of CHRIST's Spirit and pleaded the cause not of himself only, but of the gospel.

"At the same time he successfully defended himself against the first of the charges brought against him, which perhaps accused him of conspiring with the burners of Rome. He was delivered from the immediate peril, and saved from the ignominious and painful death which might have been his doom had he been convicted on such a charge." - Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul."

5. Salutations and benediction. 2 Timothy 4:19-20.

Note: Tradition tells us that Paul was beheaded in Rome.

02.17. TITUS

TITUS

Theme: The Epistle to Titus follows that of I Timothy in order of composition. After writing the last-named Epistle, Paul sailed with Titus to Crete where he left him to set in order the unorganized churches. Titus, a heathen by birth (Galatians 2:3), was probably one of Paul's converts (Titus 1:4). He was present with the apostle at the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-41), where, in spite of the insistence of the Judaizers, Paul refused to circumcise him (Galatians 2:3). The apostle had great confidence in him and entrusted him with important missions (2 Corinthians 7:6-7; 2 Corinthians 7:13-16; 2 Corinthians 8:16-24).

Knowing that the untrustworthy and vicious character of the Cretians and the presence of false teachers would render his task a difficult one, Paul wrote Titus a letter to instruct and encourage him in his duties. The Epistle is short, containing only three chapters, but it compresses in a short compass a large amount of instruction embracing doctrine, morals and discipline.

Martin Luther said of it: "This is a short Epistle, but such a quintessence of Christian doctrine, and composed in such a manner that it contains all that is needful for Christian knowledge and life."

We shall sum up the theme as follows:

- The organizing of a true church of CHRIST;
- an appeal to the church to be true to CHRIST. When Written: Shortly after First Timothy, probably from some point in Asia minor.

Why Written: To instruct Titus in the organization of the Cretian church and to direct him in the method of dealing with the people.

Contents:

- I. The Order and Doctrine of the Church. Titus 1:1-16.
- II. The Conduct of the Church. Titus 2:1-15, Titus 3:1-15.
- I. The Order and Doctrine of the Church. Titus 1:1-16.
 - 1. Introductory: Paul's salutation to Titus. Titus 1:1-4.
 - 2. Titus' special mission in Crete-to set in order the disorganized church. Titus 1:5.
 - 3. The qualifications for elders. Titus 1:6-9.
 - 4. The reason for the exercising of great care in choosing elders - the presence of false teachers (Titus 1:10-16).

Concerning these teachers notice:

(a) Their character: insubordinate and deceitful, and given to empty talk. Titus 1:10.

(b) Their motive: material gain. Titus 1:11.

(c) Their teaching: Jewish traditions and legends (Titus 1:14); for example, commandments concerning the abstaining from certain foods (Titus 1:15; compare Mark 7:1-23; Romans 14:14).

(d) Their claims: they profess to be true teachers of the gospel, but their sinful lives belie their profession. Titus 1:16.

Note that Paul in exposing the character of the Cretians (Titus 1:12-13), quotes a Cretian poet, Epimenides (600 B. C.). Ancient writers speak of the Cretians' love of gain, ferocity, fraud, falsehood and general depravity. To "Cretianize" was proverbial for to lie, as to "Corinthianize" was for to be dissolute.

II. The Conduct of the Church. Titus 2:1-15, Titus 3:1-15.

1. The believer's conduct in relation to one another. Titus 2:1-15.

2. The believer's conduct in relation to the outside world. Titus 3:1-8.

3. What to avoid - discussions concerning celestial genealogies and minute points of the law of Moses. Titus 3:9.

4. Whom to avoid - heretics (Titus 3:10-11). A heretic is a person who causes a division in the church by teaching an unscriptural doctrine. In Paul's day, tainted morals were often the accompaniment of tainted doctrine.

5. Concluding instructions. Titus 3:12-15.

02.18. PHILEMON

PHILEMON (Read the Epistle) Theme: The Epistle to Philemon is the only example of Paul's private correspondence preserved to us. From the glimpse it affords us of the apostle's courtesy, prudence and skillful address it has been known as the "Polite Epistle." It does not contain any direct teaching concerning doctrine or Christian conduct. Its chief value lies in the picture it gives us of the practical outworking of Christian doctrine in everyday life, and of the relation of Christianity to social problems.

We shall gather our theme from the story told by the Epistle, a story which centers around a runaway slave named Onesimus. The latter was more fortunate than some of his fellow-slaves in that he had for master a Christian, Philemon, a convert of Paul. For reasons not mentioned, Onesimus ran away from his master, and in so doing he probably took with him some of his master's property. He made his way to Rome, where he was converted under Paul's preaching. In him the apostle found a sincere convert and a devoted friend. So dear did Onesimus become to him that Paul would have retained him to minister to him in his captivity. But the apostle had to make a sacrifice. Though Onesimus had repented of his sin, there was a call for restitution which could be made only by the slave's returning and submitting himself to his master. The claim of duty involved a sacrifice not only for Paul, but it demanded a still greater one from Onesimus, who on returning to his master would be liable to severe punishment - crucifixion was a general penalty imposed upon runaway slaves. The sense of right required Paul to return the slave, but the constraint of love caused him to intercede for him and save him from punishment. Taking up his pen he wrote a courteous, tactful letter of eager, affectionate entreaty, identifying himself with Onesimus.

After saluting Philemon and his family (Philemon 1:1-3), Paul commends him for his love, faith and hospitality (Philemon 1:4-7). The apostle has a request to make. As Paul the apostle, he could command; but as Paul the aged, the prisoner of the Lord, he rather beseeched Philemon (Philemon 1:8-9). His request is that the latter receive again Onesimus, one who was once unprofitable, but who is now become profitable - Onesimus, Paul's own son in the faith (Philemon 1:10-12). So attached had he become to the slave that he would have retained him as servant but without Philemon's consent he would not act (Philemon 1:13-14).

Perhaps it was in GOD's providence that Onesimus should have departed for a short time, in order that he might return to be forever with his master, not as a servant but as a brother (Philemon 1:15-16). Paul identifies himself with Onesimus; if the latter owes anything the apostle will pay it. But Philemon should remember that to Paul he is indebted, in a sense, for his salvation (Philemon 1:19). That Philemon will obey, and even do more than Paul asks, is the latter's confidence (Philemon 1:21). The Epistle concludes with the usual salutations (Philemon 1:22-25). From verses Philemon 1:16; Philemon 1:21 we may safely infer that Onesimus was given his freedom. Thus by the regeneration of the individual and by the uniting of master and slave in CHRIST was the problem of slavery solved - at least in one family.

We shall sum up the theme of the Epistle as follows: the power of the gospel in the solution of social problems. When Written: It was sent by Tychicus with the letters to the Colossians and the Ephesians.

Contents:

I. Introduction: Greetings. Philemon 1:1-3.

II. Commendation of Philemon 1:1; Philemon 1:4.

III. Intercession for Onesimus. Philemon 1:8-21.

IV. Conclusion: Salutations. Philemon 1:22-25. The Value of the Epistle:

1. Its personal value lies in the insight it gives into the character of Paul, revealing his love, humility, courtesy, unselfishness and tact.

2. Its providential value. We learn here that GOD may be in the most untoward circumstances (Philemon 1:15).

3. Its practical value. We are encouraged to seek and redeem the lowest and most degraded. Onesimus had nothing to commend him, for he was a runaway slave, and worse still, a Phrygian slave, from a region noted for the vice and stupidity of its inhabitants. But Paul won him for CHRIST.

4. Its social value. The Epistle presents the relation of Christianity to slavery. During Paul's time there were about six million slaves in the Roman empire. Their lot, in general, was miserable. Considered as the property of their master, they were completely at his mercy.

They had no rights by law. For the slightest offenses they could be scourged, mutilated, crucified, or thrown to the wild beasts. No permanent marriages were allowed among them, but only temporary unions, which could be broken at the will of the masters. It may be asked, Why did not Christianity attempt to overthrow this system? Because to have done so would have required a tremendous revolution - and the religion of CHRIST reforms by love and not by force. It teaches principles that undermine and overthrow wrong systems. This method of reformation is well illustrated in the case of Philemon and Onesimus.

Master and slave were united in the Spirit of CHRIST, and in that union all social distinctions were obliterated (Galatians 3:28). Though Paul did not give a direct command to Philemon that he free Onesimus, the words in verses Philemon 1:16; Philemon 1:21 would imply that such was the apostle's desire.

5. Its spiritual value. It furnishes us some striking types of our salvation. The following incidents will suggest types to the thoughtful student:

- Onesimus' forsaking his master; Paul's finding of him;
- Paul's interceding for him;
- His identifying himself with the slave;
- His offering to pay his debt;

- Philemon's receiving Onesimus on Paul's account;
- The slave's restoration to his master's favor.

02.19. HEBREWS

HEBREWS

Theme: The Epistle to the Hebrews was written, as its name suggests, particularly to the Jewish believers, although it has a permanent value and an abiding appeal for all believers in all ages. The reading of the Epistle will reveal the fact that the body of Hebrew Christians addressed were in danger of falling away from the faith. Compared to the nation as a whole they were an obscure little company, regarded as traitors by their fellow countrymen, and the objects of their suspicion and hatred.

They felt their loneliness, cut off as they were from the nation.

- Persecution was looming large before them.
- Oppressed by present trials and by the thought of future adversity, they had yielded to discouragement.
- They were lagging behind in spiritual progress (Hebrews 5:11-14);
- Many were neglecting attendance at worship (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- Many, wearied of the walk of faith, were looking toward the magnificent temple at Jerusalem with its sacrifices and imposing ritual. The temptation was to forsake Christianity and to turn to Judaism. To check this apostasy, this Epistle was written, the chief purpose of which is to show the relation of the Mosaic system to Christianity, and the former's symbolical and transitory character. The writer first of all sets forth the superiority of JESUS CHRIST over all Old Testament mediators; then points out the superiority of the New Covenant to the Old, as a superiority of substance to shadow, of antitype to type, of reality to symbol. These believers were perplexed and disheartened by manifold temptations and, by the fact of their having to walk in the midst of adversity by faith in the naked word of GOD, without any visible support or comfort. The writer of the Epistle proves to them that the worthies of the Old Testament passed through similar experiences, walking by faith, trusting in the word of GOD in spite of all adverse circumstances and even in the face of death (Ch. 11). Therefore, like their forefathers, the believers were to "endure as seeing him who is invisible." The theme may be summed up as follows: the religion of JESUS CHRIST is superior to Judaism for it has a better covenant, a better high priest, a better sacrifice and a better tabernacle.

