

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HOME MISSIONS

MOTTO: Trust the Lord and Tell the People

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A NEW APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE AS A MISSIONARY BOOK

In this issue of Southern Baptist Home Missions we are giving an outline of the Old Testament as a sample of the new method of approach to the study of the Bible as a MISSIONARY BOOK.

We are proceeding on the assumption that the entire Bible is inspired; that every book in the Bible has a place and a meaning and that it is necessary for one to know the place and teaching of each book in order to get the full revelation of God's will; that the entire Bible with all of its books, each book in its place and each book giving its own message, is an authoritative revelation of God's purpose and plan and method and means for the redemption and salvation of the world.

These outline studies will be given in permanent form for study classes, Bible classes, Mission classes, and other church groups. Helps for study will be printed in connection with the chapters. There will also be suggestions for round-table discussions. The purpose is to offer a method of approach to the study of the Bible that will enable our people to get a better understanding of the Bible as a missionary book.

The book will be off the press this fall.

CHRIST—THE KEY TO THE WHOLE BIBLE

I. NECESSITY AND PREPARATION FOR CHRIST'S COMING.— The Old Testament.

1. **NECESSITY**—Condition of the race:
 - (1). Sinful—Needing redemption—Need of a Priest.
 - (2). Ignorant—Needing instruction—Need of a Prophet.
 - (3). Anarchistic—Needing obedience—Need of a King.
2. **PREPARATION**—In the life of Israel.
 - (1). Prophesied—Ideal Prophet—Prophecies.
 - (2). Typified—Ideal Priest—Ceremonies.
 - (3). Magnified—Ideal King—Promises.

II. THE COMING OF CHRIST.—The Four Gospels.

1. **PROPHET**—Exhibits the Prophet from Heaven who speaks the Words of God in truth.
2. **PRIEST**—Exhibits the Priest from Heaven who offers the one perfect sacrifice.
3. **KING**—Exhibits the King from Heaven who claims all authority in Heaven and in earth.

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S COMING.—Acts, Epistles, and Revelation.

1. GODWARD:

- (1). As Prophet—"Here ye HIM."
- (2). As Priest—"God raised HIM up."
- (3). As King—"God exalted HIM."

2. MANWARD:

- (1). Meets man's need of Redemption as Priest in His sacrifice.
- (2). Meets man's need of a Prophet in the Word of Truth.
- (3). Meets man's desire for a King in the glorious triumph of Revelation.

CHAPTER I.

THE WORD AND THE WORDS FOR THE WORLD

"Man doth not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live" (Deut. 8:3).

The root of all the evils which abound today lies in the fact that the Word and the Words of God are not fed upon, digested and assimilated as they ought to be by the people.

If we ask the question, why is this the case, the answer is: the Bible is not read because it is not enjoyed, and it is not enjoyed because it is not understood, and it is not understood because men do not have the key that unlocks its sacred pages to them.

1. The Bible Speaks for Itself.

Like Ezra of old, our desire in these studies is to "open the Book" and let it speak for itself, with the full conviction that if this can be done, the Bible will speak more loudly and more effectively for itself than anyone can speak for it.

To "open the Book", we must know what the Book is about, who wrote it, why it was written, and the message it contains.

These questions are answered by the Book itself, "for the prophecy came not in old times by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (I Pet. 1:27). This is the claim of the Bible. It does not attempt to establish this claim or seek to prove it. It merely assumes it and asserts it. It is for us to believe or leave. The Bible says that it is the Word of God.

2. The Bible is God's Word.

A message in writing must necessarily be given in words, and the separate words in which it is given must have the same importance and authority that the message as a whole has. Therefore, if we accept the Bible as a Revelation from God to Man and receive it as inspired, we cannot separate the words in which that inspired Revelation is given or admit the assertion that "the Bible contains the Word of God, but is not the word of God." Such a position is both illogical and impossible. We accept the Bible, therefore, as the literal Word of God, and we take the Bible as the proof of its own inspiration. It claims to be the "Word of God", and if it is not all it claims to be, then it is not a good book and is unworthy of our further consideration or attention.

