

MATTHEW

W. L. G.

*Matthew Presents I.
Jesus as the King
of the Kingdom II.*

- I. TITLE
This gospel bears the name of its penman, Matthew, which means "Gift of God."
- II. WRITER
Matthew's original name was Levi. He was the son of Alphaeus (Mk. 2:14; Lk. 5:27), and was called Levi until Jesus chose him to be an apostle. He was by birth a Jew, by calling a publican. His business was the collection of customs from persons and goods crossing the Sea of Galilee, or passing along the shore between Bethsaida and Capernaum, his home. Apparently, he was a man of wealth (Matt. 9:9-10). He is mentioned by name, after the resurrection of Christ, only in Acts 1:13.
- III. DATE
The date of Matthew's gospel is variously placed from 45 to 70 A.D.
- IV. CANONIZATION AND LANGUAGE
Many different and independent witnesses of the first centuries attest the genuineness of Matthew's gospel. Post-apostolic church leaders testify that it was written originally in the Hebrew language, and later translated into Greek. However, no traces of the Hebrew original survive. It is possible that Matthew wrote in both languages.
- V. PURPOSE
The purpose of the Gospel According to Matthew is to prove That Jesus is the King and Messiah foretold by Old Testament prophets.
- VI. SUBJECT AND ANALYSIS
The subject is the kingdom of God or of heaven. It is discussed under four headings as follows:
 - A. Preparation of the kingdom (1:1 - 4:16).
 - B. Preaching of the kingdom (4:17 - 16:20).
 - C. Passion of the kingdom (16:21 - 27:66).
 - D. Perfecting of the kingdom (Chapter 28).
- VII. CHARACTERISTICS
 - A. It is not a chronological but a systematic and topical gospel. Materials are treated in groups--miracles, parables, sermons, etc.
 - B. It is a teaching gospel. It contains a number of discourses--Sermon on the Mount, denunciation of the Pharisees, etc.
 - C. It has been called a gospel of gloom and despondency in that it contains no songs of joy like those of Luke.
 - D. It is a kingly gospel. It gives the royal descent, speaks of Jesus as a King and of His institution as a kingdom. The Keys of the Kingdom are mentioned.
 - E. It is an official gospel. Official persons are named. The official capacity of Jesus is given.
 - F. It is a Jewish gospel. Matthew wrote primarily for Jews. The genealogy is traced to Abraham. Jewish symbols and terms are used.
 - G. It is a gospel of Jewish antagonism. The Jews antagonize and reject Jesus. Jesus exposes the Jews and rejects their hypocrisy.

MARK

I. TITLE

This gospel bears the name of its writer, Mark, or John Mark. Marcus was his Latin surname. His Jewish name was John, which means "gift or grace of God."

II. WRITER

John, surnamed Mark, was not an apostle. He was the son of Mary, a woman of Jerusalem, whose home was a meeting place of the disciples (Acts 12:12). He may have been a convert of Peter for he speaks of him as "Mark, my son" (I Pet. 5:13). He went to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25) and accompanied them on their first missionary tour (Acts 13:5). He forsook them at Perga and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). Paul refused, on this account, to take him on their second tour, and he and Barnabas went separate ways. But ten years later he was with Paul during the latter's first imprisonment at Rome, and Paul recommended him to the Colossian church (Col. 4:10). At his second imprisonment, Paul asked Timothy to bring Mark, "for he is useful to me for ministering" (II Tim. 4:11). Mark was also associated with the apostle Peter and some scholars hold that this is Peter's writing, Mark being only the amanuensis. Mark was with Peter when Peter wrote his first epistle (I Pet. 5:13).

III. DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

Both date and place are disputed. The Bible does not tell us. Traditions are conflicting as to the date and place of writing; therefore, they are of little real help.

- A. Those who hold to the early date (A.D. 40-45) use the supporting statements of Papias and Clement of Alexandria, two early writers, to the effect that Mark was written during Peter's lifetime.
- B. Those who hold to the late date (A.D. 65-75) use the statement of Irenaeus to the effect that Mark wrote after the death of Paul and Peter.
- C. The place of writing has resolved itself into three possibilities: Rome, based upon statements of Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, and Jerome; Alexandria, based upon some statements found in the writings of Chrysostom; Babylon; based upon one interpretation of I Pet. 5:13).

IV. PURPOSE

Mark emphasizes the awe and the wonder which the work of Jesus created. It was written as an appeal to the Roman people, who were men of power and achievement. Everywhere he shows the power of Jesus.

V. SUBJECT

Jesus the Almighty King. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

VI. CHARACTERISTICS

- A. This is a gospel of energy and activity.
- B. Mark is a gospel showing Christ's power over devils and demons.
- C. This is the briefest of all the gospels.
- D. Mark is a gospel of vivid detail, graphic portrayal.
- E. There are no references to Jewish law; genealogy of Jesus is omitted; doubtful Jewish words are explained; Jewish customs are explained.

LUKE

I. TITLE

This gospel gets its name from the writer, Luke, which means "light-giving". His name is also expressed Lucas, which is an abbreviated form of Lucanus.

II. WRITER

The name Luke occurs three times in the New Testament (Col. 4:14; II Tim. 4:11; Phile. 24). Combining tradition with scripture, we have the following indefinite outline of his life: According to Eusebius, Luke was a native of Antioch in Syria, and according to Paul, he was a physician (Col. 4:14). Tradition says that he was also a painter. He must have been a Gentile, for he is not reckoned among those "of the circumcision" by Paul (Col. 4:11-14). The "we sections" of Acts indicate that Luke was a companion of Paul, and writer of Acts of Apostles. Apparently, he joined Paul at Troas on the second tour and journeyed with him to Philippi (Acts 16:11-40). He remained at Philippi until Paul returned on the third tour. Luke then joined the missionary party again, accompanying Paul to Caesarea and finally to Rome (Acts 20:1-17). In his preface (Luke 1:1-4), the writer indicates that he was not an eyewitness of the Lord from the first.

III. LANGUAGE

This gospel is written in some of the most beautiful Greek in the New Testament.

IV. DATE

Likely 60-63 A.D.

V. PURPOSE

- A. To give Theophilus, the person addressed, increased confidence in the faith which he had adopted.
- B. To instruct and encourage all Gentile converts, and possibly Greek-speaking converts in particular.

VI. SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Luke was guided by the Holy Spirit. Whether he witnessed any or all of the facts recorded in the narrative cannot be decided with any degree of certainty. Luke states in his preface that much of his information came from those "who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word." He relates many particulars which do not appear in the other gospels.

VII. CHARACTERISTICS

- A. It is a gospel of song and praise. The songs of Mary, the angels, Zachariah, and Simeon are given. A tone of gladness is noted.
- B. Unusual prominence is given to womanhood and childhood. Some of the women mentioned are: Elizabeth, Mary the mother of Jesus, Anna, the widow of Nain, Mary Magdalene, Mary and Martha.
- C. Special mention is made of the poor and neglected. Luke records the statement of Jesus, "I came to seek and to save that which is lost" (Luke 19:10). He mentions the publicans, harlots prodigal son, Lazarus the beggar, Zacchaeus, the dying thief.
- D. It contains a note of universality. The angels announced news of joy which shall "be to all people". The story of the Good Samaritan, the Perean ministry, show this universal appeal. The genealogy is traced from Adam and emphasizes human rather than royal descent.
- E. It is the gospel of prayer (3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:28; 11:1; etc.)
- F. It is a gospel for the Greeks, or Gentiles. The Greeks were interested in human perfection. They cultivated thought, beauty, speech, and spirit to the highest point possible. Luke pictures Jesus as the perfect man, saviour of all men.

JOHN

I. TITLE

John, Johanan, or Jehohanan, which means "Grace of God," or God's gift.