Authorship: There is no Book of the New Testament whose authorship is so disputed nor any of which the inspiration is more indisputable. The book itself is anonymous. Because of difference in style from the other writings of Paul, many orthodox scholars have denied that he himself wrote it. Tertullian in the third century declared that Barnabas was the author. Luther suggested that Apollos wrote it. "Finally we may observe, that, notwithstanding the doubts which we have recorded, we need not scruple to speak of this portion of Scripture as 'the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews.' ... Whether written by Barnabas, by Luke, by Clement, or by Apollos, it

represented the views, and was impregnated by the influence of the great apostle, whose disciples even the chief of these apostolic men might well be called. By their writings, no less than by his own, he being dead, yet spoke." - Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul."

Why Written: To check the apostasy of Jewish Christians who were tempted to return to Judaism.
Where Written: Evidently from Italy (Hebrews 13:24).

Contents:

I. The Superiority of JESUS to Old Testament Mediators and Leaders. Hebrews 1:1-14, Hebrews 2:1-18, Hebrews 3:1-19, Hebrews 4:1-16, Hebrews 5:1-14, Hebrews 6:1-20, Hebrews 7:1-28, Hebrews 8:1-6.

II. The Superiority of the New Covenant to the Old. Hebrews 8:7-13, Hebrews 9:1-28, Hebrews 10:1-18.

III. Exhortations and Warnings. Hebrews 10:19-39, Hebrews 11:1-40, Hebrews 12:1-29, Hebrews 13:1-25.

I. The Superiority of JESUS to Old Testament Mediators and Leaders. Hebrews 1:1-14, Hebrews 2:1-18, Hebrews 3:1-19, Hebrews 4:1-16, Hebrews 5:1-14, Hebrews 6:1-20, Hebrews 7:1-28, Hebrews 8:1-6.

1. JESUS is superior to the prophets because -

(a) In times past GOD's revelations to the prophets were partial, and given at different times and in different manners. Hebrews 1:1.

(b) But in this dispensation GOD has given a perfect revelation through His Son. Hebrews 1:2-3.

2. JESUS is superior to the angels, (Hebrews 1:4; Hebrews 1:14) for the following reasons:

(a) No individual angel was ever addressed as Son. Hebrews 1:5.

(b) The Son is the object of the angel's worship. Hebrews 1:6.

(c) While the angels serve, the Son reigns. Hebrews 1:7-9.

(d) The Son is not a creature, but the Creator. Hebrews 1:10-12.

(e) No angel is promised universal authority, for their function is service. Hebrews 1:13-14.

3. Exhortation in view of the foregoing statements (Hebrews 2:1-4). If disobedience to the word of angels brought punishment, what will be the loss if the salvation declared by the Lord Himself be unheeded?

4. JESUS was exalted above the angels.

Why was He made lower than they (Hebrews 2:5-18)? For the following reasons:

(a) In order that human nature might be glorified and that man might take his God-given place as ruler of the world to come. Hebrews 2:5-8.

(b) That He might fulfill GOD's plan in dying for all men. Hebrews 2:9.

(c) That the Saviour and saved might be one. Hebrews 2:11-15.

(d) That he might fulfill all the conditions of a faithful priest. Hebrews 2:16-18.

5. JESUS is greater than Moses (Hebrews 3:1-6) , because - (a) Moses was only part of GOD's household; JESUS was the Founder of the same. Hebrews 3:2-3.

(b) Moses was only a servant; JESUS was a Son. Hebrews 3:5-6.

6. Exhortation in view of the statements in Hebrews 3:1-6 (Hebrews 3:7-19, Hebrews 4:1-5). The Christian is a member of a spiritual household presided over by the Son of GOD. But let him beware, for this privilege may be lost, just as the privilege of entering Canaan was lost by many Israelites through their faithlessness and disobedience. Though these Israelites had experienced The Lord's salvation at the Red Sea, they did not enter the Promised Land. The sin that excluded them was the sin of unbelief - a sin, that if persisted in, will exclude the Jewish Christian from the privileges of his inheritance.

7. JESUS is greater than Joshua. Hebrews 4:6-13.

(a) Joshua led the Israelites into the Rest of Canaan, which was but a type of spiritual rest into which JESUS leads the believers. Hebrews 4:6-10.

(b) Exhortation in view of this statement (Hebrews 4:11-13).

"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:11-13).

8. JESUS' high priesthood. Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 5:1-10.

(a) The fact of JESUS' priesthood (Hebrews 4:14). The believers are to cling to the faith they possess, for they are not without a faithful priest, as their non-Christian brethren might lead them to believe. Their high priest though invisible, ever intercedes for them.

(b) JESUS' qualifications as a priest:

(1) He can sympathize with human infirmity (Hebrews 4:14-16 to Hebrews 5:1-3, Hebrews 5:7-9), for He Himself, like men, has suffered temptation, and borne suffering, but with this difference - He did not sin.

(2) He was called of GOD, as Aaron was (Hebrews 5:4-6; Hebrews 5:10).

9. The writer breaks the thread of his thought in order to utter words of rebuke, exhortation, warning and encouragement:

(a) A rebuke (Hebrews 5:11-14). He is about to discuss a deep typical subject-concerning Melchizedek -but he fears that their spiritual immaturity will make it difficult for him to explain it.

(b) An exhortation (Hebrews 6:1-3). They are to pass the elementary state of Christian doctrine and press on to matured knowledge. The expression "principles of the doctrine of Christ" may have reference to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity in which converts were instructed before baptism.

(c) A warning (Hebrews 6:6-8). The warning contained in these verses is against apostasy, which is a willful rejection of the truths of the Gospel on the part of those who have experienced its power. The true nature of the sin referred to in these verses will be better understood when we remember who are being addressed and the peculiar relation of the Jewish nation to CHRIST. The Jews of the writer's time could be divided into two classes in relation to their attitude toward CHRIST: those who accepted Him for whom He claimed to be - the Son of GOD; and those who rejected Him as an impostor and a blasphemer. The Jewish Christian who fell away from Christianity and returned to Judaism, would by this act testify that he believed that CHRIST was not the Son of GOD but a false prophet who merited crucifixion; he would be taking sides with those who were responsible for His death. Before his conversion, this same Jewish Christian in a sense, shared the guilt of his nation in crucifying CHRIST; in forsaking CHRIST and returning to Judaism he would be rejecting the Son of GOD a second time and crucifying Him afresh (Hebrews 6:6).

(d) An encouragement (Hebrews 6:9-20). Though he thus warns them the writer is confident that the believers will not fall away from the faith (Hebrews 6:9).

They have been earnest in the performance of good works (Hebrews 6:10); he desires that they display the same earnestness in the attainment of the hope of their spiritual inheritance (Hebrews 6:11). In this they are to be followers of those, who through faith and patience attained to the realization of their hope - for example, Abraham (Hebrews 6:12-13). The Christian's hope is a sure one; it is an anchor of the soul, holding him fast in a heavenly harbor (Hebrews 6:19-20). It is a sure hope, for it is founded on two unchangeable things: GOD's promise and GOD's oath (Hebrews 6:13-18).

10. CHRIST's priesthood (typified by that of Melchisedec) is superior to the Aaronic. Hebrews 7:1-28, Hebrews 8:1-6.

Melchizedek is mentioned in this connection as a type of CHRIST. The writer uses a Jewish mode of illustration. He takes a scriptural fact as it stands and shows its typical value. Melchizedek is a type of CHRIST in the following respects:

- (a) By reason of the meaning of his name, "King of righteousness," "King of peace." Hebrews 7:2.
- (b) His priesthood was not hereditary; Jewish priests were required to produce their genealogy before being admitted to office. Ezra 2:61-63. Though Melchisedec was a priest there is no record of his genealogy, and this is what is meant by the expression, "without father, without mother" (Hebrews 7:3). In this respect he is a type of CHRIST who did not have a priestly genealogy. Hebrews 7:14.
- (c) The fact that there is no record either of his birth or his death is typical of the eternal nature of CHRIST's priesthood. This is what is meant by the expression, "having neither beginning of days nor end of life." Hebrews 7:3.

11. The priesthood of CHRIST, typified by that of Melchizedek, is greater than that of Aaron, as shown by the following facts:

(a) In a manner of speaking, Levi, while yet in Abraham's loins, paid tithes to Melchizedek. Hebrews 7:4-10.

(b) Spiritual maturity was not attainable through the Aaronic priesthood and the covenant of which it was the mediator. This is witnessed by the fact that another order of priesthood was to arise - the Melchizedek order. This change of priesthood implies a change of law. The change was effected because of the inability of the Mosaic law to bring spiritual maturity. (Compare Romans 8:1-4).

(c) Unlike the Aaronic priesthood, the Melchizedek priesthood was instituted with an oath (Hebrews 7:20-22). GOD's oath, accompanying any statement is a sign of immutability.

(d) The ministry of the priests of the Aaronic order was ended by death; but CHRIST has an eternal and unchangeable priesthood, for He lives forever. Hebrews 7:23-25.

(e) The Aaronic priests offered sacrifices every day; CHRIST offered one eternally efficacious sacrifice. Hebrews 7:26-28.

(f) The Aaronic priests served in the tabernacle which was but an earthly type of the tabernacle in which CHRIST ministers. Hebrews 8:1-5.

(g) CHRIST is the mediator of a better covenant. Hebrews 8:6.

II. The Superiority of the New Covenant to the Old. Hebrews 8:7-13, Hebrews 9:1-28, Hebrews 10:1-18 This superiority is manifested in the following ways:

1. The Old Covenant was only temporary (Hebrews 8:7-13). This fact is witnessed by the Old Testament Scriptures which teach that GOD will make a new covenant with His people.

