

Schofields Reference Bible Notes (1917)

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A Panoramic View of the Bible (See also THE PENTATEUCH, Book Introduction, and Notes associated with Genesis 1:1)

The Bible, incomparably the most widely circulated of books, at once provokes and baffles study. Even the non-believer in its authority rightly feels that it is unintelligent to remain in almost total ignorance of the most famous and ancient of books. And yet most, even of sincere believers, soon retire from any serious effort to master the content of the sacred writings. The reason is not far to seek. It is found in the fact that no particular portion of Scripture is to be intelligently comprehended apart from some conception of its place in the whole. For the Bible story and message is like a picture wrought out in mosaics: each book, chapter, verse, and even word forms a necessary part, and has its own appointed place. It is, therefore, indispensable to any interesting and fruitful study of the Bible that a general knowledge of it be gained.

First. The Bible is one book. Seven great marks attest this unity.

1. From Genesis the Bible bears witness to one God. Wherever he speaks or acts he is consistent with himself, and with the total revelation concerning him.
2. The Bible forms one continuous story--the story of humanity in relation to God.
3. The Bible hazards the most unlikely predictions concerning the future, and, when the centuries have brought round the appointed time, records their fulfilment.
4. The Bible is a progressive unfolding of truth. Nothing is told all at once, and once for all. The law is, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn." Without the possibility of collusion, often with centuries between, one writer of Scripture takes up an earlier revelation, adds to it, lays down the pen, and in due time another man moved by the Holy Spirit, and another, and another, add new details till the whole is complete.
5. From beginning to end the Bible testifies to one redemption.
6. From beginning to end the Bible has one great theme--the person and work of the Christ.
7. And, finally, these writers, some forty-four in number, writing through twenty centuries, have produced a perfect harmony of doctrine in progressive unfolding. This is, to every candid mind, the unanswerable proof of the divine inspiration of the Bible.

Second. The Bible is a book of books. Sixty-six books make up the one Book. Considered with reference to the unity of the one book the separate books may be regarded as chapters. But that is but one side of the truth, for each of the sixty-six books is complete in itself, and has its own theme and analysis. In the present edition of the Bible these are fully shown in the introductions and divisions. It is therefore of the utmost moment that the books be studied in the light of their distinctive themes. Genesis, for instance, is the book of beginnings--the seed-plot of the whole Bible. Matthew is the book of the King, & etc. Third. The books of the Bible fall into groups. Speaking broadly there are five great divisions in the Scriptures, and these may be conveniently fixed in the memory by five key-words, Christ being the one theme (Luke 24:25-27).

PREPARATION	MANIFESTATION	PROPAGATION
The OT	The Gospels	The Acts
EXPLANATION	CONSUMMATION	
The Epistles	The Apocalypse	

In other words, the Old Testament is the preparation for Christ; in the Gospels he is manifested to the world; in the Acts he is preached and his Gospel is propagated in the world; in the Epistles his Gospel is explained; and in the Revelation all the purposes of God in and through Christ are consummated. And these groups of books in turn fall into groups. This is especially true of the Old Testament, which is in four well defined groups. Over these may be written as memory aids:

REDEMPTION	ORGANIZATION	POETRY	SERMONS	
Genesis	Joshua	Job	Isaiah	Jonah
Exodus	Judges	Psalms	Jeremiah	Micah
Leviticus	Ruth	Proverbs	Ezekiel	Nahum
Numbers	1,2 Samuel	Ecclesiastes	Daniel	Habakkuk
Deuteronomy	1,2 Kings	Song of Solomon	Hosea	Zehpaniah
	1,2 Chronicles	Lamentations	Joel	Haggai
	Ezra		Amos	Zechariah
	Nehemiah		Obadiah	Malachi
	Esther			

Again care should be taken not to overlook, in these general groupings, the distinctive messages of the several books composing them. Thus, while redemption is the general theme of the Pentateuch, telling as it does the story of the redemption of Israel out of bondage and into "a good land and large," each of the five books has its own distinctive part in the whole. Genesis is the book of beginnings, and explains the origin of Israel. Exodus tells the story of the deliverance of Israel; Leviticus of the worship of Israel as delivered people; Numbers the wanderings and failures of the delivered people, and Deuteronomy warns and instructs that people in view of their approaching entrance upon their inheritance. The Poetical books record the spiritual experiences of the redeemed people in the varied scenes and events through which the providence of God led them. The prophets were inspired preachers, and the prophetic books consist of sermons with brief connecting and explanatory passages. Two prophetic books, Ezekiel and Daniel, have a different character and are apocalyptic, largely. Fourth. The Bible tells the Human Story. Beginning, logically, with the creation of the earth and

man, the story of the race sprung from the first human pair continues through the first eleven chapters of Genesis. With the twelfth chapter begins the history of Abraham and of the nation of which Abraham was the ancestor. It is that nation, Israel, with which the Bible narrative is thereafter chiefly concerned from the eleventh chapter of Genesis to the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The Gentiles are mentioned, but only in connection with Israel. But it is made increasingly clear that Israel so fills the scene only because entrusted with the accomplishment of great world-wide purposes (Deuteronomy 7:7). **The appointed mission of Israel was,**

1. to be a witness to the unity of God in the midst of idolatry (Deuteronomy 6:5; Isaiah 43:10);
2. To illustrate to the nations the greater blessedness of serving the one true God (Deuteronomy 33:26-29; 1 Chronicles 17:20,21; Psalms 102:15);
3. To receive and preserve the Divine revelation (Romans 3:1,2); and
4. To produce the Messiah, earth's Saviour and Lord (Romans 9:4).

The prophets foretell a glorious future for Israel under the reign of Christ. The biblical story of Israel, past, present, and future, falls into seven distinct periods:

1. From the call of Abram (Genesis 12) to the Exodus (Exodus 1-20);
2. From the Exodus to the death of Joshua (Exodus 21 to Joshua 24);
3. From the death of Joshua to the establishment of the Hebrew monarchy under Saul;
4. The period of the kings from Saul to the Captivities;
5. The period of the Captivities;
6. The restored commonwealth from the end of the Babylonian captivity of Judah, to the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70;
7. The present dispersion.

The Gospels record the appearance in human history and within the Hebrew nation of the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ, and tell the wonderful story of his manifestation to Israel, his rejection by that people, his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. The Acts of the Apostles record the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the beginning of a new thing in human history, the Church. The division of the race now becomes threefold--the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God. Just as Israel is in the foreground from the call of Abram to the resurrection of Christ, so now the Church fills the scene from the second chapter of the Acts to the fourth chapter of the Revelation. The remaining chapters of that book complete the story of humanity and the final triumph of Christ. Fifth. The Central Theme of the Bible is Christ. It is this manifestation of Jesus Christ, his Person as "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16), his sacrificial death, and his resurrection, which constitute the Gospel. Unto this all preceding Scripture leads, from this all following Scripture proceeds. The Gospel is preached in the Acts and explained in the Epistles. Christ, Son of God, Son of man, Son of Abraham, Son of David, thus binds the many books into one Book. Seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15) he is the ultimate destroyer of Satan

and his works; Seed of Abraham he is the world blesser; Seed of David he is Israel's King. "Desire of all Nations." Exalted to the right hand of God he is "head over all to the Church, which is his body," while to Israel and the nations the promise of his return forms the one and only rational expectation that humanity will yet fulfil itself. Meanwhile the Church looks momentarily for the fulfilment of his special promise: "I will come again and receive you unto myself" (John 14:1-3). To him the Holy Spirit throughout this Gospel age bears testimony. The last book of all, the Consummation book, is "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:1).

The Pentateuch

The five books ascribed to Moses have a peculiar place in the structure of the Bible, and an order which is undeniably the order of the experience of the people of God in all ages.

- **Genesis** is the book of origins--of the beginning of life, and of ruin through sin. Its first word, "In the beginning God," is in striking contrast with the end, "In a coffin in Egypt."
- **Exodus** is the book of redemption, the first need of a ruined race.
- **Leviticus** is the book of worship and communion, the proper exercise of the redeemed.
- **Numbers** speaks of the experiences of a pilgrim people, the redeemed passing through a hostile scene to a promised inheritance.
- **Deuteronomy**, retrospective and prospective, is a book of instruction for the redeemed about to enter that inheritance.

That Babylonian and Assyrian monuments contain records bearing a grotesque resemblance to the majestic account of the creation and of the Flood is true, as also that these antedate Moses. But this confirms rather than invalidates inspiration of the Mosaic account. Some tradition of creation and the Flood would inevitably be handed down in the ancient cradle of the race. Such a tradition, following the order of all tradition, would take on grotesque and mythological features, and these abound in the Babylonian records.

Of necessity, therefore, the first task of inspiration would be to supplant the often absurd and childish traditions with a revelation of the true history, and such a history we find in words of matchless grandeur, and in a order which, rightly understood, is absolutely scientific. In the Pentateuch, therefore, we have a true and logical introduction to the entire Bible; and, in type, an epitome of the divine revelation.

The Historical Books

The Historical Books of the Old Testament, usually so called, are twelve in number, from Joshua to Esther inclusive. It should, however, be remembered that the entire Old Testament is filled with historical material. The accuracy of these writings, often questioned, has been in recent years completely confirmed by the testimony of the monuments of contemporaneous antiquity.

The story of the Historical Books is the story of the rise and fall of the Commonwealth of Israel, while the prophets foretell the future restoration and glory of that under King Messiah.

The history of Israel falls into seven distinct periods:

1. From the call of Abraham to the Exodus, Genesis 12:1-Exodus 1:22; (with Acts 7) The book of Job belongs to this period and shows the maturity and depth of philosophic and religious thought, and the extent of revelation of the age of the Patriarchs.
2. From the Exodus to the death of Joshua. The history of this period is gathered from the books of Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and such parts of Leviticus as relate to the story of Israel. The great figures of Moses, Aaron, and Joshua dominate this period.
3. The period of the Judges, from the death of Joshua to the call of Saul,
4. The period of the Kings, from Saul to the Captivities, (1 Samuel 11:1 - 2 Kings 17:6)
5. The period of the Captivities, Esther, and the historical parts of Daniel. With the captivity of Judah began "the times of the Gentiles," the mark of which is the political subjection of Israel to the Gentile world-powers (Luke 21:24).
6. The restored Commonwealth, always under Gentile over-lordship, from the end of the seventy years' captivity and the return of the Jewish remnant to the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. The inspired history of this period is found in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi in the Old Testament, and in the historical and biographical material found in the New Testament. During this period Christ, the promised King of the Davidic Covenant, and the Seed of the Adamic and Abrahamic Covenants, appeared, was rejected as king, was crucified, rose again from the dead, and ascended to heaven. Toward the end of this period, also, the church came into being, and the New Testament Scriptures, save the Gospel of John, John's Epistles, and the Revelation, were written.
7. The present dispersion (Luke 21:20-24), which according to all the Old Testament prophets is to be ended by the final national regathering promised in the Palestinian Covenant (Deuteronomy 30:1-9). The partial restoration at the end of the 70 years was foretold only by Daniel and Jeremiah, and was to the end that Messiah might come and fulfil the prophecies of His sufferings. In the year A.D. 70 Jerusalem was again destroyed, and the descendants of the remnant of Judah sent to share the national dispersion which still continues.

The Poetical Books

The books classed as poetical are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and Lamentations. The term "poetical" is not to be taken as implying fancifulness or unreality, but as relating to form only. They are the books of the human experiences of the people of God under the various exercises of earthly life; but those experiences are, apart from the mere external setting, wrought in them by the Spirit, interpreted to us by the Spirit, and written by holy men of God as they were moved by the Spirit. While this is true of all these books, the Psalms included, the latter have also a prophetic character.

The Hebrew poetic form is peculiar, and demands a word of explanation. Rhythm is not achieved by the repetition of similar sounds, as in rhymed verse; nor by rhythmic accent as in blank verse, but by repetition of ideas. This is called parallelism; e.g.

"The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed,
A refuge in times of trouble." (Psalms 9:9)

Parallelism is called synonymous when the thought is identical, as in the above instance; antithetic when the primary and secondary thoughts are in contrast; e.g.

"For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous:
But the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Psalms 1:6);

and synthetic when the thought is developed or enriched by the parallel; e.g.

"And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope;
Yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take
thy rest in safety." (Job 11:18)

Under this method the Poetical Books are epic, lyric, and dramatic, and supply examples of literary expression unmatched in uninspired literature.

The Prophetic Books

Prophets were men raised up of God in times of declension and apostasy in Israel. They were primarily revivalists and patriots, speaking on behalf of God to the heart and conscience of the nation. The prophetic messages have a twofold character: first, that which was local and for the prophet's time; secondly, that which was predictive of the divine purpose in future. Often the prediction springs immediately from the local circumstances (e.g. Isaiah 7:1-11 with Isaiah 7:12-14).

