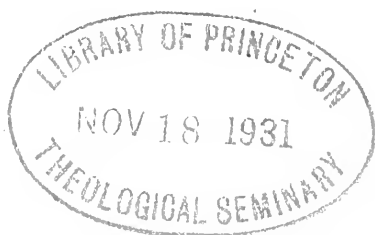


The Bible and its Books



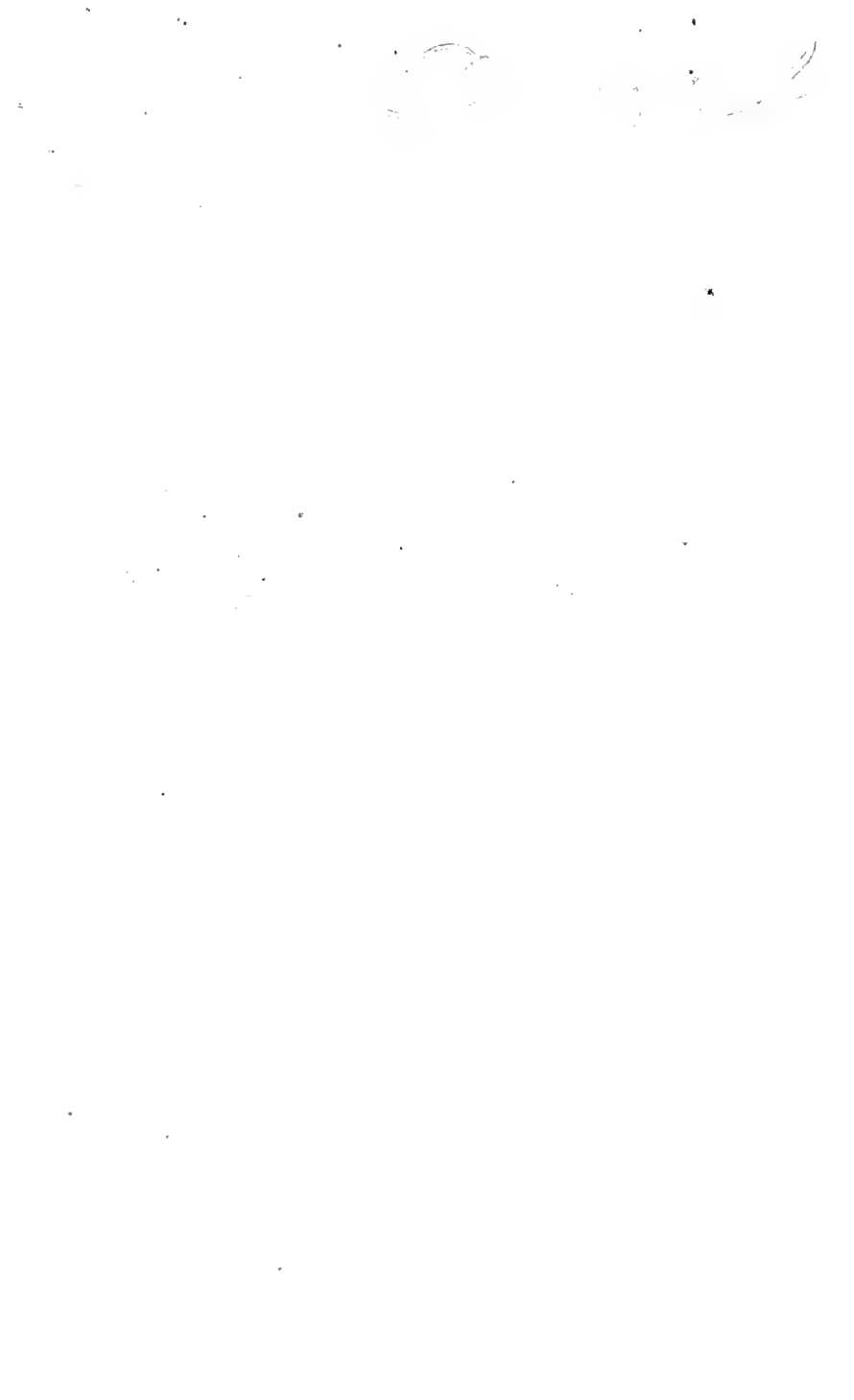


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THE



BIBLE AND ITS BOOKS.

BY

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INTRODUCTORY.

TWO methods of Bible study are needed by the busy people who teach in our Sunday schools, each the complement of the other.

One method has in view a general knowledge of the Book, in the unity of its divine truth. This is the larger, "long-range" vision, without which one can never understand the great movements of sacred history, prophecy, and doctrine.

The other method aims at a knowledge of the several books composing the Bible, the content and intent of each, as related to the others and to the unity of the whole. One who thus studies the Bible and its books will know and teach better any portion of it.

It has been the aim of the writer to combine something of both methods in this small volume, with the one purpose of helping the student whose time and equipment are limited. The reader will note that the writer has followed reverently the traditional paths of the Church in all mooted biblical questions. Whenever the masters of the new school of criticism shall agree among themselves, it will be time enough to consider the recasting of beliefs of many centuries.

H. M. HAMILL.

Nashville, Tenn., April 1, 1903.

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ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ

ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΡΚΑΝ

Facsimile from Sinai MS., 4th century A.D. See page 25.

The text is Luke xxiv. 49-53.

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PART I.—THE BIBLE.

I. INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

Definition.

Bible Testimony.

Mode of Inspiration.

Theories of Inspiration.

Orthodox.

Plenary.

Limited.

Rationalistic.

Definition.—By “inspiration,” as applied to the Bible, is meant a special and supernatural influence of God upon those who wrote the several parts of the book. In the passage (2 Tim. iii. 16), “All scripture is given by inspiration of God,” the Greek word *theopneustos* means “God-breathed,” the breath of God being used as a symbol of his power. The following definition of inspiration is given by a Bible scholar of eminence: “According to the representations of the Scriptures themselves, inspiration is an extraordinary agency upon teachers while giving instruction, whether oral or written, by which they are taught what and how they should write or speak.” While the fact of inspiration is commonly held by all devout believers, the method and measure have been matters of wide dif-

ference. In recent years, the assumptions of the so-called "higher criticism" have forced into renewed prominence and discussion all questions relating to the subject. This discussion affects both the fact and the method of inspiration, and is therefore of vital interest to students and teachers of the Bible.

Bible Testimony.—The Bible gives direct and conclusive evidence of its inspiration, both as to the fact and the extent of it, by the testimony of those who wrote it.

1. The Hebrew prophets generally, upon beginning their ministry, authenticate and confirm their messages by "Thus saith the Lord," or "The Lord spake by me, saying." The New Testament declares of these prophets that "God spake by them."

2. Jesus Christ everywhere spoke of and quoted from the Old Testament as the word of God. He enforced the divine truth and authority of all parts of it, and taught from it as a book of divinely inspired truth, whether of historic fact or religious doctrine. Upon its foundation he placed himself and his own doctrine.

3. The apostles were even more specific in asserting the inspiration not only of the Old Testament, but of their own writings. Peter declared (2 Pet. i. 21) that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and Paul lays it

down as a characteristic of "all scripture" (2 Tim. iii. 16) that it "is given by inspiration of God." The recent attempt to turn this passage about, and to render it "All divinely inspired scripture is profitable," is in direct violation of a received rule of Greek syntax, and is opposed by the common usage of the fathers and by almost all the versions. It would make the fallible human critic the final arbiter of what is and is not inspired.

It should be noted also that the sacred writers assert their inspiration, not only as to the matter but as to the manner of inspiration, in such passages as, "This scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake" (Acts i. 16), and "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (1 Cor. ii. 13). It is a significant commentary upon the doctrine of inspiration, in any age of the Church, that the nearer one lives after the pattern of the holy men who wrote the Bible, the more devoutly one clings to their view of Bible inspiration.

Mode of Inspiration.—As to the manner or processes through which holy men were moved upon to speak or to write, the Bible discloses a variety of ways. Whatever the mode of God's operation, he made it plain to his servants that the truth to be spoken or written was from himself. Inspira-

tion included not only the subject-matter to be written, but gave direction to the very form of the writings. Future events, new doctrines, things not known to the writers by natural means, were directly revealed. The pen of the historian was guided immediately by the Holy Ghost through the mass of tradition and contemporaneous history, so that the truth only would be written. The Holy Spirit restrained from error in fact and doctrine, and the writers wrote just so much and in such a manner as God saw to be best. How far the mind of the writer was active or passive under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we cannot know. That memory and judgment were divinely aided is plain from the promise of Jesus that the Holy Spirit should "bring to remembrance" and "guide into all truth." To object that each writer has a "style" of his own, and that therefore inspiration did not extend to the forms of language, is to ignore the fact that God gave to each writer by nature his "style," and could employ these varied styles as his media of revelation. To further object that the various admitted discrepancies and disagreements of the sacred writers preclude the application of inspiration to the language of the writers is to ignore the fact that inspiration is claimed for the original documents only, and is not to be charged with errors that have come through transcription,

translation, and revision, the work of uninspired custodians of the Bible.

Theories of Inspiration.—These have varied according to the measure of one's faith in the supernaturalism of the Bible. The "scientific method" of Bible study is responsible for not a little of the confusion over the questions of inspiration, inasmuch as its assumption is that nothing is to be assumed for the Bible above other books, but that miracles, inspiration, faith itself, are to be subjected to purely scientific tests. It is to be regretted that even preachers and teachers of the Bible have been caught by this bait of German rationalism, although Prof. Christlieb, among the greatest of Germany's scholars, pertinently asked: "Why do Americans gather from the gutter so much of the theological rubbish we Germans throw away?"

Briefly stated, the current theories of Bible inspiration are as follows:

1. The "orthodox" theory, sometimes called the "dynamic," which considers the Bible to be inspired in such a sense as to make it infallibly certain when taken in its legitimate sense, and of absolute authority in all matters of faith and conscience. This theory recognizes the inspiration of the writer, but does not extend it to the form of

the writing, or free the writer from possibility of errors in matters not of religion.

2. The "plenary" theory, which holds that inspiration had respect to the language, and that the entire Bible was so authenticated or dictated by the Holy Spirit that it became truth without mixture of error, expressed in such terms as the Holy Spirit ruled or suggested. In so far as this theory is applied to the original documents of the Bible, it has been successfully maintained by some of the most eminent scholars of the Church, and is the only theory which measures up to the claims which the writers of the Bible made for themselves.

3. The "limited" theory, which limits the inspiration of the Bible to strictly religious truth, and holds that the value of the religious element in the Bible is not lessened by errors in the scientific and miscellaneous matters which accompany it. This is the working theory of conservative "higher criticism," the fatal defect of which is that it gives to truth of infinite value a setting of error, though from the same writer, and puts the Bible under the odium of being "part truth and part falsehood." To be able to draw a line between what is and is not religious truth, is more than the sacred writers themselves professed ability to do.

4. The "rationalistic" theory, which concedes to

the Bible a high order of poetic or religious fervor ; but challenges its miracles, visions, and supernaturalisms as myths and “allegories.” Such is a theory held in common by materialists, skeptics, and not a few of the destructive “higher critics” who are preachers and teachers of the Christian Church.

II. STORY OF THE BIBLE.

Growth of the Bible.

Canon of Scripture.

Old Testament Canon:

1. Three Divisions.
2. Ezra's Revision.
3. N. T. Evidence.

New Testament Canon:

1. Order and Time.
2. Disputed Books.
3. Church and Council.

Growth of the Bible.—The Bible grew slowly, as a book of inspired literature. Even its present title was not given it until the fourth century. Hebrews i. 1-2 is a summary of its growth: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." The "Scriptures," as termed by ancient Jew and early Christian, spread out over many centuries. Beginning with the writings of Moses, about 1500 B.C., and closing with the prophecy of Malachi, the Old Testament was more than a thousand years in the process of formation. The thirty-nine books composing it were not given in an unbroken series. Thirty or more writers of the Old Testament, and eight of the New, very few of whom were contemporaries, wrote at "sundry times," as they were "moved by the Holy Ghost." The twenty-seven books of the New Testament were written within

the last sixty years of the first Christian century. The Bible therefore was a growth of about sixteen centuries, at the hands of about forty writers. Portions of it came by direct audible revelation from God, as in case of Moses; part as messages through angels, as to Mary; part as visions, as to Daniel and John. To the prophets came by the Holy Ghost communications, which in the Old Testament are termed "burdens," sometimes not understood by the prophet himself. Some of the books of the Old Testament were compiled from the sacred annals of the Jewish nation; all, in both Old and New Testaments, received final revision, doubtless under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. To the New Testament writers came special divine illumination, prompting and directing their writings. The Old Testament grew up about the historic and religious life of God's chosen nation, as out of it should come his Son, and upon it should be superimposed the Christian Church and its Scriptures. The New Testament, in its record of the ministry of Christ and his apostles, fulfilled and perfected the Old.

The Canon of Scripture.—The final determination of what books should compose the sacred canon was made by the Jewish and Christian Churches, respectively, always under a superintending Providence. The Jewish Church, four

centuries B.C., had fixed the Old Testament "canon," or authoritative list of its inspired books. The Christian Church, first by the testimony of Christ and his apostles, a little later by the consensus of the Church of the first three centuries A.D., authenticated the books of the Old Testament, and added to the canon, as of like inspiration and authority, the books of the New Testament. Thus the formation of the canon began with the placing of the five books of Moses in the side of the ark (Deut. xxxi. 26), and extended to the third or fourth century of the Christian era.

The evidences or tests upon which the final determination of the books of the Bible was made is worthy of special consideration. Nothing could have exceeded the watchfulness of either Jewish or Christian Church in making the final selection. Upon every book of the Bible was imposed at least three rigorous tests: (1) Is the book inspired of God? This was determined by the claims of divine inspiration in the book itself, and by the concurrent voice of the body of devout believers. (2) Is the book genuine? Is it the actual book it is claimed to be, without essential defect, corruption, or interpolation? This was determined by a chain of documents outnumbering and outweighing those in evidence of any other ancient books. (3) Is the book authentic? Is it the work of the author to

whom it is accredited? This was determined as to most of the books by a mass of history taken from the times when the books appeared. Through and over all this testing process by the Church, every devout Christian will easily believe there was the directing influence of the Holy Spirit, the Inspirer and Custodian of God's revelation to man.

The Old Testament Canon.—1. The Old Testament appeared in three successive divisions: the "Pentateuch," or "book of the law," which for centuries constituted the sole canon; "the Prophets," composed of such books as were written or compiled by the official Hebrew prophets, in order from Moses to Malachi, and consisting of the historic and prophetic books of the Old Testament; "the Psalms" (so termed by the Jews and by our Lord), or simply the "writings," consisting of the five poetical books, also Ruth, Lamentations, and Esther, together with the postexilian books of history, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. Students of the Bible are divided in opinion as to why some of these books were placed in this division out of their seemingly proper order of time and relation. The second division gradually took rank with the "book of the law," as being divinely inspired, and its successive books were received, deposited in the temple, and copied by the Jewish Church as a part of the canon. The third division, which was the

growth of one thousand years, took similar course, most of its books constituting the ritual of the Jewish Church.

2. The final collection, compilation, and revision of the Old Testament canon was the work of Ezra and the "Great Synagogue," in the fifth century B.C., after the return from Babylon, the rebuilding of city and temple, and at the closing of prophecy under Malachi. The canon thus fixed by Ezra, and accepted and authenticated by our Lord and the apostles, and by the early Christian Church, has continued undisturbed to the present day. Josephus, the Jewish historian, writing near to the time of Christ, names the books as in the canon of Ezra, and affirms that since his day "no one had dared to add to, or take from, or alter anything in the sacred books."

3. As has been remarked, our Lord and the apostles freely authenticated and quoted from most of the books of the canon as established by Ezra, and by recognizing the three divisions of the canon, as above described, thereby authenticated each book of the entire canon. By direct quotation or allusion, indeed, it might be shown that every book of the Old Testament bears the express sanction of our Lord and the apostles.

The New Testament Canon.—1. The time, order, and authorship of the books of the New Testa-

ment are known more clearly than those of the Old. Matthew's Gospel (written probably A.D. 38), followed by Mark's and Luke's, was the beginning of the canon, and the three were at once received as canonical among the Christian Churches. The book of Acts and the earlier Epistles of Paul appeared about this time, followed closely by the later Epistles of Paul and others, and closing with the writings of John, near to 100 A.D.

2. The Gospels and most of the Epistles at once took unchallenged place in the New Testament canon; but for a time, and for reasons not fully known, the books of James and Jude, Second Peter, Second and Third John, and Revelation, though received as canonical by a majority of the Churches, were held to be "disputed" books.

3. Finally, after a period of severe testing and lessening doubts on the part of the various Churches and their leaders, the New Testament canon, as we now have it, was adopted. Successive councils of the Church ascertained the mind of the Church, and the complete canon was ratified by the Council of Carthage, A.D. 397.

III. ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS AND VERSIONS.

Bible Material. Method of Study.	
Manuscripts: Hebrew. Greek: Vatican. Sinaitic. Alexandrian.	Versions: Targums. Septuagint. Syriac. Vulgate.



Bible Material.—So far as known, there is in existence no original or autographic copy of any book of the Bible, though in the light of modern archæological investigation such a discovery may yet be made. But no other book from the ancient world at all compares with our Bible in the number and reliability of translations and manuscript copies containing the original text. Of Herodotus, for instance, most ancient and important of the classic historians, whose Greek is part of all our college curricula, there are only about fifteen manuscript copies, the oldest, in the Cambridge library, dating back to the ninth century A.D. Of Plato's original, there are even fewer and no older copies. On the contrary, there are now in the libraries of the world, accessible to scholars, and for many years past the subject of most critical study, more than one thousand five hundred

ancient manuscript copies of the Bible, in part or whole, ranging back in date to the fourth century A.D. A few of these contain the entire Bible; by the others all parts of the Bible are repeatedly paralleled. So abundant are these manuscripts, and so thoroughly has textual criticism investigated them, that when English and American scholarship, after using the "Authorized Version" of King James (1611 A.D.) for nearly three hundred years, gave to the world the recent "Revised Version," it was found that surprisingly few changes were needed, though the later translators had the advantage of using the three oldest and greatest of the ancient manuscripts. Of the changes made, many were to conform to the changes in our own English language since the days of King James.