2. The ordinances and sanctuary of the Old Covenant were simply types and shadows that did not bring perfect fellowship with GOD (Hebrews 9:1-10).

3. But CHRIST, the true priest of the heavenly sanctuary, by one perfect sacrifice - His own Person -brought eternal redemption and perfect fellowship with GOD (Hebrews 9:11-15).

4. The New Covenant was sealed with better blood than that of calves and goats - the blood of JESUS (Hebrews 9:16-24).

5. The one sacrifice of the New Covenant is better than the many sacrifices of the Old. Hebrews 9:25-28, Hebrews 10:1-18.

III. Exhortations and Warnings. Hebrews 10:19-39, Hebrews 11:1-40, Hebrews 12:1-29, Hebrews 13:1-25.

1. An exhortation to faithfulness and steadfastness in view of the fact that they have sure access to GOD through a faithful high priest. Hebrews 10:19-25.

2. A warning against apostasy (Hebrews 10:26-31; compare Hebrews 6:4-8).

Let not those who will turn away from CHRIST as the sacrifice for their sins think that they can find another in Judaism. To willfully and knowingly reject Him is to thrust from themselves the sacrifice that will shield them from the fiery indignation of GOD. One scholar suggests that, from Hebrews 10:29, it may be inferred that Jewish apostates from Christianity were, before being readmitted to the synagogue, required - (1) to deny that JESUS was the Son of GOD, (2) to declare that His blood was rightly shed as that of a malefactor, (3) to ascribe (as the Pharisees did) the gifts of the Spirit to the operation of demons.

3. An exhortation to patience in view of the promised reward (Hebrews 10:32-36).

4. An exhortation to walk by faith (Hebrews 10:37-39, Hebrews 11:1-40, Hebrews 12:1-4). In this section it is the writer's purpose to show that those in past ages in whom GOD took delight were those who walked by faith, and who trusted Him in spite of all circumstances.

(a) Faith enjoined (Hebrews 10:37-39).

(b) Faith described (Hebrews 11:1-3).

Faith is that which makes the believer confident that the objects of his hope are real and not imaginary. It is manifested as shown in the case of the Old Testament saints, by an implicit obedience to and trust in GOD, in spite of appearances, and adverse circumstances.

(c) Faith conquering through GOD (Hebrews 11:32-36).

(d) Faith suffering for GOD (Hebrews 11:37-40).

(e) Faith's supreme example - the Lord JESUS, the One who gave the first impulse to our faith, and who will bring it to its final maturity (Hebrews 12:1-4).

5. An exhortation to scrupulous obedience because of their heavenly calling (Hebrews 12:18-24), and because of their heavenly Leader (Hebrews 12:25-29).

6. Concluding exhortations. Hebrews 13:1-17.

(a) To sanctified living (Hebrews 13:1-7).

(b) To steadfast living (Hebrews 13:8-9).

(c) To separated living (Hebrews 13:10-16).

Dr. Way's paraphrase will clarify verses Hebrews 13:10-14 : "Such restrictions (Hebrews 13:9, concerning clean and unclean meats) have no application to us: we already have an altar of sacrifice of which we partake; but such as still cling to the superseded temple service are disqualified from partaking of it. I say so, because, when the blood of the victims slain for the sin-offerings on the Day of Atonement is borne into the Holy Place by the high priests, the bodies of these victims may not, like other sacrifices, be eaten by the worshipers, but are burnt outside the precincts of the camp. For this reason, also, JESUS that He might consecrate GOD's people by His own blood, suffered without the gate, symbolizing the fact that those who remain in Judaism have no part in Him. Therefore let us, who accept Him, go forth to Him outside the limits of Judaism bearing the contumely which is heaped upon Him. We shall not be homeless: an abiding city we have. but not here: we aspire to that which is yet to be."

(d) To submissive living (Hebrews 13:17).

7. Conclusion (Hebrews 13:18-25).

02.20. JAMES

JAMES

Theme: The Epistle of James is the practical book of the New Testament, as Proverbs is of the Old Testament. Indeed it bears a remarkable resemblance to the last-named book because of its terse, pithy statements of moral truths.

It contains little direct doctrinal teaching; its chief purpose is to emphasize the practical aspect of religious truth. James was writing to a certain class of Jewish Christians in whom there was appearing a tendency to divorce faith from works. They were claiming to have faith, yet there existed among them impatience under trial, strife, respect of persons, evil speaking and worldliness.

James points out that a faith which does not produce holiness of life is a dead thing, a mere assent to a doctrine, which goes no farther than the intellect. He emphasizes the need of a living, effectual faith for the attainment of Christian perfection, and goes back to the simple Sermon on the Mount in demanding real deeds of Christian life.

"There are those who talk holiness and are hypocrites; there are those who make profession of perfect love and yet cannot live peaceably with the brethren; those who are full of pious phraseology but fail in practical philanthropy. This Epistle was written for them. It may not give them much comfort but it ought to give them much profit. The mysticism that contents itself with pious frames and phrases and comes short in actual sacrifice and devoted service will find its antidote here. The antinomianism that professes great confidence in free grace, but does not recognize the necessity for corresponding purity of life, needs to ponder the practical wisdom of the Epistle. The quietists who are satisfied to sit and sing themselves away to everlasting bliss ought to read this Epistle until they catch its bugle note of inspiration to present activity and continuous good deeds. All who are long on theory and short on practice ought to steep themselves in the spirit of James; and since there are such people in every community and in every age, the message of the Epistle will never grow old." - D. A. Hayes.

We shall sum up the theme as follows: Practical Christianity.

Authorship: There are three persons by the name of James mentioned in the New Testament:

- James the brother of John (Matthew 10:2);
- James the son of Alphaeus (Matthew 10:3);
- James the brother of the Lord (Galatians 1:19).

General church tradition has identified the writer of the Epistle with the last-named person. This James was the head of the church at Jerusalem, and it was he who presided at the first church council (Acts 12:17; Acts 15:13-29). The authoritative tone of the Epistle well comports with the author's high position in the church. From tradition we learn some facts concerning him. Because

of his holiness of life and his rigid adherence to the practical morality of the Law, he was held in repute by the Jews of his community, by whom he was surnamed "the Just" and many of whom he led to CHRIST.

It is said that his knees were calloused like those of a camel in consequence of his constant intercession for the people. Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that James was stoned to death by order of the high priest. To Whom Written: To the twelve tribes scattered abroad (James 1:1); i.e., to the Christian Jews of the dispersion. The whole tone of the Epistle reveals the fact that it was written for Jews.

Why Written: For the following reasons:

1. To comfort Jewish Christians who were passing through severe trials.
2. To correct disorders in their assemblies.
3. To combat a tendency to divorce faith from works. When Written: Probably about 60 A. D. It is believed to be the first Epistle written to the Christian church. Where Written: Probably at Jerusalem.

Contents:

- I. Temptation as the Trial of Faith. James 1:1-21.
- II. Works as the Evidence of True Faith. James 1:22-27, James 2:1-26.
- III. Words and Their Power. James 3:1-12.
- IV. Wisdom, the True and the False. James 3:13-18, James 4:1-17.
- V. Patience under Oppression: the Endurance of Faith. James 5:1-12.
- VI. Prayer. James 5:13-20.

I. Temptation as the Trial of Faith. James 1:1-21.

1. The purpose of temptations: to perfect Christian character (James 1:2-4). The word "temptation" is used here in its broadest sense, as including both outward persecutions and inward solicitations to evil. James shows his readers how to turn temptations into blessings by making them a source of patient endurance and so using them as the fire which tests the gold.

2. A quality to be exercised in the successful endurance of temptation - wisdom. This wisdom is a gift from GOD, but is granted only on the condition of unwavering faith (James 1:5-8).

3. A source of trial and a source of temptations - poverty and riches (James 1:9-11). The poor man is not to be depressed because of his poverty; neither is the rich man to be elated because of wealth. Both are to rejoice in their high calling.

4. The reward for endurance of trial and temptation - a crown of life (James 1:12).

5. The source of inward temptation to evil (James 1:13-18).

Though GOD may send afflictions to try men, He does not send evil impulses to tempt them.

"When a man pleads, as men often do, that 'GOD has made them so;' that 'the flesh is weak;' or that 'for a moment GOD deserted them;' when they say that they have done wrong because they could not do otherwise; when they contend that each man is no better than an automaton and that his actions are the inevitable - and therefore the irresponsible result of conditions by which he is surrounded - they are transferring to GOD the blame of their misdoings. James gives the true sense of evil. It springs from lust - desire - which is to each soul the harlot temptress which draws him from the shelter of innocence, entices him, and bears the evil offspring of committed sin." - Dean Farrar.

Far from GOD's sending evil impulses, it is He that gives us that power by which we are raised to a new and higher life (James 1:16-18).

6. The attitude to be shown in the view of the foregoing facts-a control of speech and temper, a purity of conduct and a receptive attitude toward the Word of GOD (James 1:19-21).

II. Works as the Evidence of True Faith. James 1:22-27, James 2:1-26.

1. True faith should be manifested in obeying as well as hearing the Word of GOD (James 1:22-25).

2. True faith should be manifested in practical religion, of which the characteristics are control of the tongue, brotherly love, and separation from the world (James 1:26-27).

3. True faith is shown by impartiality in dealing with the poor and the rich (James 2:1-13).

Courtesy to the rich combined with discourtesy to the poor is a partiality that indicates weakness of faith, and which constitutes a violation of the law.

4. Faith is proved by its works (James 2:14-26). A superficial reading of these might indicate that James was contradicting Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. Martin Luther in his early days was strongly opposed to this Epistle, since he believed that it flatly contradicted the teachings of Paul. Later in life, however, he recognized his mistake.

Close study of their writings will convince us that James and Paul are in perfect agreement.

Paul believes in works of godliness as well as James (See 2 Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; Titus 3:8).