It is necessary to keep this Israelitish character of the prophet in mind. Usually his predictive, equally with his local and immediate ministry, is not didactic and abstract, but has in view the covenant people, their sin and failure, and their glorious future. The Gentile is mentioned as used for the chastisement of Israel, as judged therefore, but also as sharing the grace that is yet to be shown toward Israel. The Church, corporately, is not in the vision of the O.T. prophet (Ephesians 3:1-6). The future blessing of Israel as a nation rests upon the Palestinian Covenant of restoration and conversion (Deuteronomy 30:1-9, refs.), and the Davidic Covenant of the Kingship of the Messiah, David's Son (2 Samuel 7:8-17, refs.), and this gives to predictive prophecy its Messianic character. The exaltation of Israel is secured in the kingdom, and the kingdom takes its power to bless from the Person of the King, David's Son, but also "Immanuel."

But as the King is also Son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1), the promised Redeemer, and as redemption is only through the sacrifice of Christ, so messianic prophecy of necessity presents Christ in a twofold character--a suffering Messiah (e.g. Isaiah 53), and a reigning Messiah (e.g. Isaiah 11). This duality, suffering and glory, weakness and power, involved a mystery which perplexed the prophets (1 Peter 1:10-12; Luke 24:26:27).

The solution of that mystery lies, as the New Testament makes clear, in the two advents-- the first advent to redemption through suffering; the second advent to the kingdom glory, when the national promises to Israel will be fulfilled (Matthew 1:21-23; Luke 2:28-35; 24:46-48, with Luke 1:31-33,68-75); Matthew 2:2,6; 19:27,28; Acts 2:30-32; 15:14-16). The prophets indeed describe the advent in two forms which could not be contemporaneous (e.g. ; Zechariah 9:9; contra, 14:1-9), but to them it was not revealed that between the advent to suffering, and the advent to glory, would be accomplished certain "mysteries of the kingdom" (Matthew 13:11-16), not that, consequent upon Messiah's rejection, the new Testament Church would be called out. These were, to them, "mysteries hid in God" (3:1-10).

Speaking broadly, then, predictive prophecy is occupied with the fulfilment of the Palestinian and Davidic Covenants; the Abrahamic Covenant having also its place.

Gentile powers are mentioned as connected with Israel, but prophecy, save in Daniel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Nahum, is not occupied with Gentile world-history. Daniel, as will be see,

has a distinctive character.

The predictions of the restoration from the Babylonian captivity at the end of seventy years, must be distinguished from those of the restoration from the present world-wide dispersion. The context is always clear. The Palestinian Covenant Deuteronomy 28:1-30:9; is the mould of predictive prophecy in its larger sense--national disobedience, world-wide dispersion, repentance, the return of the Lord, the regathering of Israel and establishment of the kingdom, the conversion and blessing of Israel, and the judgment of Israel's oppressors.

The true division of the prophets is into pre-exilic, viz., in Judah: Isaiah, Jeremiah (extending into the exile), Joel, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah. In Israel: Hosea, Amos, and Jonah. Exilic, Ezekiel and Daniel, both of Judah, but prophesying to the whole nation. Post-exilic, all of Judah: Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The division into major and minor prophetic writings, based upon the mere bulk of the books, is unhistoric and non-chronological.

The keys which unlock the meaning of prophecy are: the two advents of Messiah, the advent to suffer (Genesis 3:15; Acts 1:9), and the advent to reign (Deuteronomy 30:3; Acts 1:9-11); the doctrine of the Remnant (Isaiah 10:20, refs), the doctrine of the day of the Lord (2:10-22; Revelation 19:11-21), and the doctrine of the Kingdom (O.T., (Genesis 1:26-28; ((See Scofield "Zechariah 12:8") ; N.T., ; Luke 1:31-33; (See Scofield "1 Corinthians 15:28"). note). The pivotal chapters, taking prophecy as a whole, are, Deuteronomy 28, 29, 30; Psalm 2; Daniel 2, 7.

The whole scope of prophecy must be taken into account in determining the meaning of any particular passage (2 Peter 1:20). Hence the importance of first mastering the great themes above indicated, which, in this edition of the Scriptures, may readily be done by tracing through the body of the prophetic writings the subjects mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The detail of the "time of the end," upon which all prophecy converges, will be more clearly understood if to those subjects the student adds the Beast (Daniel 7:8; Revelation 19:20), and Armageddon (Revelation 16:14; 19:17, (See Scofield "Revelation 19:17")).

Chronological Order of the Prophets (According to Ussher)

1. Prophets Before the Exile

1. To Nineveh: Jonah, 862 B.C.
2. To the 10 tribes "Israel": Amos, 787 B.C.; Hosea, 785-725 B.C.; Obadiah, 887 B.C.; Joel, 800 B.C.
3. To Judah: Isaiah, 760-698 B.C.; Micah, 750-710 B.C.; Nahum, 713 B.C.; Habakkuk, 626 B.C.; Zephaniah, 630 B.C.

2. Prophets During the Exile

1. Ezekiel, 595-574 B.C.
2. Daniel, 607-534 B.C.

3. Prophets After the Exile

1. Haggai, 520 B.C.
2. Zechariah, 520-518 B.C.
3. Malachi, 397 B.C.

The Four Gospels

The four Gospels record the eternal being, human ancestry, birth, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus the Christ, Son of God, and Son of Man. They record also a selection from the incidents of His life, and from His words and works. Taken together, they set forth, not a biography, but a Personality.

These two facts, that we have in the four Gospels a complete Personality, but not a complete biography, indicate the spirit and intent in which we should approach them. What is important is that through these narratives we should come to see and know Him whom they reveal. It is of relatively small importance that we should be able to piece together out of these confessedly incomplete records (John 21:25) a connected story of His life. For some adequate reason -- perhaps lest we should be too much occupied with "Christ after the flesh"-- it did not please God to cause to be written a biography of His Son. The twenty-nine formative years are passed over in a silence which is broken but once, and that in but twelve brief verses of Luke's Gospel. It may be well to respect the divine reticencies.

But the four Gospels, though designedly incomplete as a story, are divinely perfect as a revelation. We may not through them know everything that He did, but we may know the Doer. In four great characters, each of which completes the other three, we have Jesus Christ Himself. The Evangelists never describe Christ--they set Him forth. They tell us almost nothing of what they thought about Him, they let Him speak and act for himself.

This is the essential respect in which these narratives differ from mere biography or portraiture. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." The student in whom dwells an ungrieved Spirit finds here the living Christ.

The distinctive part which each Evangelist bears in this presentation of the living Christ is briefly noted in separated Introductions, but it may be profitable to add certain general suggestions.

The Old Testament is a divinely provided Introduction to the New; and whoever comes to the study of the four Gospels with a mind saturated with the Old Testament foreview of the Christ, His person, work, and kingdom, will find them open books.

For the Gospels are woven of Old Testament quotation, allusion, and type. The very first verse of the New Testament drives the thoughtful reader back to the Old; and the risen Christ sent His disciples to the ancient oracles for an explanation of His sufferings and glory (Luke 24:27,44,45) One of His last ministries was the opening of their understandings to understand the Old Testament.

Therefore, in approaching the study of the Gospels the mind should be freed, so far as

possible, from mere theological concepts and presuppositions. Especially is it necessary to exclude the notion--a legacy in Protestant thought from post apostolic and Roman Catholic theology--that the church is the true Israel, and that the Old Testament foreview of the kingdom is fulfilled in the Church.

Do not, therefore, assume interpretations to be true because familiar. Do not assume that "the throne of David" (Luke 1:32) is synonymous with "My Father's throne" (Revelation 3:21) or that "the house of Jacob" (Luke 1:33) is the Church composed both of Jew and Gentile.

The mission of Jesus was, primarily, to the Jews (Matthew 10:5,6; 15:23-25; John 1:11) He was "made under the law" (Galatians 4:4) and was a "minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Romans 15:8) and to fulfil the law that grace might flow out.

Expect, therefore, a strong legal and Jewish colouring up to the cross. (Matthew 5:17-19; 6:12; cf ; Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 10:5,6; 15:22-28; Mark 1:44; Matthew 23:2) The Sermon on the Mount is law, not grace, for it demands as the condition of blessing (Matthew 5:3-9) that perfect character which grace, through divine power, creates (Galatians 5:22,23)

The doctrines of grace are to be sought in the Epistles, not in the Gospels; but those doctrines rest back upon the death and resurrection of Christ, and upon the great germ- truths to which He gave utterance, and of which the Epistles are the unfolding. Furthermore, the only perfect example of perfect grace is the Christ of the Gospels.

The Gospels do not unfold the doctrine of the Church. The word occurs in Matthew only. After His rejection as King and Saviour by the Jews, our Lord, announcing a mystery until that moment "hid in God" (Ephesians 3:3-10) said, "I will build my church." (Matthew 16:16,18) It was, therefore, yet future; but His personal ministry had gathered out the believers who were, on the day of Pentecost, by the baptism with the Spirit, made the first members of "the church which is his body" (1 Corinthians 12:12,13; Ephesians 1:23)

The Gospels present a group of Jewish disciples, associated on earth with a Messiah in humiliation; the Epistles a Church which is the body of Christ in glory, associated with Him in the heavenlies, co-heirs with Him of the Father, co-rulers with Him over the coming kingdom, and, as to the earth, pilgrims and strangers (1 Corinthians 12:12,13; Ephesians 1:3-14,20-23; 2:4-6; 1 Peter 2:11)

The Gospels present Christ in His three offices of Prophet, Priest and King. As Prophet His ministry does not differ in kind from that of the Old Testament prophets. It is the dignity of His person that which makes him the unique Prophet. Of old, God spoke through the prophets; now He speaks in the Son. (Hebrews 1:1,2). The old prophet was a voice from God; the Son is God himself. (Deuteronomy 18:18,19)

The prophet in any dispensation is God's messenger to His people, first to establish truth, and secondly, when they are in declension and apostasy to call them back to truth. His message, therefore, is, usually, one of rebuke and appeal. Only when these fall on deaf ears does he become a foreteller of things to come. In this, too, Christ is at one with the other prophets. His predictive ministry follows His rejection as King.

The sphere and character of Christ's Kingly Office are defined in the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:8-16) and refs, as interpreted by the prophets, and confirmed by the New Testament. The latter in no way abrogates or modifies either the Davidic Covenant or its prophetic interpretation. It adds details which were not in the prophet's vision. The Sermon on the Mount is an elaboration of the idea of "righteousness" as the predominant characteristic of the Messianic kingdom. (Isaiah 11:2-5; Jeremiah 23:5,6; 33:14-16) The Old Testament prophet was perplexed by seeing in one horizon, so to speak, the suffering and glory of Messiah. (1 Peter 1:10-11) The New Testament shows that these are separated by the present church-age, and points forward to the Lord's return as the time when the Davidic Covenant of blessing through power will be fulfilled (Luke 1:30-33; Acts 2:29-36; 15:14-17) just as the Abrahamic Covenant of blessing through suffering was fulfilled at His first coming. (Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:6-14).

Christ is never called King of the Church. "The King" is indeed one of the divine titles, and the Church in her worship joins Israel in exalting "the king, eternal, immortal, invisible." (Psalms 10:16; 1 Timothy 1:17). But the church is to reign with Him. The Holy Spirit is now calling out, not the subjects, but the co-heirs and co-rulers of the kingdom (2 Timothy 2:11,12; Revelation 1:6; 3:21; 5:10; Romans 8:15-18; 1 Corinthians 6:2,3) Christ's priestly office is the complement of His prophetic office. The prophet is God's representative with the people; the priest is the people's representative with God. Because they are sinful he must be a sacrificer; because they are needy he must be a compassionate intercessor. (Hebrews 5:1,2; 8:1-3)

So Christ, on the cross, entered upon his high-priestly work, offering Himself without spot unto God (Hebrews 9:14) as now He compassionates His people in an ever-living intercession (Hebrews 7:23). Of that intercession, John 17 is the pattern. (John 17:1-26).

Distinguish, in the Gospels, interpretation from moral application. Much in the Gospels which belongs in strictness of interpretation to the Jew or the kingdom is yet such a revelation of the mind of God, and so based on eternal principles, as to have a moral application to the people of God, whatever their position dispensationally. It is always true that the "pure in heart" are happy because they "see God," and that "woe" is the portion of the religious formalists whether under law or grace.

Especial emphasis rests upon that to which all four Gospels bear a united testimony. **That united testimony is sevenfold:**

- In all alike is revealed the one unique Personality. The one Jesus is King in Matthew, Servant in Mark, Man in Luke, and God in John. But not only so; for Matthew's King is also Servant, Man, and God; and Mark's Servant is also King, and Man, and God; Luke's Man is also King and Servant, and God; and John's eternal Son is also King, and Servant, and Man. The pen is a different pen; the incidents in which He is seen are sometimes different incidents; the distinctive character in which He is presented is a different character; but He is always the same Christ. That fact alone would mark these books as inspired.
- All the Evangelists record the ministry of John the Baptist.
- All record the feeding of the five thousand.
- All record Christ's offer of Himself as King, according to Micah.
- All record the betrayal by Judas; the denial by Peter; the trial, crucifixion, and literal resurrection of Christ. And this record is so made as to testify that the death of Christ was the supreme business which brought Him into the world; that all which precedes that death is but preparation for it; and that from it flow all the blessings which God ever has or ever will bestow upon man.
- All record the resurrection ministry of Christ; a ministry which reveals Him as unchanged by the tremendous event of his passion, but a ministry keyed to a new note of universality, and of power.
- All point forward to His second coming.