This mass of ancient manuscripts, if it could be gathered from all parts of the world into one place, would be an object of wonder and reverence to the Bible student. Written most painstakingly and often beautifully, upon vellum and parchment, there is great variety in appearance. Some of the manuscripts are worn by time and use, until no longer legible in portions; others are as clear and fresh as though only a century old. The smaller number are severely plain in their construction, and these are usually the most ancient. Many are

“illuminated” by fanciful initial letters and ornamentations. What are called the “Uncials”—about one hundred in number—are written in large capital letters, in closely crowded lines, without space between words or even sentences. This uncial writing marks the oldest and most valuable manuscripts. A specimen page from the famous “Sinaitic” manuscript, probably the oldest of all, is given at the beginning of this book. The greater number by far of the manuscripts are the “Cursives,” written in a free running hand, with more decoration and embellishment than the homely “Uncials.” These “Cursives” are several centuries later in age, and usually less accurate in their texts. Their number is about 1,500.

Method of Study.—In the formation and revision of our English Bible from the texts of these ancient manuscripts, the translators needed to follow three lines of investigation:

1. A study and comparison of the manuscripts, allowing usually the greater value to those known to be most ancient, for the reason that the nearer in time the copy is to the original, the fewer, as a rule, will be its inaccuracies. The relative age of the manuscript was determined by the lettering, uncial or cursive, by the initial letters, by the style of the writing, by the language, and by the form and condition of the parchment or vellum.

2. By a study of the several versions, or translations from Hebrew or Greek originals to other languages, and by comparing the text of these among themselves and with the manuscripts.

3. By careful examination of the writings of the Christian fathers of the first three centuries A.D., in which appear such a mass of quotations, especially from the New Testament, that it is claimed that all of it, except twelve verses, could be collated.

It is a matter of profound gratitude and wonder that, notwithstanding this mass of manuscripts, ranging through many centuries, such is their singular agreement upon all vital matters of revelation that no important fact or doctrine of the Bible has been put in peril, although the keenest scrutiny of both devout and skeptical scholarship has been vigorously applied to them.

Manuscripts and Versions.—This Bible material will be better understood when classified as follows: The Old Testament, written originally in Hebrew, was used at the time of our Lord in any one of three forms—the Hebrew MSS., either the originals or copies; the “Targums,” in Chaldaic, which began under Ezra, after the exile, and were for the use of the people, who had generally substituted the Chaldaic language acquired in exile for their mother Hebrew; the Old Testament “versions” or translations, chief of which was the

“Septuagint,” in Greek, which had become the almost universal medium of speech and writing throughout the Roman Empire.

The New Testament, written in the Greek, was also in three forms: the Greek MSS., of which we now have, as already stated, more than 1,500, dating from the fourth century A.D.; back of the earliest of these MSS., and filling the first three centuries, the “versions” of the New Testament, the earliest and most important of which were the “Syriac” or “Peshito,” the “Italic,” “Armenian,” “Coptic,” and others of the second century and later; back of these versions, or contemporaneous with them, were the writings of the Christian fathers, with their corroborative quotations from the New Testament.

Of these Old and New Testament MSS. and versions now existing, the more distinguished are as follows:

1. The “Hillel” Hebrew MS. of the Old Testament of the seventh century A.D. Since Jerome’s popular translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew direct to Latin in the fourth century A.D., the lack of Hebrew MSS. has not been greatly felt.

2. The “Vatican” MS. of the fourth century A.D., for five hundred years in the papal library at

Rome, the property of the Roman Catholic Church.

3. The "Sinaitic" MS. of the fourth century A.D., now at Petersburg, the property of the Greek Catholic Church, discovered by Dr. Tischendorf in 1859, at St. Catherine's Convent, near Mount Sinai.

4. The "Alexandrian" MS. of the fifth century A.D., now in the British Museum, the property of the Protestant Church. Each of these three noble Greek MSS. contains nearly the entire Bible.

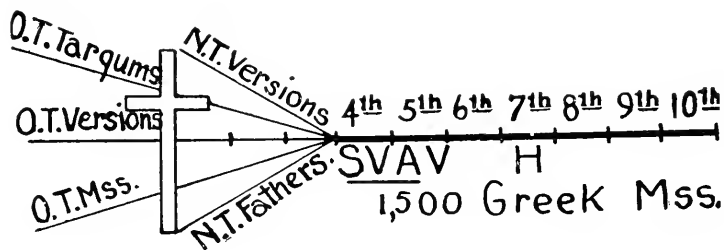
1. Of the "versions," the "Septuagint" Old Testament, translated direct from the Hebrew to the Greek, about 285 B.C. at Alexandria, was for centuries the most popular among Jews and Christians alike, and was the text chiefly used by Christ and the apostles.

2. The "Syriac," and the "Italic" or early Latin, both of the second century A.D., were translations of the entire Bible, for provincial use, into the Syriac and Latin languages.

3. The greatest of all the versions was the Latin "Vulgate" of the New Testament, translated in 385 A.D. from the Greek into the Latin by St. Jerome, the finest scholar of his age. The Old Testament was later translated by him direct from the Hebrew. For one thousand years this noble

work continued as the Bible standard and parent of all later versions, strongly influencing Protestant scholarship in the King James version of 1611.

The following diagram of the first ten centuries of the Christian era, studied in connection with the above text, will show the location and order of the sources from which our Bible sprang. The letters below the line are the initials respectively of the MSS. and versions cited above:



IV. OUR ENGLISH BIBLE.

Early England.	Cranmer's Bible, 1539.
Bible Material.	Geneva Bible, 1560.
Wycliffe's Bible, 1380 A.D.	Bishops' Bible, 1568.
Tyndale's Bible, 1525.	Authorized Version, 1611.
Coverdale's Bible, 1535.	Revised Version, 1885.

Early England.—From the sixth to the sixteenth century A.D., England was a fitting soil from which to grow the greatest of all Bibles. Our bold and liberty-loving Saxon ancestry infused their spirit of reverence and independence into its first beginnings. The minstrel Cædmon charmed the farm people with his metrical paraphrases of Bible history; the Saxon bishops, Aldhelm and Aelfric, translated portions of the Bible into the rude native tongue; the “learned Bede” compiled while dying a Saxon version of John’s Gospel; King Alfred founded the great Oxford University, and gave to his people translations of the Psalms and the Commandments; William the Conqueror began the long battle of four centuries in defense of the rights of the nation against the aggressive tyranny of the Romish Church. Successive English kings and Church leaders wrestled with, or succumbed to, the popes in their persistent efforts to keep the nation under intellectual and ecclesias-

tical subjection. The clergy became corrupt and ignorant, and the plain people, in whose hearts there was a pathetic desire for a free and uncorrupted Bible, were made to pay their money for masses and pardons, "as if God had given his sheep not to be pastured, but to be shorn." But in the hearts of these people the spirit of religious freedom and the love of learning were steadily rising, until at length, in the fourteenth century, God raised up Wycliffe to open the Scriptures and make them plain to their understandings.

Bible Material.—When Wycliffe began the first English translation of the entire Bible, his lament was that no such English version had preceded him. His available sources from which to construct an English Bible were the fragments of earlier versions already cited, and the Latin Vulgate of St. Jerome, greatly corrupted either by intent or neglect of the Romish Church. "The commune Latyne Bibles," he replied to his critics, "have more nede to be corrected, as manie as I have seen in my life, than hath the Englishe Bible late translated." Hebrew and Greek MSS. of the Bible were not available, nor had Wycliffe the skill to use them. The Oxford University had no great Hebrew or Greek scholars to assist him. Greek learning had long been under papal ban. "If you study the Greek," said a Romish prelate, "you will become a

pagan; if you study the Hebrew, you will become a Jew.”

Under such hard conditions, and with such scant material, did this brave English priest, rightly called the “morning star of the Reformation,” enter upon his lifelong effort to give an English Bible to the common people. Here is his quaint definition of a translator of the Bible: “He hath grate nede to studie well the sentence, both before and after; he hath also nede to lyve a clene life, be full devout of preiers, and have not his wit occupied about worldli thynges.”

Wycliffe's Bible, 1380 A.D.—Woefully hindered by lack of Bible material, deprived of scholarly help, persecuted to the end of his life by the Romish Church, Wycliffe's Bible, when completed, forced its way unaided into the affections and use of the people. Despite all efforts to destroy it, there are at this day not less than one hundred and fifty copies of this earliest English Bible. Its peculiarities are: homeliness of style, as it was written expressly for the common people, and not for the court or scholars; the absence of technical words, as its substitution of “riches” for “mammon;” its intense literalness. Here is a specimen of the book:

forsothe
 that ilke Joon hadde cloth of the heertis of
 cameplis and a girdil of skyn about his
 leendis; sothely his mete weren locustis
 and hony of the wode. Thanne Jerusa-
 lem wente out to hym, and al Jude, and al
 the cuntre aboute Jordan, and thei weren
 crystened of hym in Jordan, knowlechyng
 there synnes.

Wycliffe was formally tried and excommunicated, and a petition was made to the pope after his death that his body be exhumed and buried in a dunghill. The body was burned, its ashes thrown into the little river Swift that ran past his church at Lutterworth, and the poet truly sang:

“The Swift unto the Severn runs,
 The Severn to the sea;
 And so shall Wycliffe’s dust be spread
 Wide as these waters be.”

Tyndale’s Bible, 1525 A.D.—William Tyndale, born 1483, the year after Luther’s birth and one hundred years after Wycliffe’s death, had in beginning all that was denied to Wycliffe. He was master of seven languages, including Hebrew and Greek; he was distinguished as a scholar at both

Oxford and Cambridge, and was a pupil of the famous Erasmus, greatest Greek scholar of his age; he had the use of Hebrew and Greek MSS. He had more than these. The art of printing had been discovered by Gutenberg in 1450 A.D., and was greatly multiplying and cheapening books. Wycliffe's Bible had sold at forty pounds sterling a copy (\$200). Greek learning had been revived in all the universities of Europe, until one has said: "Greece rose at this time from her grave with the New Testament in her hand." Refused permission to carry on his work of translation at home, Tyndale became an exile, and printed six thousand copies of his New Testament at Worms. Betrayed by friends, persecuted by the Church, he continued in exile, printing Bibles and shipping them secretly to England. Most of the Old Testament was also translated and printed by him. After bitter and lifelong persecution, he was treacherously lured to England by an emissary of the Romish Church, imprisoned, strangled, and then burned at the stake, October 6, 1536, praying at the last: "Lord, open thou the eyes of the king of England." In the beginning of his career he had said: "I defy the pope; and if God spare me, I will one day make the boy that drives the plow in England know more of Scripture than the pope himself."

Coverdale's Bible and Others, 1535 to 1568 A.D.
—By the side of the two great typical Bibles, Wycliffe's homely version for the common people and Tyndale's original and scholarly work, the numerous succeeding Bibles of the sixteenth century (see outline at the beginning of chapter) appear as inferior, and were in fact weak plagiarisms in part upon the strong sense of Wycliffe and the great learning of Tyndale. Taken together, they prove the increasing hunger of England for the Holy Scriptures and the enduring power of the martyred Tyndale, whose blood indeed became the seed of a freer and holier Church. Taken separately, they prove the partisanship and jealousies of Church factions, and the fear by the hierarchy of the free spirit of the English people. "Coverdale's" was probably the first entire English-printed Bible; "Matthew's," the first authorized version; "Cranmer's" bore the pretentious title of the "Great Bible;" the "Geneva," printed at Geneva by Reformers, was the first distinctively Protestant Bible, and was for fifty years the most popular version in England; the "Bishops' Bible," so named from the fact that eight of its translators were bishops, was least of the list in public esteem; the "Rhemish and Douay," the Catholic Bible, was the effort of the Romish Church to stem the rising tide of Protestant influence.

The Authorized Version, 1611 A.D.—For three hundred years this Bible has been the flower and fruit of classic and English scholarship. “It has in it the lifeblood of kings, scholars, reformers, and saints.” In construction, scholarship, purity and dignity of language, it far surpassed all predecessors; and it will doubtless be many years, if ever, before it is displaced by a later version. Under appointment of King James, forty-seven great scholars of England were its translators. Among their rules were: “There shall be no change except the text require it;” “manuscript copies and competent scholarship shall be consulted;” “marginal references shall be instituted;” “no marginal notes shall be allowed;” “all differences of opinion shall be decided at a general meeting.” After five years of continuous service, working in six divisions, determining all vexed questions in general meeting, the great version was completed in 1611 A.D.

The Revised Version, A.D. 1885.—Archæological investigation and discovery; the bringing to light of many ancient MSS. (among which was the Sinai “Codex” of the fourth century); the changing forms of our English language, and the increasing number of obsolete words in the Authorized Version; the advance of textual criticism and of Hebrew and Greek scholarship since 1611

A.D.—all conspired to bring about the Revised Version of 1885. It was begun in 1870 through the English Church, by the appointment of a “New Testament” and an “Old Testament Company” of eminent English scholars, representing the greater divisions of Protestantism, and by a “Corresponding Committee” of American scholars. The first session of the English translators was held in June, 1870, in the famous “Jerusalem Chamber” of Westminster Abbey, London. Ten years later, November 11, 1880, in the church of St. Martin-in-Fields, London, the New Testament Company closed its labors with prayer and thanksgiving. The entire Bible was completed and given to the world May 5, 1885. Whether it will take the place of the Authorized Version, no one can tell; but in fullness of learning, clearness of plan, and helpfulness to the Bible student and teacher, there can be no question but that it is the best, as it is the latest, version of Scripture.

V. BIBLE SUMMARY.

A brief summary of the claims made for the Bible by devout Christians, and of its historic changes in form, will be found helpful to its students and teachers.

Three great claims are made for the Bible: (1) Its inspiration—it came from God; (2) its genuineness—we have it substantially as it was given; (3) its credibility—it is amply attested as the word of God.

THE CLAIM OF INSPIRATION.

As to the Fact.—1. The prophets of the Old Testament asserted it of their writings. 2. Our Lord repeatedly cited the Old Testament as inspired, and placed his divine seal upon the three great divisions of the Jewish canon—the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms—quoting directly from eighteen of the thirty-nine books. 3. The apostles Paul and Peter declared that the entire Old Testament was “given by inspiration” and that holy men were “moved by the Holy Ghost” to write it. 4. As to the New Testament, the apostles asserted its inspiration, and commanded it to be read in the churches, ranking it with the Old Testament. 5. The claim of inspiration for the Old Testament

was reverently received by the Jews, and of both Old and New Testaments by the early Christian Church.

As to the Mode.—1. The orthodox, or “dynamic,” theory—that the sacred writers were supernaturally inspired upon all subjects of which they wrote, but were left free as to their forms of expression. 2. The “plenary,” or verbal, theory—that even the words themselves, as to the original documents, were inspired. Orthodox opinion is divided between the two first-named theories of inspiration, with the preponderance in favor of the “dynamic” theory. 3. The “limited” theory—that inspiration is restricted to purely religious truth of doctrine or practice, and that all other parts are merely human. 4. The theory of the “higher criticism”—asserting the “errancy” of the Scriptures, and their need of being tested and amended by modern scientific study. 5. The “rationalistic” theory—that the inspiration of the Bible is but a high degree of poetic or religious fervor, consistent with error in fact or doctrine.

THE CLAIM OF GENUINENESS.

This is proved: 1. By the reverence of copyists, whether Jewish or Christian, the severest penalties being denounced against mutilation or change. 2. By Josephus’s ancient catalogue of the

books, and by the agreement between our own and the text of the two most ancient Jewish versions, the Samaritan and the Septuagint. 3. By the agreement with our modern text of the Chaldee Targums made before Christ, and the mass of direct quotations in the works of the early Christian fathers. 4. By the fact that in the nearly two thousand known manuscripts of the Bible, some of them fifteen hundred years old, there are few, if any, inexplicable disagreements, and only minor verbal and grammatical differences. 5. By the weekly public readings in both Jewish and Christian churches for thousands of years, and by the jealousy of opposing sects—Samaritan and Jew, Pharisee and Sadducee, Jew and Christian—preventing all corruption of the text.

THE CLAIM OF CREDIBILITY.

This is shown: 1. By its adaptation to man's spiritual needs, which demand just such a revelation from God. 2. By the undisputed integrity of the writers, and their corroboration by profane histories and monuments. 3. By the harmony of its forty writers, writing without opportunity for collusion, between extremes of sixteen hundred years. 4. By the harmony between the Bible and Nature, the "greater and the lesser lights" of revelation. 5. By fulfilled and fulfilling prophecy,

and repeated public miracles, as seals of its truth. 6. By its supernatural power over individual and national life, in government, society, art, education, etc. 7. By its reverent acceptance as the word of Almighty God by all classes in all ages. It is inconceivable that a book not divine could be thus universally accepted.

The historic summary of the Bible is as follows:

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

1. *The Jewish Scriptures* were written during the fifteen centuries preceding Christ.

2. They were written mainly in the Hebrew language.

3. The originals were kept by the priests in the temple, and copied for public uses.

4. Certain noted versions or translations were made as follows: (a) The Chaldee translations or "Targums," for the use of the common people after the captivity; (b) the Samaritan, a Hebrew copy of the Pentateuch made for the Samaritans, probably before Judah's captivity; (c) the Septuagint, a Greek copy of the entire Old Testament, made at Alexandria by exiled Jews, 285 B.C., and in popular use at the time of Christ.

The Jewish Canon had three stages of growth:

1. The "Law," or books of Moses, were the only canonical scriptures until after the captivity of

Judah. 2. "The Prophets," including twenty-one books of history and prophecy, were compiled, edited, and made the second part of the sacred canon by Ezra and Nehemiah, about 450 B.C. 3. "The Scriptures," including the devotional books, together with Ruth, Lamentations, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1st and 2d Chronicles, were made the third division, either by Ezra or possibly in part after his time.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. *The Christian Scriptures* were written during the first Christian century, 38-96 A.D.

2. They were mainly written in the Greek.

3. Copies of the books were extensively made by the apostolic Churches.

4. No authentic manuscript earlier than the fourth century is known.

1. *The Christian Canon* is traditionally ascribed to the Apostle John, about 100 A.D.

2. The present canon was generally received as early as the second century.

3. Seven books—Hebrews, James, 2d Peter, 2d and 3d John, Jude and Revelation—were classed as "disputed" during the second and third centuries.

4. Finally, in 397 A.D., the Council of Carthage confirmed the canon as it stands.

THE ANCIENT BIBLE.

The most noted ancient copies were :

1. The "Syriac" and the "Italic," translated into the Syrian and Latin languages near the beginning of the second century.