James believes in saving faith as well as Paul (See James 1:3-4; James 1:6; James 2:5). The seeming contradiction just referred to is explained by the fact that both writers use the words "faith," "works" and "justification" with different meanings for those terms in mind. For example:

(a) The faith meant by James is the mere intellectual assent to truth that does not lead to practical righteousness - such a faith that demons have when they believe in GOD (James 2:19). "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (James 2:14). The faith meant by Paul is an intellectual, moral and spiritual power that brings a person into vital and conscious union with GOD.

(b) The works meant by Paul are the dead works of legalism, done simply from a sense of duty and compulsion, and not from pure love of GOD. The works meant by James are the fruits of the

love of GOD spread abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit.

(c) The justification spoken of by Paul is the initial act by which GOD pronounces the sentence of acquittal on the sinner and imputes to him the righteousness of CHRIST. The justification spoken of by James is that continued holiness of life which proves the believer to be a true child of GOD.

(d) Paul has in mind the root of salvation; James the fruit.

- Paul is dealing with the beginning of Christian life; James, with its continuation.

- Paul is condemning dead works, James, dead faith.

- Paul overthrows the vain confidence of legalism; James, the vain confidence of the mere professor of Christianity.

III. Words and Their Power. James 3:1-12.

1. A warning against the too hasty assuming of the office of teacher, in view of the great responsibility attached to that calling, and of the dangers of offending through the spoken word, which is the medium of the teacher's instruction (James 3:1-2).

2. The power of the tongue (James 3:3-5). It is compared to a horse's bit, to a helm, and to a fire.

3. The evil of the tongue (James 3:6-12).

"And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh"

IV. Wisdom, the True and the False. James 3:13-18, James 4:1-17.

1. The manifestations of true wisdom. James 3:13; James 3:17-18.

2. The manifestations of the false wisdom. James 3:15.

V. Patience under Oppression: the Endurance of Faith. James 5:1-12.

1. Concerning the oppressors and the oppressed (James 5:1-6).

James is speaking of a condition which will prevail in the last days (James 5:4) - that of an oppression of the laboring class on the part of the wealthy, which oppression will cease at the coming of the Lord. The judgment of the wicked rich at the destruction of Jerusalem offers a faint picture of their fate in the last days.

Writes Dean Farrar: "And if these words of James were addressed to Jews and Christians about the year 61 A. D., how speedily were his warnings fulfilled, how terribly and how soon did the

retributive doom fall on these wealthy and luxurious tyrants! A few years later Vespasian invaded Judea. Truly there was need to howl and weep, when, amid the horrors caused by the rapid approach of the Roman armies, the gold and silver of the wealthy oppressors were useless to buy bread, and they had to lay up, for the moth to eat, those gorgeous robes which it would have been a peril and a mockery to wear. The worshipers at the last Passover became the victims. The rich only were marked out for the worst fury of the Zealots, and their wealth sank into the flames of the burning city. Useless were their treasures in those last days, when there was heard at their door the thundering summons of the Judge! In all their rich banquets and full-fed reveling they had hut fattened themselves as human offerings for the day of slaughter."

2. Concerning the Avenger (James 5:7-12). In relation to the condition described in James 5:1-6 the children of GOD are to possess their souls in patience awaiting the coming of the Avenger and Judge, and taking Job and the prophets as examples of patient endurance.

VI. Prayer. James 5:13-20.

1. Prayer in affliction (James 5:13).
2. Prayer for the sick (James 5:14-16).
3. The efficacy of prayer (James 5:17-18).
4. Our duty toward an erring brother (James 5:18-20).

"So we conclude, both from the context and from the meaning of the word itself that James and Peter (1 Peter 4:8) are speaking of a restoring ministry which turns an erring brother back to the ways of the Lord, and which, through bringing him to repentance and confession of his sins, procures the forgiveness of these even though they be a 'multitude.' For it is written that 'If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Thus, by such a ministry as that to which we are called by the last verse of James, we may not only be the means of saving a precious life for further usefulness in the world, but may be also instrumental in the putting away of sins which would otherwise confront the wrongdoer at the judgment seat of CHRIST."

02.21. FIRST PETER

FIRST PETER

Theme: In this Epistle there is offered to us a fine illustration of how Peter fulfilled the commission given to him by the Lord - "When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:32).

Purified and settled through suffering, and matured by experience he was able to utter words of encouragement to bodies of Christians who were passing through fiery trials. Many of the lessons which he had learned from the Lord Himself he imparted to his readers. (Compare 1 Peter 1:10 with Matthew 13:17; 1 Peter 5:2 and John 21:15-17; 1 Peter 5:8 with Luke 22:31).

1 Peter 5:12 of the last chapter will suggest the theme of the Epistle - the grace of GOD.

Those whom he was addressing were passing through times of testing. He therefore encourages them by showing that all that was needed for strength, character and courage was provided for in the grace of GOD. GOD is the "God of all grace" (1 Peter 5:10) whose message to His people is, "My grace is sufficient." The theme of I Peter may be summed up as follows: the sufficiency of divine grace and its practical application in relation to Christian living, and to the endurance of trial and suffering.

Why Written: To encourage believers to hold fast during suffering, and to exhort them to holiness. When Written: Probably A. D. 60. Where Written: From Babylon (1 Peter 5:13).

Contents:

I. Rejoicing in Suffering Because of Salvation. 1 Peter 1:1-12.

II. Suffering for Righteousness' sake. 1 Peter 1:13-25, 1 Peter 2:1-25, 1 Peter 3:1-22.

III. Suffering with CHRIST. 1 Peter 4:1-19.

IV. Concluding Exhortations. 1 Peter 5:1-14.

I. Rejoicing in Suffering Because of Salvation. 1 Peter 1:1-12.

1. The source of our salvation (1 Peter 1:2):

(a) The Father who chooses.

(b) The Spirit who sanctifies.

(c) The Son, with whose blood we are sprinkled.

2. The result of salvation: the new birth (1 Peter 1:3).

3. The consummation of salvation: the acquisition of the heavenly inheritance which is reserved for the believer, while he himself is kept by the power of GOD (1 Peter 1:4-5).

4. The joy of salvation (1 Peter 1:6-8). Even in the midst of trials and temptations which are but for the testing of faith, the believers can rejoice in their invisible Lord with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

5. The mystery of salvation (1 Peter 1:9-12).

(a) The prophets who predicted the sufferings and glory of CHRIST, did not fully understand their own prophecies. In answer to their enquiries it was revealed to them that the salvation about which they were prophesying was not for them but for those living in another dispensation.

(b) The angels who have never sinned desire to investigate the strange joy of those who have been redeemed by CHRIST.

II. Suffering for Righteousness' sake. 1 Peter 1:13-25, 1 Peter 2:1-25, 1 Peter 3:1-22. In this section we shall notice the following exhortations:

1. To holiness (1 Peter 1:13-21). With alert and sober minds, the believers are to separate themselves from their former habits of life, living a life of holiness and watching for the Lord's return.

2. To intense and sincere love of the brethren (1 Peter 1:22-25). This love should follow as the natural result of the purification of the soul by the Holy Spirit; and of the new birth.

3. To spiritual growth (1 Peter 2:1-2). As the new born babe instinctively desires to feed on milk, so the regenerate are to have a yearning desire for the unadulterated teaching of the Word of GOD, the sweetness of which they have already tasted.

4. To draw near unto CHRIST, the foundation stone of the great spiritual temple, of which they are the living stones (1 Peter 2:3-10). The believers collectively form one great temple (Ephesians 2:20-22) of which they themselves are the priesthood, and where they offer up spiritual sacrifices. (Compare Hebrews 13:10; Hebrews 13:15). The relation Israel bore to GOD as an earthly people, they - Gentiles - bear to Him as an earthly people, for they are a chosen people, a holy nation, GOD's own peculiar treasure (1 Peter 2:9, compare Deuteronomy 7:6).

5. To live a blameless life, so as to disarm the prejudice and enmity of the heathen surrounding them (1 Peter 2:11-12).

6. To submission.

(a) Submission of all Christians to the government (1 Peter 2:13-17).

"It was a lesson so deeply needed by the Christians of the day that it is taught as emphatically by Peter as by Paul himself. It was more than ever needed at a time when dangerous revolts were gathering to a head in Judea; when the hearts of the Jews throughout the world were burning with a fierce flame of hatred against the abominations of tyrannous idolatry: when Christians were being charged with 'turning the world upside down'; when some poor Christian slave led to martyrdom or put to the torture might easily relieve the tension of his soul by bursting into Apocalyptic denunciations of sudden doom against the crimes of the mystic Babylon; when the heathen in their impatient contempt, might willfully interpret a prophecy of the final conflagration as though it were a revolutionary and incendiary threat; and when Christians at Rome were, on this

very account, already suffering the agonies of Neronian persecution." - Farrar.

(b) Submission of slaves to masters (1 Peter 2:18-25). Servants are to be obedient even to unjust and harsh masters. In suffering injustice silently they will be glorifying GOD, and they will be true followers of CHRIST, who did not defend Himself but committed His cause to GOD the righteous Judge.

(c) The submission of wives to husbands (1 Peter 3:17). Christian wives might be led to consider their heathen husbands as inferior to themselves. They are rather to obey their husbands, so that, if the latter will not accept the written Word or believe the spoken testimony, they may be won by the silent and effective testimony of a holy life. In so doing, Christian wives will be following the example of holy women of old.

7. To brotherly love (1 Peter 3:8-12).

8. To patient endurance of wrong (1 Peter 3:13-16).

If they are doing good they have nothing to fear (1 Peter 3:13). But if it happens that they do suffer innocently they are to remember that a blessing is promised to those who suffer for righteousness' sake (1 Peter 3:14, compare Matthew 5:11-12). Inward holiness of heart, and an outward readiness to defend their faith in the spirit of meekness, together with a good conscience would finally make the heathen ashamed of their false accusations (1 Peter 3:15-16). In the matter of suffering unjustly, the believer has the example of CHRIST, who, as the sinless One, suffered for the unjust. But His sufferings were followed by triumph and exaltation. In triumph, for He proclaimed His victory in the underworld; in exaltation, for He is now seated at the right hand of GOD (1 Peter 3:18-20). In like manner will the Christians' sufferings be followed by glory.