Introductory Notes to The Epistles of Paul

The Epistles of the Apostle Paul have a very distinctive character. All Scripture, up to the Gospel accounts of the crucifixion, looks forward to the cross, and has primarily in view Israel, and the blessing of the earth through the Messianic kingdom. But "hid in God" (Ephesians 3:9) was an unrevealed fact--the interval of time between the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ and His return in glory; and an unrevealed purpose-- the outcalling of the ecclesia, the church which is Christ's body. In Mat. 16, our Lord announced that purpose, but wholly without explanation as to how, when, or of what materials, that church should be built, or what should be its position, relationships, privileges, or duties.

All this constitutes precisely the scope of the Epistles of Paul. They develop the doctrine of the church. In his letters to seven Gentile churches (in Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and Thessalonica), the church, the "mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God" (Ephesians 3:9), is fully revealed, and fully instructed as to her unique place in the counsels and purposes of God.

Through Paul alone we know that the church is not an organization, but an organism, the body of Christ; instinct with His life, and heavenly in calling, promise, and destiny. Through him alone we know the nature, purpose, and form of organization of local churches, and the right conduct of such gatherings. Through him alone do we know that "we shall not all sleep," that "the dead in Christ shall rise first," and that living saints shall be "changed" and caught up to meet the Lord in the air at His return.

But to Paul was also committed the unfolding of the doctrines of grace which were latent in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Paul originates nothing, but unfolds everything, concerning the nature and purpose of the law; the ground and means of the believer's justification, sanctification, and glory; the meanings of the death of Christ, and the position, walk, expectation, and service of the Christian.

Paul converted by the personal ministry of the Lord in glory, is distinctively the witness to a glorified Christ, Head over all things to the church which is His body, as the Eleven were to Christ in the flesh, the Son of Abraham and David.

The chronological order of Paul's Epistles is believed to be as follows: 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Timothy. Hebrews has a distinctive place, nor can the order of that book amongst the writings of Paul be definitely fixed.

The Two Silences

Two periods in the life of Paul after his conversion are passed over in a silence which is itself

significant--the journey into Arabia, from which the Apostle returned in full possession of the Gospel explanation as set forth in Galatians and Romans; and the two silent years in prison in Caesarea, between his arrest in the temple at Jerusalem and his deportation to Rome.

It was inevitable that a trained intellect like that of Paul, a convinced believer in Mosasism, and, until his conversion on the Damascus road, an eager opposer of Christianity, must seek the underlying principles of the Gospel. Immediately after his conversion he preached Jesus as the Messiah; but the relation of the Gospel to the Law, and, in a lesser degree, of the great Jewish promises, needed clear adjustment if Christianity was to be a reasonable faith, and not a mere dogma. In Arabia Paul sought and found that adjustment through revelation by the Spirit. Out of it came the doctrinal explanation of salvation by grace through faith, wholly apart from the law, embodied in Galatians and Romans.

But the Gospel brings the believer into great relationships--to the Father, to other believers, to Christ, and to the future purposes of God. It is not only a salvation from sin and the consequences of sin, but into an amazing place in the Divine counsels. Furthermore, the new thing, the church in its various aspects and junctions, demanded clear revelation. And these are the chief themes of the Epistles written by Paul from Rome, and commonly called the Prison Epistles--Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. It is contrary to the method of inspiration, as explained by Paul himself, to suppose that these crowning revelations were made apart from deep meditation, demanding quietness, and earnest seeking. It seems most congruous with the events of Paul's life to suppose that these great revelations came during the silent years at Caesarea--often spoken of as wasted.

The Jewish-Christian Epistles

In Hebrews, James, First and Second Peter, and Jude we have a group of inspired writings differing in important respects from Paul's Epistles. But this difference is in no sense one of conflict. All present the same Christ, the same salvation, the same morality. The difference is one of extension, of development. The Jewish-Christian writings deal with the elementary and foundational things of the Gospel, while to Paul were given the revelations concerning the church, her place in the counsels of God, and the calling and hope of the believer as vitally united to Christ in the one body.

The other characteristic difference is that while Paul has in view the body of true believers, who are therefore assuredly saved, the Judaeo-Christian writers view the church as a professing body in which, during this age, the wheat and tares are mingled. (Matthew 13:24-30). Their writings, therefore, abound, in warnings calculated to arouse and alarm the mere professor. A word of caution is, however, needful at this point. The persons warned are neither mere hypocrites, nor mere formalists. So far as they have gone their experiences are perfectly genuine. It is said of the supposed persons in (Hebrews 6:4-9) that they had been "enlightened," and the same word is used (Hebrews 10:32,) translated "illuminated." They are said, too, to have "tasted" of the heavenly gift, and again a word importing reality is used, for it occurs in Hebrews 2:9 of the death of Christ. The true point of the divine solicitude is expressed in verses 1 and 2. It is that they shall go on. They have made a real beginning, but it is not said of them that they have faith, and it is said (verse 9) that "things that accompany salvation" are "better." This fear lest beginners will "come short" is the theme of Hebrews 3:7-4:3. The men in (Matthew 7:21-23) are not conscious hypocrites-- they are utterly surprised at their exclusion. Characteristic contrasts are, (Hebrews 6:4-6; Romans 8:29-39; 2 Peter 1:10; Philippians 1:6) In this respect these Epistles group with Matthew 13-23 and Acts 2-9. The two Epistles of Peter, however, are less Jewish and more truly catholic than the other Jewish-Christian writings. He addressed, in his First Epistle, neither Jews as such, not even Christian Jews of Jerusalem, or Judea, but of the dispersion; while Second Peter is not distinctively Jewish at all.

Genesis

GENESIS is the book of beginnings. It records not only the beginning of the heavens and the earth, and of plant, animal, and human life, but also of all human institutions and relationships. Typically, it speaks of the new birth, the new creation, where all was chaos and ruin. With Genesis begins also that progressive self-revelation of God which culminates in Christ. The three primary names of Deity, Elohim, Jehovah, and Adonai, and the five most important of the compound names, occur in Genesis; and that in an ordered progression which could not be changed without confusion. The problem of sin as affecting man's condition in the earth and his relation to God, and the divine solution of that problem are here in essence. Of the eight great covenants which condition human life and the divine redemption, four, the Edenic, Adamic, Noahic, and Abrahamic Covenants are in this book; and these are the fundamental covenants to which the other four, the Mosaic, Palestinian, Davidic, and New Covenants, are related chiefly as adding detail or development. Genesis enters into the very structure of the New Testament, in which it is quoted above sixty times in seventeen books. In a profound sense, therefore, the roots of all subsequent revelation are planted deep in Genesis, and whoever would truly comprehend that revelation must begin here. The inspiration of Genesis and its character as a divine revelation are authenticated by the testimony of Christ (Matthew 19:4-6; 24:37-39; Mark 10:4-9; Luke 11:49-51; 17:26-29,32 ; John 1:5; 7:21-23; 8:44,56).

Genesis is in five chief divisions:

1. Creation (1:1-2:25)
2. The fall and redemption (3:1-4,7).
3. The Diverse Seeds, Cain and Seth, to the Flood (4:8-7:24).
4. The Flood to Babel (8:1-11:9).
5. From the call of Abram to the death of Joseph (11:10-50:26).

The events recorded in Genesis cover a period of 2,315 years (Ussher).

Exodus

EXODUS, "going out," records the redemption out of Egyptian bondage of the descendants of Abraham, and sets forth, in type, all redemption. It is therefore peculiarly the book of redemption. But as all redemption is unto a relationship with God of which worship, fellowship, and service are expressions, so Exodus, in the giving of the law and the provisions of sacrifice and priesthood, becomes not only the book of redemption, but also, in type, of the conditions upon which all relationships with God exist.

Broadly, the book teaches that redemption is essential to any relationship with a holy God; and that even a redeemed people cannot have fellowship with Him unless constantly cleaned of defilement.

In EXODUS, God, hitherto connected with the Israelitish people only through His covenant with Abraham, brings them to himself nationally through redemption, puts them under the Mosaic Covenant, and dwells among them in the cloud of glory. Galatians explains the relation of the law to the Abrahamic Covenant. In the Commandments God taught Israel His just demands. Experience under the Commandments convicted Israel of sin; and the provision of priesthood and sacrifice (filled with precious types of Christ) gave a guilty people a way of forgiveness, cleansing, restoration to fellowship, and worship.

Exodus falls into three chief divisions:

1. Israel in Egypt (1-15.)
2. From the Red Sea to Sinai (16-18.)
3. Israel at Sinai (19:40.)

The events recorded in Exodus cover a period of 216 years (Ussher).

Leviticus

LEVITICUS stands in the same relation to EXODUS, that the Epistles do to the Gospels. EXODUS is the record of redemption, and lays the foundation of the cleansing, worship, and service of a redeemed people. LEVITICUS gives the detail of the walk, worship, and service of that people. In EXODUS God speaks out of the mount to which approach was forbidden; in LEVITICUS He speaks out of the tabernacle in which He dwells in the midst of His people, to tell them that which befits His holiness in their approach to, and communion with, Himself.

The key word of Leviticus is holiness, occurring 87 times. Key verse is Leviticus 19:2.

LEVITICUS is in nine chief divisions:

1. The Offerings 1-6:7
2. The Law of the Offerings 6:8-7:38.
3. Consecration 8:1-9:24
4. A Warning Example 10:1-20.
5. A Holy God Must Have a Cleansed People 11-15.
6. Atonement 16,17.
7. The Relationships of God's People 18-22.
8. The Feasts of Jehovah, 23.
9. Instructions and Warnings, 24-27.

Numbers

The book derives its name from the fact that it records the enumeration of Israel. Historically, NUMBERS takes up the story where EXODUS left it, and is the book of the wilderness wanderings of the redeemed people consequent upon their failure to enter the land at Kadesh-barnea.

Typically, it is the book of service and walk, and thus completes, with the preceding books, a beautiful moral order: GENESIS, the book of the creation and fall; EXODUS, of redemption; LEVITICUS, of worship and fellowship; and NUMBERS, of that which should follow--service and walk.

It is important to see that nothing was left to self-will. Every servant was numbered, knew his place in the family, and had his own definitely assigned service. The N.T. parallel is 1 Cor. 12.

The second typical lesson is that, tested by wilderness circumstances, Israel utterly failed.

NUMBERS is in five chief divisions:

1. The Order of the Host, 1:1-10:10
2. From Sinai to Kadesh-barnea, 10:11-12:16,
3. Israel at Kadesh-barnea, 13:1-19:22,
4. The Wilderness Wanderings, 20:1-33:49,
5. Closing Instructions, 33:50-36:13.

The events covered in NUMBERS cover a period of 39 years (Ussher).

Deuteronomy

DEUTERONOMY consists of the parting counsels of Moses delivered to Israel in view of the impending entrance upon their covenanted possession. It contains a summary of the wilderness wanderings of Israel, which is important as unfolding the moral judgement of God upon those events; repeats the Decalogue to a generation which had grown up in the wilderness; gives needed instruction as the conduct of Israel in the land, and contains the Palestinian Covenant (Deuteronomy 30:1-9). The book breathes the sternness of the Law. Key- words, "Thou shalt"; key-verses, Deuteronomy 11:26-28.

It is important to note that, while the land of promise was unconditionally given Abraham and to his seed in the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 13:15; 15:7), it was under the conditional Palestinian Covenant (Deuteronomy 28:1-30:9) that Israel entered the land under Joshua. Utterly violating the conditions of that covenant, the nation was first disrupted (1 Kings 12) and then cast out of the land (2 Kings 17:1-18; 24:1-25:11). But the same covenant unconditionally promises a national restoration of Israel which is yet to be fulfilled.

DEUTERONOMY is in seven divisions:

1. Summary of the history of Israel in the wilderness, 1:1-3:29
2. A restatement of the Law, with warnings and exhortations, 4:1 -11:32,
3. Instructions, Warnings, and Predictions, 12:1-27:26,
4. The great closing prophecies summarizing the history of Israel to the second coming of Christ, and containing the Palestinian Covenant, 28:1-30:20,
5. Last counsels to Priests, Levites, and to Joshua, 31,
6. The Song of Moses and his parting blessings, 32,33,
7. The Death of Moses, 34.

The time covered by this retrospect is approximately forty years.

Joshua

Joshua records the consummation of the redemption of Israel of Israel out of Egypt; for redemption has two parts: "out," and "into" (Deuteronomy 6:23). The key-phrase is "Moses My servant is dead" (Joshua 1:2). Law, of which Moses is the representative, could never give a sinful people victory (Hebrews 7:19; Romans 6:14; 8:2-4).