2. The "Vulgate," in Latin, made by Jerome, 385 A.D.

3. The Vatican Codex in Greek, of the fourth century A.D., now in the Pope's library at Rome.

4. The Sinai Codex in Greek, of the fourth century, held by the Greek Church at St. Petersburg.

5. The Alexandrian Codex in Greek, of the fifth century, now in the British Museum.

Fully two thousand ancient manuscripts are extant, mainly fragmentary, fifty of which are over one thousand years old.

THE MODERN BIBLE.

The five most noted versions are :

1. Wycliffe's Bible, 1380 A.D., the first Bible in English.

2. Tyndale's Bible, 1525 A.D., nearly entire, the first printed Bible.

3. Coverdale's Bible, 1535 A.D., the first entire printed Bible.

4. The "Great Bible," 1539 A.D., known as Cranmer's.

5. The Geneva Bible, 1560 A.D., made by Puri-

tan exiles from England—the first strictly Protestant Bible.

6. The Rheims-Douay, or Catholic Bible, made from the Vulgate in 1609, for the Roman Catholic Church, including as canonical seven books rejected from the Protestant Bible.

7. The “King James Bible,” or “Authorized Version,” 1611 A.D.

8. The “Revised Version,” completed in 1885, by English and American scholars.

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

I. THE PENTATEUCH.

Book.	Writer.	Time.	Subject.
Genesis.	Moses.	4004 B.C.	The Chosen Family.
Exodus.		1635 B.C.	The Chosen Nation.
Leviticus.		1490 B.C.	The Jewish Church.
Numbers.		1490 B.C.	The Nation Tested.
Deuteronomy.		1451 B.C.	The Jewish Code.

II. THE HISTORICAL BOOKS.

Joshua.	Joshua.	1451 B.C.	The Conquest.
Judges.	Samuel.	1425 B.C.	The Fifteen Judges.
Ruth.	Samuel.	1322 B.C.	Christ's Ancestress.
1 and 2 Samuel.	Nathan, { Gad, Jere- miah, et al. }	1171 B.C.	The Monarchy.
1 and 2 Kings.		1015 B.C.	{ The Divided Kingdoms.
1 and 2 Chron.		1056 B.C.	
Ezra.	Ezra.	536 B.C.	The Restoration.
Nehemiah.	Nehemiah.	446 B.C.	The Reformation.
Esther.	Mordecai.	521 B.C.	The Jew in Exile.

III. THE POETICAL BOOKS.

Job.	Moses.	1520 B.C.	Providence.
Psalms.	David et al.	1056 B.C.	Devotion.
Proverbs.	{ Solomon. }	1000 B.C.	Wisdom.
Ecclesiastes.		977 B.C.	Happiness.
Song.		1014 B.C.	Religion.

IV. THE GREATER PROPHETS.

Isaiah.	Isaiah.	760 B.C.	The Messianic Kingdom.
Jeremiah.	} Jeremiah. {	629 B.C.	} The Doom of Judah.
Lamentations.		588 B.C.	
Ezekiel.		595 B.C.	
Daniel.	Daniel.	607 B.C.	The Messianic Triumph.

V. THE LESSER PROPHETS.

Hosea.	The Prophets.	785 B.C.	Kingdom of Israel.
Joel.		800 B.C.	Kingdom of Judah.
Amos.		787 B.C.	Kingdom of Israel.
Obadiah.		587 B.C.	Edom.
Jonah.		862 B.C.	Nineveh.
Micah.		750 B.C.	Israel and Judah.
Nahum.		713 B.C.	Assyria.
Habakkuk.		626 B.C.	Chaldea.
Zephaniah.		630 B.C.	Kingdom of Judah.
Haggai.		520 B.C.	Christ's Coming.
Zechariah.		520 B.C.	Christ's Kingdom.
Malachi.		397 B.C.	Christ's Advent.

NOTE.—The "time" quoted above follows the chronology of the Oxford Teachers' Bible, and much of it is conjectural. The year given in each case marks the beginning of the subject-matter of the book.

PART II.—THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS.

I. THE PENTATEUCH.

GENESIS.	
Subject: Chosen Family.	Persons: Adam to Joseph.
Writer: Moses.	Events: Creation, Fall,
Class: History.	Flood, Family of
Chronology: B.C. 4004 to 1635.	Abraham.

The book of Genesis is the first and, in some respects, the greatest of the books of the Bible. It is the book of beginnings: of the world, of man, of sin, of redemption. It is the oldest of all books, and the only authentic account of more than two thousand years of the history of mankind.

Subject.—It centers about the chosen family of Abraham. Part of it narrates the history before the flood; the larger part begins with the call of Abraham, and ends with the death of Joseph, his great-grandson. It starts with the story of the single pair in the garden of Eden; it centers, later, about the family of Noah; then narrates the rise of nations, until it narrows down to the history of a single chosen family, out of which should spring God's chosen nation.

Writer.—Moses wrote this and the succeeding

books of the Pentateuch. Jew and Christian alike have accepted the declarations of the Old and the New Testament as to his authorship. Within a hundred years or more, German rationalists, followed by American "higher critics," have denied the Mosaic authorship, and attempted to make of it a mere compilation. The student will find many references in the Bible to the "book of Moses," "the law," etc., and it is difficult for a devout believer in the inspiration of the Scriptures to reject the Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the canon.

Chronology.—The vast range of the history in Genesis, taking Usher's system of chronology as the best working basis, is shown by the fact that it is the only authentic history of all that happened from the creation, 4004 B.C., to the death of Joseph, 1635 B.C., a period of two thousand three hundred and sixty-nine years, or more than one-third of the entire world's history to date.

Persons.—First in order and prominence are Adam and his sons; farther along the line is Enoch, the devout patriarch; Noah, the righteous; afterwards appears Abraham, followed by Isaac, Jacob, and his twelve sons.

Events.—Only the chief events need to be committed to memory. These in order are: the creation of the world and man in six days or periods of

time; the sin and fall of Adam and Eve; the rapid increase of mankind and the growth of sin; the destruction of the race, except a single family, by the flood; after a long interval, the call of Abraham to be the father of the chosen family and head of the chosen nation; the narrative of the Abrahamic family through four generations, from Abraham to Joseph, inclusive.

EXODUS.	
Subject: Chosen Nation.	Chronology: B.C. 1635 to 1490.
Writer: Moses.	Persons: Pharaoh, Moses, Aaron, Miriam.
Class: History.	Events: Bondage, Deliverance, Tabernacle.

Exodus, like Genesis, is historical, taking up the story where Genesis leaves off, with the death of Joseph. It is no longer a biography of individuals, or a story of one family; but the current of history widens until a nation becomes its theme.

Subject.—The book narrates the origin, growth, oppression, and final organization and deliverance of God's chosen nation, out of which he designed that his Son should come, and by whom the world should be redeemed.

Chronology.—The time ranges from the death of Joseph, B.C. 1635, to the completion of the tabernacle at Sinai, B.C. 1490, a period of one hundred and forty-five years.

Persons.—These include the Pharaohs, succeeding the days of Joseph, especially the oppressor of the Hebrew slaves; Moses, the prince, deliverer, and lawgiver; Aaron, his brother and helper; Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron.

Events.—These center about the long bondage under Pharaoh in Egypt, the ten great miracles of national deliverance, the institution of the Passover, the exodus into the Wilderness, the giving of the Law at Sinai, the building and erection of the Tabernacle, and organization of the Jewish Church.

LEVITICUS.

Subject: Jewish Church.	Persons: Moses and Aaron.
Writer: Moses.	Events: Institution of Priesthood, Code of Priests.
Class: History.	
Chronology: B.C. 1490—One Month.	

Leviticus, though not strictly historical, is a close sequel to Exodus. Its subject-matter is legislative and ecclesiastical, centering upon the formal institution of the Church.

Subject.—The Jewish Church expresses its theme. Before this all worship had been crude and unorganized. The father was the priest in his own home; the altar of stone or earth, the symbol and place of worship. Now God organizes his Church in the Wilderness, and ordains a ritual and place of national worship.

Chronology.—One month, under the shadows of Mount Sinai, is the scope of the book, B.C. 1490, the second year after the crossing of the Red Sea.

Persons.—Two continue in prominence: Moses, the great lawgiver and leader, the vicegerent of the theocracy; Aaron, the newly installed head of the Hebrew priesthood.

Events.—Two notable events divide the book. The first is the appointment and consecration of the Aaronic priesthood, as mediators between God and men; the second is the deliverance of the priest's code, which includes most of the book.

NUMBERS.	
Subject: The Nation Tested. Writer: Moses. Class: History. Chronology: B.C. 1490 to 1451	Persons: Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Caleb. Events: The March, Rebellions, Wars, Appointment.

The book of Numbers resumes the history of the nation. It takes its name from the twice numbering of the people, but it is really a history of the moldings of a newly constituted nation, under severe discipline, into permanent form—such a history of trial as our own nation passed through in the years of the revolutionary struggle.

Subject.—The book deals with God's tests of the nation in the Wilderness, and its long march from Sinai to the borders of the Promised Land. Prone

to lapse into the idolatries of Egypt, and unfit for permanent national life, the nation was kept in the hard school of discipline until the generation of Egypt were dead, and their children, reared under a life of obedience and trial, were grown to manhood and womanhood.

Chronology.—The time extends from the erection of the tabernacle, B.C. 1490, to the last encampment on the plains of Moab, this side the Jordan, B.C. 1451.

Persons.—Aaron and Miriam of the old order pass away; Moses continues as leader and lawgiver; Joshua and Caleb come into prominence.

Events.—First, the weary march of thirty-eight years, doubling back again and again upon its track; the sin of Moses and Aaron; the wars against the Amorites and the Midianites; finally, the appointment of Levitical cities and cities of refuge.

DEUTERONOMY.

Subject: Jewish Code.	Persons: Moses, Joshua.
Writer: Moses.	
Class: History.	Events: Review, Revision, Renewal, Death.
Chronology: B.C. 1451—Two Months.	

Deuteronomy is the last of the five great books written by Moses. Some friendly hand, doubtless that of Joshua, added to the book its last chapter, concerning the death of Moses.

Subject.—The nation was soon to enter the Promised Land. The fathers who had heard the first giving of the law at Sinai were dead. A new generation had succeeded them, and new conditions of permanent national life awaited them. Therefore Moses revised the old Sinaitic and Wilderness laws, adapting them to fixed residence in cities under a stable government; and the book becomes, practically, a revised national code of laws.

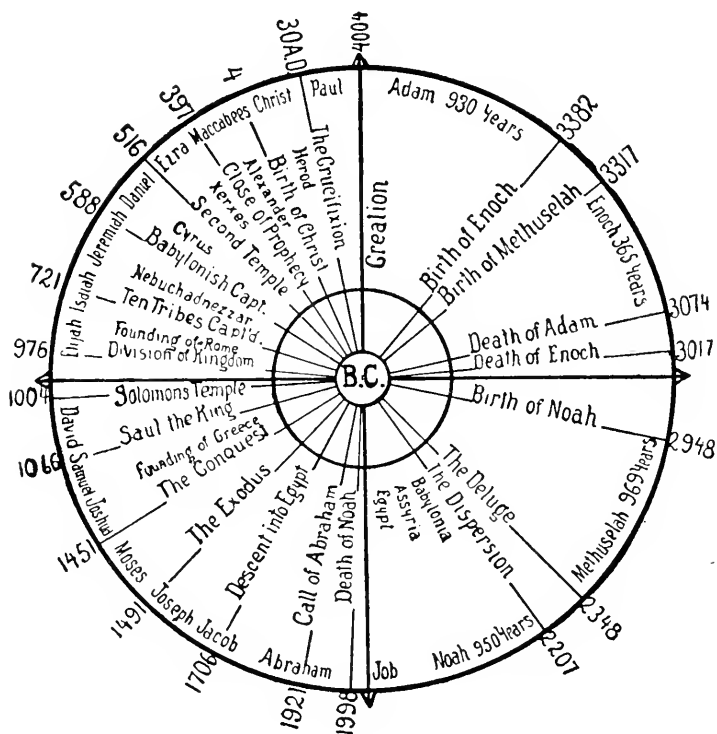
Chronology.—The time covered by the book is about two months of the year B.C. 1451, on the eve of the entrance into Canaan. The scene of the book is the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan.

Persons.—The last glimpse is given us of the nobility, wisdom, and last days of the great Hebrew leader, Moses; together with a view of his successor, Joshua, in whose warrior hand God had placed the sword of conquest.

Events.—The book divides into three parts. It has little history, and is chiefly admonitory and legislative. Moses assembles the people and reviews their trials and mercies, and shows God's goodness to the nation; next, he promulgates the revised national laws; lastly, he renews the consecration of the nation to God. Joshua is divinely installed as successor to Moses, and Moses dies in sight of the Promised Land.

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

Each quadrant of the circle represents 1,000 years.



Note to Superintendents and Teachers.—The above circle of Old Testament history, together with other like illustrations interspersed throughout this book, are to assist the student and also to suggest material for brief blackboard or chart drills of school or class.

II. THE BOOKS OF HISTORY.

JOSHUA.

Subject: The Conquest.	Persons: Joshua, Caleb,
Writer: Joshua.	Eleazar.
Class: History.	Events: Conquest, Al-
Chronology: From 1451 to 1425 B.C.	lotment, Covenant.

Subject.—The book of Joshua carries forward the Old Testament history in close sequence to the Pentateuch. The book introduces Joshua as the divinely commissioned successor to Moses, and narrates his conquest of the Promised Land, and partition of it among the tribes. The subject of the book may be summed up briefly as “the conquest.”

Writer.—Joshua, according to the judgment of Jews and Christians generally, wrote the book. The Jewish tradition is that Joshua followed the example of Moses, and, under divine command, wrote the annals of his own times. This does not conflict with the later tradition that all the books of Old Testament history were revised and edited by Ezra the Scribe.

Chronology.—The book of Joshua includes twenty-five years, and extends from the death of Moses and entrance into Canaan, B.C. 1451, to the death of Joshua, B.C. 1425. The first seven years

of the twenty-five were spent in the subjugation of Canaan and hostile neighboring nations. After this, the work of conquest proceeded, together with the allotment of the land to the tribes of Israel.

Persons.—The hero of the book is Joshua, the conqueror. The book deals little with biography. Eleazar, successor to Aaron, is the counselor of Joshua; Caleb wins further honors; and Othniel, afterwards a famous judge, is introduced.

Events.—The book falls naturally into three parts: the three campaigns of Joshua in securing possession of the land; the allotment of the land among the tribes; the renewal of the covenant of the nation, closing with Joshua's death.

JUDGES.

<p>Subject: The 15 Judges. Writer: Samuel. Class: History. Chronology: From 1425 to 1120 B.C.</p>	<p>History: Joshua to Samson, Persons: Othniel, Deborah, et al. Events: Seven Deliverances.</p>
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RUTH.—The Ancestry of Christ.

Subject.—The book of Judges is a history of Israel under the rule of its Judges. There were fifteen judges from Othniel, the first holding the office, to Samuel, the last. Only thirteen of the fifteen judges are included in this book, the account of Eli and Samuel being carried over by the sacred historian to the first book of Samuel. The

book exhibits the apostasy of Israel. It recounts how the chosen nation persistently descended from the righteous standard of Joshua to a condition of anarchy.

Writer.—The Jews generally ascribed the book to Samuel, allowing for certain later revision. It bears strong internal evidence that it was written close to the time of its events. There are frequent hints in the Old Testament books of history that faithful records were kept by chosen men, from which the completed history could, under divine direction, be compiled.

Chronology.—This includes about three hundred years, ranging from the death of Joshua, B.C. 1425, to the death of Samson, about B.C. 1120. The book of Judges is not chronologically arranged, the last five chapters, concerning the destruction of the tribe of Benjamin, belonging probably to the oldest portion of the book.

Persons.—The judges of greater renown were as follows: Othniel, deliverer from Mesopotamia; Deborah (with Barak), deliverer from the Canaanites; Gideon, from Midian; Jephthah, from Ammon; Samson, from Philistia.

Events.—Seven great deliverances from oppressing nations are narrated: (1) From Mesopotamia, by Othniel; (2) from Moab, by Ehud; (3) from Philistia, by Shamgar; (4) from Canaanites,

by Deborah and Barak; (5) from Midian, by Gideon; (6) from Ammon, by Jephthah; (7) from Philistia, by Samson.

THE BOOK OF RUTH.

In the ancient Jewish canon this book was a part of Judges. The time of the book is uncertain, probably near to the days of Deborah. Samuel was believed to be the author. Apart from the beautiful portraiture of Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz, and of ancient home life, the book has special value in showing the mingling Jewish and Gentile ancestry of David and of David's "greater Son," our Lord.

SAMUEL.	
Subject: The Monarchy.	Persons: Eli, Samuel, Saul, and David.
Writers: Samuel and Others.	Events: Reformation under Samuel.
Class: History.	Reigns of Saul and David.
Chronology: From 1171 to 1015 B.C.	

Subject.—In the ancient Jewish canon, the two books of Samuel were one. The translators of the Septuagint, B.C. 285, first separated them. The books center upon the Hebrew monarchy; and, beginning with the story of Eli and Samuel as an introduction, narrate the reigns of Saul and David, the first of the long line of Hebrew kings.

Writers.—Partly in honor to Samuel's noble life, which the opening twelve chapters of the book con-

tain, and partly because Samuel is accredited with having written the first twenty-four chapters, the books are so named. But the books of Samuel, of Kings, and of Chronicles, were composite. From the time of Samuel on, the prophets in succession seem to have been charged with keeping the historic record. Gad, Nathan, and other prophets down to Jeremiah, are to be credited with the original annals. The work of subsequent compilation of all books of history is ascribed by the Jews to Jeremiah and Ezra, especially the latter.

Chronology.—The two books of Samuel range from the birth of Samuel, B.C. 1171, to the death of David, B.C. 1015, a period of one hundred and fifty-six years; eighty of which belong to the reigns of Saul and David, each forty years.

Persons.—Four noted names comprise the biographical succession: Eli, Samuel, Saul, David. Eli's life illustrates forcibly how one may be a good man, with great opportunities, yet ruin his family and his nation by persistent weakness. Saul, with a brilliant beginning and a miserable end, shows the folly and ruin of willfulness. Samuel, last of the judges and first of the national prophets, one of the most majestic figures of the Old Testament, has been properly called the "Hebrew Aristides." David, ranking with Abraham and Moses, yet

stained by one great sin, shows the perils of human nature in all ages and stations.

Events.—These may be summed up briefly, in the defeat and death of Eli, the reformation under Samuel, the establishment of the monarchy, and the reigns of Saul and David.

KINGS.