II. WRITER

- A. Son of Zebedee and Salome, the brother of James (Mk. 3:17).
- B. It is thought that John's mother was a sister of the Lord's mother (Mk. 15:40-41; Matt. 27:56; John 19:25-27). If so, he was a cousin to Jesus.
- C. He was a fisherman whose home was probably Bethsaida, (Matt. 4:21).
- D. One of the twelve apostles, probably turned to the Lord by John the Baptist (John 1:40; Mark 3:14-19).
- E. He was an eye-witness of the things recorded by him (John 1:14; I John 1:1-4).
- F. He was one of the three most intimate with Jesus (Matt. 17:1; 26:37).
- G. The writer of I, II, III John and Revelation.

III. DATE

Probably around 95 A.D.

IV. PLACE OF WRITING

Uncertain. John remained at Jerusalem during the great persecution against the church (Acts 8:1). He is still there fifteen years after Paul's first visit (Acts 15:6). From that point the story of his life is largely traditional. The strong tradition is that he moved to Ephesus, and was banished from Ephesus to Patmos under the persecution of Domitian. He did receive the Revelation on the island of Patmos (Rev. 1:9). Tradition says he later returned to Ephesus, and that he died there around 95 A.D. If these traditions are trustworthy, it means that John probably wrote this gospel in the city of Ephesus. The New Testament makes no mention of this.

V. LOCAL CONDITIONS

The gospel had been preached in all the Roman Empire, Jerusalem had fallen, Christianity had been sorely persecuted, and most of the New Testament had already been written.

VI. PURPOSE

To develop the spiritual life of Christians

VII. TO WHOM WRITTEN

Christians of all nationalities.

VIII. SUBJECT

Jesus as the "logos", the Divine Christ, the Son of God.

IX. CHARACTERISTICS

- A. The gospel for the church.
- B. It is referred to as a spiritual gospel.
- C. It is a gospel of feasts, which furnish material for much of Christ's teaching.
- D. It is a gospel of belief (John 20:30-31).
- E. It is the gospel of the incarnation. "The word became flesh and dwelt among us..." (1:14).

X. UNIQUE FEATURES

- A. The "spiritual" genealogy (1:1-4, 14).
- B. The absence of John's name in his own gospel, but reference to him as "that disciple whom Jesus loved".
- C. Jesus' last great discourse (John, chapters 14, 15, 16).

ACTS

I. TITLE

The book is called "The Acts," or "The Acts of the Apostles" because it contains an account of the activities of some (not all) of the apostles. In fact, the work is given in detail of only two of the apostles, Peter and Paul. A better title would be simply "Acts", or "Acts of Apostles".

II. WRITER

The authorship of Acts is ascribed to Luke for these reasons:

- A. It is addressed to Theophilus, Acts 1:1, to whom the writer had formerly written a record of the life of Christ, Luke 1:3. The gospel of Luke is the only record that meets this condition.
- B. The two books are similar in style.
- C. After the thirteenth chapter, the pronoun "we" indicates that the writer was a traveling companion of Paul. From Paul we learn that Luke was with him part of the time, (Col. 4:14; II Tim. 4:11; Phile 23). For facts concerning Luke's life read the outline on the gospel according to Luke.

III. DATE

Luke probably wrote the book of Acts from Rome during Paul's first imprisonment. It records 33 years of Christian history, reaching from Tiberius Caesar to Nero, Roman emperors. Since the story ends abruptly without giving an account of Paul's death or release, it is thought that the apostle was still a prisoner (Acts 28:30-31). The book was probably written about 63 A.D.

IV. PURPOSE

Acts is a continuation of the author's former treatise (Luke), and records the birth, growth and development of the Christian religion after the ascension of Jesus. It shows how the apostles carried on the work commanded by Jesus of evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8). The book is the best available commentary on the great commission of Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-47.

V. BRIEF OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. History of the Church: Peter as the Chief Actor
 1. Instruction to Apostles; Ascension of Christ; Descent of the Holy Spirit (1:1 - 2:13).
 2. The Church at Jerusalem (2:14 - 6:7).
 3. Gospel Preached in Judea and Samaria (6:8 - 8:25).
 4. Conversion of the Eunuch, Saul, and Cornelius (8:26 - 12:25).
- B. History of the Church: Paul as the Chief Actor
 1. Paul's First Missionary Journey (13 - 14:28).
 2. Dispute About Circumcision Settled (15:1-35).
 3. Paul's Second Missionary Journey (15:36-18:22).
 4. Paul's Third Missionary Journey (18:23 - 21:16).
 5. Paul at Jerusalem (21:17 - 23:35).
 6. Paul at Caesarea (24:1 - 26:32).
 7. Paul's Voyage to Rome (27:1 - 28:10).
 8. Paul at Rome (28:11-31).

VI. ANALYSIS (See Acts 1:8 for plan of evangelization followed)

- A. Preaching the gospel "in Jerusalem" (Acts 1:1-8:1).
- B. Preaching the gospel "in all Judea and Samaria" (Acts 8:2-12:25).
- C. Preaching the gospel "unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 13:1-28:31).

Ch. 5.

ROMANS

I. OCCASION

Paul had long wanted to go to Rome (Acts 19:21). According to Romans 15:24-33, he soon hoped to go. Perhaps he wanted them to know of his teaching before his arrival. He probably felt that this great city would be a fertile field of labor. Furthermore, he had probably just written Galatians, stressing the human side of redemption. Romans stresses the divine side. Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, probably carried the letter to Rome (16:1-2).

II. PURPOSE

- A. To present a systematic exposition of the gospel.
- B. To justify Paul's mission to the Gentiles.
- C. To show that the gospel is the power of God to save Jew and Gentile alike (1:16).
- D. To show that the whole world (both Jew and Gentile) is under sin and condemnation; the Jew having been condemned by the law, and the Gentile by his conscience (1:19).
- E. To emphasize that justification is by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law of Moses (3:24 - 8:39).
- F. To emphasize the spiritual recovery of Jew and Gentile.
- G. To give practical moral exhortations (12 - 16).

III. ARGUMENTS PRESENTED

- A. Jew and Gentile alike are guilty before God.
- B. Therefore all men need a Savior.
- C. Christ died for all men.
- D. All can be saved through faithful obedience to Christ.

IV. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Personal introduction, fundamental thesis (1:1-17).
- B. All men, both Jews and Greeks, are under condemnation and need God's righteousness (1:18 - 3:20).
- C. Righteousness is not achieved by keeping the law of Moses but by complete trust in Christ (3:21 - 4:25).
- D. God's grace through Christ is sufficient to save (Chs. 5 - 8).
- E. The rejection of Israel is explained in its relation to God's purpose (Chs. 9 - 11).
- F. In view of God's grace a Christian is obligated to live a life of practical devotion (12:1 - 15:13).
- G. Personal matters, farewell, timely warnings (15:14 - 16:27).

V. DATE

Scholars generally agree that the book was written from Corinth about 58 A.D. during Paul's second visit in Greece (Acts 20:1-3; Romans 1:11, 13, 15; 15:23-33; 16:1-2, 21, 23; Acts 19:21-22; 24:17). It is thought that I and II Thess., I and II Cor. and Gal. were written before Romans.

VI. PLACE OF WRITING

Corinth

VII. WRITER

Paul

I CORINTHIANS

I. TITLE

This book is called I Corinthians because it is the first of two letters addressed to the church of God at Corinth (I Cor. 1:1).

II. WRITER

In I Cor. 1:1 we learn that Paul, "an apostle of Christ Jesus," was the writer.

III. TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

According to best chronology, and from statements found in Acts 19, it has been generally concluded that Paul wrote the letter from Ephesus in the spring of A.D. 57.

IV. THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

Paul established the Corinthian church on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1-18). About three years prior to this letter he entered Corinth alone. Later he was joined by Silas and Timothy from Macedonia. For eighteen months Paul worked night and day. While there he made his home with Aquila and Priscilla, who were tent-makers. As a result of his labors, "many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). After leaving Corinth, Paul came to Ephesus and later went back to Jerusalem and Antioch (Acts 18:18-22). In the meantime, Apollos worked some with the church at Corinth (Acts 18:24-28; 19:1).