III. Suffering with CHRIST. 1 Peter 4:1-19.

1. Death to sin (1 Peter 4:1-6). As CHRIST died to an earthly life and rose again to a heavenly, Christians are to consider themselves dead to the old life of sin and alive to a new life of holiness (1 Peter 4:1-3, compare Romans 6:1-23). The heathen wonder at their manner of life, and speak evil of them. But right will finally triumph at the time when the Lord shall judge the living and the dead (1 Peter 4:4-6).

2. Conduct in view of imminence of the Lord's return (1 Peter 4:7-11).

3. The glorious privilege of suffering with CHRIST (1 Peter 4:12-19).

Christians are not to be surprised at GOD's process of testing and refining by suffering, but rather to rejoice in the fact, that they are partakers of CHRIST's sufferings (1 Peter 4:12-13). To bear CHRIST's reproach is a sign of spiritual grace resting on them, but to suffer as an evil-doer is a sign of disgrace (1 Peter 4:15). Let believers expect suffering, for judgment must begin at the house of GOD - there must be a time of purging and purification for the church. Therefore let those who suffer commit themselves unto Him who is faithful (1 Peter 4:17-19).

IV. Concluding Exhortations. 1 Peter 5:1-14.

1. To the pastors. 1 Peter 5:1-4).

2. To young men (1 Peter 5:5-6).
3. To the church in general (1 Peter 5:6-11).
4. Salutations (1 Peter 5:12-14).

02.22. SECOND PETER

SECOND PETER

Theme: First Peter deals with a danger without the church - persecutions; Second Peter, with one within - false doctrine. The first was written to encourage; the second, to warn. In the first, Peter is seen fulfilling his commission to "strengthen the brethren" (Luke 22:32); in the second he is seen fulfilling his commission to shepherd the sheep, leading them past lurking and insidious dangers, to walk in the paths of righteousness (John 21:15-17). In the second Epistle, the writer gives a graphic description of the false teachers who would threaten the faith of the Church, and as an antidote to their false doctrine and tainted life, he exhorts the Christians to avail themselves of every means for growing in grace and in the experiential knowledge of JESUS CHRIST. The theme may be summed up as follows: a full experiential knowledge of CHRIST is the stronghold against a false teaching and an unholy life.

Why Written: To give a prophetic picture of the apostasy of the last days, and to urge upon Christians that preparedness of heart and life which alone can fit them to meet its perils. When Written: Probably A. D. 66.

Contents:

I. Exhortation to Growth in Divine Grace and Knowledge. 2 Peter 1:1-21.

II. Warning Against False Teachers. 2 Peter 2:1-22.

III. Promise of the Lord's Coming. 2 Peter 3:1-18.

I. Exhortation to Growth in Divine Grace and Knowledge. 2 Peter 1:1-21.

1. Salutation (2 Peter 1:1-2). The grace and peace that Peter asks for the saints should issue in experiential knowledge of GOD and of CHRIST.

2. The basis of saving knowledge - the promises of GOD (2 Peter 1:3-4).

3. The growth in experiential knowledge (2 Peter 1:5-11). There is no standstill in Christian experience, there must be either progress or falling back. The believer has a foundation, faith; but he must be continually building on that foundation a superstructure of Christian character and virtue.

Notice -

(a) The result of this spiritual "addition" (2 Peter 1:5): fruitfulness in experiential knowledge of Divine things and the acquiring of an abundant entrance into the kingdom of the Lord JESUS (2 Peter 1:8; 2 Peter 1:10-11).

(b) The result of neglect of spiritual growth - spiritual blindness and backsliding (2 Peter 1:8).

4. The sources of saving knowledge:

(a) The testimony of the apostles who were eye witnesses of CHRIST's glory (2 Peter 1:12-18).

(b) The testimony of the prophets (2 Peter 1:19-21).

"Moreover the apostle appeals to the inspiration of the prophets in the confirmation of his teaching: '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 spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.'

"He recognizes this as a primary truth, that prophecy is not of one's own origination, nor is it to be tied up to the times of the prophet. The prophecy was brought to him as it is brought to us. Peter and his fellow believers did not follow cunningly devised fables; they were borne along in their prophetic utterance by the Holy Spirit."

II. Warning Against False Teachers. 2 Peter 2:1-22.

1. The conduct of false teachers (2 Peter 2:1-3).

They will stealthily and cunningly introduce fatal heresies, even denying the Lord Himself. Covering their true motives with plausible arguments they will lead many astray.

2. The certain doom of these false teachers as set forth by ancient examples of retribution (2 Peter 2:4-9).

3. The character of these false teachers (2 Peter 2:10-22). The apostle probably has in mind the future rise of Gnostic sects, who combined tainted morals with tainted living. The following sects arose in the second century:

- The Ophites, who worshiped the serpent of the Garden of Eden as their benefactor;
- The Cainites, who exalted as heroes some of the vilest characters of the Old Testament;
- The Carpocratians who taught immorality;
- The Antitactae, who regarded it as a duty to the supreme GOD to violate the Ten Commandments on the ground that they were promulgated by a wicked mediating angel.

III. Promise of the Lord's Coming. 2 Peter 3:1-18.

1. Scoffers and the promise of the second coming (2 Peter 3:1-4).

"Presumptuous skepticism and lawless lust, setting nature and its so-called laws above the GOD of nature and revelation, and arguing from the past continuity of nature's phenomena that there can be no future interruption to them, was the sin of the antediluvians (those living before the flood), and shall be that of the scoffers in the last days."

2. Answers to their objections (2 Peter 3:5-9).

(a) "They obstinately shut their eyes to the Scripture record of the Creation and the Deluge; the latter is the very parallel to the coming judgment of fire . . . 'All things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.' Before the flood the same objection to the possibility of the flood might have been urged with the same plausibility: the heavens and the earth have been from old. How

unlikely then that they should not continue so! But, replies Peter, the flood came in spite of their reasonings; so will the final conflagration of the earth come in spite of the scoffers of the last days."

(b) GOD's delays are due to His mercy.

3. The certainty, suddenness, and effects of the Lord's coming (2 Peter 3:10-13). The "day of the Lord" here mentioned refers to a whole series of events beginning with the premillennial advent and ending with the destruction of the wicked and the final conflagration and general judgment. "As the flood was the baptism of the earth, eventuating in a renovated earth partly delivered from the curse, so the baptism by fire shall purify the earth so as to be the renovated abode of the regenerated man wholly delivered from the curse."

4. Concluding exhortations:

(a) To live blamelessly in the light of their great Hope (2 Peter 3:14).

(b) To remember that reason for the Lord's delay is to give men an opportunity to repent (2 Peter 3:15).

(c) To beware of being led astray by false doctrine (2 Peter 3:17).

(d) To grow in grace (2 Peter 3:18).

02.23. FIRST JOHN

FIRST JOHN

Theme: The Gospel of John sets forth the acts and words which prove that JESUS is the CHRIST, the Son of GOD; the First Epistle of John sets forth the acts and words which are obligatory upon those who believe this truth.

- The Gospel deals with the fundamentals of Christian faith; the Epistle, with fundamentals of Christian life.

- The Gospel was written to give a foundation of faith; the Epistle, to give a foundation of assurance.

- The Gospel leads us across the Father's threshold; the Epistle makes us at home in the Father's house. The Epistle is an affectionate letter from a spiritual father to his children in the faith, in which he exhorts them to cultivate that practical godliness which brings perfect fellowship with GOD, and to avoid that type of religion where actions do not conform to profession. To accomplish his purpose the apostle lays down a number of rules whereby true spirituality may be tested - rules that draw a rigid line of demarcation between those who merely profess to walk in love and holiness and those who really do so.

Though John is plain-spoken and severe in dealing with erroneous doctrine and inconsistent living, yet on the whole his tone is affectionate and shows him as deserving of his title "the apostle of love." The frequent recurrence of the word "love" and the form of address "my little children," makes his Epistle breathe an atmosphere of tenderness. The following story concerning John will not be out of place in this connection. It is said that when the apostle had arrived to an extreme old age and could with difficulty be carried to the church in the arms of his disciples, and was too weak to give any lengthy exhortations, he would say no more at their meetings than this: "Little children, love one another." The disciples and fathers wearied of this constant repetition of the same words said, "Master, why dost thou always say this?" He replied, "It is the Lord's command, and if only this be done, it is enough."

We shall sum up the theme as follows: the grounds of Christian assurance and of fellowship with the Father.

Why Written: It was written for the following purposes, as stated in the Epistle itself:

1. That the child of GOD might have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and with one another (1 John 1:3).
2. That the child of GOD may have fullness of joy (1 John 1:4).
3. That he may not sin (1 John 2:1).

4. That he may recognize the grounds of his assurance of eternal life (1 John 5:13). When Written: Probably about A. D. 90. Where Written: Probably at Ephesus, where John lived and ministered after leaving Jerusalem.

Contents:

I. Introduction. 1 John 1:1-4.

II. Fellowship with GOD. 1 John 1:5-10, 1 John 2:1-28.

III. Divine Sonship. 1 John 2:29, 1 John 3:1-24.

IV. The Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error. 1 John 4:1-6.

V. GOD Is Love. 1 John 4:7-21.

VI. Faith. 1 John 5:1-12.

VII. Conclusion: Christian Confidence. 1 John 5:13-21.

Note: The quotations in this study of John are from Pakenham-Walsh's Commentary on I John (McMillan Co., New York).

I. Introduction. 1 John 1:1-4.

1. The substance of the Gospel: the deity, incarnation of CHRIST (1 John 1:1).

2. The guarantee of the Gospel:

(a) The apostle's experience (1 John 1:1). They had come into personal contact with the Word of life.

(b) The apostolic testimony (1 John 1:2).

3. The purpose of preaching the Gospel (1 John 1:3).

(a) That believers might have fellowship with the apostles and all Christians.

(b) That the believers might share in all the blessings and privileges that the apostles had gained from their fellowship with the Father.

4. The result of the Gospel: the fullness of joy that comes from perfect fellowship with GOD (1 John 1:4).

II. Fellowship with GOD (1 John 1:5-10, 1 John 2:1-28). The apostle lays down the following tests of fellowship with GOD.