Subject: The Divided Kingdoms.	Persons: The Jewish Kings.
Writers: The Prophets and Jeremiah.	Events: Solomon's Reign and Temple, the Divided Kingdoms, the Captivity.
Class: History.	
Chronology: From 1015 to 588 B.C.	

Subject.—The two books of Kings were formerly one book, known as the second book of Kings. The books give the records of Solomon, the last great king of the Hebrew monarchy, and of the thirty-nine succeeding kings (including one usurping queen) of the divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

Writers.—Jewish tradition ascribed the compilation of Kings to Jeremiah. Three sources the compiler names as follows: the "Book of the Acts of Solomon," the "Chronicles of the Kings of Judah," the "Chronicles of the Kings of Israel."

Chronology.—The books begin with the death of David, B.C. 1015, and close with the captivity of Judah, B.C. 588, a period of 427 years, thus giving

the longest and most eventful period of Jewish national history.

Persons.—The reigns of forty kings constitute the biographic matter of the books, from Solomon to Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. Of the nineteen kings and nine dynasties of Israel, not one redeemed the long line of evil rulers. Of the twenty kings of Judah, three only are distinguished for wise and righteous reigns: Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. These three reformed the apostate nation, and revived its ancient faith and worship.

Events.—The greater events are: the reign of Solomon; the building of the temple; the division of the kingdoms; the wars of Judah and Israel against each other and neighboring nations; the captivity of Israel by the Assyrians; and, finally, the captivity of Judah, and the destruction of Jerusalem. The kingdom of Israel lasted about two hundred and fifty years; that of Judah, about four hundred years.

CHRONICLES.

Subject: The Divided Kingdoms.	History: David to Zerubbabel.
Writer: The Prophets and Ezra.	Persons: Kings of Judah.
Chronology: 1056 to 536 B.C.	Events: Relating to Judah.

The two books of Chronicles were originally one. The Septuagint Version gave them a Greek title, meaning "the things omitted." It was evidently

the compiler's purpose to put into these books certain historic facts and tables which had been lightly touched in previous sacred histories, or were wholly omitted. The books are not consecutively historic, but bring together, at long range, genealogy and history, both civil and ecclesiastical. Studied side by side with the books of Samuel and Kings, the value of their supplementary history will appear.

Subject.—This may be summed up in the words, “supplemental history of the Divided Kingdoms, especially of Judah.” Compiled after the Babylonian captivity, a peculiar condition confronted the returning Jewish exiles. The temple worship was to be reënacted, the priesthood and Levitic officers reassigned, the lands to be reallocated. The history of their nation needed to pass in review before them, the exile having turned their thoughts toward God and the ancient ritual of their fathers. Hence the painstaking review of the genealogical lines of the heads of the nation, both priestly and political, particularly along the line of Judah, out of which the “Shiloh” of prophecy should come.

Writer.—Ezra was undoubtedly the compiler of Chronicles, selecting his material from as many as twelve books of sacred record, named in Chronicles.

Chronology.—The two books, so far as their history goes, range through a period of five hundred

and twenty years, beginning with the accession of David, B.C. 1056, to Prince Zerubbabel, who led the returning exiles from Babylon to Jerusalem, B.C. 536.

Events.—These deal with “things omitted,” rather than with the regular succession given in the books preceding. The opening chapters give genealogical tables from Adam to Abraham, of the twelve tribes, of David’s royal line; and follow with the reigns of David, Solomon, and the kings of Judah, ignoring largely the kings of Israel. Emphasis is given to the temple and its services, and to Judah’s reformers, such as Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah, which is in keeping with the special religious purpose of the book.

EZRA AND NEHEMIAH.

Subject: Restoration and Reformation.	Persons: Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah.
Writers: Ezra, Nehemiah.	Events: Return, Rebuilding, Reformation.
Class: History.	
Chronology: 536 to 434 B.C.	

These two books also were anciently joined in one. They are a close sequel to Chronicles, and carry forward the Jewish history to the close of the Old Testament record.

Subject.—The books belong to the post-captivity, and narrate the restoration and reformation of

the people of Judah, politically and religiously, under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

Writers.—By the Jews Ezra was accredited as the author of that portion now called distinctively the book of Ezra; and Nehemiah, of the book of Nehemiah.

Chronology.—The books extend the history of the nation from the return under Zerubbabel from Babylon, B.C. 536, to the death of Nehemiah, about 434 B.C. They close the history of the Old Testament, and are followed by silence and servitude of more than four hundred years, until the advent of Christ in New Testament history.

Persons.—Four names are prominent: Cyrus, the deliverer from exile; Zerubbabel, the rebuild-er of the temple; Ezra, the restorer of the law; Nehemiah, the reformer of religious and civil abuses. Zerubbabel, prince of the house of Judah, led the forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty exiles back to their loved country, reëstablished the daily sacrifice, rebuilt the temple in twenty years, in the face of fierce hostility from the enemies of Judah. Ezra, esteemed by Jews as second only to Moses, fifty years later led a second band of exiles to Jerusalem, restored the laws and worship of the nation, and compiled and revised the sacred Scriptures. Nehemiah, the patriot exile, forsook high place in the Persian court, came as governor to Je-

rusalem, and devoted his energies to rebuilding the walls of the city and instituting religious reforms.

Events.—These great events mark the history in the two books: the rebuilding of city and temple by Prince Zerubbabel; the political reforms under Ezra; the religious reforms under Nehemiah.

ESTHER.

<p>Subject: Jew in Exile. Writer: Mordecai. Class: History. Chronology: 521 to 495 B.C.</p>	<p>Persons: Ahasuerus, Haman, Mordecai, Esther. Events: Promotion, Plot, Decree, Deliv- erance.</p>
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Like the book of Ruth, this is a brief but beautiful episode in the history of the Jewish nation. It belongs near to the time of the Babylonian captivity, and is an incident of exile in the far-away court of the greatest of Persian monarchs. After the lapse of centuries, devout Jews in every land yet observe its anniversary, called the "Feast of Purim."

Subject.—The "Jew in exile" aptly defines the book's place in history, as revealing God's care over his suffering people in time of exile. The name of God does not once appear in the book, yet the providence of God overshadows its every incident.

Writer.—The book's authorship was in doubt among the Jews, who had the best right to know

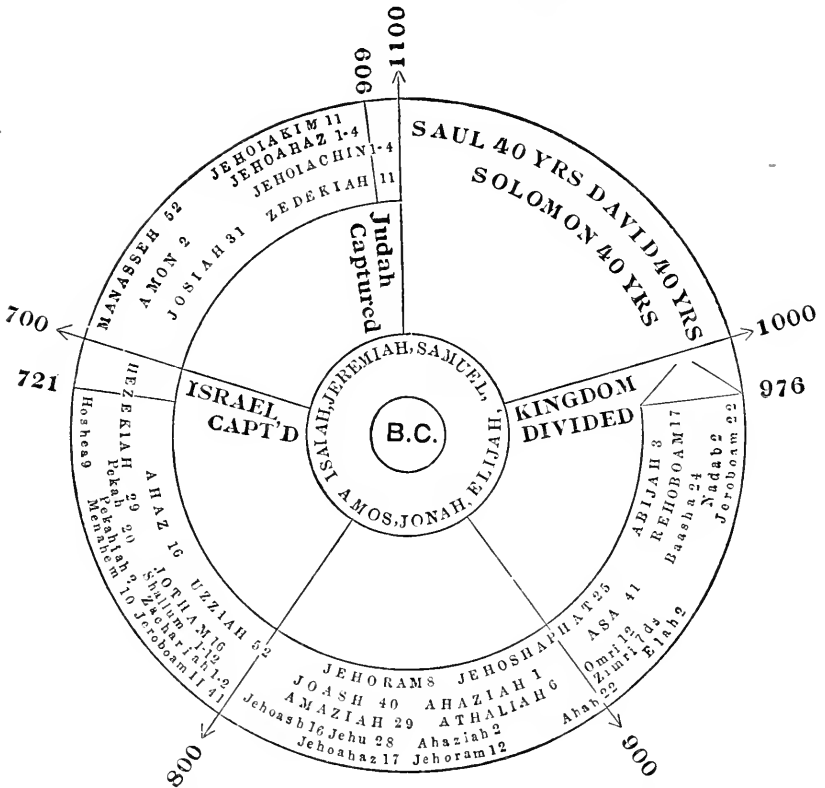
the origin of their sacred books. Ezra is thought by some to have written it; but the better opinion, in view of his intimate relationship to the book's history, is that Mordecai was its author.

Chronology.—This too is in doubt, the only certain thing known being its relation to the years of exile. Ahasuerus, the king, is thought to have been Xerxes, and the time prior to the invasion of Greece.

Persons.—Four persons are prominent: Ahasuerus, the typical Oriental monarch, luxurious, hasty, yet with a strong sense of kingly justice; Haman, the crafty prime minister, full of hatred to one who refused, for conscience's sake, to bow down before him; Mordecai, the Jew in exile, the man of God, and lover of his exiled nation; Esther, the beautiful queen, divinely lifted to the highest place of honor, to become God's chosen instrument of deliverance.

Events.—The book centers upon four scenes: The royal banquet and elevation of Esther to the queenship; the plot of Haman against the Jewish people; the disclosure of Esther and death of Haman; the counter decree and deliverance of the Jews.

THE JEWISH KINGS.



The above is designed to exhibit, within periods of one century each, the succession of the Jewish Kings of the Divided Kingdoms, with the length of each reign. Judah's Kings are expressed in capital letters.

III. THE BOOKS OF POETRY.

JOB.

Subject: Special Providence.	Persons: Jehovah, Satan, Job, Friends, Elihu.
Writer: Moses.	Events: Introduction, Controversy, Acquit- tal, Restoration.
Class: Poetry.	
Chronology: Patriar- chal. About 1520 B.C.	

The atmosphere of the patriarchal age is about one who comes to the study of this great book, the noblest of the epics, the one divinely inspired. It has real history as its basis. See Ezekiel xiv. 14; James v. 11. To Jews and to Christians it reveals the beauty of religion—constant in spirit, changing only in form—in the far-away mists of the world's early morning.

Subject.—The book sets forth a devout soul struggling over the hardest of human problems—why the good should be called to suffer. It teaches immortality; it reveals the needed discipline of sorrow. But its central theme, about which its teachings all revolve, is the doctrine of God's special providence, as wrought out through joy or sorrow, wealth or poverty, in every devout life.

Writer.—Opinions vary widely. Some hold that Job wrote it; others accredit its authorship to Solomon, Ezra, or to a post-exilian writer. The Jews

assigned it to Moses, holding that he rewrote it from the original, which came from Job, and put it in its present form.

Chronology.—No one knows. The Oxford Teachers' Bible dates the history in the book at B.C. 1520. The setting, language, history, and religion of the book belong to the patriarchal age. The father is priest over his house. There is no hint of later Jewish history or worship, which is inexplicable if the book was written after the time of Moses.

Persons.—Satan, Job, the three friends, Elihu, the mediator, and Jehovah, are the *dramatis personæ*. Satan is a personal devil, real, powerful, malignant. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar are skilled in human philosophy, and full of "wise saws and instances," but mistaken judges of divine problems. Elihu is the true interpreter of Providence. There is nothing grander in the Bible than the sublime picture of Jehovah which the book presents.

Events.—The movement is in four parts: (1) The introduction (in prose), recounting Job's prosperity, followed by his dire affliction; (2) the controversy—a series of speeches, three in number, alternating between Job's friends and himself; (3) the acquittal, containing the mediatory speech of

Elihu and the address of Jehovah; (4) the restoration of Job, and his latter end (in prose).

PSALMS.	
Subject: Devotion.	Divisions: In 5 parts.
Writers: David <i>et al.</i>	Compilers: David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Ezra.
Class: Poetry.	
Chronology: 1500 to 500 B.C.	

Subject.—The book of Psalms is the one great manual of devotion for Jew and Christian alike. It is a collection of religious poems, from the experiences of inspired writers, and specially designed for the Jewish temple worship. But so wide is their range, so truly adapted to every age, condition, and clime, so expressive of every phase of religious life, that the book of Psalms is read and sung the world over, and enters more largely into the ritual of the Church and the worship of the family than any other part of the Bible, not even excepting the Gospels. In the temple service, at the daily hours of sacrifice, and at the feasts and festivities, the Psalms were sung by the great Levite choir, to the music of many instruments.

Writers.—David did more than all others to develop the musical life of the nation, and to put it to the noblest religious and patriotic uses. But David was only the chief, not the exclusive, writer of the Psalms. Out of the one hundred and fifty,

he probably wrote eighty, with a score or more partly accredited to him. David's chief musician and choristers, with Solomon, Moses, Hezekiah, and others, were doubtless in part composers. The ascriptions or titles of the Psalms are of questionable origin.

Chronology.—The book of Psalms ranges through the entire life of the nation, from the conquest to the captivity. Moses doubtless wrote the ninetieth Psalm. Some of the Psalms are known to have been composed during and after the captivity of Judah; so that they may be said to extend from B.C. 1500 to B.C. 500, a period of one thousand years, though usually assigned to the reign of David, which began 1056 B.C.

Divisions and Compilers.—The book is in five distinct parts. David, as founder of Hebrew psalmody, first introduced it into public worship; his successors, Solomon, Hezekiah, and Ezra, are believed to have compiled the Psalms, and arranged them in order in five collections, as follows: First collection, Psalms i.-xli., all of David; second collection, Psalms xlii.-lxxii., compiled probably by Solomon from compositions of David and others; third collection, Psalms lxxiii.-lxxxix., compiled by Hezekiah; fourth collection, Psalms xc.-cvi., compiled in Josiah's time; fifth collection,

Psalms cvii.-cl., compiled by Ezra during and after the captivity.

PROVERBS.

Subject: Wisdom. Writers: Solomon <i>et al.</i> Class: Poetry. Chronology: 1000 to 500 B.C.	Divisions: In 5 Parts. Compilers: Hezekiah, Agur, Lemuel, Ezra.
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Subject.—This book is a fitting companion to Psalms. As that book is a manual of devotion for the inner life, so is Proverbs a manual of wisdom for the outer life. It is eminently the “book of wisdom,” and its maxims are beyond those of mere human production. The essence of all worldly wisdom is selfishness; the essence of the proverbs of Solomon is righteousness. The Proverbs of Solomon apply as aptly to our complex modern life as they did to the cruder conditions of ancient civilization, which is an evidence of their divine inspiration. They recognize God in every event, and the “fear of the Lord” is the keynote of the book.

Writers.—The first verse of the book names as author Solomon, the King; but as the book of Psalms is named after David, the chief contributor, so it is with Proverbs. Solomon, perhaps, wrote more than all others whose proverbs enter into the book. Of the thirty-one chapters composing the book, it is safe to say that twenty-four are the work of Solomon. King Hezekiah enlarged

the collection in his day, from what sources is not known. The words of Agur and Lemuel form the thirtieth and part of the thirty-first chapters. It was a Jewish tradition that the book was further enlarged by Ezra the Scribe.

Chronology.—Solomon came to the throne B.C. 1015, and died B.C. 975. Taking the above tradition at what it may be worth, the book of Proverbs, compiled in part at the beginning by Solomon, was not completed until the time of Ezra, about five hundred years later.

Divisions and Compilers.—The book is plainly a growth, in at least five parts or stages. The first nine chapters differ from all the others. They consist of several compositions in parallel or antithetic sentences, together personifying “wisdom.” From the tenth to the twenty-fourth chapters, inclusive, is the second division—containing short sayings, without an apparent connection of thought or subject, written by Solomon. From the twenty-fifth to the twenty-ninth chapter are selections made by “the men of Hezekiah,” after the lapse of two hundred and fifty years, forming a third division. “The words of Agur,” and the “words of King Lemuel,” form the concluding divisions.

ECCLESIASTES.**Subject:** Happiness.**Writer:** Solomon.**Class:** Poetry.**Chronology:** 1015 to 975

B.C.

Divisions: In 4 Parts.**SOLOMON'S SONG.**—The Beauty of Religion.

The book of Ecclesiastes is another exposition of inspired wisdom. Some have found it perplexing and contradictory, and upon a lower level than other Old Testament books; but the trouble is rather with the critics than with the book. The historical setting and plan of the book being considered, its place and purpose will be plain.

Subject.—The book has for its subject the problem of human happiness—what it is, whence it comes. Every supposed source of happiness is in turn considered—wealth, learning, pleasure, etc. The experiences of the author are rehearsed, his judgment is summed up in the oft-recurring words “vanity of vanities,” and he brings us at last to the one solution of the problem: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”

Writer.—The book names as its author Solomon, “the son of David, King of Jerusalem.” There is no warrant, in the book or out of it, for supposing that any one else had part in its authorship, or that the book belongs to a time later than Solomon’s.

It is safe to follow the opinion that the book was written by Solomon late in life, after his backsliding and restoration.

Chronology.—The time can be conjectured only. It was probably written near to the close of Solomon's reign, which was from 1015 to 975 B.C.

Divisions.—The prologue states the problem. After this come four parts, as follows: The vanity of worldly pleasure (chapters ii., iii.); of wealth and power (chapters iv.-vi.); of mere knowledge (chapters vii.-xi.); the value of religion (chapter xii.).

SOLOMON'S SONG.

This is the one remaining song of the many accredited to Solomon in 1 Kings iv. 32. It was part of the ancient Hebrew canon, but its place in the Christian canon has sometimes been challenged. It is a single long poem, with two interlocutory speakers. What its true subject or purpose is finds many opinions. Some of the critics deal with it as an allegory, representing the union of Christ and his Church; others, as presenting in fervid oriental imagery the beauty of religion.

IV. THE GREATER PROPHETS.

ISAIAH.

Subject: Messianic Kingdom.	Chronology: 760 to 698 B.C.
Writer: Isaiah.	Prophecies: Syria, Ten Tribes, Tyre, Nineveh, Babylon, Christ.
Class: Prophecy.	

Subject.—First, Judah and her enemies. Isaiah came in the “Indian summer” of Judah, serving four of her kings. The people had grown rich and luxurious, caring little for the temple and its worship. Hezekiah was one of the few good kings. Together with the prophet, he turned the nation back from its corruptions. The kingdom of Israel was on the verge of destruction, which came to pass while Isaiah was serving Judah. Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Tyre, and Damascus, enemies of Judah, were in turn denounced by the prophet, and their doom foretold. Second, the Messianic kingdom, chapters xl.-lxvi., in which Isaiah vividly draws upon the canvas of the future the advent, personality, and kingdom of Christ. So full and lofty, yet so accurate in detail, are these prophecies, that the other wonderful visions of Isaiah suffer in comparison. The entire book might properly be called a representation of the Messianic kingdom.