V. OCCASION OF THE LETTER

On his third tour Paul returned to Ephesus where he spent three years (Acts 19; 20:31). While he was there, some members of the Corinthian church, Stephanas, Fortunatus, Achaicus, and members of the house of Chloe (1:1; 16:17), visited him and brought unfavorable news concerning moral and spiritual conditions in Corinth. The city was one of the most wicked of ancient times, and many shameful practices and departures had developed in the church. News regarding such an unfavorable situation served as the occasion for this letter.

VI. PURPOSE OF THE LETTER

The purpose of the letter was to correct the immoral practices and doctrinal errors which had developed in the congregation. The Corinthian correspondence is an excellent textbook on local church life.

VII. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. The cause, curse and cure of divisions (Chs. 1-4).
- B. Fornication in the church (Ch. 5).
- C. Lawsuits in the church (Chs. 6).
- D. Marriage and divorce evils (Ch. 7).
- E. The sin of idolatry (Chs. 8 and 10).
- F. Defense of Paul's apostolic authority (Ch. 9).
- G. Woman and her place in the worship (11:2-16; 14:34-46).
- H. Desecration of the Lord's Supper (11:17-34).
- I. Jealousies over spiritual gifts (Chs. 12-14).
- J. Defense of faith in the resurrection (Ch. 15).
- K. Collections for the saints, personal matters, benediction (Ch. 16).

VIII. THE CITY OF CORINTH

At the time Paul visited it, Corinth was the chief city of Greece, with around 400,000 inhabitants. Its wealth was as proverbial as the vice and profligacy of its inhabitants. Religion and philosophy had been prostituted, and intellectuality was placed above moral life. Pagan vices were prevalent and idolatry was rampant. Its metropolitan population included Jews, Greeks, Italians, Romans, Syrians, Egyptians, sailors, traders and slaves. It had two harbors and enjoyed great commercial activity.

II CORINTHIANS

I. TITLE

This book is called II Corinthians because it is the second of two letters addressed to the church at Corinth (II Cor. 1:1). Suggestions found in I Cor. 5:9 and elsewhere cause some scholars to assume that Paul wrote another letter to the Corinthians, but only two have come down to us.

II. WRITER

From II Cor. 1:1 we learn that Paul, "an apostle of Jesus Christ," was the writer.

III. TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

It was written from some point in Macedonia, probably in the fall of A.D. 57. Some assume Philippi to be the exact place of writing.

IV. OCCASION OF THE LETTER

Shortly after Paul wrote I Corinthians, Demetrius and his guild of silversmiths stirred up a riot in Ephesus and Paul nearly lost his life (Acts 19; II Cor. 1:8-10). At the urging of the brethren, the apostle departed on his journey to visit the churches of Europe. He had hoped to meet Titus at Troas with good news from Corinth. When Titus failed to show up, Paul became anxious and proceeded immediately into Macedonia (II Cor. 1:15-16; 2:12-13). Somewhere in Macedonia he met Titus and in response to the good news wrote this second letter (II Cor. 7:5-7).

V. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LETTER

II Corinthians is both didactic and appreciative. Paul rejoices that the church reacted favorably to his first letter (II Cor. 1:13-14; 7:9,15-16), and now proceeds to convey further counsel on needful matters. It contains a medley of emotions -- joy, grief, indignation. The letter is the least systematic and perhaps the most personal of all Paul's epistles. It is invaluable as a sourcebook on the life and character of the apostle. Solicitude for the Corinthians, defense of Paul, warnings against error, instructions in matters of duty and joy over spiritual triumphs make the letter an interesting treatise. The keynote is loyalty to Christ. The extreme emotion of the writer's mind is expressed in the following words: tribulation, consolation, boasting, weakness, simplicity, manifest, manifestation, folly. The predominant word is tribulation, although in the English version it occurs in various synonyms.

VI. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- A. Paul's account of the character of his spiritual labors (Chs. 1-7). Here the apostle portrays his feelings over the condition of the Corinthian church, and shows his relief after the coming of Titus. The central theme is consolation in tribulation, with an undercurrent of apology and suppressed indignation.
- B. Instructions concerning collections for the poor saints (Chs. 8-9). The apostle appeals for and tells of the blessedness of liberality.
- C. Paul's defense of his apostolic authority (Chs. 10-13). Judaizing teachers everywhere were trying to destroy Paul's influence as an apostle and bring churches under bondage to the Jewish law. In this division of the book Paul tells what his apostolic labors had cost him in earthly sufferings.

GALATIANS

I. OCCASION

Paul left the churches running well (Gal. 5:7). Shortly afterwards, Judaizing teachers crept in teaching that the Jewish law was binding upon Christians (Ch. 3). They accepted Jesus as the Messiah, but claimed that salvation is reached through the words of the law, and that Gentiles should be circumcised (5:1-5). In order to carry their point, they tried to undermine Paul's apostolic authority by saying that he was not one of the apostles, and that he received his doctrines from men and not from the Lord (Ch. 1-2).

II. PURPOSE

- A. To defend his apostleship (1:1, 11-24).
- B. To give a contrast between the law of Moses and the gospel of Christ (2:16-5:26).
- C. To show that salvation is a matter of faithful obedience to the gospel of Christ, and not to the law of Moses.

III. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Introduction (1:1-10).
- B. Authoritativeness of Paul's gospel (1:11-21).
 - 1. It is independent of man (1:11-24).
 - 2. It is the gospel of an apostle (Ch. 2).
- C. Teaching of Paul's gospel (Chs. 3-4) "Justification by faith"
 - 1. Their experience proves it (3:6-9).
 - 2. The example of Abraham attests it (3:6-9).
 - 3. The scripture teaches it (3:10-12).
 - 4. The work of Christ provides for it (3:13-14).
 - 5. Its superior results demonstrate it (3:15-4:20).
 - 6. The experience of Sarah and Hagar and their sons illustrate it (4:21-31).
- D. Application of Paul's gospel of faith and obedience (5:1-6:10).
 - 1. He exhorts them to stand fast in the liberty of Christ (5:1-12). This liberty excludes Judaism.
 - 2. He exhorts them not to abuse their liberty (5:13-6:10).
- E. Conclusion (6:11-18).

IV. DATE

Indefinite, ranging from 48 to 58 A.D., depending upon whether the person accepts the "North Galatia" or the "South Galatia" theory. It is not appropriate that we go into this consideration in this type of effort. Therefore, consider the date indefinite, somewhere within this 11 year period.

V. PLACE (This problem is also connected with the above theories).

- A. If an early date is accepted (approx. 48 A.D., which would be after the first missionary tour and before the council of Jerusalem) The place of writing would probably be Antioch of Syria.
- B. If a middle date is accepted (Approx. 50-52 A.D., which would be on the second missionary journey after Paul's second visit to Galatia), the place of writing would probably be from Macedonia, especially Corinth.
- C. If a late date is accepted (Approx. 57-58 A.D., which seems to be most likely), this would mean the book was written on the third missionary journey, probably between the writing of II Cor. and Romans. Therefore, it would probably have been written from either Corinth or Ephesus.

EPHESIANS

I. OCCASION

The contents of this epistle offer no indication for believing its writing was prompted by any pressing set of circumstances. However, since this letter is closely related to the Colossian letter, it is probable that Paul took advantage of this opportunity to send this correspondence by Tychicus (6:21; 4:7; 4:16).

II. PURPOSE

The church, the body of Christ, is the theme. The general object of the epistle is to present the ground, the aim, the end of the Lord's church. Paul establishes:

- A. The origin of the church is by the will of God.
- B. The aim of the church is a life of dedication directed by the Holy Spirit through the word.
- C. Quotation from F.W. Farrar, The Life and Work of St. Paul, (1889), p. 635.

"The one overwhelming thought in the mind of the Apostle was the ideal splendour and perfectness of the Church of Christ, and the consequent duty of holiness which was incumbent on all its members...the Epistle naturally falls into two great divisions, doctrinal and practical...the glorious unity of the Church in Christ its living head, and the moral exhortations which sprang with irresistible force of appeal from this divine mystery."

III. TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Evidence indicates that Paul wrote the letter about 62 A.D. during his first imprisonment at Rome (6:20; Acts 28:30-31). Apparently it was written about the time of the Colossian letter, and Tychicus was the bearer of both (6:21; Col. 4:7; 4:16). Some believe Philemon was also sent at the same time.