In a spiritual sense the book of Joshua is the Ephesians of the Old Testament. "The heavenly" of Ephesians is to the Christian what Canaan was to the Israelite and blessing through divine power (Joshua 21:43-55; Ephesians 1:3)

The government, as before, was theocratic; Joshua succeeding Moses as the ruler under God.

Joshua falls into four parts:

1. The conquest, 1-12.
2. The partition of the inheritance, 13-21.
3. Incipient discord, 22.
4. Joshua's last counsels and death, 23,24.

The events recorded in Joshua cover a period of 26 years (Ussher).

Judges

This book takes its name from the thirteen men raised up to deliver Israel in the declension and disunion which followed the death of Joshua. Through these men Jehovah continued His personal government of Israel. The key-verse to the condition of Israel is (Judges 17:6), "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Two facts stand out--the utter failure of Israel; the persistent grace of Jehovah. In the choice of the Judges is illustrated Zechariah's great word (Zechariah 4:6), "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord"; and Paul's word (1 Corinthians 1:25), "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."

The book records seven apostasies, seven servitudes to seven heathen nations, seven deliverances. The spiritual parallel is found in the history of the professing church since the Apostles, in the rise of sects and the lost sense of the unity of the one body (1 Corinthians 12:12,13).

Judges is in two parts:

1. 1-16 inclusive; key-verse, Judges 2:18.
2. 17-21; key-verse, Judges 21:25.

The events recorded in Judges cover a period of 305 years (Ussher).

Ruth

This lovely story should be read in connection with the first half of Judges, as it presents a picture of life in Israel at that time.

Typically, the book may be taken as a foreview of the church (Ruth), as the Gentile bride of Christ, the Bethlehemite who is able to redeem. Ruth also gives a normal Christian experience:

1. Ruth deciding, 1
2. Ruth serving, 2.
3. Ruth resting, 3.
4. Ruth rewarded, 4.

The events recorded in Ruth cover a period of 10 years (Ussher)

1 Samuel

This book represents the personal history of Samuel, last of the Judges. It records the moral failure of the priesthood under Eli, and of the Judges in Samuel's attempt to make the office hereditary (1 Samuel 8:1). In his prophetic office Samuel was faithful, and in him begins the line of writing prophets. Henceforth the prophet, not the priest, is conspicuous in Israel. In this book the theocracy, as exercised through judges, ends (1 Samuel 8:7), and the line of kings begins with Saul.

The book is in four parts:

1. The story of Samuel to the death of Eli, 1:1-4:22.
2. From the taking of the ark to the demand for a king, 5:1-8:22.
3. The reign of Saul to the call of David, 9:1-15:35.
4. From the call of David to the death of Saul, 16:1-31:13.

The events recorded in First Samuel cover a period of 115 years (Ussher).

2 Samuel

As First Samuel marks the failure of man in Eli, Saul, and even Samuel, so Second Samuel marks the restoration of order through the enthroning of God's king, David. This book also records the establishment of Israel's political centre in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:6-12), and her religious centre in Zion (2 Samuel 5:7; 6:1-17). When all was thus ordered, Jehovah established the great Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 23:1-7) out of which all kingdom truth is henceforth developed. David, in his "last words" (2 Samuel 23:1-7), describes the millennial kingdom yet to be.

The book is in four parts:

1. From the death of Saul to the anointing of David over Judah, in Hebron, 1:1-27.
2. From the anointing in Hebron to the establishment of David over united Israel, 2:1-5:25.
3. From the conquest of Jerusalem to the rebellion of Absalom, 6:1-14:33.
4. From the rebellion of Absalom to the purchase of the temple-site, 15:1-24:25.

The events recorded in 2 Samuel cover a period of 38 years (Ussher).

1 Kings

First Kings records the death of David, the reign of Solomon, the building of the temple, death of Solomon, division of the kingdom under Rehoboam and Jeroboam, and the history of the two kingdoms to the reign of Jehoram over Judah, and Ahaziah over Samaria. Includes the mighty ministry of Elijah.

The book is in seven parts:

1. From the rebellion of Adonijah to the death of David, 1:1-2:11.
2. From the accession of Solomon to the dedication of the temple, 2:12-8:66.
3. From the division of the kingdom to the death of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, 12:1-14:31.
4. The kingdoms to the accession of Ahab, 15:1-16:28.
5. Accession of Ahab to his death, 16:29-22:40.
6. From the reign of Jehoshaphat to the accession of Jehoram over Judah, and Ahaziah over Samaria, 22:41-53.

The events recorded in First Kings cover a period of 118 years (Ussher).

2 Kings

This book continues the history of the kingdoms to the captivities. It includes the translation of Elijah and the ministry of Elisha. During this period Amos and Hosea prophesied in Israel, and Obadiah, Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah in Judah.

Second Kings is in seven parts:

1. The last ministry and translation of Elijah, 1:1-2:11.
2. The ministry of Elisha from the translation of Elijah to the anointing of Jehu, 2:12-9:10.
3. The reign of Jehu over Israel, 9:11-10:36.
4. The reigns of Athaliah and Jehoash over Judah, 11:1-12:21.
5. The reigns of Jehoahaz and Joash over Israel, and the last ministry of Elisha, 13:1-25.
6. From the death of Elisha to the captivity of Israel, 14:1-17:41.
7. From the accession of Hezekiah to the captivity of Judah, 18:1-25:30.

The events recorded in Second Kings cover a period of 308 years. (Ussher)

1 Chronicles

The two books of Chronicles (like the two books of Kings) are but one book in the Jewish canon. Together they cover the period from the death of Saul to the captivities. They were written probably during the Babylonian captivity, and are distinguished from the two books of the Kings in a fuller account of Judah, and in the omission of many details. The blessing of God's earthly people in connection with the Davidic monarchy is probably the typical significance of these books.

First Chronicles is in three parts:

1. Official genealogies, 1:1-9:44.
2. From the death of Saul to the accession of David, 10:1-12:24.
3. From the accession of David to his death, 13:1-29:30.

Excluding the genealogies (Ch 1-9) the events recorded in First Chronicles cover a period of 41 years (Ussher).

2 Chronicles

This book continues the history begun in First Chronicles. It falls into eighteen divisions, by reigns, from Solomon to the captivities; records the division of the kingdom of David under Jeroboam and Rehoboam, and is marked by an ever growing apostasy, broken temporarily by reformations under Asa, 14-16; Jehoshaphat, 17:1-19; Joash, 24; Hezekiah, 29-32; and Josiah, 34,35. But the religious state of the people, even at the best, is described in Isaiah 1-5.

The events recorded in Second Chronicles cover a period of 427 years. (Ussher).

Ezra

Ezra, the first of the post-captivity books (Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi), records the return to Palestine under Zerubbabel, by decree of Cyrus, of a Jewish remnant who laid the temple foundations (B.C. 536). Later (B.C. 458) Ezra followed, and restored the law and ritual. But the mass of the nation, and most of the princes, remained by preference in Babylonia and Assyria, where they were prospering. The post-captivity books deal with that feeble remnant which alone had a heart for God.

The book is in two parts:

1. From the decree of Cyrus to the dedication of the restored temple, 1:1-6:22.
2. The ministry of Ezra, 7:1-10:44.

The events recorded in Ezra cover a period of 80 years (Ussher).

Nehemiah

Fourteen years after the return of Ezra to Jerusalem, Nehemiah led up a company (B.C. 444) and restored the walls and the civil authority. Of those events this book is the record.

It is in eight divisions:

1. The journey to Jerusalem, 1:1-2:20
2. The building of the wall, 3:1-6:19.
3. The census, 7:1-73.
4. The revival, 8:1-11:36.
5. The census of the priests and Levites, 12:1-26.
6. Dedication of the wall, 12:27-43.
7. Restoration of the temple worship, 12:44-47.
8. The legal order restored, 13:1-31.

The moral state of the time is disclosed by the prophet Malachi. This book affords many instances of individual faith acting on the written word (e.g. Nehemiah 1:8,9; 13:1). It is the principle of 2 Timothy 2.

The events recorded in Nehemiah cover a period of 11 years (Ussher).

Esther

The significance of the Book of Esther is that it testifies to the secret watch care of Jehovah over dispersed Israel. The name of God does not once occur, but in no other book of the Bible is His providence more conspicuous. A mere remnant returned to Jerusalem. The mass of the nation preferred the easy and lucrative life under the Persian rule. But God did not forsake them. What He here does for Judah, He is surely doing for all the covenant people.

The book is in seven parts:

1. The Story of Vashti, 1:1-22.
2. Esther made queen, 2:1-23.
3. The conspiracy of Haman, 3:1-15.
4. The courage of Esther brings deliverance, 4:1-7:10.
5. The vengeance, 8:1-9:19.
6. The feast of Purim, 9:20-32.
7. Epilogue, 10:1-3.

The events recorded in Esther cover a period of 12 years (Ussher).

Job

Job is in form a dramatic poem. It is probably the oldest of the Bible books, and was certainly written before the giving of the law. It would have been impossible, in a discussion covering the whole field of sin, of the providential government of God, and man's relation to Him, to avoid all reference to the law if the law had then been known. Job was a veritable personage (Ezekiel 14:20; James 5:11), and the events are historical. The book sheds a remarkable light on the philosophic breadth and intellectual culture of the patriarchal age. The problem is, Why do the godly suffer?

Job is in seven parts:

1. Prologue, 1:1-2:8.
2. Job and his wife, 2:9,10.
3. Job and his three friends, 2:11-31:40.
4. Job and Elihu, 32:1-37:24.
5. Jehovah and Job, 38:1-41:34.
6. Job's final answer, 42:1-6.
7. Epilogue, 42:7-17.

The events recorded in Job cover a period within 1 year.

Psalms

The simplest description of the five books of Psalms is that they were the inspired prayer- and-praise book of Israel. They are revelations of truth, not abstractly, but in the terms of human experience. The truth revealed is wrought into the emotions, desires, and sufferings of the people of God by the circumstances through which they pass. But those circumstances are such as to constitute an anticipation of analogous conditions through which Christ in His incarnation, and the Jewish remnant in the tribulation (10:21, refs), should pass; so then many Psalms are prophetic of the sufferings, the faith, and the victory of both. Psalms 22 and 50 are examples. The former--the holy of holies of the Bible-- reveals all that was in the mind of Christ when He uttered the desolate cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" The latter is an anticipation of what will be in the heart of Israel when she shall turn to Jehovah again (Deuteronomy 30:1,2). Other Psalms are directly prophetic of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glories which should follow" (Luke 24:25-27,44). Psalm 2 is a notable instance, presenting Jehovah's Anointed as rejected and crucified (Psalms 2:1-3; Acts 4:24-28) but afterward set as King in Zion.

The great themes of the Psalms are, Christ, Jehovah, the Law, Creation, the future of Israel, and the exercises of the renewed heart in suffering, in joy, in perplexity. The promises of the Psalms are primarily Jewish, and suited to a people under the law, but are spiritually true in Christian experience also, in the sense that they disclose the mind of God, and the exercises of His heart toward those who are perplexed, afflicted, or cast down.

The imprecatory Psalms are the cry of the oppressed in Israel for justice--a cry appropriate and right in the earthly people of God, and based upon a distinct promise in the Abrahamic Covenant ((See Scofield "Genesis 15:18")), but a cry unsuited to the church, a heavenly people who have taken their place with a rejected and crucified Christ.(Luke 9:52-55).

The Psalms are in five books, each ending in a doxology:

1. Psalms 1-41.
2. Psalms 42-72.
3. Psalms 73-89.
4. Psalms 90-106.
5. Psalms 107-150.

Proverbs

This collection of sententious sayings is divine wisdom applied to the earthly conditions of the people of God. That the Proverbs were Solomon's (Proverbs 1:1) implies no more than that he gathered into orderly arrangement sayings already current amongst the people, the wisdom of the Spirit, perhaps through many centuries (Ecclesiastes 12:9). Chapters 25-29 were current in Hezekiah's time (Ecclesiastes 25:1). Chapters 30 and 31 are by Agur and Lemuel.

The book is in six parts:

1. To sons, 1-7.
2. The praise of wisdom, 8-9.
3. The folly of sin, 10-19.
4. Warnings and instructions, 20-29.
5. The words of Agur, 30. The words of King Lemuel, 31.

Ecclesiastes

This is the book of man "under the sun," reasoning about life; it is the best man can do, with the knowledge that there is a holy God, and that He will bring every-thing into judgment. The key phrases are "under the sun;" "I perceived"; "I said in my heart." Inspiration sets down accurately what passes, but the conclusions and reasonings are, after all, man's. That those conclusions are just in declaring it "vanity" in view of judgment, to devote life to earthly things, is surely true; but the "conclusion" (Ecclesiastes 12:13) is legal, the best that man apart from redemption can do, and does not anticipate the Gospel.

Ecclesiastes is in five parts:

1. Theme, 1:1-3.
2. Theme proved, 1:4-3:22.
3. Theme unfolded in the light of human sufferings, hypocrisies, uncertainties, poverty and riches, 4:1-10:20.
4. The best thing possible to the natural man apart from God, 11:1-12:12.
5. The best thing possible to man under the law, 12:13,14.