Writer.—Isaiah was the greatest of the Hebrew prophets. He was fifth in order of time. He lived in Jerusalem, and served Judah especially. He prophesied under four kings—a period of sixty years. His contemporaries in prophecy were Amos, Hosea, and Micah. He died during the reign of Manasseh, aged ninety years. He was probably of royal blood.

Chronology.—Isaiah began to prophesy in the eighth century B.C. (about 760), and died probably 698 B.C. He was contemporary with three great rulers of Assyria: Pul, Sargon, Sennacherib. Romulus was building Rome during the life of the prophet.

Prophecies.—Isaiah's greater prophecies were as follows: the destruction of Syria, fulfilled by Pul; the captivity of the ten tribes, by Sargon; the ruin of Tyre, completed by Alexander the Great; the destruction of Nineveh, by the Medes; the capture and ruin of Babylon, by Cyrus the Great; the advent of the Messiah.

JEREMIAH.

Subject: Doom of Judah.	Chronology: 629 to 588 B.C.
Class: Prophecy.	Prophecies: Jerusalem, Zedekiah, Captivity, Babylon, Exile and Restoration.
Writer: Jeremiah.	
LAMENTATIONS.—Lament for Jerusalem.	

Subject.—The book is a mingling of prophecy and history, the former largely predominating. The prophecies relate chiefly to the doom of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem, and the history to the siege, captivity, and downfall of the country. The prophet lived under the shadow of impending doom, with a clear vision before him of the conquering hosts of the brilliant Nebuchadnezzar, the exile of the nation, the destruction of holy city and temple. By the Jews the book of Lamentations was joined with the main book, as its concluding portion. It is a Hebrew acrostic poem (like Psalm cxix.), and was written by Jeremiah after the destruction of Jerusalem, in a series of dirges over the ruin of the city and the sorrows of its people.

Writer.—Jeremiah lived about sixty years, mainly in the last half of the seventh century B.C., and was called to prophesy when a young man, near the middle of Josiah's reign. For forty years his prophetic career continued, amid intense sorrow and persecution. He survived the destruction of

Judah and Jerusalem, is said to have rescued and buried the ark, became an exile in Egypt with a remnant of his brethren, and was there stoned to death by them.

Chronology.—Jeremiah began to prophesy seventy years after Isaiah's death, his prophecies extending from about 629 B.C. to the destruction of Jerusalem, 588 B.C.

Prophecies.—His most notable prophecies are as follows: The destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; the captivity and blinding of King Zedekiah; the date and duration of the Babylonian captivity; the destruction of Babylon.

EZEKIEL.	
Subject: The Restoration.	Chronology: 595 to 574 B.C.
Class: Prophecy.	Prophecies: Doom of Seven Nations, and Judah's Return.
Writer: Ezekiel.	

Subject.—The theme of Ezekiel's prophecies, like that of Jeremiah, refers to Judah and her impending calamities. His prophecy of the restoration of Judah, however, and her deliverance and return from Babylon, was expanded to a higher and grander spiritual restoration in the far future, and thus exceeds the vision of Jeremiah.

Writer.—Ezekiel is called the "captive prophet," having spent his entire ministry in captivity. He

was a boy in Jerusalem when Jeremiah began to prophesy, and at the age of twenty-five was carried a prisoner by Nebuchadnezzar to Chebar, on the river Euphrates, two hundred miles north of Babylon. He was contemporary as a prophet six years with Jeremiah, and twenty-two years with Daniel. When he was a child, Nineveh, the mighty Assyrian capital, was the military center of the world. Tyre was next, as the greatest commercial center. Jerusalem, under Josiah, was again rich and famous; Babylon, least of the four, was rising into renown. When he was a man, Nineveh was in ruins, Tyre had fallen, Jerusalem was desolated, and Babylon was ruler of the world.

Chronology.—Ezekiel's prophetic career began when he was about thirty years old, and extended from 595 to 574 B.C.

Prophecies.—These are in three groups, and center upon Judah and Jerusalem. The first group was delivered before the siege of Jerusalem, and warned the city against hope of deliverance from Egypt. The second group, delivered during the siege, denounced God's judgments against the seven nations which had aided the conquerors of Judah: Sidon, Tyre, Ammon, Moab, Philistia, Edom, Egypt. The third group, after the siege, predicted the return of Judah from exile, and her spiritual restoration.

DANIEL.

Subject: Messianic Triumph.	Chronology: 607 to 534 B.C.
Class: Prophecy.	Prophecies: The Rise of Four Empires, and Advent of Christ.
Writer: Daniel.	

Subject.—The book is part history and part prophecy, but the former is of small moment compared with the latter. It is, indeed, the last and, in some respects, the greatest of the greater books of prophecy. The history in the first six chapters deals with Daniel's life and the events of the exile in Babylon, while the prophecies range in scope from his own time, through the rise and fall of successive empires, until the final establishment and universal triumph of the kingdom of Christ.

Writer.—Daniel was a prince of the royal blood in his own country, and became a greater prince in the land of exile. At the age of sixteen, in the third year of King Jehoiakim (607 B.C.), he was carried by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon. He began his prophetic career two years later, and continued it throughout the seventy years of exile. He was made chief of Nebuchadnezzar's council while yet a young man, and was vicegerent during the king's madness. After the capture of Babylon and death of Belshazzar, Darius, the Mede, made Daniel his prime minister, in which high place he was afterwards confirmed by Cyrus. He witnessed the re-

turn of Judah from exile, and died at Babylon when about ninety years old.

Chronology.—The book includes from 607 to 534 B.C., and is concurrent with the exile in Babylon.

Prophecies.—Daniel's earlier prophecies relate to the successive rise and fall of four great empires: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. - His four visions symbolized the course of these great kingdoms, ending, finally, in the advent and world-wide triumph of the kingdom of Christ. Daniel foretold, with exact detail, the date of Christ's advent, the duration of his ministry, and his death.

V. THE LESSER PROPHETS.

HOSEA.

Subject: Kingdom of Israel.	Chronology: 785 to 725 B.C.
Class: Prophecy.	Prophecies: Doom of Israel, Assyrian Exile.
Writer: Hosea.	

Subject.—What Jeremiah was to Judah, Hosea was to the northern kingdom of Israel. That kingdom was nearing its end, and had grown utterly corrupt. Its wealth was great, and its wickedness greater. The doom of Israel, its captivity, and utter desolation by the Assyrian hosts, is the one theme of the prophet's warnings.

Writer.—Little is known of Hosea. He was a prophet of the northern kingdom, successor probably to Amos, and contemporary with Isaiah of the kingdom of Judah. He began his career under Jeroboam II., and continued prophesying until near the captivity of Israel, 721 B.C. He is thought by some writers to have witnessed that captivity.

Chronology.—The prophet's ministry extended from the time of Jeroboam in Israel, and Uzziah in Judah, to the reign of Hezekiah, in whose sixth year Israel's captivity occurred—about sixty years, from 785 to 725 B.C. Jeroboam II. had added to

the wealth and bounds of his kingdom; but Assyria, under its great warriors Pul and Shalmaneser, was threatening destruction to its enemies. Israel at last, under the Assyrian Sargon, was led into captivity.

Prophecies.—Hosea predicted the conquest of the kingdom, the desolation of the land, the exile of the people—all of which were fulfilled by the Assyrians.

JOEL.	
Subject: Kingdom of Judah.	Time: 800 to 760 B.C.
Class: Prophecy.	Prophecies: Assyrian Invasion, the Kingdom of Christ.
Writer: Joel.	

Subject.—Joel's place in the prophetic line is one of the difficult problems for Bible chronologists, which leaves in doubt the immediate subject of his prophecies. Some place his prophecy as early as Josiah; others make him contemporaneous with the reign of Uzziah. In the latter case, it is not hard to apply his prophecies. The northern kingdom of Israel was nearing destruction, and the Assyrian war clouds were gathering over Judah. Hence the voice of the prophet is raised in denunciation of the sins of the kingdom of Judah, and in warnings against the invasion of the Assyrians.

Writer.—Little is known of Joel. He was an inhabitant of Jerusalem, a prophet of the kingdom

of Judah. He belongs in the list of direct Messianic prophets, as is exhibited by his memorable prophecy of the "last days," the outpouring of the Spirit, and the vision of the judgment.

Chronology.—Assigning him to the reign of Uzziah, his prophecies ranged between B.C. 800 and 760. As the book indicates, it was a time of sore drought and famine, together with an invasion of the dreaded locusts of the East. The prophet uses the locusts as a symbol of the impending invasion of the Assyrians, and calls a great fast, promising the mercy of God upon national repentance. Uzziah's reign was one of prosperity and increasing wickedness.

Prophecies.—These were directly in warning against the Assyrians; but Joel's visions range far beyond his own generation, and include the coming and kingdom of Christ. Tyre, Sidon, Egypt, and Edom "shall be a desolation," but "Judah shall abide forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation." Peter, on the day of Pentecost, quotes and applies the prophecy of Joel.

AMOS.

Subject: Kingdom of Israel.	Chronology: 787 to 760 B.C.
Class: Prophecy.	Prophecies: Captivity of Israel, Fate of Hostile Nations.
Writer: Amos.	

Subject.—Amos's prophecy included both northern and southern kingdoms. His prophetic message, addressed chiefly to Israel and Samaria, is aimed also at Judah. Both kingdoms had lapsed into idolatry. The golden calves were set up at Bethel and Dan, and Gilgal and Beersheba were centers of idol worship. The prophet was sent to Jeroboam II. to denounce the licentiousness of his court and kingdom. His prophecies begin with warnings against Syria, Philistia, Tyre, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and close with the promise of restoration of the tabernacle of David and the establishment of the kingdom.

Writer.—Amos was a contemporary, in part, of Hosea and Isaiah. He was a shepherd and dresser of sycamore-trees by occupation, and was untaught in the schools of the prophets. His prophetic career was of short duration. Though rude and unlearned, as he modestly speaks of himself, a great writer declares that in "loftiness of sentiment, elegance of diction, and force of speech he is not one whit behind the foremost of the Hebrew prophets."

Chronology.—Amos received his commission “two years before the earthquake,” he tells us, which, Josephus says, was a mark of divine displeasure upon Uzziah for his usurpation of the priestly office. This would place the beginning of his prophecies about 787 B.C.

Prophecies.—These are in four groups: the denunciation of neighboring nations which had aided the enemies of God’s people; the warnings against Israel’s worship of the golden calves, and God’s intended judgment; the denunciation of the sins of Judah; the vision of the restoration.

OBADIAH.

Subject: Edom.
Class: Prophecy.
Writer: Obadiah.
Chronology: 587 B.C.

Prophecies: Ruin of
 Edom, Restoration of
 Judah

Subject.—This briefest of the prophecies is clear and specific in its theme, which is the denunciation of Edom, the inveterate enemy of the chosen nation. The Edomites were the powerful and warlike descendants of Esau. They were kinsmen and neighbors of the “house of Jacob;” yet, with unrelenting enmity, had again and again made fierce assault upon God’s people, or had joined themselves to foreign conquerors. Finally their cup of wrath was filled to the brim by their cruel exultation over the destruction of Jerusalem and

their slaughter of the innocent Jews, who sought escape from the captivity of Nebuchadnezzar by hiding themselves amid the mountains of Edom.

Writer.—Little is known of him personally, or of his place or time; but the more probable opinion is that he was successor, if not contemporary, of Jeremiah. That he was prophet of Judah there is little question.

Chronology.—Assuming what is generally held (that Obadiah prophesied after the fall of Jerusalem, which was completed in 588 B.C.), the prophecy must have followed close upon that event, while the memory of Edomite cruelty was yet fresh in the minds of the conquered people of Judah.

Prophecies.—These are in two parts: the impending doom of Edom, and the catalogue of its sins and cruelties; the promise that Israel shall be restored, shall possess the lands of Edom and Philistia, and shall rejoice in the reëstablishment of “the kingdom of the Lord.”

JONAH.

Subject: Nineveh.
Class: Prophecy.
Writer: Jonah.

Chronology: 862 B.C.
Prophecy: Overthrow
of Nineveh.

Subject.—The destruction of Nineveh is the burden of Jonah’s prophecy. The book of Jonah is both narrative and prophetic. Its four chapters recount the divine commission to the prophet, his

attempted escape by sea, his warnings against the great city, followed by the repentance of its people. The book is one of exceeding interest, and bears internal evidence of its truthfulness. It is of special interest as an Old Testament illustration of God's concern for Gentile as well as Jew. Our Lord refers to the miracle of this book on two occasions (Matt. xii. 40, 41; xvi. 4) as a "sign" of his own death and resurrection. In recent years some have had their "fling" at the truth of Jonah's narrative, in the face of Christ's acceptance of it as historic.

Writer.—Jonah, the writer, was a prophet of the kingdom of Israel. He is supposed by some to have been that prophet who foretold to Jeroboam II. the enlargement of his territory and the prosperity of his reign. (2 Kings xiv. 25.) Josephus asserts the identity. In the time of Jonah, Assyria was the great world-power. Syria had been made tributary, and Israel's kings also had been compelled to pay tribute. Nineveh was the greatest of the world's cities. Diodorus says it was sixty miles in circumference. It was at this period of greatness and opulence that Jonah visited it.

Chronology.—Jonah was probably contemporaneous, in part, with the last days of Jehu. It is safe to place the time of the narrative and prophecy of the book between 862 and 800 B.C., thus making Jonah, as is commonly held, the first of the

Hebrew prophets whose prophecies are in the canon.

Prophecies.—One unvarying message came from the strange Jewish messenger of God: “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” It seems strange indeed, to those who forget the power of God, that a great heathen city should so soon repent, or repent at all, at the coming of one man, a Jew.

MICAH.	
Subject: Israel and Judah. Class: Prophecy. Writer: Micah. Chronology: 750 to 710 B.C.	Prophecies: Assyrian Invasion, Christ's Birthplace and Kingdom.

Subject.—The book of Micah was third in order of the minor prophets in the Septuagint, but sixth in our Bible. He was of the kingdom of Judah by birth and citizenship, but was called to prophesy to both Israel and Judah. It was his mission to warn the two kingdoms that, unless they repented and turned to God from their idolatry, the Assyrians would overwhelm and destroy them.

Writer.—Micah prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. He was contemporary with Isaiah.

Chronology.—This cannot be determined with exactness. The maximum of the three reigns

named above was fifty-nine years; the minimum time that Micah could have served under the three is sixteen years. The time of the book is given as between 750 and 710 B.C. After the death of Jeroboam II., the northern kingdom fell into anarchy and idolatry, under a number of weak and wicked kings. In Judah, under Jotham and Ahaz, the kingdom steadily declined into idolatry. Isaiah's and Micah's prophecies were heeded by King Hezekiah, and a reformation was begun during his long reign.

Prophecies.—These were predictions of the invasion of Israel by the Assyrians, the captivity of both kingdoms and their final restoration. The most notable of Micah's prophecies, however, is found in chapter v. 2, in which he predicts the place of our Lord's birth and the glory of the Messianic kingdom. This prophecy of birth was quoted (in Matthew) by the Jewish rulers before Herod the Great.

NAHUM.

Subject: Assyria.
Writer: Nahum.
Class: Prophecy.

Chronology: 713 B.C.
Prophecy: Ruin of
 Nineveh.

Subject.—The book of Nahum is a sequel to that of Jonah. Jonah had warned Nineveh, and the city had repented of its wickedness. The mercy of God had spared it for many years by rea-

son of its prompt repentance, but by the time of Nahum it had lapsed into its old idolatry and brutality. A second prophet is now commissioned to denounce its destruction, this time without hope of remission.

Writer.—Little is known of Nahum beyond what he states in his book. Some hold that he was a native of Galilee, of the village of Elkosh; that his parents were probably carried away into Assyrian captivity, while the prophet, a young man, escaped to Judah, and there prophesied. Others affirm that he was taken captive to Assyria; that Elkosh was the Alkusch on the banks of the Tigris, near to Nineveh; that he prophesied wholly in exile, and that to this day devout Jews visit the scene, and point out the “tomb of Nahum.”

Chronology.—Josephus asserts that he prophesied in the reign of Jotham, and that his prophecies were “fulfilled one hundred and fifteen years later,” when Nineveh was finally destroyed by the Medes and Chaldeans, about B.C. 625. Nineveh, at this time, was greatest of the world’s cities, and, under Shalmaneser, Sargon, and Sennacherib, powerful and rapacious. The period justifies the spirit and scope of Nahum’s prophecies.

Prophecy.—The “burden of Nineveh” was the prophet’s theme. Nothing exceeds his vivid picture of the siege and desolation of the great city.

How well this was fulfilled is a matter of history. For many centuries the site of the city was unknown, until in our own time Dr. Layard unearthed its ruins and confirmed the truth of prophecy.

HABAKKUK.

Subject: Chaldea.
Writer: Habakkuk.
Class: Prophecy.
Chronology: 628 to 610
 B.C.

Prophecies: Ruin of
 Chaldea, Mercy to
 Judah.

Subject.—As with Nahum, Habakkuk had a single purpose: to predict the destruction of the Chaldean empire, which had succeeded to the world-wide dominion long held by the Assyrians. By might of great armies and skilled generals, it was becoming the scourge of other nations.

Writer.—Apart from tradition, little is known of Habakkuk. He was probably a Levite in Judah, and his burial-place is pointed out near to Jerusalem.

Chronology.—The prophet belongs unquestionably to the time just preceding the invasion by the Chaldeans and the destruction of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar, and after the reformation attempted by King Josiah had spent its force and Judah had again lapsed into idolatry. His place in time is during the last part of the reign of Jo-

siah, and probably under Jehoiakim, from B.C. 626 to 610. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah.

Prophecies.—Nineveh was being assailed, or was perhaps already destroyed, by the Medes and Chaldeans. Necho, king of Egypt, was moving in triumph eastward, while young Nebuchadnezzar was winning fame as the Babylonian general. Every political omen abroad, and the loss of divine favor at home, pointed to the early and long-prophesied destruction of Judah. The prophet foresees the evil to come, and warns his countrymen against the destruction awaiting them at the hands of the Chaldeans, and ends by comforting them with the assurance that God in the end would destroy their oppressors, restore Judah to the divine favor, and bring her back from exile. “The just shall live by faith” is one of the many noble passages of the book, and was used by Paul as the basis of his New Testament teaching.

ZEPHANIAH.

Subject: Judah.

Writer: Zephaniah.

Class: Prophecy.

Chronology: 630-610 B.C.