IV. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Salutation (1:1-2).
- B. Doctrinal (1:3 - 3:21).
 - 1. What God has done for us in Christ (1:3-14).
 - 2. Paul's prayer for their spiritual enlightenment (1:15-23).
 - 3. Saved by grace (2:1-10).
 - 4. The uniting of Jew and Gentile (2:11-22).
 - 5. The "mystery" revealed (3:1-13).
 - 6. Doxology (3:14-21).
- C. Practical (4:1 - 6:23).
 - 1. Paul's plea for unity (4:1-16).
 - 2. The "old man" vs. the "new man" in Christ (4:17-24).
 - 3. Principles governing the "new man", (4:25-5:21).
 - 4. Domestic relations (5:22-6:9).
 - a. Wives and husbands (5:22-33).
 - b. Children and parents (6:1-4).
 - c. Slaves and masters (6:5-9).
 - 5. The Christian's armor (6:10-20).
- D. Closing words (6:21-24).

PHILIPPIANS

I. OCCASION

Epaphroditus had come to Rome to bring Paul help from the Philippian church (4:18). He had become ill while in Rome (2:26-27). After his recovery, he plans to return to Philippi because he has heard that the Philippians have received word of his serious illness. His return trip to Philippi is the occasion Paul needs to send this "love letter" to the Christians at Philippi, (4:28-30).

II. PURPOSE

- A. To express his deep thanksgiving for their concern and gifts (4:10-19).
- B. To exhort to Christ-like unity (2:1-4).
- C. To declare his love and appreciation for them (1:1-11).
- D. To inform them of his condition (1:12-20), and to promise them that he will send Timothy with the news of the outcome of his trial (2:19-23).
- E. To warn against false teachers and the danger of following them (3:1-3; 3:15-19).

III. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Salutation (1:1-2).
- B. Thanksgiving and prayer for the Philippians (1:3-11).
- C. Prospects of the gospel (1:12-18).
- D. Hope to revisit with Philippians (1:19-26).
- E. The Philippians are to practice unity (1:27-30).
- F. The duty of harmony and mutual consideration is to be effected by humility like that of Christ (2:1-11).
- G. The brotherly love (2:12-18).
- H. Words concerning Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30).
- I. Teaching concerning false teachers and agitators (Ch. 3).
- J. A gentle warning to prominent persons (4:1-7).
- K. Another appeal for harmony (Ch. 4:8ff).
- L. Expression of thanks for their gifts (4:10-20).
- M. Salutations and benediction (4:21-23).

IV. PLACE AND DATE OF WRITING

- A. Place: (Rome).
 - 1. He is a prisoner (1:7).
 - 2. His presence has caused interest in the gospel (1:13-20).
 - 3. His mention of saints in Caesar's household (4:22).
 - 4. A sentence awaited by Paul that seems to indicate life or death indicates a Roman court (1:20).
- B. Date: (Sometime during the Roman imprisonment, probably 63-64 A.D.).
 - 1. Paul seems to expect a verdict soon (2:23).
 - 2. A considerable time seems to have elapsed (1:12ff; 2:26).

V. A WORTHWHILE QUOTATION

"To all ages of the Church - to our own especially - this epistle reads a great lesson. While we are expending our strength on theological definitions or ecclesiastical rules, it recalls us from these distractions to the very heart and center of the gospel - the life of Christ and the life in Christ. Here is the meeting point of all our differences, the healing of all our feuds, the true life alike of individuals and sects and churches: here doctrine and practice are wedded together; for here is the "creed of creeds" involved in and arising out of the work of works."

Epistle to the Philippians, p. 72, J.B. Lightfoot.

COLOSSIANS

I. OCCASION

While Paul was in prison at Rome Epaphras had come to visit the apostle in his captivity, bringing a good report of the general condition of the Colossian church, of its stability and growth in grace, and assuring the apostle of its loyal affection for him (1:8); but at the same time filling Paul's heart with a deep anxiety (2:1-4), by his tidings of a new and perilous doctrine that was gaining a footing in the church. This news formed the occasion for the letter.

II. PURPOSE

- A. The chief purpose of the book is to show that Christ is the head of the church (1:18), and the Christian is made full in him (2:10).
- B. Christ is presented as the source of all creation (1:15-17), and man's hope of redemption (1:12-14).
- C. Paul is combating a false doctrine which had the following characteristics:
 1. Philosophic character: (2:8, 2:4).
 2. Ritualistic or Judaistic in some respects (2:11, 14, 16, 17).
 3. Worship of angels: (1:16; 2:10, 15, 18-19).
 4. Ascetic practices: (2:20-23).
 5. This false teaching is considered by many to be the beginnings of Gnosticism, which came into maturity in the Second Century, and consisted primarily of the following main elements:
 - a. Oriental mysticism.
 - b. Judaism.
 - c. Greek philosophy.
 - d. Christianity.
 6. These people assumed the role of Christian teachers: (1:23, 25; 2:3-10, 16-18, 23; 3:1, 14-15).

III. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Salutation and thanksgiving (1:1-8).
- B. Prayer for their spiritual advancement (1:9-14).
- C. Christ in relation to God, the universe and the church (1:15-19).
- D. The reconciling work of Christ (1:20-23).
- E. The apostle's part in proclaiming that work (1:24-2:3).
- F. Warning against, and refutation of, the false teaching (2:4-23).
- G. The new life and the old (3:1-11).
- H. The garment of holiness (3:12-17).
- I. Injunctions concerning domestic life (3:18-4:1).
- J. Exhortation to prayer, wisdom and circumspect speech (4:2-6).
- K. Commendation and closing salutations (4:7-18).

IV. DATE

About 62 A.D.

V. PLACE

In Rome, during Paul's first imprisonment, at about the same time and under the same circumstances as Ephesians and Philemon (Eph. 6:21; Colossians 1:24; 4:7-9, 18; Philemon 11, 23).

I THESSALONIANS

I. TITLE

This book is called "I Thessalonians" because it is the first of two epistles addressed to "the church of the Thessalonians" (I Thess. 1:1).

II. WRITER

The apostle Paul is named the writer in the first verse.

III. TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

It was written from Corinth about 52 or 53 A.D. (Acts 17:14-16; 18:1-5; I Thess. 3:1-6).

IV. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

A. Address and greeting (1:1).

B. Personal thanksgiving and apologia (1:2-3:13).

1. Thanksgiving for the disciples (1:2-10).

2. Review of the apostle's work (2:1-12).

3. Gratitude for the success of the gospel ministry in Thessalonica (2:13-16).

4. Paul's attempt to return to them (2:17-20).

5. Paul's desire to revisit Thessalonica (3:1-10).

6. The apostle's prayer (3:11-13).

C. Exhortation and instruction (4:1-5:28).

1. The duty of purity and love (4:1-5:28).

2. Concerning those who have fallen asleep (4:13-18).

3. Concerning the sudden coming of the day of the Lord (5:1-11).

4. Practical exhortations (5:12-22).

5. Prayer for the church (5:23-24).

6. Concluding salutations and benediction (5:25-28).

V. THE EPISTLE

This is probably the first epistle by Paul, and some think it is the first written document of the Christian religion. It is full of the spirit of love for the Thessalonians, whose "work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope" was remembered by the apostle. The main idea is consolation (4:17-18). The keynote is hope, and the key words are "afflictions" and "advent".

VI. SOME PURPOSES

A. To congratulate them on their steadfastness (1:2-3).

B. To correct erroneous thinking concerning Christ's second coming (4:13-18).

1. Some thought that all work should be suspended since Christ was to come immediately.

2. Some feared that the departed Christians would have no share in the gathering at the Lord's coming.

VII. THE CITY OF THESSALONICA

The town was formerly called Therma (Bath, or Hotwells), and was situated on the Thermaic Gulf almost 100 miles southwest of Philippi. In 315 B.C., Cassander, King of Macedonia, named it for his wife Thessalonica, half-sister of Alexander the Great. During Paul's time, it was a great commercial and political center, being the Roman capital of one of the four districts of Macedonia. The modern town goes by the name of Salonika.