1. Walking in the light (1 John 1:5-7).

"There were false teachers in John's days, who were trying to induce Christians to leave the church and join their heretical body. Among other things, they taught that if a man's mind were enlightened with heavenly knowledge, it did not at all matter what his conduct was like; he might commit as much sin as he pleased. John says that such doctrine would overthrow all holiness and truth, and was utterly opposed to Christianity. So he makes it very clear in this section that, far

from its being true that all conduct is alike to the enlightened man, it is the character of his conduct that will show whether he is enlightened or not." GOD is light; i.e., He is the fountain of pure truth, pure intelligence, pure holiness. He who is walking in the darkness of willful sin, lies when he says that he has fellowship with such a Being.

2. Consciousness and confession of sin (1 John 1:8-10, 1 John 2:1). To claim sinless perfection, or, on the other hand, to deny the sinfulness of certain bodily acts (as did the Antinomians) is to deceive ourselves and to give the lie to GOD's revelation. It is GOD's will that we should not sin. When GOD's light reveals sin in us we are to confess it and obtain that cleansing which the blood of JESUS and His intercession for us makes possible.

3. Obedience to GOD's commands in imitation of CHRIST (1 John 2:2-6).

"The false teachers maintained that knowledge was the one and all-important thing; if a man were enlightened with what they considered the knowledge of love, it did not matter how he lived. John wishes to show that such knowledge is a delusion; that all true knowledge of GOD must result in holiness of life, otherwise it is a dead and useless thing. He therefore bids men test their knowledge of GOD, and if they want to know for certain whether they have the knowledge of GOD, the test is simple - do they keep GOD's commandments?"

4. Love to the brethren (1 John 2:7-11).

John is writing an old-new commandment; old, because they heard it when they first became Christians; new, because it is fresh and living to those who have fellowship with CHRIST, the true Light now shining for them.

5. Unworldliness (1 John 2:12-17). A Christian cannot love GOD and love the world at the same time - the world, disordered by the unrestrained prevalence of sinful forces and fettered in the bondage of corruption.

6. Pure doctrine (1 John 2:18-28). The believers have heard of Antichrist who will come at the end of this, the last age. But his spirit is in the world at the present time in the person of certain false teachers who deny the Deity and Messiahship of CHRIST. The Christian need not be led astray by the subtle and plausible arguments of these errorists, for the Spirit would lead them into all truth.

"There is an undoubted allusion here to a false teacher, Cerinthus, who denied that JESUS was the CHRIST and held that the man JESUS and the aeon or spirit, CHRIST, were distinct beings. He taught that JESUS was an ordinary man till His baptism when this 'aeon' descended upon Him, gave Him the power of working miracles and revealed to Him the hitherto unknown Father. This aeon, being incapable of suffering, left JESUS before His passion. Hence the two central truths of the incarnation and the atonement were denied by this teaching . . . These false teachers were continually saying to the Christians, 'You have need of a great deal of instruction; follow us and we will lead you into the depths of Christian faith. We know the hidden mysteries and can teach you who have need of teaching.' John reminds the Christians of their anointing, of the presence in their midst of the divine Teacher, the Holy Spirit . . . Having the Holy Spirit, they needed no other teacher, and they might boldly claim this unction in the face of the haughty teachers of error. He does not mean to say that they needed no Christian teacher, no instruction from the lips of an apostle or teacher in the church. (See Ephesians 4:11; Hebrews 5:12).

III. Divine Sonship. 1 John 2:29, 1 John 3:1-24. The following tests of divine sonship are laid down by John:

1. A righteous walk (1 John 2:29, 1 John 3:1-10). The Christian is to show an absolute antagonism to sin because of the following facts:

- (a) His divine sonship and the hope of becoming like JESUS. 1 John 2:29, 1 John 3:1-3.
- (b) Sin is lawlessness (transgression of the law) - in essence, rebellion against GOD. 1 John 3:4.
- (c) Because of CHRIST's character and His atoning work for us (1 John 3:5-7). So far as we abide in CHRIST we do not sin; so far as we sin we do not abide in CHRIST.
- (d) Because of the diabolical origin of sin (1 John 3:8).
- (e) Because of the God-begotten quality of the Christian life (1 John 3:9).
- (f) Because the final test as to whether we are children of GOD or children of the devil lies in our actions (1 John 3:10).

2. Love to the brethren. 1 John 3:11-18.

- (a) The command (1 John 3:11).
- (b) The warning (1 John 3:12).
- (c) The consolation (1 John 3:13-15).
- (d) The pattern (1 John 3:16).
- (e) The practical illustration (1 John 3:17-18). "Actions speak louder than words."

3. Assurance. 1 John 3:19-24.

- (a) The basis of assurance (1 John 3:19). The practice of God-inspired love toward the brethren, and not only our feelings which are variable, is the test of the reality of our faith and our union with CHRIST.
- (b) The results of assurance (1 John 3:20-24).

IV. The Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error. 1 John 4:1-6. The thought of the Spirit dwelling in us (1 John 3:24) leads John to treat in a parenthesis of other spirits - false and evil spirits and how Christians may distinguish them.

1. The appeal (1 John 4:1). However eloquent and gifted a prophet may be, his teaching is to be tested.

2. The test (1 John 4:2) - the confession of CHRIST's incarnation.

"This all has a special bearing on our own days, when there is so much heard of spiritualism, theosophy, and the communications of men with spirits and with the spiritual world . . . The test proposed by John may be applied as surely and certainly today as ever; there is one 'medium' of spiritual communication between the invisible and the visible world, between heaven and earth, that is JESUS CHRIST come in the flesh. All true spirits will unite themselves to Him; all untrue

ones will deny, setting themselves up (whether they are clothed in human bodies or not) as independent mediums, creating intercourse between heaven and earth."

3. The conflict (1 John 4:4).

There had evidently been a conflict between Christians and false teachers, but the Church had adhered to the truth. Their victory is our victory today.

4. The contrast (1 John 4:5-6).

Those possessed by the Spirit of GOD attract disciples similar to themselves, earnest men filled with spirit and doing righteousness; the others attract disciples similar to themselves, worldly men whose lives are evil.

V. GOD Is Love. 1 John 4:7-21.

1. The call to love (1 John 4:7).

2. The reason for love: "God is love" (1 John 4:8).

3. The proof of divine love: GOD's sacrifice (1 John 4:9-10).

4. The claim of love: GOD's love toward us calls for love on our part toward our brethren (1 John 4:11).

5. The result of love on our part: the manifestation of GOD's presence (1 John 4:12-16); boldness (1 John 4:17); absence of condemning fear (1 John 4:18).

6. The proof of our love: the proof of our love for the invisible GOD is the love for our brother who is made and renewed in GOD's image (1 John 4:19-21); the proof of our true love for the brethren is found in our love for GOD (1 John 5:1-2); our love for GOD finds its manifestation in the keeping of His commandments. (1 John 5:3).

VI. Faith. 1 John 5:4-12.

1. The victory of faith (1 John 5:4-5) "And this is the victory that overcomes the world."

"John uses great boldness in speaking of the victory as past. In each believer there is a power of life from GOD, exercised by faith which must conquer, which from GOD's point of view has conquered. In the body of believers, the church of GOD, there is the same power for the ultimate conquest of the world. When John wrote, the church was a despised, insignificant sect, consisting chiefly of slaves and poor low-caste people; it was far from perfect; it was vexed with false teachers; the world was the solid, united, irresistible heathen power of Rome, commanding all the wealth, the strength and resources of civilization. And yet John not merely prophesied that the church would conquer the world, but asserted that it had done so. And further his words imply that the complete conquest of all the evil that remains in ourselves, of all the evil that exists in the world, of every system of falsehood or wickedness which fights against GOD, is assured, and from the divine standpoint accomplished."

2. The threefold earthly witness of faith (1 John 5:6-8).

(a) The water witnesses to the beginning of CHRIST's earthly ministry inaugurated by His baptism.

(b) The blood witnesses to His death which brought eternal redemption.

(c) The Spirit witnesses in all ages to His resurrection and endless life.

Notice the emphasis in 1 John 5:6; "not by water only, but by water and blood." Cerinthus, John's chief opponent, taught that the heavenly CHRIST descended upon JESUS at His baptism but left Him on the eve of His passion; so that JESUS died, but the CHRIST, being spiritual, did not suffer. That is, that CHRIST came by water (baptism), but that he did not come by blood (death). The apostle's object is to prove that He who was baptized and He who died on Calvary was the same person.

3. The heavenly witness (1 John 5:9-12).

VII. Conclusion: Christian Confidence. 1 John 5:13-21.

1. The substance of the Christian confidence - the assurance of eternal life (1 John 5:13).

2. The manifestation of Christian confidence.

(a) Outwardly the power of offering effectual prayer (1 John 5:14-17).

(b) Inward conviction-"We know" (1 John 5:18-20).

3. Concluding exhortation (1 John 5:21).

"In JESUS you have found Him who is the true GOD and eternal life. If you are in Him that is true, you are bound carefully and earnestly to make a complete chasm between yourselves and all heathen things, and now shun the idols which you once worshiped." - Schlatter.

02.24. SECOND JOHN

SECOND JOHN (Read the Epistle)

Theme: The First Epistle of John is a letter to the Christian family in general, warning against false teaching and exhorting to practical godliness. The second Epistle is a letter to a particular member of that family, written for the purpose of instructing her as to her attitude toward false teachers. She was not to show hospitality to such.

Such an injunction may sound harsh; but it was justified on the grounds that the doctrines of these teachers struck at the very fundamentals of Christianity, and in many cases menaced purity of conduct. By receiving such in her house, the believer to whom John was writing would be identifying herself with their errors. John did not mean to teach unkind treatment of Christians who happen to differ from us doctrinally, or of those ensnared by error. He was writing at a time when Antinomian and Gnostic errorists were attempting to undermine the foundation of faith and purity, and under such conditions it was imperative that Christians denounce their teachings both in word and in attitude. The theme may be summed up as follows: the duty of obeying the truth and avoiding fellowship with its enemies.