Prophecies: Doom of Judah, Judah's Enemies, Restoration.

Subject.—The book of Zephaniah is a denunciation of the sins of Judah, and of its destruction by Jehovah, together with the destruction of the neighboring nations which had been her oppressors.

Writer.—Zephaniah traces his own lineage from King Hezekiah, and was, therefore, like Isaiah, a prophet of the royal line. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah and a prophet of Judah. Nothing more is known of him.

Chronology.—The prophet evidently lived and prophesied during the earlier years of King Josiah's reign, 630 to 610 B.C., prior to the reformation attempted by the king and to the finding of the book of the law. He speaks of the worship of the "host of heaven upon the house tops," which would have been true of the beginning of Josiah's reign. Manasseh's wicked reign of fifty-five years had greatly corrupted the kingdom of Judah, and introduced the worship of Baal. Assyria, always a terror of Judah, was beginning to totter before the yet greater power of Chaldea. It was during this last struggle of the prophets against the deepening wickedness of the nation that King Josiah and the prophets, Zephaniah and Jeremiah, sought to bring back the nation to repentance.

Prophecies.—The prophet foretells the destruction of Judah. The oppressors of Judah are also included in his message of denunciation—Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Ethiopia, and Nineveh. The book closes with the promise of return from captivity.

HAGGAI.

Subject: The Second Temple.	Chronology: B.C. 520.
Writer: Haggai.	Prophecies: The Second Temple, Christ's Coming.
Class: Prophecy.	

Subject.—The book of Haggai is the first of the prophecies after the Babylonian exile. Its purpose was the urging on of the rebuilding of the second temple, which for fourteen years had been suspended because of the opposition of the Samaritans.

Writer.—Haggai was one of the exiles from Judah whom the decree of Cyrus had permitted to return to their native land. He was, in all probability, an old man, and had seen the glory of Solomon's temple. He was contemporary with Zechariah. Cyrus authorized the captive Jews to return from Babylon and to rebuild their cities and temple. The foundation of the temple was at once laid, but the craft of enemies succeeded in getting a counter decree from the successor of Cyrus, and work was stopped. After many years of inactivity. Haggai came with his plea for the completion of the temple.

Chronology.—This is fixed by the prophet's own words at B.C. 520.

Prophecies.—Haggai predicts the cessation of famine, the success of Zerubbabel, and the "greater

glory of the second temple, because of Christ's appearance in it.

ZECHARIAH.	
Subject: Restoration.	Chronology: B.C. 520-487.
Writer: Zechariah.	Prophecies: The Restoration.
Class: Prophecy.	

Subject.—The book of Zechariah, like that of Haggai, his contemporary, deals, in part, with the rebuilding of the temple, but takes on a far wider range. It sets before the nation not only the completion of the temple of the Lord, but foretells the restoration of Jewish nation and Church, and the final coming of the Prince of Peace. The latter part of the book is generally held to be broadly Messianic.

Writer.—Zechariah was the grandson of Iddo, the head of a priestly house in the Jerusalem colony, and was one of the exiles whom Zerubbabel had led home from Babylon.

Chronology.—He began prophesying at the close of Haggai's short career, and continued for several years, until after the completion of the temple. The date of his prophecy is from B.C. 520 to 487. Darius Hystaspes was the reigning monarch, and Judah was one of his provinces, ruled over by a governor from Damascus.

Prophecy.—The book is in three parts, as fol-

lows: Part I. (chapters i.-vi.) narrates a series of eight visions, symbolic of the future state of the Jewish Church and nation. Part II. (chapters vii., viii.) points to a time when many nations shall worship the true God at Jerusalem. Part III. (chapters ix.-xiv.) is the Messianic portion, depicting the future course of the Jewish Church, and the coming and kingdom of Christ.

MALACHI.

Subject: The Advent.

Class: Prophecy.

Writer: Malachi.

Chronology: About 397
B.C.

Prophecies: The Com-
ing of John and Je-
sus.

Subject.—The book closes the post-exilian prophecies, and is the last voice of the long line of Hebrew prophecies, ranging through a thousand years. The Jews called it the “seal,” because of this fact. Four hundred years without Bible record were to ensue, after which John, the herald of Christ, was to prepare the “way of the Lord.” The book is a connecting link between the Old and the New Testament.

Writer.—Nothing is known of the writer, Malachi, but his name and the time of his writing. He was probably the national prophet under Nehemiah, during the latter part of his rule as governor.

Chronology.—Malachi prophesied about four

hundred years before Christ. His book points plainly to the time of Nehemiah and the social and religious lapses of that period, which followed the partial reformation achieved by Ezra. The time of the prophecy is given at 397 B.C. The nation was under Persian rule, Artaxerxes being king, and a Jewish governor, as his deputy, administered the affairs of the Jews. The second temple was complete, and Ezra was dead. The nation was falling again into grossest wickedness, led on by the priests, and temple and worship were neglected. In this time of spiritual declension came the prophet's message.

Prophecies.—Very vividly and distinctly the prophet points to John the Baptist, and to Christ as the one to whom "all the prophets gave witness."

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

I. THE FOUR GOSPELS.

Book.	Writer.	Time.	Subject.
Matthew.	Matthew.	38 A. D.	The Son of David.
Mark.	Mark.	62 A. D.	The Son of God.
Luke.	Luke.	63 A. D.	The Son of Man.
John.	John.	80 A. D.	The God-Man.

II. THE BOOK OF ACTS.

The Acts.	Luke.	64 A. D.	The Early Church.
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III. THE PAULINE EPISTLES.

Romans.	Paul.	57 A. D.	Justification by Faith
1 Corinthians.		57 A. D.	} Christian Living.
2 Corinthians.		57 A. D.	
Galatians.		57 A. D.	Christian Liberty.
Ephesians.		62 A. D.	Christian Unity.
Philippians.		62 A. D.	Christian Liberality
Colossians.		62 A. D.	Christ's Supremacy.
1 Thessalonians.		53 A. D.	} Christ's Coming.
2 Thessalonians.		53 A. D.	
1 Timothy.		65 A. D.	} Christian Ministry.
2 Timothy.		66 A. D.	
Titus.		65 A. D.	Church Government.
Philemon.		62 A. D.	Christian Fraternity
Hebrews.		66 A. D.	Christ's Priesthood.

IV. THE GENERAL EPISTLES.

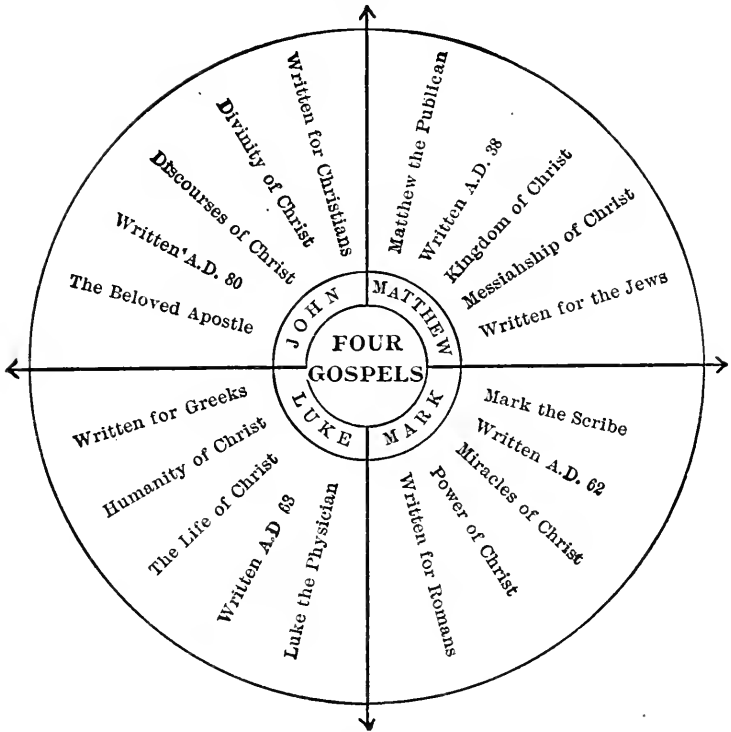
James.	James.	61 A. D.	Christian Works.
1 Peter.	{ Peter	64 A. D.	} Christian Fortitude
2 Peter.		66 A. D.	
1 John.	{ John	90 A. D.	Christian Assurance
2 John.			Christian Orthodoxy.
3 John.			Christian Hospitality.
Jude.	Jude	66-70 A. D.	Christian Loyalty

V THE BOOK OF PROPHECY.

Revelation	John	96 A. D.	Christ and Antichrist.
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NOTE.—The "time" above noted refers to date of writing of the book. Though more nearly defined than Old Testament chronology, New Testament dates are largely conjectural.

THE FOUR GOSPELS.



The above outline presents, in the order of their place in the canon and the date of their publication, the four Gospels, as to author, time, content, and intent.

PART III.—THE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS.

I. THE FOUR GOSPELS.

MATTHEW.

Subject: The Son of David.	Place: Chiefly Galilee.
Class: Historic.	Characteristic: The Evidences.
Writer: Matthew.	Purpose: A Hebrew Gospel.
Time: A.D. 38.	

Subject.—Matthew's Gospel, first in order and time of the four, centers upon the life of Christ. Its purpose, however, is not strictly biographical or chronological. It is second to Luke's Gospel in the amount of historic incident, and of the four Gospels pays least regard to the order of time in narrating events. It sets before us Jesus as the son of David, the Messiah of prophecy; and groups the events and teachings of his life in such a way as to confirm this purpose. Sixty-five citations from Old Testament prophets are found in the book, more than in all the other Gospels, showing the underlying plan of the writer.

Writer.—Matthew was a Hebrew, living at Capernaum. He was a publican, collecting taxes at the Sea of Galilee. It should be remembered that publicans, though despised by Jews as servants of

Rome, were not necessarily of mean character. Everything points to the contrary in the case of Matthew. He was chosen as one of the Twelve, and tradition declares that "he opened the doors of Persia to the gospel, and was stoned as a martyr."

Time.—Concerning the time of the writing of this book there are widely divergent views. Some hold that the book was written as late as A.D. 60, or beyond; others place it nearer to the death of Christ, from A.D. 38 to 42, within a few years of the crucifixion; yet others maintain the theory that there were duplicate Gospels by Matthew, one very early, in the Aramaic, and one much later, in the Greek. That the book was written at the earlier date is supported by internal evidence, and by the fact that it is wholly improbable that the apostles would have allowed so long a time as thirty years to elapse before one of them wrote an authentic account of the Lord's life.

Place.—The Gospels vary one from the other as to the place and period in the life of our Lord which they emphasize. Matthew's Gospel might be called a Galilean Gospel, as the larger part of it has to do with the eighteen months of our Lord's ministry in that province.

Characteristic.—Each Gospel, in its point of view and purpose, is distinct from the others. Matthew had in mind, evidently, to present Jesus as

the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. To this end he groups events regardless of time, and often cites the prophets. The characteristic of Matthew, therefore, is the historic and prophetic evidences concerning Christ. Written within the shadow of the cross, it was to be expected that this first Gospel would connect Christ's death with all that the Old Testament had prefigured by type and prophecy concerning him; and would present Jesus Christ to the Jews as their promised Saviour, through the medium of a Hebrew Gospel.

MARK.

<p>Subject: The Son of God. Class: Historic. Writer: Mark. Time: About 62 A.D.</p>	<p>Place: Chiefly Galilee. Characteristic: The Miracles. Purpose: A Roman Gospel.</p>
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Subject.—Mark's Gospel is the briefest, and deals only with our Lord's public ministry. It is silent as to his childhood, youth, and years of preparation. It is evident that to Mark was given to write a Gospel which should present the active ministry of Jesus as the Son of God, as the divine Master over man, nature, and the invisible world. Pagan mythology abounded in fanciful legends of sons and daughters of the gods, dwelling among human beings, and possessed of miraculous powers. Mark draws the graphic picture of the only Son of the one true God.

Writer.—Mark, the writer, was a young man, probably the young man described by himself (xiv. 51). He lived at Jerusalem, was cousin to Barnabas, and was converted by Peter, who calls him his “son.” He had opportunity, as resident of Jerusalem, to become acquainted with the facts in the life of Jesus, and his vivid narrative challenges the opinion of some that he wrote his Gospel under the direction of Peter. Mark was with Paul and Barnabas on their first tour, and later with Paul in prison at Rome, and with Peter at Babylon. He was probably the youngest New Testament writer.

Time.—The time of the writing of the Gospel is in doubt. Some place it as earliest of the Gospels, which is not likely. The larger opinion is that it was written at Rome, in the order of its place in the canon, certainly before the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. The date generally given is about A.D. 62.

Place.—Mark, like Matthew, deals mainly with the events of our Lord’s Galilean ministry, adding to it a brief sketch of the Perean period, which Luke more fully presents. In common with the other Gospel writers, he devotes much space to the closing events of our Lord’s life in and around Jerusalem.

Characteristic.—The characteristic of Mark’s Gospel is the miracles of Christ. He gives no

great discourse, and few parables; but of all the Gospel narratives, his is the fullest and most vivid account of the Lord's miracles. His descriptions abound in characteristic touches wanting in the others. Mark's purpose was to write a Gospel for the Romans, whose ideal was that of power. They cared little for the merely religious, but were moved by wonders and miracles. Just such a Gospel as would be most impressive to these world conquerors, Mark wrote. Hence he says nothing of the thirty years preceding the public ministry of Jesus. The power and majesty of Christ is his theme, to which he steadfastly holds.

LUKE.	
Subject: The Son of Man.	Places: Galilee and Perea.
Class: Historic.	Characteristic: The Life.
Writer: Luke.	Purpose: A Greek Gospel.
Time: About 63 A.D.	

Subject.—Luke writes of our Lord as the “Son of Man,” from the standpoint of his humanity. In simple narrative, he gives the events of our Lord's life in their chronological order. His Gospel contains much the fullest material. Representing the contents of the Gospels at 100, Mark has 7 peculiarities and 93 coincidences; Matthew has 42 peculiarities and 58 coincidences; Luke has 59 peculiarities and 41 coincidences. Luke

gives two sections of our Lord's life which are lightly noted by the other Gospels—his childhood and youth, and his Perea ministry.

Writer.—Little is known as to Luke. He wrote two books, the Gospel and the book of Acts; he was a Gentile, and by occupation a physician; he was a companion of Paul on his second and third tours, and in prison with him at Cæsarea and Rome. From the traditions of the Fathers, we learn that he was a Syrian, a native of Antioch, a convert of Paul, a painter, one of the seventy, that he labored in Southern Europe, and suffered martyrdom in Greece.

Time.—Luke's Gospel preceded his book of Acts. (Acts i. 1.) Some hold that the Gospel must have been written at Cæsarea, while Luke was with Paul in prison in that city. The date commonly given is A.D. 63, in the belief that both Gospel and Acts followed the first imprisonment of Paul.

Places.—Luke's Gospel, like those of Matthew and Mark, narrates the Galilean ministry, but Luke adds the Perea ministry beyond the Jordan, near the close of our Lord's life. This period, with its wonderful series of parables, including that of the prodigal son, would be lost but for Luke.

Characteristic.—Luke's special purpose seems to be the putting before us of the simple story of our Lord's life, in the order in which it was lived.

Discourses, miracles, parables, succeed one another, without special emphasis, as in Matthew and Mark. This is in accord with the preface to his Gospel, in which he says: "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus." His was the Greek Gospel, written from the standpoint of a cultured Greek, free from Jewish prejudice. It is the broad gospel of our Lord's humanity. Christ's line, in Luke, runs back to Adam. Our Lord's infancy, his prayers, his sympathy for sinners, his social life, are emphasized by Luke. His Gospel has been fittingly called the "Gospel of the Gentiles."

JOHN.

Subject: The God-Man.
Class: Historic.
Writer: John the Apostle.
Time: About A.D. 80.

Place: Chiefly Judea.
Characteristic: The Discourses.
Purpose: For All Christians.

Subject.—It is the God-man whom John specially presents. His Gospel opens with its keynote: "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." The synoptical evangelists had presented the human side of our Lord's life; but to John, who had penetrated most deeply into the spiritual mysteries of the kingdom of Christ, it was given especially to sum up the great doctrines which en-

title his Gospel to the name which one of the Fathers gave it—"the spiritual Gospel." John gives no parables, and only eight miracles, six of which had been omitted by the other writers. He records his own personal recollections, with peculiar emphasis. He saw, he knows; hence John's Gospel has been a stumbling-block to mythical and legendary theorists. Clement of Alexandria wrote: "John, last of all, perceiving that the more corporeal truths were revealed in the previous Gospels, composed a spiritual Gospel."

Writer.—John was a fisherman, but he evidently belonged to a family of means and influence, as his father employed servants, and he himself was "known to the high priest." His mother was a disciple of the Lord, and John and his brother became disciples of John the Baptist, and afterwards of Jesus. He was ordained one of the Twelve, and was probably its youngest member. Jesus named him "Son of Thunder," from knowledge of his temper and spirit; yet he became the "disciple whom Jesus loved," and is altogether the most unique figure of the Twelve. He was with the Lord in the judgment hall and at the cross, and to him was committed the mother of Jesus. He was for many years at Ephesus, in charge of the Churches of Asia Minor. He was banished to Patmos by Domitian, and, returning to Ephesus, as

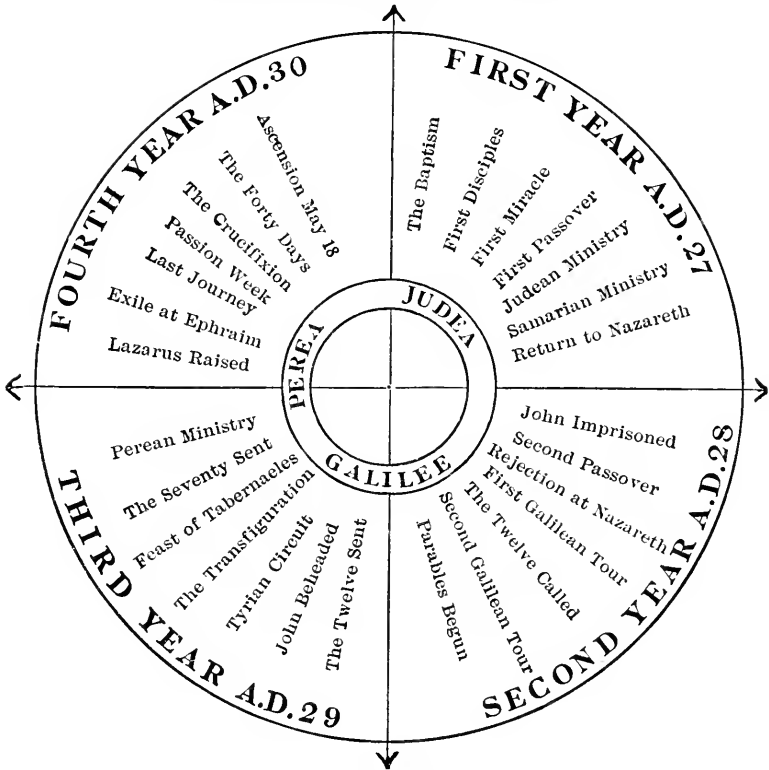
last of the apostles, is reputed to have died at the age of one hundred years.