VIII. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH IN THESSALONICA

Paul established the church on his second missionary tour. After leaving Philippi, the party passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica where they spent three sabbaths preaching in the synagogue (Acts 17:1-4). While Paul was in Thessalonica he received support from the Philippian (Phil. 4:16). The evangelization of Thessalonica had far-reaching consequences. In no other Macedonian community was there found a more effective sounding board for the gospel (1:8).

II THESSALONIANS

I. TITLE

This epistle is called II Thessalonians because it is the second of two letters addressed to "the church of the Thessalonians" (1.1).

II. WRITER

Paul, who wrote the first Thessalonian letter, was also the writer of this one, as indicated by the very first verse.

III. TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

This letter was probably written from Corinth in A.D. 53, and just a few months after the first epistle. Two things indicate this date:

- A. The fact that almost the same conditions are described in each - persecution and trial; expectation of the Lord's hasty return; idleness in view of the Lord's speedy return; disorderly conduct;
- B. The fact that Silas and Timothy were with Paul at the time each letter was written (I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:1).

IV. OCCASION

The continued excitement and disturbance over the second coming of Christ, primarily (2:1-4).

V. PURPOSES

- A. To admonish them concerning their attitude toward the disorderly.
- B. To correct the attitude of some, who, disturbed over the supposed imminency of the Lord's coming, forsook their work and gave themselves up to the expectation of the future, threatening the whole structure of society in the church with chaos (3:7-13).

VI. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Greeting (1:1-2).
- B. Thanksgiving and prayer (1:3-12).
- C. Antichrist (2:1-12).
- D. The eternal purpose of God (2:13-14).
- E. A request for prayers (3:1-2), and a word of encouragement (3:3-5).
- F. "Work or Want" (3:6-15).
- G. Closing words (3:16-18).

VII. THE EPISTLE

For information concerning Thessalonica and the establishment of the church there, please refer to the sheet on I Thess. The reasons for writing this second letter are apparent. The chief object was to correct an erroneous idea among the Thessalonians that the Lord would return soon and bring the world to an end. In the first letter, Paul tried to comfort them concerning their Christian dead. His effort did more than he intended. They expected Christ to return during their life-time, hence many quit their secular work and were just waiting in idleness for his coming (II Thess. 3:6-13). The second letter attempts to correct these errors, and to warn the church concerning false teachers who tampered with Paul's authority. This is the shortest letter written by Paul to any church. The general theme is patient waiting for the Lord. There is a lack of special greetings. The epistle has been called a letter of warning.

I TIMOTHY

I. OCCASION

Timothy's need for specific instructions and general encouragement in working with the church at Ephesus while Paul was in Macedonia (1:3; 3:14).

II. PURPOSE

Paul found Ephesus a hot-bed of trouble after his release from Roman imprisonment. He had predicted this (Acts 20:29-30). Paul had personally dealt with some of the troublemakers (1:19-20), before leaving for Macedonia. However, expecting more difficulties (6:3-ff), he left Timothy at Ephesus (1:3). The purpose of the letter is two-fold:

- A. To off set the false doctrines of Jewish teachers (4:7-10; 6:3-5; 6:20-21).
- B. To guide and encourage Timothy in his evangelistic duties:
 1. Concerning public devotions (2:1-8).
 2. Concerning the duties and behavior of Christian women (2:9-15).
 3. Concerning the church officers (3:1-13).
 4. Concerning Timothy's teaching (3:14-16); 4:1-10).
 5. Concerning Timothy's personal holiness (4:11-16).
 6. Concerning the treatment of offenders, of widows, of elders, of slaves, of the rich; and the duties of these several classes of persons (Chs. 5 and 6).

III. A POSSIBLE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND IMPRISONMENT OF PAUL

- A. Release at Rome in late 63 or early 64 as he had hoped (Phile. 22, Phil. 2:23-24).
- B. Sending of Timothy to Philippi as he had promised (Phil 2:19-23).
- C. The journey to Asia (Ephesus), then to Colossae as he had promised Philemon (Phile. 22).
- D. Return to Ephesus and leaving Timothy there on his departure (I Tim. 1:20; 1:3-4).
- E. Journey into Macedonia (I Tim. 1:3).
- F. Detained in Macedonia, he writes I Timothy.
- G. Visits Crete and leaves Titus to "set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city..."
- H. Journeys to Corinth. Finding Zenas and Apollos planning a trip by Crete, Paul writes and sends the letter to Titus, (Titus 3:13), in which he tells Titus of plans to winter at Nicopolis and requests Titus to join him there after he has been replaced by Artemas, or Tychicus (Titus 3:12).
- I. The journey to Spain. Paul was probably in Spain when Nero burned Rome on July 19-24, 64 A.D. (Acts 19-21; Rom. 15:22-24).
- J. Paul returns to Asia Minor, probably avoiding Rome, and visits Miletus and Troas (II Tim. 4:20; 4:13).
- K. His capture, possibly at Troas, subsequent imprisonment at Rome without any anticipation of release (II Tim. 1:12; 2:8-9; 4:6-8, 16-17).
- L. His execution, probably in 67 or 68 A.D.

IV. SPECIAL SECTIONS WITHIN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

- A. Qualifications for elders (3:1-7).
- B. Qualifications for deacons (3:8-10, 12-23).
- C. Instructions in regard to widows (5:3-16).

II TIMOTHY

I. OCCASION

Paul's impending death, bringing forth this last touching epistle "to Timothy, my beloved child..." (1:2).

II. PURPOSE

- A. One object of the letter was to request Timothy to come to him speedily (4:9,11,21).
- B. It was also written to further instruct Timothy in church matters, and to explain to him Paul's personal affairs.

III. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Salutation (1:1-2).
- B. Exhortation to boldness and fidelity (1:3-14).
- C. Two examples: one of desertion, other of fidelity (1:15-18).
- D. Exhortation to courage (2:1-13).
- E. Exhortation to reprove the erring and to be an example (2:14-26).
- F. Prediction of persecution; exhortation to be steadfast (3:1-17).
- G. "Preach the Word" (4:1-8).
- H. Conclusion: personal directions; assurances of confidence (4:9-22).

IV. DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

This epistle was written from Rome during Paul's second imprisonment, and just before his martyrdom, probably in 67 A.D.

V. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EPISTLE

- A. More personal than I Timothy.
- B. "Hasten", "Come", "Greatly desiring to see thee", "Do diligence to come shortly", and "Come before winter" are all key-expressions.
- C. Personal references are many. More than 20 names are mentioned in a personal way.
- D. This epistle contains Paul's valedictory address.
- E. Paul forgets himself in thoughts of others though bearing the burden of loneliness and certain loss of life.

VI. KEY PASSAGES

- A. "Hold the pattern of sound words," (1:13).
- B. "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine," (4:3).
- C. "Study to show thyself approved...", (2:15).
- D. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction...", (3:16-17).
- E. "Preach the word...", (4:11).
- F. "Only Luke is with me." (4:11).
- G. "The Lord's servant must...be apt to teach," (2:24).
- H. "For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come...", (4:6).

TITUS

I. OCCASION

The immediate occasion for the writing of Titus seems to have been the forthcoming visit of Apollos and Zenas to Crete (3:13). This gave Paul his opportunity to send this correspondence to Titus.

II. PURPOSES

A. Authorization:

Titus was in a difficult place, Crete. He needed positive indication that what he was doing was authoritative when he began to "set things in order." This written epistle from the apostle Paul would carry much weight when Titus began his work of appointing elders (1:5), setting in order the things that were wanting, (1:5), stopping the mouths of false teachers (1:11), etc.

B. Instruction:

Paul was revealing the qualifications for elders (1:7-9), teaching the dire need for the teaching of sound doctrine (2:1), impressing the necessity of consistent Christian living (2:2-10), etc.

C. Information: (personal)

Information concerning Zenas and Apollos (3:13), Paul's decision to winter at Nicopolis (3:12), and his request to Titus to join him there when he had been replaced by Tychicus or Artemas (3:12a).