Song of Solomon

Nowhere in Scripture does the unspiritual mind tread upon ground so mysterious and incomprehensible as in this book, while the saintliest men and women of the ages have found it a source of pure and exquisite delight. That the love of the divine Bridegroom should follow all the analogies of the marriage relation seems evil only to minds so ascetic that martial desire itself seems to them unholy.

The interpretation is twofold: Primarily, the book is the expression of pure marital love as ordained of God in creation, and the vindication of that love as against both asceticism and lust--the two profanations of the holiness of marriage. The secondary and larger interpretation is of Christ, the Son and His heavenly bride, the Church (2 Corinthians 11:1-4 refs).

In this sense the book has six divisions:

1. The bride seen in restful communion with the Bridegroom, 1:1-2:7.
2. A lapse and restoration, 2:3-3:5.
3. Joy of fellowship, 3:6-5:1.
4. Separation of interest--the bride satisfied, the Bridegroom toiling for others, 5:2-5.
5. The bride seeking and witnessing, 5:6-6:3.
6. Unbroken communion, 6:4-8:14.

Isaiah

Isaiah is justly accounted the chief of the writing prophets. He has the more comprehensive testimony and is distinctively the prophet of redemption. Nowhere else in the Scriptures written under the law have we so clear a view of grace. The New Testament Church does not appear (3:3-10), but Messiah in His Person and sufferings, and the blessing of the Gentiles through Him, are in full vision.

Apart from his testimony to his own time, which includes warnings of coming judgments upon the great nations of that day, the predictive messages of Isaiah cover seven great themes:

1. Israel in exile and divine judgment upon Israel's oppressors.
2. The return from Babylon.
3. The manifestation of Messiah in humiliation (e.g. Chap. 53).
4. The blessing of the Gentiles.
5. The manifestation of Messiah in judgment ("the day of vengeance of our God").
6. The reign of David's righteous Branch in the kingdom-age.
7. The new heavens and the new earth.

Isaiah is in two chief divisions:

1. Looking toward the captivities, 1:1-39:8. Key verses, 1:1,2.
2. Looking beyond the captivities, 40:1-66:24. Key verses, 40:1,2.

These chief divisions fall into subdivisions, as indicated in the text.

The events recorded in Isaiah cover a period of 62 years (Ussher).

Jeremiah

Jeremiah began his ministry in the 13th year of Josiah, about 60 years after Isaiah's death. Zephaniah and Habakkuk were contemporaries of his earlier ministry. Daniel of his later. After the death of Josiah, the kingdom of Judah hastened to its end in the Babylonian captivity. Jeremiah remained in the land ministering to the poor Remnant (2 Kings 24:14) until they went into Egypt, whither he followed them, and where he died, early in the 70 year's captivity. Jeremiah, prophesying before and during the exile of Judah, connects the pre-exile prophets with Ezekiel and Daniel, prophets of the exile.

Jeremiah's vision includes: the Babylonian captivity; the return after 70 years; the world- wide dispersion; the final regathering; the kingdom-age; the day of judgment on the Gentile powers, and the Remnant.

Jeremiah is in six chief divisions:

1. From the prophet's call to his message to the first captives. 1:1-29:32.
2. Prophecies and events not chronological, 30:1-36:2.
3. From the accession to the captivity of Zedekiah, 37:1-39,18.
4. Jeremiah's prophecies in the land after the final captivity of Judah, 40:1-42:22.
5. The prophet in Egypt, 43:1-44:30.
6. Miscellaneous prophecies, 45:1-52:34.

The events recorded in Jeremiah cover a period of 41 years (Ussher).

Lamentations

The touching significance of this book lies in the fact that it is the disclosure of the love and sorrow of Jehovah for the very people who He is chastening--a sorrow wrought by the Spirit in the heart of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 13:17; Matthew 23:36,38; Romans 9:1-5).

The chapters indicate the analysis, viz., five lamentations.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel was carried away to Babylon between the first and final deportation of Judah (2 Kings 24:11-16). Like Daniel and the Apostle John, he prophesied out of the land, and his prophecy, like theirs, follows the method of symbol and vision. Unlike the pre-exilic prophets, whose ministry was primarily to either Judah or the ten-tribe kingdom, Ezekiel is the voice of Jehovah to "the whole house of Israel."

Speaking broadly, the purpose of his ministry is to keep before the generation born in exile the national sins which had brought Israel so low (e.g. Ezekiel 14:23); to sustain the faith of the exiles by predictions of national restoration, of the execution of justice upon their oppressors, and of national glory under the Davidic monarchy.

Ezekiel is in seven great prophetic strains indicated by the expression, "The hand of the Lord was upon me." (Ezekiel 1:3; 3:14,22; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1; Ezekiel 40:1).

The minor divisions are indicated in the text.

The events recorded in Ezekiel cover a period of 21 years (Ussher).

Daniel

Daniel, like Ezekiel was a Jewish captive in Babylon. He was of royal or princely descent (Daniel 1:3). For his rank and comeliness he was trained for palace service. In the polluted atmosphere of an oriental court he lived a life of singular piety and usefulness. His long life extended from Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah, Ezekiel (Daniel 14:20), Joshua, the high priest of the restoration, Ezra, and Zerubbabel.

Daniel is the indispensable introduction to New Testament prophecy, the themes of which are, the apostasy of the Church, the manifestation of the man of sin, the great tribulation, the return of the Lord, the resurrections and the judgments. These, except the first, are Daniel's themes also.

But Daniel is distinctively the prophet of the "times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24), (See Scofield "Luke 21:24") . His vision sweeps the whole course of Gentile world-rule to its end in catastrophe, and to the setting up of the Messianic kingdom.

Daniel is in four broad divisions:

1. Introduction. The personal history of Daniel from the conquest of Jerusalem to the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, 1:1-21.
2. The visions of Nebuchadnezzar and their results, 2:1-4:37.
3. The personal history of Daniel under Belshazzar and Darius, 5:1-6:28.
4. The visions of Daniel, 7:1-12:13.

The events recorded in Daniel cover a period of 73 years (Ussher).

Hosea

Hosea was a contemporary of Amos in Israel, and of Isaiah and Micah in Judah, and his ministry continued after the first, or Assyrian, captivity of the northern kingdom 2 Kings 15:29. His style is abrupt, metaphorical, and figurative.

Israel is Jehovah's adulterous wife, repudiated, but ultimately to be purified and restored. This is Hosea's distinctive message, which may be summed up in his two words, Lo-ammi, "not my people," and Ammi, "my people." Israel is not merely apostate and sinful--that is said also; but her sin takes its character from the exalted relationship into which she has been brought.

The book is in three parts:

1. The dishonoured wife, 1:1-3:5.
2. The sinful people, 4:1-13:8.
3. The ultimate blessing and glory of Israel, 13:9-14:9.

The events recorded in Hosea cover a period of 60 years (Ussher)

Joel

Joel, a prophet of Judah, probably exercised his ministry during the reign of Joash (2Chr 22. to 24.). In his youth he may have known Elijah, and he certainly was a contemporary of Elisha. The plagues of insects, which were the token of the divine chastening, give occasion for the unveiling of the coming "day of the Lord" (Isaiah 2:12, refs.), in its two aspects of judgment on the Gentiles and blessing for Israel.

Joel is in three chief parts:

1. The plague of insects, 1:1-20.
2. The day of the Lord, 2:1-3:8.
3. Retrospect of the day of the Lord, and full kingdom blessing, 3:9-21.

Amos

Amos, a Jew, but prophesying (B.C. 776-763) in the northern kingdom (Amos 1:1; 7:14,15) exercised his ministry during the reign of Jeroboam II, an able but idolatrous king who brought his kingdom to the zenith of its power. Nothing could seem more improbable than the fulfilment of Amos' warnings; yet within fifty years the kingdom was utterly destroyed. The vision of Amos is, however, wider than the northern kingdom, including the whole "house of Jacob."

Amos is in four parts:

1. Judgments on the cities surrounding Palestine, 1:1-2:3.
2. Judgements on Judah and Israel, 2:4-16.
3. Jehovah's controversy with "the whole family" of Jacob, 3:1-9:10.
4. The future glory of the Davidic kingdom, 9:11-15.

Obadiah

Internal evidence seems to fix the date of Obadiah's ministry in the reign of the bloody Athaliah 2 Kings 8:16-26. If this be true, and if the ministry of Joel was during the reign of Joash, then Obadiah is chronologically first of the writing prophets, and first to use the formula, "the day of the Lord." (Cf.) (See Scofield "Joel 1:4") .

The book is in four parts:

1. Edom's humiliation, vs. 1-9.
2. The crowning sin of Edom, vs. 10-14.
3. The future visitation of Edom in the day of the Lord, vs. Ob.1:15,16, (Isa. 34.).
Isa.63:1-6.
4. The inclusion of Edom in the future kingdom, Ob. 1:17-21; Nu. 24:17-19.

Jonah

The historical character of the man Jonah is vouched for by Jesus Christ Matthew 12:39-41 as also that his preservation in the great fish was a "sign" or type of the Lord's own entombment and resurrection. Both are miraculous and both are equally credible. 2 Kings 14:25 records the fulfilment of a prophecy by Jonah. The man himself was a bigoted Jew, unwilling to testify to a Gentile city, and angry that God had spared it. Typically he foreshadows the nation of Israel out of its own land; a trouble to the Gentiles, yet witnessing to them; cast out by them, but miraculously preserved; in their future deepest distress calling upon Jehovah-Saviour, and finding deliverance, and then becoming missionaries to the Gentiles. Zechariah 8:7-23.

He typifies Christ as the Sent One, raised from the dead, and carrying salvation to the Gentiles. The chapter divisions indicate the analysis of Jonah.

Micah

Micah, a contemporary of Isaiah, prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah over Judah, and of Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea over Israel 2 Kings 15:23-30; 17:1-6. He was a prophet in Judah Jeremiah 26:17-19 but the book called by his name chiefly concerns Samaria.

Micah falls into three prophetic strains, each beginning, "Hear":

1. 1:1-2:13
2. 3:1-5:15
3. 6:1-7:20

The events recorded Micah cover a period of 40 years (Ussher).

Nahum

Nahum prophesied during the reign of Hezekiah, probably about one hundred and fifty years after Jonah. He has but one subject--the destruction of Nineveh. According to Diodorus Siculus, the city was destroyed nearly a century later, precisely as here predicted. The prophecy is one continuous strain which does not yield to analysis. The moral theme is: the holiness of Jehovah which must deal with sin in judgment.

Habakkuk

It seems most probable that Habakkuk prophesied in the latter years of Josiah. Of the prophet himself nothing is known. To him the character of Jehovah was revealed in terms of the highest spirituality. He alone of the prophets was more concerned that the holiness of Jehovah should be vindicated than that Israel should escape chastisement. Written just upon the eve of the captivity, Habakkuk was God's testimony to Himself as against both idolatry and pantheism.

The book is in five parts:

1. Habakkuk's perplexity in view of the sins of Israel and the silence of God, 1:1-4. Historically this was the time of Jehovah's forbearance because of Josiah's repentance (2 Ki. 22:18-20).
2. The answer of Jehovah to the prophet's perplexity, 1:5-11.
3. The prophet, thus answered, utters the testimony to Jehovah, 1:12-17; but he will watch for further answers, 2:1.
4. To the watching prophet comes the response of the "vision," 2:20.
5. All ends in Habakkuk's sublime Psalm of the Kingdom.

As a whole the Book of Habakkuk raise and answers the question of God's consistency with Himself in view of permitted evil. The prophet thought that the holiness of God forbade him to go on with evil Israel. The answer of Jehovah announces a Chaldean invasion (Habakkuk 1:6), and a world- wide dispersion Habakkuk 1:5). But Jehovah is not mere wrath; "He delighteth in mercy" (Micah 7:18), and introduces into His answers to the perplexed prophet the great promises, ; Micah 1:5; 2:3,4,14,20.

Zephaniah

This prophet, a contemporary of Jeremiah, exercised his ministry during the reign of Josiah. It was a time of revival (2Ki. 22), but the captivity was impending, nevertheless, and Zephaniah points out the moral state which, despite the superficial revival under Josiah (Jeremiah 2:11-13), made it inevitable.

Zephaniah is in four parts:

1. The coming invasion of Nebuchadnezzar a figure of the day of the Lord, 1:1-2:3.
2. Predictions of judgment on certain peoples, 2:4-15.
3. The moral state of Israel for which the captivity was to come, 3:1-7.
4. The judgment of the nations followed by kingdom blessing under Messiah, 3:8-20.

Haggai

Haggai was a prophet of the restored remnant after the 70 years' captivity. The circumstances are detailed in Ezra and Nehemiah. To hearten, rebuke, and instruct that feeble and divided remnant was the task of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The theme of Haggai is the unfinished temple, and his mission to admonish and encourage the builders.