Why Written: To warn a hospitable Christian lady against entertaining false teachers.

02.25. THIRD JOHN

THIRD JOHN (Read the Epistle) Theme: This short Epistle gives us a glimpse of certain conditions that existed in a local church in John's time. The story which may be gathered from the Epistle seems to be as follows. John had sent out a band of itinerant teachers with letters of commendation to the various churches, one of which was the Assembly to which Gaius and Diotrephes belonged. Diotrephes, either from jealousy for the rights of the local church or for some personal reason, refused to tender hospitality to these teachers and excommunicated those members of his church who received them. Gaius, one of the members of the church, refused to be intimidated by this spiritual autocrat, and entertained the repulsed and disheartened missionaries, who later reported his kindness to the apostle.

It seems that John was about to send forth a second time these teachers (3 John 1:6) and he exhorts Gaius to continue in his ministry of love toward them.

John himself wrote a letter of remonstrance to Diotrephes, which was ignored. Therefore the apostle expressed intention of paying a personal visit to the church and of deposing this ecclesiastical tyrant.

We shall sum up the theme as follows: the duty of hospitality toward the ministry, and the danger of domineering leadership.

Why Written: To commend Gaius for entertaining those Christian workers who were entirely dependent on the hospitality of believers, and to denounce the inhospitable, tyrannical attitude of Diotrephes.

02.26. JUDE

JUDE (Read the Epistle)

Theme: There is a certain resemblance between the second Epistle of Peter and that of Jude; they both treat of apostasy in the church and describe the leaders of that apostasy.

Concerning this subject it seems that Jude quotes from Peter. (Compare 2 Peter 3:3 and Jude 1:18.) They both have in mind the same class of errorists - men of loose morals and shameful excesses.

- Peter describes the apostasy as future; Jude, as present.
- Peter sets forth the false teachers as godless and extremely dangerous but not at their worst; Jude, as depraved and as lawless as they can be.

It was the presence of these men in the church and their activity in spreading their pernicious doctrines that led Jude to write this Epistle, the theme of which is: the duty of Christians to keep themselves spotless and to contend earnestly for the faith, in the midst of apostasy.

Authorship: The author is believed to be Jude the brother of James and of our Lord (Mark 6:3).

Why Written: To warn them against apostates within the church, who though having denied the faith still retained their membership. When Written: Probably between A. D. 70 and 80.

Contents: The following is a brief analysis of the Epistle:

After the salutation (Jude 1:1-2) Jude mentions the purpose of his writing. At first he had intended to write concerning doctrine, but the presence of false teachers had caused him to sound out a warning to believers to contend for the truths of the Gospel (Jude 1:3-4). To illustrate the doom of these teachers three examples of ancient apostasy are given (Jude 1:5-7). These apostates, ever yielding to their own sinful fancies, are guilty both of fleshly sin and of rebellion against authority (Jude 1:8), and speak of authority in terms that Michael the archangel did not dare to use in speaking to Satan (Jude 1:9). They dare to speak evil of spiritual things about which they are ignorant; yet in the things they do understand they corrupt themselves (Jude 1:10). Their sin and their doom is prefigured by Scripture (Jude 1:11) and by nature (Jude 1:12-13). They are the true subjects of Enoch's prophecy (Jude 1:14). As to character, they are complainers and murmurers, scheming flatterers, mockers of spiritual things, men who bring divisions, and who are utterly fleshly, having not the Spirit of CHRIST (Jude 1:16-19). But believers, in contrast with these are to build themselves up in the faith, pray in the Holy Ghost, abide in GOD's love, ever looking to JESUS (Jude 1:20-21). In regard to those in error they are to have compassion on those weak ones who have wavered; others they are to save by desperate effort, but always watching lest they be contaminated with the filthy garment of tainted doctrine and sensual living (Jude 1:22-23).

Jude concludes with a Doxology well suited to the subject he has been discussing - a doxology that praises Him who is able to keep the believer from falling into apostasy and sin, and who is

able to keep him blameless until the great Day (Jude 1:24-25).

02.27. THE REVELATION

THE REVELATION

Theme: The book of Revelation is the climax of GOD'sb revelation of truth to man, the capstone of the edifice of the Scriptures, of which Genesis is the foundation stone. The Bible would not be complete without either book. If the omission of Genesis would have left us in ignorance as to the beginnings of things, the omission of Revelation would have deprived us of much light concerning the consummation of all things. Between Genesis and Revelation a striking balance may be seen, as follows:

GENESIS

REVELATION

Paradise lost

Paradise regained

The first city, a failure

City of the redeemed, a success

The beginning of the curse

No more curse

Marriage of first Adam

Marriage of second Adam

First tears

Every tear wiped away

Satan's entrance

Satan's doom

Old creation

New creation

Communion broken

Communion restored

The book of Revelation is the consummation of Old Testament prophecy. It is full of symbols and language borrowed from the writings of those prophets who were favored with glorious revelations concerning the end-time-Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah. It is the grand "Amen" of, and the

glad "Hallelujah" for, the fulfillment of the predictions of the prophets - the glad answer to their yearning and prayer that the kingdom of GOD might come and that His will might be done on earth as it is in heaven. "As the completion of the whole prophetic Scriptures it gathers up the threads of all the former books and weaves them into one chain of many links which binds all history to the throne of GOD."

Above all, this book is a revelation-an unveiling-of the Lord JESUS CHRIST. In his Gospel, John describes His earthly life and ministry. Before writing the book of Revelation, the apostle is caught up to the throne of GOD where he sees the Lord JESUS clothed with the glory which He has with the Father before the foundation of the world; where he sees Him who was judged by the world, returning as its Judge; where he sees Him who was rejected by men, taking possession of all the kingdoms of the world, as King of kings, and Lord of lords. The Revelation is the book of CHRIST's coming in glory, therefore we shall sum up the theme as follows: The coming of CHRIST in glory, as the supreme climax of the age.

Why Written: It was written by John the apostle at the direct command of JESUS, in order that there might be a book of prophecy for this dispensation. Where Written: On Patmos, an isle off the coast of Asia Minor, about A. D. 90.

Contents: The analysis of Revelation 1:19 will give us the three main heads of our outline:

I. Concerning CHRIST: "The things which thou hast seen." Revelation 1:1-20.

II. Concerning the church: "The things which are." Revelation 2:1-29, Revelation 3:1-22.

III. Concerning the Kingdom: "The things which shall be." Revelation 4:1-11, Revelation 5:1-14, Revelation 6:1-17, Revelation 7:1-17, Revelation 8:1-13, Revelation 9:1-21, Revelation 10:1-11, Revelation 11:1-19, Revelation 12:1-17, Revelation 13:1-18, Revelation 14:1-20, Revelation 15:1-8, Revelation 16:1-21, Revelation 17:1-18, Revelation 18:1-24, Revelation 19:1-21, Revelation 20:1-15, Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-21.

Facts to be remembered in studying Revelation:

1. The book is confessedly the most difficult of interpretation of all the books in the canon. One has said, "His courage is greater than his wisdom who finds no room for doubt in the interpretation of much in the Apocalypse." In meeting some portions the meaning of which is not clear, rather than seek for strained, fanciful and far-fetched interpretations, it is better to say, "I do not understand," and then wait patiently for light.

2. It is quite probable that the interpretation of the book will become clearer as time arrives for the fulfillment of its prophecies. In Old Testament times, the coming of the Messiah was a fact agreed upon by all the pious of the nation; but to them, Messianic prophecy must have presented many difficulties of interpretation, as the book of Revelation does to us. Even the prophets did not always understand their own prophecies (1 Peter 1:10-11).

It was as the prophecies concerning the CHRIST began to be fulfilled that the spiritually enlightened among the people - of whom Simeon (Luke 2:25-35) is an example - would find their perplexities disappearing as the rays of the "bright and morning Star" would shine on the pages of sacred Writ. We can all agree as to the main facts of the book - coming tribulation and judgment,

the coming of CHRIST in glory, the setting up of His kingdom, etc. - and then wait patiently till further study, increased spiritual enlightenment and passing events shed light on those details which at present seem obscure.

3. Apart from the interpretation of the book, there are many valuable lessons to be learned, many warnings to be heeded, many promises to encourage, that make the book of Revelation of real practical value to the Christian. For example, the messages to the churches contain practical teaching that can be applied both to the church and to the individual. In this connection it is well to remember that it is always more profitable to practice the things that we do understand, instead of puzzling, speculating, and splitting hairs over the things that we do not understand.

4. Since the book of Revelation is a mosaic of Old Testament prophecies and symbols, the study of certain prophets - Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah - will provide the key to many a closed door in its interpretation.

I. Concerning CHRIST: "The things which thou hast seen." Revelation 1:1-20.

1. The introduction (Revelation 1:1-3).

(a) Note the correct title of the book, "the revelation (unveiling) of Jesus Christ."

(b) The means of communication (Revelation 1:2). The Lord "signified" it; i.e., communicated it by means of signs or symbols.

(c) The blessing to the reader, hearer and the keeper of the sayings of the book (Revelation 1:3).

2. The salutation (Revelation 1:4-5), from (a) The Father (Revelation 1:4).

(b) The seven Spirits; i.e., the Holy Spirit in His diversities, power and operation (Revelation 1:4).

(c) From JESUS CHRIST (Revelation 1:5).

3. The praise (Revelation 1:5-6).

4. The proclamation - the coming of CHRIST (Revelation 1:7-8).

5. The Prophet (Revelation 1:9-20).

(a) His mood, "in the Spirit."

(b) The time of the vision, "on the Lord's day."

(c) The place, the isle of Patmos.

(d) His vision.

"It is well that our memory should dwell much upon the CHRIST who lived and walked as the Son of man upon this earth, but this scene in Revelation is a picture of the CHRIST of to-day. It is the picture of the CHRIST who sits on the right hand of GOD in glory. This is the coming CHRIST. This is the CHRIST we think of as we wait and look for His coming. And what a figure! The Spirit ransacks the realm of nature for symbols that might convey some faint conception to our dull and finite minds of the glory, splendor, and majesty of the Coming One, who is the CHRIST of Revelation." - McConkey.