D. Consolation and encouragement: (1:1-4).

The entire epistle serves this purpose for Titus, who, no doubt, was experiencing a difficult time on the island of Crete.

III. CONTENTS

A. Salutation (1:1-4).

B. Qualifications of elders (1:5-9).

C. How to deal with false doctrines (1:10-16).

D. Upright Christian living (2:1-10).

1. Concerning aged men and women (2:1-8).

2. Concerning servants (2:9-10).

E. The Grace of God (2:11-14; 3:4-7).

F. General exhortations to Titus (2:15; 3:1-3; 3:8-11).

G. Conclusion: (3:12-15).

1. Instructions (3:12-14).

2. Salutations (3:15).

IV. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS EXAMINED

A. Presbuteros: elder and presbyter - indicating age and experience, (Acts 14:23; I Tim. 5:1, 17; Titus 1:5; I Pet. 5:1).

B. Episkopos: bishop and overseer - emphasizing supervision, direction, oversight, (Acts 20:28; Titus 1:7; I Tim. 3:1; Phil. 1:1).

C. Poimain: pastor and shepherd - reflecting nurture, feeding, teaching, care, (Eph. 4:11; I Pet. 2:25; 5:2).

D. I Timothy 3:1-7 gives the following qualifications: without reproach, husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach, no brawler, no striker, gentle, not contentious, no lover of money, rules well his own house, not a novice, having good testimony from without...

E. Titus 1:5-9 gives the following qualifications: blameless, husband of one wife, having children that believe, not self-willed, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, given to hospitality, lover of good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, sound in faith.

PHILEMON

I. OCCASION

Paul writes to his friend Philemon concerning Onesimus, Philemon's run-a-way slave who had escaped to Rome.

II. PURPOSE

- A. Onesimus had come to Rome and had been converted by Paul's efforts.
- B. Paul, after the conversion of Onesimus, sends him back to his master with this letter which urges Christian conduct on Philemon's part and reminds him of the new relationship between master and slave, in Christianity.

III. PLAN OF APPROACH AND PROCEDURE+

- A. Paul gives personal salutations (1-3).
- B. He then praises God for Philemon's character as shown by his attitude toward Christ and Christians (4-7).
- C. Philemon is then entreated to forget and forgive the past and to receive Onesimus, not as a slave, but as a friend and Christian brother (8-22).
- D. Paul then closes with more salutations and a benediction (23-25).

IV. PLACE

In Rome, during Paul's first imprisonment, at about the same time and under the same circumstances as Ephesians and Colossians (Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:24; 4:7-9, 18; Phile. 11, 23).

V. DATE

About 62 A.D.

VI. MAIN TEACHINGS

- A. This letter shows the way the Christian grapples with the evils of society.
- B. This letter impresses us in that it shows the best way to purify the evils of society is by Christian principles rather than legislative enactment.

VII. RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

- A. This letter is one of four personal epistles by Paul.
- B. It differs from his other letters in that it contains no doctrine, as such.
- C. Although Christianity recognized the existence of slavery, its principles of brotherhood softened the harsh relations between social classes and paved the way for freedom and democracy.
- D. The epistle is a wonderful illustration of Paul's delicacy and tenderness of character, in which he exhibits dignity, generosity, prudence, friendship, affection, politeness, skillful address, and purity.
- E. It has been called the "polite epistle." It is a noble example of Christian love.

HEBREWS

I. WRITER: Unknown.

- A. Eusebius tells us that Pantoenus (2nd Century writer) assigned authorship to Paul.
- B. Tertullian of Carthage (3rd Century writer) stated that Barnabas wrote it.
- C. Martin Luther thought Apollos was the writer.
- D. Morgan thinks it bears traces of Paul's thinking and Luke's writing.
- E. Others have claimed Clement, and even Priscilla, wrote it.
- F. Origen has well said, "Who wrote the Epistle God only knows certainly."
- G. Certain evidences for Pauline authorship:
 - 1. There is no proof that anyone else wrote it.
 - 2. Style, contents, and argument are said to be Pauline.
 - 3. Paul was thoroughly familiar with the Jewish system discussed.
 - 4. Second Century scholars named Paul as the writer.
 - 5. It was written during Paul's lifetime, for the temple was still standing.
 - 6. It was written by a friend of Timothy (13:23).
 - 7. The writer was or had been in Italy (13:23-24).
 - 8. Peter speaks of an epistle by Paul to the Hebrews (II Pet. 3:15).
 - 9. The epistle closes with the usual Pauline benediction.

II. DATE: Unknown.

When this epistle was written cannot be definitely determined. Many place the date at 62-64 A.D. on the assumption that this letter was written by Paul and during his first imprisonment. It is safe to assume that it was written before 70 A.D., the date of the destruction of Jerusalem.

III. PLACE: Unknown.

From the greeting at the close "they of Italy salute you," it may be gathered that the epistle was either sent from Rome or addressed to Rome. Since it contains a preponderance of Jewish arguments, the implication is that it was written from Rome rather than to Rome.

IV. TO WHOM ADDRESSED: Unknown

- A. The title, "The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews," is not in reliable MSS.
- B. The main theories of the destination of the epistle are as follows:
 - 1. To Christians of predominantly pagan origin.
 - 2. To those still taking part in Jewish worship.
 - 3. To those of Jerusalem: many hold this view, based on the presupposition that an exact knowledge of Jewish law and ritual and worship is assumed.
 - 4. To those of Antioch: many hold this view based upon inferences from (2:3; 6:10, and Acts 11:19, 27-30).
 - 5. To those of Rome, based upon:
 - a. "They of Italy salute you."
 - b. Clement of Rome quotes from Hebrews in his writings as early as 96 A.D.
- C. Concerning those addressed, all that we may be certain of is that we cannot be certain of their locality.

JAMES

I. WRITER: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1).

- A. There are at least four James mentioned in the New Testament.
 - 1. The son of Zebedee (Matt. 4:21). One of the twelve, elder brother of John, and sometimes called James the Elder or Great.
 - 2. The son of Alphaeus (Matt. 10:3), probably the "Less" (Mark 15:40).
 - 3. The father of Judas the apostle, not Iscariot (Lk. 6:16).
 - 4. The Lord's brother, or half-brother (Matt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3; Gal. 1:19).
- B. The writer most likely James, the Lord's brother, because:
 - 1. Father of Judas entirely unknown except for his son.
 - 2. Son of Alphaeus is not well known.
 - 3. The son of Zebedee was martyred not later than 44 A.D. (Acts 12:1).
 - 4. Thus, James the Lord's brother is thought by many to be the author:
 - a. He did not believe on the Lord until after his resurrection (Jno. 7:2-9; Mk. 3:21; Acts 1:13-14).
 - b. He was a pillar in the early church at Jerusalem, (Acts 12:17; 15:13-21; Gal. 1:19).

II. DATE: Undetermined, but conservatives hold two possibilities.

- A. Shortly before death of James, (62-65 A.D.).
- B. Very early date, (45-48 A.D.), because:
 - 1. No reference to fall of Jerusalem.
 - 2. Apparently no close organization of local congregations.
 - 3. Believers still met in the "synagogue" at times (2:2).
 - 4. No mention of Gentiles' entrance into the church.
- C. The very early date seems to fit the content of the epistle. If this date is correct, it makes James the earliest written document of the Christian religion.

III. PLACE OF WRITING

Undetermined. Conservatives, in accepting James the Lord's brother as the author, are inclined to look to Jerusalem as the place of writing because of James' prominence there. However, there is no conclusive proof as to the place of writing.

IV. OCCASION AND PURPOSE

The epistle seems to have been occasioned by the outward experiences, spiritual state, and doctrinal misconceptions of the Jewish Christians of the Dispersion. They were persecuted by their own countrymen, especially the rich. Their spiritual state was ebbing, there being strife and factions among them leading them to mis-use the tongue, etc. Many acted as if knowing the truth was enough and they did not put their faith to work.

"Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only," - a good theme. Practical religion, or faith at work, is emphasized, (1:27; 2:14-26).