The divisions of the book are marked by the formula, "came the word of the Lord by Haggai":

1. The event which drew out the prophecy, 1:1,2.
2. The divine displeasure because of the interrupted work, 1:3-15.
3. The temples--Solomon's, the restoration temple, and the kingdom-age temple, 2:1-9.
4. Uncleaness and chastening, 2:10-19.
5. The final victory, 2:20-23 (see: Rev. 19:17-20; 14:19,20; Zech. 14:1-3).

Zechariah

Zechariah, like Haggai, was a prophet to the remnant which returned after the 70 years. There is much of symbol in Zechariah, but these difficult passages are readily interpreted in the light of the whole body of related prophecy. The great Messianic passages are, upon comparison with the other prophecies of the kingdom, perfectly clear. Both advents of Christ are in Zechariah's prophecy Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:1-11 Zechariah 14:3,4. More than Haggai or Malachi, Zechariah gives the mind of God about the Gentile world-powers surrounding the restored remnant. He has given them their authority Daniel 2:27-40 and will hold them to account; the test, as always, being their treatment of Israel. (See Scofield "Genesis 15:18") note 3, clause 6; Zechariah 2:8.

Zechariah, therefore, falls into three broad divisions:

1. Symbolic visions in the light of the Messianic hope, 1:1-6:15.
2. The mission from Babylon, 7:, 8.
3. Messiah in rejection and afterwards in power, 9-14.

Malachi

MALACHI "my messenger," the last of the prophets to the restored remnant after the 70 years' captivity, probably prophesied in the time of confusion during Nehemiah's absence (Nehemiah 13:6). The burden of his message is, the love of Jehovah, the sins of the priests and of the people, and the day of the Lord. Malachi, like Zechariah, sees both advents and predicts two forerunners (Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6). As a whole, Malachi gives the moral judgement of God on the remnant restored by his grace under Ezra and Nehemiah. He had established his house among them, but their worship was formal and insincere.

The book is in four natural divisions:

1. The love of God for Israel, 1:1-5
2. The sins of the priests rebuked, 1:6-2:9
3. The sins of the people rebuked, 2:10-3:18
4. The day of the Lord, 4:1-6

Matthew

WRITER: The writer of the first Gospel, as all agree, was Matthew, called also Levi, a Jew of Galilee who had taken service as a tax-gatherer under the Roman oppressor. He was, therefore, one of the hated and ill-reputed publicans.

DATE: The date of Matthew has been much discussed, but no convincing reason has been given for the discrediting the traditional date of A.D. 37.

THEME: The scope and purpose of the book are indicated in the first verse. Matthew is the "book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1). This connects him at once with two of the most important of the Old Testament Covenants: the Davidic Covenant of kingship, and the Abrahamic Covenant of promise. ; 2 Samuel 7:8-16; Genesis 15:18.

Of Jesus Christ in that twofold character, then, Matthew writes. Following the order indicated in the first verse, he writes first of the King, the son of David; then of the Son of Abraham, obedient unto death, according to the Isaac type Genesis 22:1-18; Hebrews 11:17-19.

But the prominent character of Christ in Matthew is that of the covenanted King, David's "righteous Branch" Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15. Matthew records His genealogy; His birth in Bethlehem the city of David, according to Micah 5:2, the ministry of His forerunner according to Malachi Malachi 3:1. His rejection by Israel; and His predictions of His second coming in power and great glory.

Only then (Matthew 26-28) does Matthew turn to the earlier covenant, and record the sacrificial death of the son of Abraham.

This determines the purpose and structure of Matthew. It is peculiarly the Gospel for Israel; and, as flowing from the death of Christ, a Gospel for the whole world.

Matthew falls into three principal divisions:

1. The manifestation to Israel and rejection of Jesus Christ the Son of David, born King of the Jews, 1:1-25:46. The subdivisions of this part are:
 - a. The official genealogy and birth of the King, 1:1-25;
 - b. The infancy and obscurity of the King, 2:1-23;
 - c. The kingdom "at hand," 3:1-12:50 (the order of events of this subdivision is indicated in the text);

- d. The mysteries of the kingdom, 13:1-52;
- e. The ministry of the rejected King, 13:53-23:39;
- f. The promise of the King to return in power and great glory, 24:1-25:46.

- 2. The sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of Abraham, 26:1-28:8.
- 3. The risen Lord in ministry to His own, 28:9-20.

The events recorded in Matthew cover a period of 38 years (Ussher).

Mark

WRITER: The writer of the second Gospel, Mark, called also John, was the son of one the New Testament "Marys", and nephew of Barnabas. He was an associate of the apostles, and is mentioned in the writings of Paul and of Luke Acts 12:12,25; 15:37,39; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1:24.

DATE: The date of Mark has been variously placed between A.D. 57 and 63.

THEME: The scope and purpose of the book are evident from its contents. In it Jesus is seen as the mighty Worker, rather than as the unique Teacher. It is the Gospel of Jehovah's "Servant the Branch" Zechariah 3:8 as Matthew is the Gospel of the "Branch. . . unto David" Jeremiah 33:15.

Everywhere the servant character of the incarnate Son is manifest. The key verse is Mark 10:45. "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." The characteristic word is "straightway," a servant's word. There is no genealogy, for who gives the genealogy of a servant? The distinctive character of Christ in Mark is that set forth in Philippians 2:6-8.

But this lowly Servant, who emptied Himself of the "form of God," "and was found in fashion as a man," was, nevertheless, "the mighty God" Isaiah 9:6 as Mark distinctly declares (Mark 1:1) and therefore mighty works accompanied and authenticated His ministry. As befits a Servant-Gospel, Mark is characteristically a Gospel of deeds, rather than on words.

The best preparation of the heart for the study of Mark is the prayerful reading of Isaiah 42:1-21; 50:4-11, 52:13-53:12; Zechariah 3:8; Philippians 2:5-8.

Mark is in five principal divisions:

1. The manifestation of the Servant-Son, 1:1-11.
2. The Servant-Son tested as to His fidelity, 1:12,13.
3. The Servant-Son at work, 1:14-13:37.
4. The Servant-Son "obedient unto death," 14:1-15:47.
5. The ministry of the risen Servant-Son, now exalted to all authority, 16:1-20.

The events recorded in this book cover a period of 7 years.

Luke

WRITER: The writer of the third Gospel is called by Paul "the beloved physician" Colossians 4:14 and, as we learn from the Acts, was Paul's frequent companion. He was of Jewish ancestry, but his correct Greek marks him as a Jew of the dispersion. Tradition says that he was a Jew of Antioch, as Paul was of Tarsus.

DATE: The date of Luke falls between A.D. 63 and 68.

THEME: Luke is the Gospel of the human-divine One, as John is of the divine-human One. The key-phrase is "Son of man," and the key-verse Luke 19:10. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." In harmony with this intent, Luke relates those things concerning Jesus which demonstrate how entirely human He was. His genealogy is traced to Adam, and the most detailed account is given of His mother, and of His infancy and boyhood. The parables peculiar to Luke have distinctively the human and the seeking note. But Luke is careful to guard the Deity and Kingship of Jesus Christ, Luke 1:32-35. Luke, then, is the Gospel of "the man whose name is The BRANCH", Zechariah 6:12.

Luke has seven chief divisions:

1. The Evangelist's Introduction, 1:1-4.
2. The human relationships of Jesus, 1:5-2:52.
3. The baptism, ancestry, and testing of Jesus, 3:1-4:13.
4. The ministry of the Son of man as Prophet-King in Galilee, 4:14-9:50.
5. The final offer of the Son of man as King to Israel, His rejection and sacrifice, 19:45-23:56.
6. The resurrection, resurrection ministry, and ascension of the Son of man, 24:1-53.

The events recorded in this book cover a period of 39 years.

John

WRITER: The fourth Gospel was written by the Apostle John John 21:24. This has been questioned on critical grounds, but on the same grounds and with equal scholarship, the early date and Johanean authorship have been maintained.

DATE: The date of John's Gospel falls between A.D. 85 and 90. Probably the latter.

THEME: This is indicated both in the Prologue (1:1-14), and in the last verse of the Gospel proper (20:31), and is: The incarnation of the eternal Word, and Son of life; (2) that as many as believe on Him as "the Christ, the Son of God" (20:31) may have eternal life. The prominent words are, "believed" and "life."

The book is in seven natural divisions:

1. Prologue: The eternal Word incarnate in Jesus the Christ, 1:1-14.
2. The witness of John the Baptist, 1:15-34.
3. The public ministry of Christ, 1:35-12:50.
4. The private ministry of Christ to His own, 13:1-17:26.
5. The sacrifice of Christ, 18:1-19:42.
6. The manifestation of Christ in resurrection, 20:1-31.
7. Epilogue: Christ the Master of life and service, 21:1-25.

The events recorded in this book cover a period of 7 years.

Acts

WRITER: In the Acts of the Apostles Luke continues the account of Christianity begun in the Gospel which bears his name. In the "former treatise" he tells what Jesus "began both to do and teach"; in the Acts, what Jesus continued to do and teach through His Holy Spirit sent down.

DATE: The Acts concludes with the account of Paul's earliest ministry in Rome, A.D. 65, and appears to have been written at or near that time.

THEME: This book records the ascension and promised return of the Lord Jesus, the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Peter's use of the keys, opening the kingdom (considered as the sphere of profession, as in Mat. 13) to the Jews at Pentecost, and to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius; the beginning of the Christian church and the conversion and ministry of Paul.

The Holy Spirit fills the scene. As the presence of the Son, exalting and revealing the Father, is the great fact of the Gospels, so the presence of the Spirit, exalting and revealing the Son, is the great fact of the Acts.

Acts is in two chief parts: In the first section (1- 9:43) Peter is the prominent personage, Jerusalem is the center, and the ministry is to Jews. Already in covenant relations with Jehovah, they had sinned in rejecting Jesus as the Christ. The preaching, therefore, was directed to that point, and repentance (i.e. "a changed mind") was demanded. The apparent failure of the Old Testament promises concerning the Davidic kingdom was explained by the promise that the kingdom would be set up at the return of Christ (Acts 2:25-31; Acts 15:14-16). This ministry to Israel fulfilled Luke 19:12-14. In the persecutions of the apostles and finally in the martyrdom of Stephen, the Jews sent after the king the message, "We will not have this man to reign over us." In the second division (10:1-; 28:31) Paul is prominent, a new center is established at Antioch, and the ministry is chiefly to Gentiles who, as "strangers from the covenants of promise" (2:12), had but to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" to be saved. Chapters 11,12, and 15 of this section are transitional, establishing finally the distinction, doctrinally, between law and grace. Galatians should be read in this connection.

The events recorded in The Acts cover a period of 32 years.

Romans

WRITER: The Apostle Paul (Romans 1:1).

DATE: Romans, the sixth in chronological order of Paul's Epistles, was written from Corinth during the apostle's third visit to that city. 2 Corinthians 13:1 in A.D. 60. The Epistle has its occasion in the intention of the apostle soon to visit Rome. Naturally, he would wish to announce before his coming the distinctive truths which had been revealed to and through him. He would desire the Christians in Rome to have his own statement of the great doctrines of grace so bitterly assailed everywhere by legalistic teachers.

THEME: The theme of Romans is "the Gospel of God" (Romans 1:1), the very widest possible designation of the whole body of redemption truth, for it is He with whom is "no respect of persons"; and who is not "the God of the Jews only," but "of the Gentiles also" ; Romans 2:11; 3:29. Accordingly, "all the world" is found guilty, Romans 3:19, and a redemption is revealed as wide as the need, upon the alone condition of faith. Not only does Romans embody in the fullest way the doctrines of grace in relation to salvation, but in three remarkable chapters (9-11.) the great promises to Israel are reconciled with the promises concerning the Gentiles, and the fulfilment of the former shown to await the completion of the church and coming of the Deliverer out of Zion, Romans 11:25-27. The key-phrase is "the righteousness of God" ; Romans 1:17; 3:21,22.

The Epistle, exclusive of the introduction (1:1-17), is in seven parts.

1. The whole world guilty before God, 1:18-3:20.
2. Justification through the righteousness of God by faith, the Gospel remedy for guilt, 3:21-5:11.
3. Crucifixion with Christ, the resurrection life of Christ, and the walk in the Spirit, the Gospel provision for inherent sin, 5:12-8:13.
4. The full result in blessing of the Gospel, 8:14-39.
5. Parenthesis: the Gospel does not abolish the covenant promises to Israel, 9:1-11:36.
6. Christian life and service, 12:1-15:33.
7. The outflow of Christian love, 16:1-27.

1 Corinthians

WRITER: The Apostle Paul. His relation to the church at Corinth is set forth in Acts 18:1-18 and in the Epistles to the Corinthians.

DATE: First Corinthians was written in A.D. 59, at the close of Paul's three year's residence in Ephesus. Acts 20:31; 1 Corinthians 16:5-8.

THEME: The subjects treated are various, but may all be classified under the general theme, Christian conduct. Even the tremendous revelation of the truth concerning resurrection is made to bear upon that theme 1 Corinthians 15:58. The occasion of the Epistle was a letter on inquiry from Corinth concerning marriage, and the use of meats offered to idols; 1 Corinthians 7:1; 8:1-13 but the apostle was much more exercised by reports of the deepening divisions and increasing contentions in the church, and of a case of incest which had not been judged; 1 Corinthians 1:10-12; 5:1.