II. Concerning the church: "The things which are." Revelation 2:1-29, Revelation 3:1-22. The churches mentioned in these chapters actually existed in John's day and the conditions prevailing there then called forth the Lord's message to them. But these local churches are evidently a type of the entire church and therefore the messages may be applied to the church in every age, as shown - by the following facts: the number, seven, is clearly typical, for there were more than seven churches in Asia Minor in John's time. "Then, too, mark the space given to them. The book of Revelation is so terse and so condensed that but one chapter is given to the millennium, and less than one to the advent of CHRIST. That these two chapters here, comprising ten per cent of the book, should be given over to messages to the seven churches bespeaks the wider scope of the messages." - McConkey. In studying these chapters we shall notice the following facts concerning each church:

- (a) A message of commendation.
- (b) A message of rebuke.
- (c) A symbolic title of CHRIST suited to the needs of the church.
- (d) A promise to the overcomers.
- (e) A historical reference that will cast some light on the message.

1. The message to the church at Ephesus. Revelation 2:1-7.

- (a) Commendation: works, patience, abhorrence of false teachers.
- (b) Rebuke: spiritual declension.
- (c) Title of CHRIST: to a church which has lost its first love He is one walking in the midst of the seven candlesticks - a superintendent subjecting their works and motives to a severe scrutiny.
- (d) Promise to overcomer: tree of life.
- (e) Historical reference. Ephesus has been called the "Vanity Fair" of Asia. It was a wealthy, cultured, corrupt, and idolatrous city, the center of the cult of Diana, to whom a magnificent temple had been erected.

2. Message to the church at Smyrna. Revelation 2:8-11.

- (a) Commendation: endurance in persecution.
- (b) There is no message of rebuke to this suffering church.
- (c) Title of CHRIST: to a church facing persecution, the Lord reveals Himself as the One who suffered, died and rose again.
- (d) Promise to overcomer: deliverance from second death.
- (e) Historical reference. "I will give thee a crown of life." The "crown of Smyrna" was a circular street consisting of a ring of magnificent buildings. One of their philosophers advises them to value more a crown of men than a crown of buildings.

3. Message to the church at Pergamos. Revelation 2:12-17.

(a) Commendation: faithfulness in testimony.

(b) Rebuke: the prevalence of licentiousness and idolatry.

(c) Title of CHRIST: to a church tainted with immorality and idolatry He is the One who will fight against it with His two-edged sword.

(d) Promise to overcomer: hidden manna.

(e) Historical reference. Pergamos was the center of idolatry, and had a great altar erected to the worship of a serpent god. This may explain the words "where Satan's seat is."

4. Message to the church at Thyatira. Revelation 2:18-29.

(a) Commendation: charity, service, faith.

(b) Rebuke: toleration of corrupt teachers.

(c) Title of CHRIST: the One with eyes as a flame of fire (see Revelation 2:23), and One with the feet like brass (symbolical of judgment).

(d) Promise to overcomer: power over nations.

(e) Historical reference. Thyatira was a prosperous city celebrated for its trade guilds.

Membership in one of these guilds conferred many privileges. Perhaps there is a warning here to Christian tradesmen not to join themselves to pagan brotherhoods and thus participate in idolatrous customs (Revelation 2:20).

5. Message to the church at Sardis. Revelation 3:1-6.

(a) Commendation: works (though imperfect).

(b) Rebuke: spiritual deadness.

(c) Title of CHRIST: to a church spiritually dead, He is One holding the seven stars - churches -in His hands, and also the seven Spirits of GOD, the power of which is able to quicken those churches.

(d) Promise to overcomer: clothed in white raiment and name confessed before the Father.

(e) Historical reference. "I will come upon thee as a thief." Sardis was the scene of the final overthrow of Croesus, the great Lydian king, when the Persians attacked the city. In the year 546 B. C., thinking himself absolutely safe in his citadel which he considered impregnable, the king neglected to set a watch. Finding an unguarded spot, where the rain had washed away a cleft in the soft rock, the Persians climbed up one by one and captured the city. Thus by one night of carelessness the great Lydian empire fell.

6. Message to the church at Philadelphia. Revelation 3:7-13.

(a) Commendation: obedience to CHRIST's commands and steadfastness in testimony.

(b) Rebuke: there is no direct reproof, although "the faint praise of a 'little strength' has in it the shadow of a rebuke."

(c) Title of CHRIST: to a church eager to enter the open door of missionary service, CHRIST is the One who has the keys that open doors no man can shut.

(d) Promise to overcomer: pillars in GOD's temple; a new name.

(e) Historical reference. At one time Philadelphia was destroyed by an earthquake, and so terrified were the inhabitants ever afterwards that they lived outside the city in huts and booths. "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God (in a building which no earthquake can shake), and he shall go out no more (as the people did during the earthquake)."

Later the city was built at the expense of the Roman government, and was given a new name, this last signifying that the city was consecrated in a special way to the service and worship of the emperor. "I will write upon him my new name." However, the city later dropped its new name.

7. Message to the church at Laodicea. Revelation 3:14-22.

(a) Commendation: praise is lacking for this church.

(b) Rebuke: spiritual lukewarmness.

(c) Title of CHRIST: to a lukewarm church, unfaithful in testimony, He sets Himself forth as the Amen, the true and faithful witness.

(d) Promise to overcomer: to share CHRIST's throne.

(e) Historical reference. Laodicea was a wealthy and prosperous city. Following an earthquake, when other cities were accepting imperial help, it declared its independence of such assistance. It was "rich" and had "need of nothing." It was celebrated for the manufacture of a soft black wool, and for costly garments which were made from it (Revelation 3:18). It was celebrated throughout the Roman empire for its school of medicine, and for the "Phrygian powder" from which its well-known eye-salve was made (Revelation 3:18).

III. Concerning the Kingdom: "The things which shall be." Revelation 4:1-11, Revelation 5:1-14, Revelation 6:1-17, Revelation 7:1-17, Revelation 8:1-13, Revelation 9:1-21, Revelation 10:1-11, Revelation 11:1-19, Revelation 12:1-17, Revelation 13:1-18, Revelation 14:1-20, Revelation 15:1-8, Revelation 16:1-21, Revelation 17:1-18, Revelation 18:1-24, Revelation 19:1-21, Revelation 20:1-15, Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-21.

1. The vision of GOD's throne (Revelation 4:1-11). The prophet is caught up, in spirit, to the throne of GOD, and from there-from the viewpoint of the heavenlies, he is made to see the judgment that will be poured out upon the earth in the latter times.

2. A vision of the Lamb (Revelation 5:1-14). The main feature of this chapter is the unsealing of a book handed to the Lord. In discussing the nature of this sealed book, Mr. McConkey says: "What is the symbolism of a seal? A seal may be indeed used to attest the signature to a title-deed. But it is also used to conceal and safeguard the contents of a written document. We seal a letter for that purpose. In prophecy GOD uses the seal in precisely this way. He tells Daniel (Daniel 12:4) concerning certain prophecies which are to be hidden that he is to "seal the book." He tells John concerning the very prophecies of Revelation which He wants disclosed to His servants "seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book." Revelation 22:10. This use of the seal therefore to

conceal the prophetic word seems to be the clear and natural usage here with the seven-sealed book . . . In it the scroll of New Testament prophecy is unrolled by JESUS Himself as He breaks the seals in their divinely appointed order."

3. The seals (Revelation 6:1-17, Revelation 7:1-17, Revelation 8:1). The author quoted above raises the question as to whether Revelation has a story thread, or a story-flow, and whether CHRIST ever told the Revelation story before. He then points out that the seals constitute the story thread of the book, and that their message resembles closely that of CHRIST's discourse recorded in Matthew 24:1-51. Another scholar, Milligan, takes the same view. Following the suggestions of these men, but not their exact outlines, we offer the following parallel:

Matthew 24:1-51

Revelation 6:1-17

False Christs (Matthew 24:5)

First Seal

War (Matthew 24:6-7)

Second Seal

Famine (Matthew 24:7)

Third Seal

Pestilence (Death) (Matthew 24:7)

Fourth Seal

Tribulation (Matthew 24:21)

Fifth Seal

Celestial disturbances (Matthew 24:29)

Sixth Seal

Second advent (Matthew 24:30)

Seventh Seal

4. We have then seen that the seals represent the very backbone of Revelation. But what is the relation of the trumpets and the vials to the seals? The explanation given is that they do not run parallel, but the seventh seal expands into the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet expands into the seven vials. Mr. Graham Scroggie holds the same view, explaining these sections on the principle of inclusion, the seven trumpets being included in the seventh seal, and the seven vials in the seventh trumpet.

5. In following the story-flow of Revelation, the student will notice that we have passed over certain episodes. This has been done because these do not form part of the story thread, but are detached from it. Mr. McConkey refers to these as "insets." For example, in examining a map of a

state, we may see in a corner a map of a certain city in that state. This is an inset, giving a "close-up" view of the city. Or in a picture of a famous battle, there may be given in the same space pictures of special portions of the battlefield, or portraits of famous generals who took part in the campaigns. So in Revelation, the writer passes along rapidly, describing the course of events that terminate in CHRIST's coming, but here and there he stops to give us a "close-up" view of some particular personage, company, or city. Of such we may notice the following:

- (a) Two companies, a Jewish and a Gentile. Revelation 7:1-17.
- (b) The angel and the book. Revelation 10:1-11.
- (c) The two witnesses. Revelation 11:1-19.
- (d) The two wonders. Revelation 12:1-17.
- (e) The two beasts. Revelation 13:1-18.
- (f) Two pictures of CHRIST - the Lamb and the Reaper. Revelation 14:1-20.
- (g) Babylon. Revelation 17:1-18, Revelation 18:1-24.

6. Having noticed the main story thread of Revelation, and the parentheses, we shall sum up the conclusion briefly:

- (a) The second advent. Revelation 19:1-21.
- (b) The millennium. Revelation 20:1-15.
- (c) The new heavens and the new earth. Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-21.

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