V. MAIN TEACHINGS

- A. Importance of works of faith; value of practice over mere theory (Ch. 2).
- B. Patience under trial (1:2ff; 4:4; 5:7-11).
- C. Respect to the poor; wrongs of the rich (2:6; 5:1-6).
- D. Danger of evil speech (1:19; 3:2-12; 4:11-12; 5:9).
- E. Need for humility and sincerity (3:13; 4:6-10).

I PETER

I. OCCASION

The occasion was the "fiery trial" which had come upon the Christians (4:12). If the traditional date of this epistle is correct, the "fiery trial" would be the terrible persecution under Nero which began in 64 A.D. Tacitus tells us that vast numbers of Christians in Rome were put to death in brutal fashion. This gave the cue to all provincial governors to do likewise, if they wished to gain favor of Nero.

II. PURPOSE

The general purpose of the letter, expressed in (5:12), was to console them in their suffering, and to exhort them to faithfulness and duty. There were other indirect purposes:

- A. This epistle gives support to the authority of Paul in that:
 - 1. Silas, a close companion of Paul, is the bearer of this epistle.
 - 2. Mark, also a co-worker with Paul, but apparently converted by Peter, is with Peter at the time of writing.
 - 3. This epistle sent to the Asiatic churches established by Paul and reflects a complete oneness with Paul in the Christian faith.
- B. To assure them they are religiously right and to assure them that suffering for Christ is something not to be ashamed of, (4:16).
- C. The essentiality and purpose of baptism as stated, (3:20-21).

III. TO WHOM WRITTEN

To the "sojourners of the dispersion". These Jewish Christians had been scattered by persecutions (1:1, 17; 2:11-12; 3:17; 4:1-4, 12-19; 5:8-9). They were sojourning among Gentiles in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (1:1; 2:12). Although the epistle was addressed primarily to Jewish Christians, it did not exclude the Gentiles. Peter presents the church as the true Israel of God's promise. (2:4-10).

IV. DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

Probably written between A.D. 64 and 67, from Babylon (5:13). Some take the position that "Babylon" was the symbolic name for Rome. Nothing in the New Testament confirms this view. However, several of the early writers (uninspired men) claim that Peter was martyred in Rome when Nero was emperor: Clement of Rome, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius.

V. CONTENTS

- A. The explanation of suffering: the establishment in conduct (1:3-3:9).
 - 1. The foundation of Christian conduct: our life in Christ (1:1-25).
 - 2. The functioning of Christian conduct: our life in Christ (2:1-10).
 - 3. The felicity of Christian conduct: our life for Christ (2:11-3:9).
- B. The exhortation to suffering: the encouragements in character (3:10-4:19).
 - 1. The principle of Christian character (c:10-17).
 - 2. The pattern for Christian character (3:18-22).
 - 3. The powers of Christian character (4:1-19).
- C. The expectation of suffering: the exhortations in conflict (5:1-14).
 - 1. The service to the flock: the exhortations to the elders (5:1-4).
 - 2. The submission to the Father: the exhortations to the younger (5:5-9).
 - 3. The steadfastness in the faith: the exhortations in the complimentary close (5:10-14).

II PETER

I. AUTHORSHIP

Peter, as stated in (1:1). Also, external and internal evidence reflects Peter.

A. Internal evidence:

1. Reference is made to events which happened in Peter's life:
 - a. (1:14) Peter speaks of his coming death as "our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." (John 21:18-19).
 - b. (1:16-18) Peter speaks of the transfiguration of Jesus "in the holy mount." (Matt. 17:1-7).
2. Reference is made to a previous letter, probably I Peter (3:1).

B. External evidence:

1. Genuineness was established in the church at the end of the 4th Century by the councils of Laodicaea (approximately 366 A.D.), Hippo (393 A.D.), and Carthage (397 A.D.).
2. Jerome considered it genuine; Eusebius acknowledged it as profitable; Origen says II Peter was only doubted.

II. OCCASION AND PURPOSE

The libertines and mockers, two classes of false teachers within the church, were causing considerable difficulty. This letter warns the church against them, and exhorts Christians to "grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (3:18). The plea for steadfastness is prominent, in view of numerous heretics threatening the spiritual life of the saints.

III. DATE AND PLACE

No definite information concerning time and place of writing is available. Probably written in the late 60's, shortly after I Peter. Therefore, very likely from the same place, Babylon. However, many believe that Peter was taken to Rome and martyred there, and that this letter was written from Rome shortly before his death. This view based upon traditions and writings of uninspired men, not upon revelation.

IV. TO WHOM ADDRESSED

- A. This epistle is addressed "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us."
- B. This address is very general but may be narrowed somewhat by (3:1), "This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I write unto you..."
- C. Therefore, it seems that Peter was, at least in a general way, addressing the same people in the II epistle as he did in the first.

V. PLAN OF APPROACH AND PROCEDURE

- A. Peter exhorts them to growth and Christian knowledge (1:1 - 1:11).
- B. He reminds them of the ground upon which their knowledge rests and warns against false teachers (1:12 - 2:22).
- C. Teaches concerning the second coming of Christ (3:1-13).
- D. He closes with an exhortation to make their calling and election sure. He recommends Paul's epistles (3:14-18).

I. TITLE

This letter bears the name of the writer, and is the first of three general epistles by John.

II. WRITER

The writer nowhere indicates his name, but the uniform testimony of the early church affirmed that John the apostle was the writer. There is also a close similarity of thought and expression between the Gospel according to John and the epistle. John was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and the brother of James. James and John were "surnamed Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder" (Mk. 3:17). Peter, James, and John were the Lord's innermost friends, but John held the distinction of being the disciple whom Jesus loved (Jno. 19:26). John was an eyewitness of the person and labors of the Lord (I Jno. 1:1-4; 4:14).

III. TO WHOM ADDRESSED

We cannot be sure about the destination of this epistle, but it was probably written primarily to the churches in and around Asia Minor, for a large part of John's life was traditionally spent at Ephesus. They were of all ages of Christian development, hated of the world, inclined to worldliness, and in danger of being led into doubt by some who denied the divinity of Christ.

IV. TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

The letter was probably written from Ephesus, but the precise dates are uncertain. The dates suggested range far and wide; however, most writers fix the time around 95 A.D.

V. OCCASION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of the letter was to warn against prevailing errors, and tell the disciples how to be sure to gain eternal life (5:13). One group of false teachers among the brethren questioned the divinity of our Lord (2:18-22; 4:15; 5:1). Others denied his humanity, and thus taught that his incarnation was but a myth (Heb. 2:14-18; 4:15; I Jno. 1:1-3; 4:3; 5:6). There was a third group who taught that one could worship God with the spirit and indulge in every sin with the body. John refutes this creed by showing that every sin is transgression (2:3-6; 3:4; 8-10; 4:13; 5:16-17). Errors reflected in this epistle crystallized into a philosophy that became known as Gnosticism. It gave pure Christianity a terrific struggle during the second century. Cerinthians, Ebionites and Docetists threatened to undermine the gospel.

VI. STYLE OF WRITING

The material resembles a sermon more than an epistle. Although the thought is profound, the language is simple. The book contains many contrasts, parallelisms and repetitions. It reveals the writer to be both affectionate and severe, as all true disciples should be. The gentlest Christian may be a son of thunder (Mark 3:17).
f

VII. THEME

The central theme of this epistle is fellowship with God through Jesus Christ his Son.

VIII. ANALYSIS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A. Introduction(1:1-4). | D. God's love (4:7 - 5:3). |
| B. God's light (1:5 - 2:28). | E. God's faithfulness (5:4-12). |
| C. God's righteousness (2:29 - 4:6) | F. Conclusion (5:13-21). |

II JOHN

I. TITLE

The book gets its name from the fact that it is the second of three epistles by John.

II. THE WRITER

A few ancient scholars maintained that II John was written by "John the presbyter," a contemporary of John the apostle. The argument is based on verse 1 where the writer assumes the title of "elder" or "presbyter." However, this fact does not prove that John the apostle did not write the epistle, for "elder" is a title by which Peter also designates himself (I Peter 5:1). John used the title because he was an elder in a congregation, or because he was one advanced in years.