The factions were not due to heresies, but to the carnality of the restless Corinthians, and to their Greek admiration of "wisdom" and eloquence. The abomination of human leadership in the things of God is here rebuked. Minor disorders were due to vanity, yielding to a childish delight in tongue and the sign gifts, rather than to sober instruction (1 Corinthians 14:1-28). Paul defends his apostleship because it involved the authority of the doctrine revealed through him.

A rigid analysis of First Corinthians is not possible, The Epistle is not a treatise, but came from the Spirit through the apostle's grief, solicitude, and holy indignation.

The following analysis may, however, be helpful:

1. Introduction: The believer's standing in grace, 1:1-9
2. The contrast of their present factious state, 1:10-4:21.
3. Immorality rebuked; discipline enjoined, 5:1-6,8.
4. The sanctity of the body, and Christian marriage, 6:9-7,40.
5. Meats, and the limitations of Christian liberty, 8:1-11:1.
6. Christian order and the Lord's Supper, 11:2-34
7. Spiritual gifts in relation to the body, the church, and Christian ministry, 12:1-14,40.
8. The resurrection of the dead, 15:1-58
9. Special directions and greetings, 16:1-24.

2 Corinthians

WRITER: The Apostle Paul

DATE: A.D. 60; probably from Philippi, after the events of Acts 19:23-20:1-3.

THEME: The Epistle discloses the touching state of the great apostle at this time. It was one of physical weakness, weariness, and pain. But his spiritual burdens were greater. These were two kinds--solicitude for the maintenance of the churches in grace as against the law-teachers, and anguish of heart over the distrust felt toward him by Jews and Jewish Christians. The chilling doctrines of the legalizers were accompanied by detraction, and by denial of his apostleship.

It is evident that the really dangerous sect in Corinth was that which said, "and I of Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:12). They rejected the new revelation through Paul of the doctrines of grace; grounding themselves, probably, on the kingdom teachings of our Lord as "a minister of circumcision" (Romans 15:8); seemingly oblivious that a new dispensation had been introduced by Christ's death. This made necessary a defence of the origin and extent of Paul's apostolic authority.

The Epistle is in three parts:

1. Paul's principles of action, 1:1-7-16.
2. The collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem, 8:1-9:15.
3. Paul's defence of his apostolic authority, 10:1-13:14.

Galatians

WRITER: The Apostle Paul (1:1)

DATE: Galatians was probably written A.D. 60, during Paul's third visit to Corinth, The occasion of the Epistle is evident. It had come to Paul's knowledge that the fickle Galatians, who were not Greeks, but Gauls, "a stream from the torrent of barbarians which poured into Greece in the third century before Christ," had become the prey of the legalizers, the Judaizing missionaries from Palestine.

THEME: The theme of Galatians is the vindication of the Gospel of the grace of God from any admixture of law-conditions, which qualify or destroy its character of pure grace.

The Galatian error had two forms, both of which are refuted. The first is the teaching that obedience to the law is mingled with faith as the ground of the sinner's justification; the second, that the justified believer is made perfect by keeping the law. Paul meets the first form of the error by a demonstration that justification is through the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 15:18), and that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after the confirmation of that covenant, and the true purpose of which was condemnation, not justification, cannot disannul a salvation which rests upon the earlier covenant. Paul meets the second and more subtle form by vindicating the office of the Holy Spirit as Sanctifier.

The book is in seven parts:

1. Salutation, 1:1-5
2. Theme, 1:6-9.
3. Paul's Gospel is a revelation, 1:10-2:14.
4. Justification is by faith without law, 2:15-3:24.
5. The rule of the believer's life is gracious, not legal, 3:25-5:15.
6. Sanctification is through the Spirit, not the law, 5:16-24.
7. Exhortations and conclusion, 5:25-6:18.

Ephesians

WRITER: The Apostle Paul (1:1)

DATE: Ephesians was written from Rome in A.D. 64. It is the first in order of the Prison Epistles, Acts 20:1-27:44. (See Scofield "Acts 28:30") and was sent by Tychicus, concurrently with Colossians and Philemon. It is probable that the two greater letters had their occasion in the return of Onesimus to Philemon. Ephesians is the most impersonal of Paul's letters. Indeed the words, "to the Ephesians," are not in the best manuscripts. Colossians 4:16 mentions an epistle to the Laodiceans. It has been conjectured that the letter known to us as Ephesians is really the Laodicean letter. Probably it was sent to Ephesus and Laodicea without being addressed to any church. The letter would then be "to the saints and the faithful in Christ Jesus" anywhere.

THEME: The doctrine of the Epistle confirms this view. It contains the highest church truth, but has nothing about church order. The church here is the true church, "His body," not the local church, as in Philippians, Corinthians, etc. Essentially, three lines of truth make up this Epistle: the believer's exalted position through grace; the truth concerning the body of Christ; and a walk in accordance with that position.

There is a close spiritual affinity between Ephesians and Joshua, the "heavenlies" answering in Christian position to Canaan in Israel's experience. In both there is conflict, often failure, but also victory, rest, and possession, Joshua 21:43-45; Ephesians 1:3; 3:14-19; 6:16,23. As befits a complete revelation, the number seven is conspicuous in the structure of Ephesians.

The divisions are, broadly, four:

1. The apostolic greeting, 1:1,2
2. Positional; the believer's standing "Christ" and "in the heavenlies" through pure grace, 1:3-3:21.
3. Walk and service, 4:1-5:17
4. The walk and warfare of the Spirit-filled believer, 5:18-6:24.

Philippians

WRITER: The Apostle Paul (1:1)

DATE: The date of Philippians cannot be positively fixed. It is one of the prison letters. Whether Paul was twice imprisoned, and if so, whether Philippians was written during the first or second imprisonment, affects in no way the message of the Epistle. A.D. 64 is the commonly received date. The immediate occasion of the Epistle is disclosed in 4:10-18.

THEME: The theme of Philippians is Christian experience. Soundness of doctrine is assumed. There is nothing in church order to set right. Philippi is a normal New Testament assembly-- "saints in Christ Jesus, with the bishops (elders) and deacons." The circumstances of the apostle are in striking contrast with his Christian experience. As to the former, he was Nero's prisoner. As to the latter, there was the shout of victory, the paean of joy. Christian experience, he would teach us, is not something which is going on around the believer, but something which is going on within him.

The key-verse is, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (1:21). Right Christian experience, then, is the outworking, whatever one's circumstances may be, of the life, nature, and mind of Christ living in us (1:6,11; 2:5,13).

The divisions are indicated by the chapters:

1. Christ, the believer's life, rejoicing in suffering, 1:1-30.
2. Christ, the believer's pattern, rejoicing in lowly service, 2:1-30
3. Christ, the believer's object, rejoicing despite imperfections, 3:1-21.
4. Christ, the believer's strength, rejoicing over anxiety, 4:1-23.

Colossians

WRITER: The Apostle Paul (1:1)

DATE: Colossians was sent by the same messenger who bore Ephesians and Philemon, and was probably written at the same time.

THEME: Epaphras, who laboured in the Word in the assembly at Colosse, was Paul's fellow-prisoner at Rome. Doubtless from him Paul learned the state of that church. As to fundamentals that state was excellent (1:3-8), but in a subtle way two forms of error were at work: The first was legality in its Alexandrian form of asceticism, "touch not, taste not," with a trace of the Judaic observance of "days"; the object of which was the mortification of the body (cf. Romans 8:13). The second form of error was false mysticism, "intruding into those things which he hath not seen"--the result of philosophic speculation. Because these are ever present perils, Colossians was written, not for that day only, but for the warning of the church in all days.

The Epistle is in seven divisions:

1. Introduction, 1:1-8
2. The apostolic prayer, 1:9-14
3. The exaltation of Christ, Creator, Redeemer, Indweller, 1:15-29
4. The Godhead incarnate in Christ, in whom the believer is complete, 2:1-23.
5. The believer's union with Christ in resurrection life and glory, 3:1-4
6. Christian living, the fruit of union with Christ, 3:5-4:6
7. Christian fellowship, 4:7-18

1 Thessalonians

WRITER: The apostle Paul (1:1)

DATE: The Epistle was written from Corinth, A.D. 54, shortly after Paul's departure from Thessalonica (Acts 16:,17), and is the earliest of his letters.

THEME: The theme of the Epistle is threefold:

1. To confirm young disciples in the foundational truths already taught them;
2. To exhort them to go on to holiness;
3. To comfort them concerning those who had fallen asleep. The second coming of Christ is prominent throughout. The Epistle is incidentally most interesting as showing the richness in doctrine of the primitive evangelism. During a mission of about one month the apostle had taught all the great doctrines of the Christian faith.

The divisions of the Epistle are sufficiently indicated by the Chapters.

1. The model church, and the three tenses of the Christian life, 1:1-10
2. The model servant and his reward, 2:1-20
3. The model brother, and the believer's sanctification, 3:1-13
4. The model walk, and the believer's hope, 4:1-18
5. The model walk, and the day of Jehovah, 5:1-28

2 Thessalonians

WRITER: The Apostle Paul (1:1)

DATE: Second Thessalonians was evidently written very soon after Paul's first letter to that church. The occasion may well have been the return of the bearer of the former Epistle and his report.

THEME: The theme of Second Thessalonians is in 2:2 where "the day of Christ is at hand." The Thessalonian converts were "shaken in mind" and "troubled," supposing, perhaps on the authority of a forged letter as from Paul, that the persecutions from which they were suffering were those of the "great and terrible day of the Lord," from which they had been taught to expect deliverance by "the day of Christ, and out gathering together unto him" (2:1)

The present letter, then, was written to instruct the Thessalonians concerning the day of Christ, "and our gathering together unto him", 4:14-17, and the relation of the "day of Christ" to the "day of the Lord." First Thessalonians had more in view the "day of Christ"; the present Epistle the "day of the Lord."

The Epistle is in five divisions:

1. Salutation, 1:1-4
2. Comfort, 1:5-12
3. Instruction concerning the day of the Lord and the man of sin, 2:1-12
4. Exhortations and apostolic commands, 2:13-3:15
5. Benediction and authentication, 3:16-18

1 Timothy

WRITER: The Apostle Paul

DATE: The date of this Epistle turns upon the question of the two imprisonments of Paul. If there were two (see: (See Scofield "Acts 28:30") then it is clear that First Timothy was written during the interval. If Paul endured but one Roman imprisonment, the Epistle was written shortly before Paul's last journey to Jerusalem.

THEME: As the churches of Christ increased in number, the questions of church order, of soundness in the faith, and of discipline became important. At first the apostles regulated these things directly, but the approaching end of the apostolic period made it necessary that a clear revelation should be made for the guidance of the churches. Such a revelation is in First Timothy, and in Titus. The key-phrase of the Epistle is, "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." Well had it been with the churches if they had neither added to nor taken from the divine order.

The divisions are five:

1. Legality and unsound doctrine rebuked, 1:1-20
2. Prayer and the divine order of the sexes enjoined, 2:1-15
- 3 . The qualifications of elders and deacons, 3:1-16
4. The walk of the "good minister," 4:1-16
5. The work of the "good minister," 5:1-6:21;

2 Timothy

WRITER: The Apostle Paul (2 Timothy 1:1)

DATE: The touching letter was written by Paul to his "dearly beloved son" shortly before his martyrdom (2 Timothy 4:6-8), and contains the last words of the great apostle which inspiration has preserved.

THEME: Second Timothy (in common with Second Peter, Jude, and Second and Third John) has to do with the personal walk and testimony of a true servant of Christ in a day of apostasy and declension. The key-phrases are, "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me" (2 Timothy 1:15); and, "A good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy 2:3). The Asian churches had not disbanded, nor ceased to call themselves Christian, but they had turned away from the doctrines of grace distinctively revealed through the Apostle Paul. This was the proof that already the apostasy had set in its first form, legalism.

The natural divisions are four:

1. The Apostle's greeting, 1:1-18
2. The pathway of an approved servant in a day of apostasy, 2:1-26
3. Apostasy and the Word, 3:1-17
4. A faithful servant and his faithful Lord, 4:1-22

Titus

WRITER: The Apostle Paul (1:1)

DATE: Practically the same with First Timothy

THEME: Titus has much in common with First Timothy. Both Epistles are concerned with the due order of the churches. The distinction is that in First Timothy sound doctrine is more prominent 1 Timothy 1:3-10 in Titus the divine order for the local churches Titus 1:5. The permanent use of these Epistles lies in this twofold application, on the one hand to churches grown careless as to the truth of God, on the other, to churches careless as to the order of God's house. The importance of this order is made solemnly emphatic in that the tests by which true elders and deacons may be known are repeated ; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9.

There are two divisions:

1. The qualifications and functions of elders, 1:1-16.
2. The pastoral work of the true elder, 2:1-3,15.

Philemon

WRITER: The Apostle Paul (1:1)

DATE: Probably A.D. 64. It is one of the Prison Epistles. See Introductions to Ephesians and Colossians.