Time.—The Gospel was written long after the other three, and the time is given as between A.D. 80 and A.D. 96, the probabilities being in favor of the earlier date.

Place.—John confines his Gospel chiefly to the ministry of our Lord in the province of Judea. The other writers had already emphasized the Galilean and Perean ministry of Jesus; and John, with their Gospels before him, deals rather with the ministry of Judea, which they had omitted.

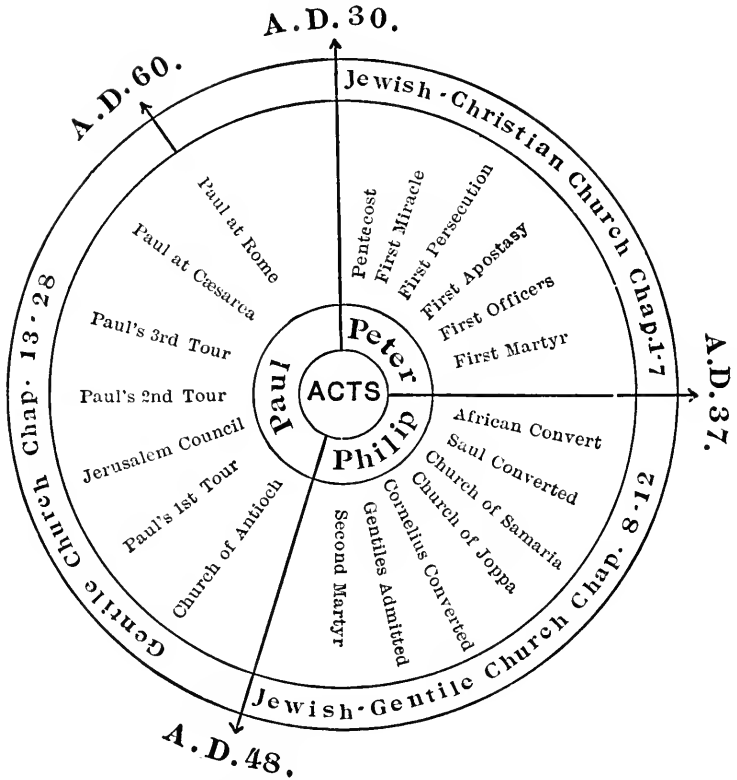
Characteristic.—John sets forth specially the greater discourses and doctrines of Jesus, and his Gospel is, therefore, peculiarly a didactic one. Writing long after the others, when there was no special need of a Hebrew, a Roman, and a Greek Gospel, John writes this closing, catholic Gospel, and designs it not for a class or nation only, but for all Christians of all time.

THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST.



The above represents in order the several years of our Lord's ministry, and the chief events of each year. The inner circle exhibits relatively the Province in which each year was spent.

THE BOOK OF ACTS.



The above presents in outline the three divisions or periods in the Book of Acts, with the leading events of each in their order of time.

II. THE BOOK OF ACTS.

THE ACTS.	
Subject: The Early Church.	Place: The Roman Empire.
Class: Historic.	History: First Thirty Years.
Writer: Luke.	Purpose: The Holy Spirit's Leadership.
Time: About A.D. 64.	

Subject.—The book of Acts is the sequel in time and history to the four Gospels. Its subject is the early Church, beginning with the Ascension, A.D. 30, and ending with the imprisonment of the apostle Paul, about 60 A.D., after the gospel had been planted in all the great capitals of the world. Three conditions, under Providence, conspired to the swift and marvelous advance of the gospel in so brief a time. These were: the universal rule of the Roman empire; the general use of the Greek language, which furnished a ready medium for preaching and writing; the wide dissemination of the Old Testament in the Jewish synagogues, as foundation and place for the preaching of the new faith.

Writer.—Luke was the writer. In the opening verses he states the connection with his “former treatise,” or Gospel. Luke, according to tradition, was a convert of Paul, and between the two there

existed a peculiarly strong affection. He was fellow-traveler with Paul on his second and third missionary tours, and with him in prison at Cæsa-rea and at Rome.

Time.—The last chapter of Acts leaves Paul at Rome, a prisoner. Luke must have written the book soon after the incidents recorded in this chapter. The time of the book is given as about A.D. 64.

History.—The history in the book covers the first thirty years of the Church, from the Ascension to Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. Short as was the time, it was enough for the extension of the gospel throughout the Roman empire, into Asia, Europe, and Africa, and for the organization of churches in most of the great cities. The book emphasizes the ministries of two men: Peter, as leader, in the first twelve chapters; and Paul, in the remaining sixteen chapters. Under Peter, the scene of action is Palestine, with James and John and Philip as helpers. The Jewish-Christian Church is its special theme. Under Paul, the book takes world-wide range; Christianity throws off its Jewish fetters and becomes cosmopolitan, like its great leader. Throughout the many and thrilling events of the book may be seen the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit. One has well said that the book is not "so much the acts of the apostles as it is the acts of the Holy Ghost."

III. THE PAULINE EPISTLES.

ROMANS.

Subject: Justification by Faith.	Time and Place: A.D. 57, Corinth.
Class: Doctrinal.	History: The Church at Rome.
Writer: Paul.	

Subject.—The book of Romans is not only first in order, but easily foremost in rank of the doctrinal books. Nearly every great doctrine of Christianity is here touched upon, but the book rests upon what, to Paul, was the fundamental truth of the gospel—justification by faith. Paul's argument might be summed up in three points: salvation needed by all, salvation provided for all, salvation free to all, Jew or Gentile, on the one condition of faith in Jesus Christ.

Writer.—Paul was doubtless several years younger than our Lord. His birthplace was Tarsus, in Asia Minor, famous for its schools. He was of pure Hebrew blood, of the faith of the Pharisees, was taught the trade of a tentmaker, was of a wealthy family, with the rights of a Roman citizen. His conversion took place about A.D. 38. Persecuted by the Jews, he fled to Arabia for three years, receiving special revelations there,

preached later at Tarsus and Antioch, and then began his missionary career.

Time.—The book was written from Corinth, at the close of Paul's third missionary journey, shortly before his arrest by the Jews at Jerusalem, during the year A.D. 57.

History.—Rome was the metropolis of the world. Thither drifted all nationalities and creeds. Paul had learned through his friends of the Church at Rome. It had a mixed membership of Jews and Gentiles, the latter probably outnumbering the former, but dominated by them. There were the usual Judaizing influences and leadership, which Paul everywhere encountered in the early Church. Paul longed to visit this Roman Church; and meantime writes this exposition of the great doctrines of the gospel, designed especially to meet the needs of a cosmopolitan Church. The great purpose of the book is to set before Jewish and Gentile members of the Church that all are alike before God; that the Jew had not exclusive right over the Gentile by covenant or descent, but that God had provided a way of salvation for all who would accept the terms of the gospel by faith in Jesus Christ.

THE CORINTHIAN EPISTLES.**Subject:** Christian Living.**Class:** Doctrinal.**Time and Place:** 57 A.D.; Ephesus, Philippi.**History:** The Church at Corinth.

THE FIRST EPISTLE.

Subject.—Corinth was the greatest and the most profligate city of Greece, the “Vanity Fair of the ancient world.” It stood on an isthmus between two seas, and received commerce from all countries. It had great wealth. Its population was mixed. Religion was degraded into sensuality in the great temple of Venus. The Corinthian games drew hither the dissolute of all countries. Judaizing teachers came from Jerusalem and beset the Church. Grave questions affecting Christian living, as well as administration and doctrine, sprang up and split the Corinthian Church into factions, which were warring against one another. Paul was twice informed of the conditions, and wrote the first Epistle in direct answer to certain questions which had risen, such as going to law, marriage and celibacy, the Lord’s Supper, the conduct of women in church, the resurrection, etc.

Time and Place.—The first Epistle was written from Ephesus, during Paul’s third missionary tour, A.D. 57. Ephesus was the metropolis of Asia

Minor, in which city Paul spent three years of his last tour.

History.—Paul had come to Corinth from Athens, about A.D. 51, on his first tour, and with the help of his friends, Aquila and Priscilla, had given eighteen months in the city to the organization of this Church, which became foremost of the European Churches founded by the apostle. After Paul, Apollos the Eloquent ministered to it

THE SECOND EPISTLE.

Subject.—Paul, having received word of the salutary effects produced by his first Epistle, wrote his second, commending the prompt obedience of the Corinthians to his apostolic commands, and comforting the Church in the midst of the trials it was called to endure. The greater part of this second Epistle is devoted to a bold vindication of the apostle's authority. His character and call to the ministry of an apostle had been assailed by those who would have wrought havoc with the Church rather than suffer his authority to prevail; hence the strong words of Paul's self-assertion.

Time.—The second Epistle was written the same year as the first, from some point in Macedonia, probably its chief city, Philippi, which Paul had visited on a former tour.

GALATIANS.**Subject:** Christian Liberty.**Time and Place:** A.D. 57, Corinth.**Writer:** Paul.**History:** The Galatian Church.

Subject.—Galatians, next to Romans, is Paul's strongest doctrinal book. Paul was by nature and training a controversialist, and the fire of controversy flames forth from this little book, which is set for a defense of the gospel. Adroit and plausible Jews were teaching Paul's Galatian converts that the law and ritual of Moses were yet binding upon them, that circumcision was in force, that the righteousness which is of the law was not to be displaced by that which comes of faith in Christ. The effect of such teaching had turned many away from the great Pauline doctrine of justification, and the Galatian Church was lapsing into sensualism and license, under the guise of Christian liberty. To reclaim his converts, and to reaffirm the doctrine and scope of liberty in Christ, was Paul's purpose in this book.

Time and Place.—The book was written from Corinth during Paul's third missionary journey, in the winter of A.D. 57, probably near to the close of his sojourn in that city.

History.—The Galatian Church, or Churches, had been founded by Paul on his second missionary

journey. Galatia was a Roman province of Asia Minor, settled chiefly by Gauls who came from the North of France in the fourth century B.C. In the year A.D. 52, after the Jerusalem Council admitted Gentiles to the privileges of Christianity, Paul's route led westward through Galatia, as recorded in Acts xvi. The book of Galatians itself informs us of Paul's sickness in Galatia, and of the zeal displayed by his Gallic converts. It was then that the Galatian Church was organized, and the bodily suffering of the apostle endured at its birth made it all the dearer to his heart. In the book of Galatians, more than in any other of his writings, the human yearning of Paul finds pathetic expression.

EPHESIANS.

Subject: Christian Unity.
Time and Place: A.D. 62, Rome.

Writer: Paul.
History: The Ephesian Church.

Subject.—The book of Ephesians is meditative rather than controversial, exhibiting Paul as a lofty teacher, with the sword of controversy in its sheath. The great doctrine of Christian unity is set forth as its special theme; first, unity with the divine nature of God through Christ; second, unity of all Christians one with another in purity of doctrine and holiness of living. The book is es-

essentially Gentile in scope and spirit, and illustrates the wide range of the catholic apostle.

Time and Place.—Paul wrote the book from his prison at Rome, about A.D. 62, together with three other Epistles (Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon), the four being sent to the respective Churches by the hands of chosen messengers who had brought the greetings of the Churches to the imprisoned apostle.

History.—Ephesus was the metropolis, the political, commercial, and religious center of Asia Minor. What Rome was to Italy, and Corinth to Greece, Ephesus had become to Asia. Greek and Asiatic civilization commingled, under Roman dominion. Thither came many thousands each year to worship at the shrine of Diana, and to take part in the spectacular games of the Ephesian theater. The temple of Diana was one of the seven wonders of the world, the Asiatic “Artemis,” its guardian deity, ministered to by one thousand prostitutes. Magic was a favorite study, and paganism in its grossest forms ran riot. Yet, in three years, Paul broke the power of this infamous citadel of idolatry and sensualism. The Church at Ephesus became the most zealous of the Christian Churches of the first centuries, and bore the appellation of the “Mother Church.” Paul founded it on his second missionary tour, leaving behind him Aquila

and Priscilla to care for it. During his third missionary tour, Paul gave this Church further distinction by serving it as pastor for three years, and by making it the center of gospel influence for all Asia.

PHILIPPIANS.

Subject: Christian Liberality. Time and Place: A.D. 62, Rome.	Writer: Paul. History: The Church at Philippi.
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Subject.—This little book is personal rather than doctrinal. Like Philemon, it shows the human side of Paul and the grateful heart of the apostle. As prisoner at Rome, he became dependent upon the kindly offerings of his friends. Foremost among these was the Church at Philippi, which dispatched Epaphroditus with liberal gifts to Rome in aid of its imprisoned founder. Paul writes in return this letter of thanks. As a pastoral “love letter,” this Epistle, along with the one to Philemon and the two to Timothy, is in gentle contrast with the incisive logic and bold aggressiveness of Paul in his more familiar character as “defender of the faith.”

Time and Place.—The book was written from Rome during Paul’s first imprisonment, about A.D. 62.

History.—Philippi was the chief city of Macedonia, situated north of the Archipelago, upon the

great highway connecting Asia and Europe. It was a Roman colony, with peculiar civic rights. The Philippian Church was founded by Paul on his second missionary journey, about A.D. 52. It had the distinction of being the first Christian Church planted in Europe, as the result of the direct call of Paul by the Holy Spirit. Unlike most cities into which Paul entered, it had no synagogue, which is evidence that its population numbered few Jews. The Church was begun at a place of prayer by the river's side, and a woman was probably its first member. Paul's miraculous release from persecution in this city is recounted in Acts xvi.

COLOSSIANS.

Subject: Christ's Su-
premacacy.

Time and Place: A.D.
62, Rome.

Writer: Paul.

History: The Colossian
Church.

Subject.—The divinity and headship of Christ had been assailed in the Church of Colosse, and the apostle comes to the defense of the foundation doctrine of Christianity. Epaphras had brought to the apostle in his Roman prison intelligence of the heretical teaching among the Colossian converts. The heresies evidently included the old gnostic doctrine that matter is evil, and that sin adheres in the physical but not in the spiritual constitution of man. To this was added a species of angel wor-

ship and denial of the doctrine of the divine authority of Christ. To sweep away this worship of angels, and to reënthrone Christ as supreme Head of the Church and Creator of all things, Paul writes this strong doctrinal Epistle.

Time and Place.—The book was written at Rome during Paul's first imprisonment, about A.D. 62, and dispatched by the hands of Tychicus and Onesimus to the Colossian Church, with the request that it be read also by the Church of Laodicea, one of the "seven churches of Asia," afterwards addressed by the apostle John.

History.—Colosse was the chief city of Phrygia, one of the central provinces of Western Asia. It lay along the great Asiatic route from the east to the west. Who founded the Church of Colosse is not known. Paul could not have been far from it on his second missionary tour, but his own word is that the Colossians had not seen his "face in the flesh." The probability is that Epaphras was the founder, and that Paul had given him aid during his long ministry of three years at Ephesus. It was under his apostolic jurisdiction; hence his letter of authority and reproof.

THE THESSALONIAN EPISTLES.**Subject:** Christ's Com-
ing.**Writer:** Paul.**Time and Place:** A.D.
53, Corinth.**History:** The Thessa-
lonian Church.

FIRST THESSALONIANS.

Subject.—Thessalonica was the city of Paul's second European Church. Driven from the city, leaving Silas behind to carry on the work begun, he later sent Timothy to the Church to bring word of its condition. Timothy returned to Paul at Corinth, reporting the loyalty of the Church under grave persecution and the death of certain of the brethren, whereupon Paul wrote this letter commending their faithfulness and condoling with those who mourned their dead. To comfort the latter, he vividly depicts the second coming of Christ, and gives the assurance that the dead will not be overlooked by him at his coming. This prophecy of Christ's second coming and the resurrection may properly be considered the subject of the book. The Thessalonian Epistles mark the beginning of the Pauline writings.

Time and Place.—Banished from Thessalonica, Paul journeyed to Corinth, and there awaited the return of Timothy. The writing of the first Epistle must have been only a few months after the banishment, and the second letter closely followed

the first. The date generally accepted is the year 53 A.D.

History.—On his second missionary tour, Paul had planted the Church of Thessalonica. The city had grown to greatness under the power of Rome, and its position upon the Thermaic Gulf gave it a commanding share of the commerce of Western Asia and Southern Europe. Paul's manual labor, preaching, and arraignment on a charge of treason against Cæsar, brought about by his intense presentation of Christ as king, are narrated in Acts xvii. Paul's preaching and nobility of spirit made lasting impression here, and the Church he founded became greatly renowned for learning, doctrinal purity, and power. Its members were not without fiery persecutions, even in Paul's time.

SECOND THESSALONIANS.

Subject.—The first Epistle produced an effect which was not intended. Paul's vivid description of the Lord's coming so aroused the Church that certain of the Thessalonian Christians were swept away into fanaticism, and proclaimed the instant coming of Christ. Labor was abandoned, and the Church became a community of idlers and visionary awaiters of marvelous events, an easy effect upon a people among whom myths and delusions abounded. Paul therefore wrote the second Epis-

tle to correct the fanatical views which had erroneously been deduced from his first. In this second letter he rebukes the idle Thessalonians, exhorting them to continue in the constancy and faithfulness with which they began their Christian course.

EPISTLES TO TIMOTHY.

Subject: The Christian Ministry.	Time and Place: A.D. 65-66; Macedonia, Rome.
Writer: Paul.	History: Paul's "Son."

FIRST TIMOTHY.

Subject.—This is the first of Paul's "Pastoral Epistles." To Timothy, at Ephesus, Paul addresses this first Epistle, solemnly giving him charge as his chief helper in the ministry, enjoining faithfulness, and especially instructing him in the work of completing the organization and administering the discipline of the Ephesian Church, which, from his own long pastorate over it, and its commanding influence and position, must have been foremost in Paul's thought and care. The central theme of the Epistles is the Christian ministry.