III. TO WHOM ADDRESSED

There is also a difference of opinion concerning the one addressed. Some think that "the elect lady" is a symbolical expression used by John to refer to a nation, a church, or to the church in general. Many scholars believe that the "elect lady" was a Christian woman who probably lived at Ephesus. References to her children imply that she was a mother, and because no mention is made of her husband, it is thought that she was a widow.

IV. TIME OF WRITING

Probably written during the last decade of the first century.

V. PLACE OF WRITING

Strong and undisputed tradition of the early church is that John located at Ephesus during his later ministry. Therefore, Ephesus is the probable place of writing.

VI. PURPOSE AND CONTENTS

The evident purpose of the letter was to warn the addressee against error and false teachers. The letter shows the warm affection which true gospel preachers have toward those whom they serve. One writer says: "Of the thirteen verses in this epistle, eight are in substance found in the former letter." Characteristic words are love, truth, commandment, and walking.

VII. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Address and salutation (verses 1-4).
- B. Admonitions (verses 5-6).
- C. Warnings (verses 7-11).
- D. Conclusion (verses 12-13).

III JOHN

I. AUTHENTICITY

The author simply calls himself, "the elder." This is believed to be John the apostle. Many ancient writers help us to verify this identification. Clement of Alexandria cited this letter; Dionysius mentions that John is not named in his Epistles "not even in the Second and Third Epistles, although they are short Epistles, but simply calls himself the presbyter." (Eusebius, H.E. VII, XXV.). Many of the same phrases and certainly the same style is found in III John as in the first two epistles. It is not surprising that from the early Christian era III John has been credited to John the apostle by most conservative scholars.

II. WHY WRITTEN

Three main points stand out in this short letter. John writes:

- A. Commending Gaius for faithfulness, fidelity, hospitality to missionaries; to encourage him to continue in this in spite of the opposition that had arisen.
- B. Rebuking Diotrephes for arrogance, love of preeminence, and perverseness.
- C. Commending Demetrius.

III. WHERE WRITTEN

The close connection with II John suggests that this epistle was written from the same place, perhaps Ephesus. However, we do not have the necessary information to say where this letter was written with any degree of certainty.

IV. WHEN WRITTEN

Probably written during the last decade of the first century.

V. TO WHOM WRITTEN "Unto Gaius the beloved"

- A. It is impossible to identify him with:
 - 1. Gaius of Macedonia (Acts 19:29).
 - 2. Gaius of Derbe (Acts 20:4).
 - 3. Gaius, baptized by Paul (I Cor. 1:14).
 - 4. Gaius, Paul's host (Rom. 16:23).
- B. Gaius, written to by John (III John 1:1), might well be a different person from any of these.
- C. He seems to have been a man devoted to the truth, given to hospitality, and dependable.

VI. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Address and salutation (verses 1-4).
- B. New Testament law of missions (verses 5-8)
- c. John's apostolic approval (verses 9-10).
- D. Faithfulness of Demetrius (verses 11-12).
- E. Conclusion (verses 13-14).

I. AUTHORSHIP

- A. Signs his name as "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." Generally agreed that this is not Jude (Thaddeus) the apostle, as the inference is against apostleship of writer in vs. 17.
- B. Was this Jude, the author, the brother of Jesus? (Matt. 13:55).
 1. Mk. 6:3 states Jesus was the brother of James.
 2. Jude 1:1 states Jude is the brother of James.
 3. Therefore, Jude was the brother of Jesus.
 4. Not only the Bible, but early writers bear this out: "There were yet living of the family of our Lord," the narrative says, "the grandchildren of Judas, called the brother of our Lord, according to the flesh. These were reported as being of the family of David, and were brought to Domitian..." (Hegesippus vis Eusebius).
- C. Since Jude does not call himself an apostle, the evidence is very strong that he was the brother of James and Jesus, according to the flesh.

II. DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING UNKNOWN

- A. 65066 A.D. is the traditional date.
- B. Palestine, or Jerusalem itself, is the traditional site.

III. TO WHOM ADDRESSED

Although the letter is addressed to Christians in general, "To them that are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ," it was likely intended at first for Jewish Christians in Palestine. Several allusions presuppose an acquaintance with the Old Testament scriptures and Jewish traditions. Some believe that the epistle was sent to Antioch in Syria and that it was intended for both Jewish and Gentile Christians.

IV. OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- A. Opening greeting (1-2).
- B. The occasion and purpose of the letter (3-4).
- C. Three warning examples (5-7).
- D. The false brethren (8-16).
- E. Charge to true Christians (17-23).
- F. Closing doxology (24-25).

V. SIMILARITIES OF II PETER AND JUDE

- A. Warning of heretics who deny the Lord (II Pet. 2:1; Jude 4).
- B. False teachers turning grace of God into lasciviousness (II Pet. 2:2; Jude 4).
- C. Those who crept into congregations privily, working deceptively (II Pet. 2:1; Jude 4).
- D. Their motive was covetousness (II Pet. 2:3, 15; Jude 11).
- E. Despised authority, railed at dignitaries (II Pet. 2:10; Jude 8).
- F. They employed swelling words of vanity (II Pet. 2:18; Jude 8).
- G. Ignorant, not influenced by reason or gospel (II Pet. 2:12; Jude 10).
- H. Like Baalam (II Pet. 2:5; Jude 11).
- I. "Springs without water," "clouds carried by winds" (II Pet. 2:17; Jude 12).

VI. PURPOSE

The epistle was written to denounce the deceitful workers, false teacher, sensualists, deceivers, infidels, lascivious, liars, hypocrites, mumurers, and fault-finders, and to exhort the faithful to "condend earnestly for the faith." The original purpose was, it seems, to have been a letter concerning the "common salvation," but because of the alarming conditions developing, Jude attacked the evil-doers.

W.C.H.

REVELATION

I. AUTHORSHIP

The apostle John generally accepted as the author, about 96 A.D.

II. TO WHOM WRITTEN

To all Christians; "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:7). Also "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy..." (Rev. 1:3; 22:7). The Comfort and Assurance, along with the Closeness to the Father, found in studying Revelation are blessings to be obtained from this Book.

III. PURPOSE

"To show unto his servants even the things which must shortly come to pass" (Rev. 1:1). There are two reasons for prophecy:

- A. To test the prophet (Deut. 18:22).
- B. To prepare the faithful for future events (Jno. 14:29; Matt. 24:25).
- C. It is apparent the Father has revealed to Christians the things that are to come to pass (from John's day) in the future. As we observe these coming to pass in history, our faith is made stronger, realizing that the Father has not abandoned the world, but that all things are working out like he said they would.

IV. CONTENT

There are four schools of thought to be found in literature concerning the teaching of Revelation:

- A. Preterist, considering all fulfilled in early centuries, the Dark Ages being the millenium.
- B. Futurist, considering most all to be yet future, applied to short period just before and at the second coming of Christ.
- C. Spiritualist, likening the visions to "great principles in constant conflict."
- D. Historical, applying the visions to historical events affecting the church and civilization in general beginning with John's time, some of the visions yet future.

V. GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN THE STUDY OF REVELATION

While an open mind should always be maintained in studying all the Bible, it is especially desirable in studying Revelation, since we have no inspired writer pointing out the true interpretation. However, the Father has a message here for his people, and by use of common sense and discretion, great progress may be made in understanding this message.

Many of our more conservative brethren favor Number IV.D., above, the Historical Interpretation. Within this school of interpretation, there are several sub-schools of exposition, dealing with the visions in series, parallel, or other styles. In either case, a close study of history becomes necessary to strengthen our ideas on interpretation.

Differences in schools of interpretation should not be considered a test of fellowship, generally speaking. Some ideas (the Premillennial system for instance, under No. IV. C. above) are in conflict with simple truths of the Gospel and for that reason should be avoided, yet it appears from such statements as Rev. 13:9 "If any man have an ear, let him hear" that the understanding of Revelation may well be an individual matter, so long as contentions are not had.

One rule to go by always in interpreting difficult passages of Scripture: Never allow an interpretation of a difficult passage to contradict the plain meaning of the simpler passages.