THEME: Onesimus ("profitable"), a slave of Philemon, a Christian of Colosse, had robbed his master and fled to Rome. There he became a convert through Paul, who sent him back to Philemon with this letter.

It is of priceless value as a teaching:

1. in practical righteousness;
2. in Christian brotherhood;
3. in Christian courtesy;
4. in the law of love.

The divisions are four:

1. Greeting 1-3.
2. The character of Philemon, 4-7.
3. Intercession for Onesimus, 8-21.
4. Salutations and conclusion, 22-25.

Hebrews

WRITER: The authorship of Hebrews has been in controversy from the earliest times. The book is anonymous, but the reference in 2 Peter 3:15 seems conclusive that Paul was the writer. See also Hebrews 13:23. All agree that, whether by Paul or another, the point of view is Pauline. We undoubtedly have here the method of Paul's synagogue addresses. No book of Scripture more fully authenticates itself as inspired.

DATE: From internal evidence it is clear that Hebrews was written before the destruction of the Temple, A.D. 70 (cf Hebrews 10:11).

THEME: The doctrinal passages reveal the purpose of the book. It was written with a twofold intent:

1. To confirm Jewish Christians by showing that Judaism had come to an end through the fulfilment by Christ of the whole purpose of the law; and
2. The hortatory passages show that the writer had in view the danger ever present to Jewish professed believers of either lapsing back into Judaism, or of pausing short of true faith in Jesus Christ. It is clear from the Acts that even the strongest of the believers in Palestine were held to a strange mingling of Judaism and Christianity (e.g. Acts 21:18-24 and that snare would be especially apt to entangle professed Christians amongst the Jews of the dispersion.

The key-word is "better." Hebrews is a series of contrasts between the good things of Judaism and the better things of Christ. Christ is "better" than angels, than Moses, than Joshua, than Aaron; and the New Covenant than the Mosaic Covenant. Church truth does not appear, the ground of gathering only being stated (13:13). The whole sphere of Christian profession is before the writer; hence exhortations necessary to warn and alarm a mere professor.

Hebrews is in six divisions, but these include five parenthetical passages of exhortation:

1. The great salvation, 1:1-2:18 (2:1-4, parenthetical).
2. The rest of God, 3:1-4:16 (all parenthetical).
3. Our great High Priest, 5:1-8,6 (5:11-6:12, parenthetical).
4. The new covenant and the heavenly sanctuary, 8:7-10:39 (10:26-39, parenthetical).
5. The superiority of the faith way, 11:1-40.
6. The worship and walk of the believer-priest, 12:1-13:25 (12:3-17, parenthetical).

James

WRITER: James (See Scofield "Matthew 4:21") , called "the Just" mentioned by Paul with Cephas and John as "pillars" in the church at Jerusalem Galatians 2:9. He seems to have been, as a religious man, austere, legal, ceremonial Acts 21:18-24.

DATE: Tradition fixes the martyrdom of James in the year 62, but his Epistle shows no trace of the larger revelations concerning the church and the distinctive doctrines of grace made through the Apostle Paul, nor even of the discussion concerning the relation of Gentile converts to the law of Moses, which culminated in the first council (Ac 15.), over which James presided. This presumes the very early date of James, which may confidently be set down as "the first Epistle to Christians."--Weston.

THEME: By "the twelve tribes scattered abroad" we are to understand, not Jews, but Christian Jews of the Dispersion. The church began with such Acts 2:5-11 and James, who seems not to have left Jerusalem, would feel a particular pastoral responsibility for these scattered sheep. They still resorted to the synagogues, or called their own assemblies by that name James 2:2, where "assembly" is "synagogue" in the Gr.). It appears from James 2:1-8 that they still held the synagogue courts for the trial of causes arising amongst themselves. The Epistle, then, is elementary in the extreme. To suppose that James 2:14-26 is a polemic against Paul's doctrine of justification is absurd. Neither Galatians nor Romans was yet written.

James' theme, then, is "religion" (Gr., threskeia, "outward religious service") as the expression and proof of faith. He does not exalt works as against faith, but faith as producing works. His style is that of the Wisdom-books of the O.T.

The divisions are five:

1. The testing of faith 1:1-2:26
2. The reality of faith tested by the tongue, 3:1-18
3. The rebuke of worldliness, 4:1-17
4. The rich warned, 5:1-6
5. Hortatory, 5:7-20

1 Peter

WRITER: The Apostle Peter (1:1)

DATE: Probably A.D. 60. That "Babylon" refers to the former city on the Euphrates, or to Rome, cannot be inferred from 5:13. The text is obscure.

THEME: While Peter undoubtedly has scattered Jewish believers in mind, his Epistles comprehend Gentile believers also (2:10). The present Epistle, written from a church on Gentile ground (5:13), presents all the foundational truths of the Christian faith, with special emphasis on the atonement. The distinctive note of First Peter is preparation for victory over suffering. The last-name word occurs about fifteen times, and is the key-word to the Epistle.

The Epistle is in three parts:

1. Christian suffering and conduct in the light of full salvation, 1:1-2:8
2. The believer's life in view of his sevenfold position, and of the vicarious suffering of Christ, 2:9-4:19
3. Christian service in the light of the coming of the Chief Shepherd, 5:1-14

2 Peter

WRITER: The Apostle Peter (1:1)

DATE: Probably A.D. 66

THEME: Second Peter and Second Timothy have much in common. In both, the writers are aware that martyrdom is near (2 Timothy 4:6; 2 Peter 1:14 with John 21:18,19); both are singularly sustained and joyful; both foresee the apostasy in which the history of the professing church will end. Paul finds that apostasy in its last stage when the so-called laity (See Scofield "Revelation 2:6") , have become infected (2 Timothy 3:1-5; 4:3,4); Peter traces the origin of the apostasy to false teachers (2:1-3,15-19). In Peter the false teachers deny redemption truth (2:1); we shall find in First John a deeper depth--denial of the truth concerning Christ's person (1 John 4:1-5). In Jude all phases of the apostasy are seen. But in none of these Epistles is the tone one of dejection or pessimism. God and His promises are still the resource of the believer.

The Epistle is in four divisions:

1. The great Christian virtues, 1:1-14
2. The Scriptures exalted, 1:15-21
3. Warnings concerning apostate teachers, 2:1-22
4. The second coming of Christ and the day of Jehovah, 3:1-18

1 John

WRITER: The Apostle John, as unbroken tradition affirms, and as internal evidence and comparison with the Gospel of John prove.

DATE: Probably A.D. 90

THEME: First John is a family letter from the Father to His "little children" who are in the world. With the possible exception of the Song of Solomon, it is the most intimate of the inspired writings. The world is viewed as without. The sin of a believer is treated as a child's offence against his Father, and is dealt with as a family matter (1:9; 2:1). The moral government of the universe is not in question. The child's sin as an offence against the law had been met in the Cross, and "Jesus Christ the righteous" is now his "Advocate with the Father." John's Gospel leads across the threshold of the Father's house; his first Epistle makes us at home there. A tender word is used for "children," teknia, "born ones," or "bairns." Paul is occupied with our public position as sons; John with our nearness as born-ones of the Father.

First John is in two principal divisions.

1. The family with the Father, 1:1-3:24.
2. The family and the world, 4:1-5:21.

There is a secondary analysis in each division of which occurs the phrase, "My little children," as follows:

1. Introductory, the incarnation, 1:1,2.
2. The little children and fellowship, 1:3-2:14
3. The little children and secular and "religious" world, 2:15-28.
4. How the little children may know each other, 2:29-3:10
5. How the little children must live together, 3:11-24.
6. Parenthetic: How the little children may know false teachers, 4:1-6.
7. The little children assured and warned, 4:7-5:21.

2 John

WRITER: The Apostle John.

DATE: Probably A.D. 90.

THEME: Second John gives the essentials of the personal walk of the believer in a day when "many deceivers are entered into the world" (1:7). The key phrase is "the truth," by which John means the body of revealed truth, the Scriptures. The Bible as the only authority for doctrine and life, is the believer's resource in a time of declension and apostasy.

The Epistle in three divisions:

1. The pathway of truth and love, vs. 1-6
2. The peril of unscriptural ways, vs. 7-11
3. Superscription, vs. 12,13

3 John

WRITER: The Apostle John.

DATE: Probably about A.D. 90.

THEME: The aged Apostle had written to a church which allowed one Diotrephes to exercise an authority common enough in later ages, but wholly new in the primitive churches. Diotrephes had rejected the apostolic letters and authority. It appears also that he had refused the ministry of the visiting brethren (1:10), and cast out those that had received them. Historically, this letter marks the beginning of that clerical and priestly assumption over the churches in which the primitive church order disappeared. This Epistle reveals, as well, the believer's resource in such a day. No longer writing as an apostle, but as an elder, John addresses this letter, not to the church as such, but to a faithful man in the church for the comfort and encouragement of those who were standing fast in the primitive simplicity. Second John conditions the personal walk of the Christian in a day of apostasy; Third John the personal responsibility in such a day of the believer as a member of the local church. The key-phrase is "the truth" (see 2 John, Introduction).

There are three divisions:

1. Personal greetings, vs. 1-4
2. Instructions concerning ministering brethren, vs. 5-8
3. The apostate leader and the good Demetrius, vs. 9-14

Jude

WRITER: Jude, the brother of James (1:1)

DATE: Probably A.D. 66

THEME: It is not so much Jude who speaks, as the constraining Spirit (1:3) and the theme is, "Contending for the faith" (Luke 18:8), (See Scofield "Luke 18:8") . In this brief letter the apostasy (See Scofield "2 Thessalonians 2:3") of the professing church is predicted, and the cause and course described. As in Second Timothy and Second Peter the apostasy is treated as having already set in.

The Epistle is in five divisions:

1. Introduction, vs. 1,2
2. Occasion of the Epistle, vs. 3,4
3. Apostasy is possible, vs. 5-7
4. Apostate teachers described, vs. 8-19
5. The saints assured and comforted, vs. 20-25

Revelation

WRITER: The Apostle John (1:1)

DATE: A.D. 96

THEME: The theme of the Revelation is Jesus Christ (1:1), presented in a threefold way:

1. As to time: "which is, and which was, and which is to come" (1:4);
2. As to relationships--the churches (1:9-3:22), to the tribulation (4:1-19:21), to the kingdom (20:1-22:21);
3. In His offices--High Priest (8:3-6), Bridegroom (19:7-9), King-Judge (20:1-15).

But while Christ is thus the central theme of the book, all of the events move toward one consummation, the bringing in of the covenanted kingdom. The key-phrase is the prophetic declaration of the "great voices in heaven" (11:15), "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. ."

The book is, therefore, a prophecy (1:3).

The three major divisions of Revelation must be clearly held if the interpretation is to be sane and coherent. John was commanded to "write" concerning three classes of "things" (1:19):

1. Things past, "the things thou hast seen," i.e. the Patmos vision, 1:1-20.
2. Things present, "the things which are," i.e. things then existing--obviously the churches. The temple had been destroyed, the Jews dispersed: the testimony of God had been committed to the Churches (1 Timothy 3:15). Accordingly we have seven messages to seven representative churches, 2:1-3:22. It is noteworthy that the church is not mentioned in chapters 5-18.
3. Things future, "things which shall be hereafter," lit. "after these," i.e. after the church period ends, 4:1-22:21. The third major division, as Erdman (W.J.) has pointed out, falls into a series of six sevens, with parenthetical passages, making, with the church division, seven sevens.

The six sevens are:

1. The seals, 4:1-8:1.
2. The seven trumpets, 8:2-11:19.
3. The seven personages, 12:1-14,20.
4. The seven vials (bowls), 15:1-16:21.

5. The seven dooms, 17:1-20:15.
6. The seven new things, 21:1-22:21.

The parenthetical passages are:

1. The Jewish remnant and the tribulation saints, 7:1-17.
2. The angel, the little book, the two witnesses, 10:1-11:14.
3. The Lamb, the Remnant, and the everlasting Gospel, 14:1-13.
4. The gathering of the kings at Armageddon, 16:13-16.
5. The four alleluias in heaven, 19:1-6. These passages do not advance the prophetic narrative. Looking backward and forward they sum up results accomplished, and speak of results yet to come as if they had already come. In 14:1, for example, the Lamb and Remnant are seen prophetically on Mount Sion, though they are not actually there till 20:4-6.

The end of the church period (2-3) is left indeterminate. It will end by the fulfilment of 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17. Chapters 4-19. are believed to synchronize with Daniel's Seventieth Week (See Scofield Daniel 9:24). The great tribulation begins at the middle of the week, and continues three and a half years (11:3-19:21). The tribulation is brought to an end by the appearing of the Lord and the battle of Armageddon (Matthew 24:29,30; Revelation 19:11-21). The kingdom follows (20:4,5); after this the "little season" (20:7-15), and then eternity.

Interpreters of the Revelation should bear in mind two important passages: 1 Peter 1:12; 2 Peter 1:20,21. Doubtless much which is designedly obscure to us will be clear to those for whom it was written as the time approaches.