Time and Place.—The time of the first Epistle is fixed as between Paul's first and second Roman imprisonments, probably just before his return to Rome, the date being about A.D. 65. The place from which Paul wrote was probably some point in

Macedonia. The second Epistle, written probably A.D. 66, was sent from Rome during Paul's second imprisonment.

History.—Timothy was Paul's dearest friend and companion. Paul says of him, "I have none like-minded," and calls Timothy his "son in the gospel," which is evidence that he must have been converted under Paul's preaching on the occasion of the apostle's first tour through Asia Minor, in the village of Lystra, where, as a boy, Timothy lived. His father was a Greek; his mother and grandmother were devout Jewesses. On Paul's second tour he found Timothy "well reported of by the brethren," adopted him as a companion, kept him with him on his European tour, and afterwards made him his helper during the three years at Ephesus. After Paul was released from the first Roman imprisonment, he sent Timothy to the great Church of Ephesus as its pastor, which abundantly attests the high esteem in which he was held by the apostle.

SECOND TIMOTHY.

Subject.—This is the last writing of the apostle, and as such possesses a pathetic interest. Written from his prison cell, with death imminent, addressed to the young man who had been converted as a boy by his preaching, and who had rendered him long and devoted service, and had now grown

to eminence, nothing could be more natural than that the apostle should pour out his fatherly love upon his beloved Timothy. The old preacher exhorts the younger to "stir up the gift that is in him;" the old soldier admonishes his successor that he has "fought a good fight," and has "kept the faith."

TITUS.

Subject: Church Govern-
ment.

Writer: Paul.

Time and Place: A.D.
65, Macedonia.

History: Paul's "Part-
ner."

Subject.—Titus had been sent by Paul to the island of Crete to bring together the scattered forces of Christianity, organize them, and raise the standards of doctrine and morals among them. The Cretans were a turbulent race, half-civilized, noted for piracy, lying, and dishonesty, as they are until this day. It was a grave question of discipline that confronted Titus, and Paul therefore makes the matters of Church government the chief thought of this brief Epistle. The looseness of Cretan morality explains the severe allusions contained in the Epistle.

Time and Place.—Evidence both internal and external points to the same time and place of the writing of this Epistle as in the case of First Timothy. Paul probably wrote it from some point in

Macedonia, during the year A.D. 65, between his first and second Roman imprisonments.

History.—The Epistle to Titus is evidently an abridgment of First Timothy. The circumstances of both were much the same. Titus was appointed over the Church at Crete, as Timothy had been at Ephesus. Both were young men, and both dear to Paul. Paul calls Titus “my partner and fellow-helper.” Paul had converted Titus from paganism, had taken him to the famous Jerusalem council, had sent him to Corinth to collect money for the poor saints at Jerusalem, and then set him over the Church at Crete. He is not named in the book of Acts, and is usually called the “Evangelist.” Crete is an island halfway east and west in the Mediterranean, and was visited by Paul at one time.

PHILEMON.

Subject: Christian Fraternity.
Writer: Paul.

Time and Place: A.D. 62, Rome.
History: Paul's Convert.

Subject.—Fraternity in Jesus Christ is the theme of the tender little Epistle which bears the name of Philemon. It was evidently a private letter to the apostle's friend and former host, but the fact that Philemon held a Church “in his house” accounts for its reception into the canon by the Fathers, in addition to its broad Christian teaching

of true brotherhood. Paul, as the big-hearted and considerate apostle, writes the letter to the master in behalf of a converted slave.

Time and Place.—The Epistle was probably written from Rome during Paul's first imprisonment, about the year A.D. 62.

History.—Onesimus was the property of Philemon, of Colosse, in Asia Minor, and had run away from his master and come to Rome at the time Paul was there preaching in "his own hired house." He had possibly known Paul at the home of Philemon, and heard him preach in the house of his master. A runaway slave in Rome, Onesimus heard of and sought out Paul, was converted by him, given transportation back to his far-away home, bearing this pleading Epistle to the master to receive him as a brother begotten, as was Philemon, of Paul's gospel.

HEBREWS.

Subject: Christ's Priesthood.	Time and Place: A.D. 66, Rome.
Writer: Paul.	History: The Mother Church.

Subject.—The central theme of this great Epistle is set forth in the opening verses. By elaborate argument Christ is presented as the great High Priest, the perpetual Mediator between God and man, the perfect fulfillment of Old Testament

types and prophecies. One by one the Epistle takes these types and figures of the Old Testament, and places them in bold contrast with the person and gospel of Christ in the New. Moses, lawgiver for a season, gives place to Jesus, in whom the law is permanently vested. The Jewish high priest gives place to the eternal High Priest, who offers himself once for all as an abiding sacrifice. The Jewish Church, with cumbrous ritual, passes away, and the Church of Christ enters upon its enduring mission.

Writer.—Much controversy has arisen over the authorship of this Epistle, some assigning it to Barnabas, others to Luke, others to Apollos. The writer does not give his name, as in the case of other Epistles, but it is enough to say that the greater number of eminent Bible students have accredited the Epistle to Paul. It is essentially Pauline in style, in logical movement, in the characteristic temper of that apostle, and even in the turns of language which mark Paul's writings.

Time and Place.—The Epistle itself (chapter xiii.) states from whence it was written. "They of Italy," on the face of it, indicates that Paul was writing from Rome, during one or the other of his imprisonments. It is probable that the Epistle was written during his second Roman imprisonment, about A.D. 65 or 66.

History.—While the Epistle within is unaddressed, there can be no doubt that its title “To the Hebrews” is its true one. Every line of its argument makes it plain that it was designed for the instruction and admonition of those who were Hebrew in blood and Christian in faith. The frequent allusions to the temple which was yet undestroyed, and to the ritual and the sacrifices, impress upon one the conviction that the Epistle was written especially to the “Mother Church” at Jerusalem, and generally to the Palestinian Hebrews, rather than to Hebrews in exile, as some assume. If intended for the Hebrews of the dispersion, most of whom had not seen the temple or taken part in its worship, much of the meaning of the Epistle would have been lost.

IV. THE GENERAL EPISTLES.

JAMES.

Subject: Christian Works.	Time and Place: A.D. 61, Jerusalem.
Writer: James the Just.	History: The Dispersion.

Subject.—The central thought of the Epistle of James is the necessity and relation of Christian works, which contrast with, but do not conflict with, the doctrine of faith as set forth by Paul. Luther, in a moment of weakness, when pressing the doctrine of faith as alone vital to salvation, called this an “epistle of straw.” James, writing to “the twelve tribes scattered abroad,” knew how far many professing Christians had turned liberty into license, and had put under foot the doctrine of works. The Epistle is a vindication of Christian works, not as a ground of salvation, but as the test of the genuine Christian.

Writer.—It was written by James the Just, brother of our Lord, and pastor of the mother Church at Jerusalem. He is that James to whom Jesus appeared, according to the testimony of Paul, and who made the decisive speech at the Jerusalem council which admitted Gentiles into

the Church. Paul names him as one of the “pillars of the Church.”

Time and Place.—Opinions vary as to the time of the writing of the Epistle, some placing it as early as A.D. 45. The commentators are unanimous in fixing its date before the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred A.D. 70. The Epistle was written from Jerusalem, probably about A.D. 61.

History.—The Epistle, with the six succeeding ones, belongs to the class called “catholic,” meaning thereby general, and intended for circulation among all Christian believers. Judged by its contents, James designed this Epistle not only for Christian Jews, but for all who were of Jewish blood, especially those who, under the name of “the Dispersion,” were exiles or dwellers in heathen lands.

PETER'S EPISTLES.

Subject: Christian For-
titude.

Writer: Peter.

Time and Place: A.D.
64,66; Babylon, Rome.

History: Nero's Perse-
cution.

FIRST EPISTLE.

Subject.—Peter addresses his first Epistle to “the strangers scattered” abroad in many lands, meaning evidently the Jews who, before the final

destruction of Jerusalem, were already dwellers in all countries. As such they were called to endure severe trial of their Christian faith and fortitude. To minister comfort and encouragement to his persecuted brethren is the plain intent of the Epistle. Christ in his suffering and exaltation is held up before them as their great example, and the joy of the reward in prospect for the faithful is set vividly in contrast with the present affliction. The world was fast breaking up, evil rulers abounded, the fires of persecution were being kindled. It was at this juncture in the history of the early Church that Peter fulfilled the command of his Master to "strengthen the brethren."

Writer.—Peter, one of the Twelve, when called was a fisherman at the Sea of Galilee. He was married, and his home was at Capernaum, where Jesus abode during his Galilean ministry. By reason of his native ability, he attained to a position of primacy among the apostles, though not as the Catholics hold. He was impetuous and courageous, and needed the sharp discipline he received. He was foremost in the earlier years of the Church, until superseded by Paul. He was designated as the "apostle to the circumcision," a place his Jewish prejudices fitted him for, and to which his life work was circumscribed. According to tradition,

he died a martyr at Rome, at nearly the same time as Paul.

Time and Place.—The Epistle was evidently written from Babylon, just before the destruction of Jerusalem, during the persecutions which are known to have occurred at that time, about A.D. 64.

SECOND EPISTLE.

Subject.—The same atmosphere of unrest, suffering, and persecution is about Peter's second Epistle. The emperor Nero was entering upon his fierce persecution of Christians throughout the Roman empire. Heresies, false teachers, and apostates abounded. If the first Epistle was for the encouragement of the faithful, the second is plainly for the sharp rebuke of the unfaithful among the professing disciples of the Lord. It is the last warning of Peter, before his martyrdom at Rome, A.D. 66.

JOHN'S EPISTLES.

Subjects: { 1. Christian Assurance.
2. Christian Orthodoxy.
3. Christian Hospitality.

Writer: John the Apostle.

Time and Place: About A.D. 90, Ephesus.

FIRST EPISTLE.

Subject.—This noble Epistle came near to the close of the first Christian century and of the writer's long life. The other apostles were dead, and

three score years had passed since the death of our Lord. Grave heresies had crept into the Church, the most dangerous of which was the gnostic, which held that sin was in matter and not in spirit. It led to two things in practice: asceticism, or the punishment of the body as the supposed seat of sin; and licentiousness, on the ground that nothing that the body could do would taint the spirit. John writes to all believers, reaffirming the doctrine of sin, rebuking the dangerous heresy of gnosticism, and setting forth the grounds of Christian assurance as obedience, brotherly love, and the indwelling Spirit.

Time and Place.—Commentators generally agree in assigning this and the other Epistles of John to Ephesus, whither he went after the deaths of Paul and Peter, and to which he returned from his exile on Patmos. Here he was pastor for many years, and here it is supposed he died. The time of the three Epistles was about A.D. 90.

SECOND EPISTLE.

Subject.—This brief Epistle of a single chapter was written about the same time as the first, from the same place, and carries with it the same purpose—to rebuke the rising heresies of the times. It was addressed to the “elect lady,” who in all probability was one of John’s disciples, and is

therefore strictly a pastoral letter, but by authority of the early Church was placed among the "catholic" Epistles, as designed for the Churches generally.

THIRD EPISTLE.

Subject.—The third Epistle is simply a letter of apostolic commendation of a Christian gentleman, who had extended warm-hearted hospitality to certain missionaries who had been treated inhospitably by an officer or member of the local Church, Diotrephes by name. Old-fashioned Christian hospitality, especially to ministers and messengers of Christ, is a grace worthy of apostolic commendation in any age of the Church.

JUDE.

Subject: Christian Loyalty.
Writer: Jude, the Apostle.

Time and Place: Probably Palestine, A.D. 66-70.

Of Jude little is known, and there are only contradictory traditions. The fragment contained in this brief Epistle is all that remains of his life. His very personality is in doubt, some affirming, others denying, that he was one of the Twelve. The probability is that he is the "Judas" named in John xiv. 22 as one of his apostles. The Epistle is commonly supposed to have been written in Pales-

tine or Asia Minor, a little later than those of Peter, the spirit and surroundings of both being much the same, as judged by their contents. The Epistles of both Peter and Jude are marked by bold denunciation of a condition of apostasy and corruption, except that Peter seems to point to it as impending, while Jude writes of it as at hand.

V. THE BOOK OF PROPHECY.

REVELATION.

Author: John the Apostle.	Purpose: To Comfort Church.
Time and Place: A.D. 96, Patmos.	Subject: Christ and Antichrist.

The book of Revelation is the one great book of New Testament prophecy, including in its scope the progress of Christianity from the close of the first century to the end of time. Much of it is obscure, some of it plain. Some of its prophecies have evidently been accomplished, others are now fulfilling, and others are yet to be fulfilled. Though differing widely as to some of the prophecies, Bible students are in substantial agreement as to the purpose of the book. Like all divinely inspired prophecy, the book of Revelation is given not to the curious and speculative, but to comfort the true believers before and confirm their faith after the fulfillment. As to the prophecies of the book, there have been three schools of interpretation:

1. Those who hold that all of the prophecies are already fulfilled, notably in the fall of Judaism and the pagan empire of Rome.

2. Those who hold that the prophecies are yet to

be fulfilled, near in time to the second coming of our Lord.

3. Those who hold that the book is a prophetic history of the entire interval between the first and second advent, and that the prophecies are now fulfilling. This view is most generally held.

The author of the Revelation was the apostle John, the last living member of the Twelve.

The time of the writing was about A.D. 96, near to the close of Domitian's reign.

The place where the revelations were received, and doubtless written out, was the island of Patmos, in the Ægean Sea, southwest of Ephesus, to which island John had been exiled by the Roman Emperor, Domitian.

The purpose of the book was immediately to assure the hopes and comfort the hearts of the early Church, and remotely to strengthen and confirm the faith of Christian believers in the final victory of Jesus Christ and his Church.

The subject of the book is chiefly the long and indefinite conflict between Christ and Antichrist—the powers of good and of evil, as massed in and against the Christian Church, ending only when “all things shall be put under his feet.” The book might well be called the prophetic programme of the Church.

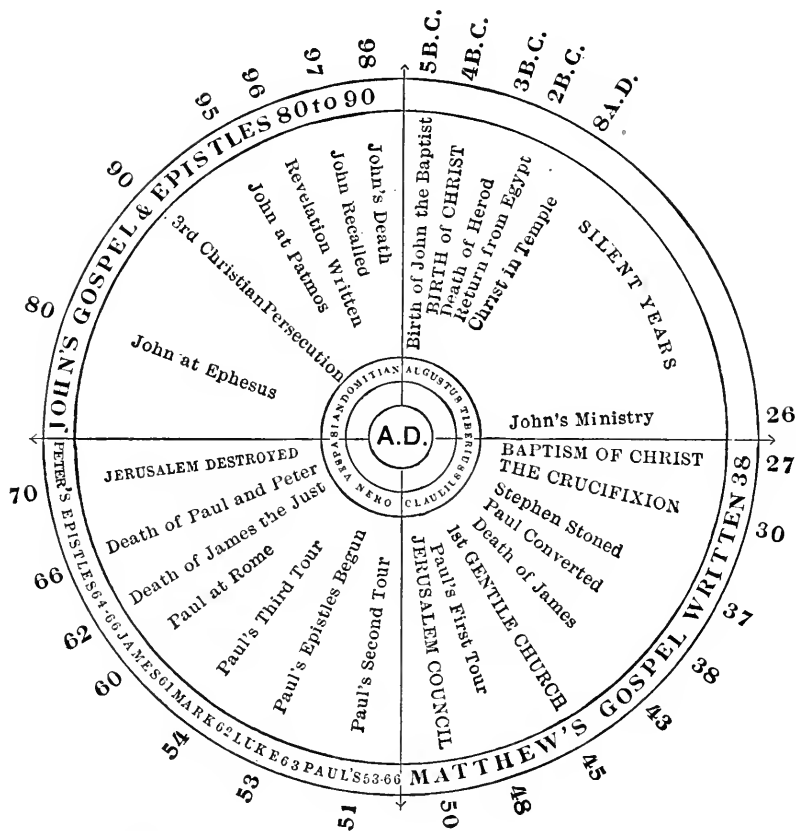
A simple analysis of the book is as follows :

Chapters 1-3.—The prophetic messages of Christ to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor. These prophecies have long since been fulfilled.

Chapters 4-11.—The two great cycles of seals and trumpets, representing by twice-repeated symbol and picture the varying phases of the Messianic age.

Chapters 12-22.—The seven greater visions of the apostle, outlining in narrative form the final great conflicts between the Church and her foes.

NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY.



TEST QUESTIONS.

Explanation.—These questions are intended to be used by the student in testing his knowledge of this book. Full and accurate answers to the questions are evidence that the book has been comprehensively and faithfully studied.

1. What is meant by inspiration of the Bible?
2. State the three evidences the Bible itself gives of its inspiration.
3. Define fully the modern theories of inspiration.
4. By what successive steps was the Old Testament canon formed?
5. What were the three tests applied to each book of the Bible?
6. What were the "disputed books," and why were they thus disputed?
7. What Bible material existed at the time of Christ?
8. Describe the oldest manuscripts and versions.
9. Describe particularly the Vulgate.
10. How was the age of manuscripts determined?
11. What were Wycliffe's hindrances in translating the Bible?
12. Name five most noted English Bibles, and their dates.
13. Describe fully the "Authorized Version."
14. By what five points would you establish the genuineness of the Bible?
15. State the writers, time, and subjects of the Old Testament historical books.
16. State fully the facts given as to the book of Deuteronomy.
17. From what sources were the books of Old Testament history formed?

18. Define fully Ezra's great work as to the Bible
19. What are the differences between the books of Kings and Chronicles?
20. Describe fully the book of Esther.
21. What is said as to the authorship of the Psalms?
22. What is the difference in subject-matter between Psalms and Proverbs?
23. Give an analysis of the book of Job.
24. State fully the more notable prophecies of the Greater Prophets.
25. Describe fully the book of Daniel.
26. Of the twelve Lesser Prophets, name those who were distinctly Messianic.
27. State fully what is said as to the book of Jonah.
28. What are the chief differences among the four Gospels?
29. Why is it held that Matthew's is the oldest Gospel?
30. What is the characteristic of each Gospel?
31. Describe fully the Gospel of John.
32. What is the time, subject, and purpose of the book of Acts?
33. Give a list of the subjects of Paul's fourteen Epistles.
34. Which of these Epistles are strongest as doctrinal books?
35. What was the history of the Galatian and the Roman Churches?
36. In what respect does James's book differ from, yet agree with, Paul's books?
37. Under what conditions did Peter write his Epistles?
38. Why are some Epistles called "General?"
39. State fully the subjects and purposes of the General Epistles.
40. Give fully the facts set forth as to the book of Revelation.

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