Accepting the Bible as the Word of God, we accept it as God's message to Man telling him of God's purpose and plan to save the world. It is God's message to Man about His Only Begotten Son. It is delivered to Man in order that Man might come to know God's Son

as Saviour and be saved. Hence, it is authoritative, final, and complete.

3. The Bible Interprets God.

The first great and essential principle which must be ever present when we study the Word of God as a whole is to treat it as the Revelation which God has given to interpret Himself and His will to man.

This interpretation is made through Christ, the Living Word, who is the theme of the written word. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten son, he being in the bosom of the father, hath declared him." The word "declared" means to make known.

This is why Christ is called the "Word of God." He makes known, reveals and explains the Father.

This is why the scriptures are called the "Word of God," they make known the Father and the Son, by the Holy Spirit, the Author of the written Word.

Thus we have the Word in three manifestations:—

The Incarnate Word.

The written Word.

The preached Word.

There is no other. Christ reveals the Father. The scriptures reveal Christ. The Holy Spirit reveals both the Father and the Son in the written Word. And the preached Word is the proclamation of the written Word in which both the Father and the Son are revealed.

Our mission is to preach the Word. This has always been and always will be the mission of God's people. The Living Word and the written Word cannot be separated. To try to preach the written Word without preaching Christ, the Living Word, is no preaching at all; neither can it be done in the power of the Holy Spirit.

4. The Bible Has Christ as its Theme.

Christ is the one great subject that runs through the whole Word of God; the promised seed of the woman in Genesis (3:15).

This verse marks the depth of ruin to which Man came by the fall; and it is the foundation for the rest of the scriptures.

All hope of restoration for Man and for creation is centered in Christ, the Living Word; who in due time should be born into the world, should suffer and die; and, in resurrection, should become the Lord of a new creation, and should finally crush the head of the serpent who brought in all the ruin.

Christ is therefore the King, and He, together with the Kingdom which He is to set up eventually, is the one great subject which occupies the whole of the Word of God.

Hence, the Key to the Divine Revelation in the written Word is

Christ and His Kingdom; and apart from Him and His Kingdom it cannot be understood.

The contents of the Bible must therefore be seen and arranged with reference to Christ, the Living Word; the counsels and purposes of God are centered in Him.

(1). In the Old Testament we have the King and the Kingdom in promise and prophecy, illustration and type.

(2). In the four Gospels we have the King and the Kingdom presented and proclaimed by John the Baptist, and by Christ Himself; and we see the Kingdom rejected and the King crucified.

(3). In the Acts of the Apostles we have the transition from the Kingdom to the Church.

(4). In the Epistles we have the King exalted and made head over all things to the Church.

(5). In Revelation we have the Revelation of the King in judgment; and we see the Kingdom set up, the King enthroned in power and glory, the promises fulfilled, and the prophecy ended.

From the Scripture, and from its illustration, it is seen that the great subject of the whole Book is Christ. From the first (Gen. 3:15) to the last (Rev. 22:20) "the Coming One" fills our vision.

The one great design of all the books of the Bible is to tell of the "Coming One." All else is subordinated to this. This is why we see the ordinary events in a household combining with the grandest vision of a prophet to testify of Him who fills all Scripture. It may be written of the Word, as it is of the New Jerusalem, "The Lamb is the light thereof."

5. Rightly Dividing the Word.

The first requirement of the Word centers in the fact that it is "The Word of Truth." And this fact is so stated as to imply that unless the Word is rightly divided we shall not be able to get the "Truth." "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

We get the truth of the Word only in proportion to the measure in which we divide the Word rightly.

There are four principle spheres in which we are to give diligence to follow the right ways so clearly marked out for our studies in rightly dividing the Word.

We must rightly divide the Word of Truth:

- (1). As to its literary form.
- (2). As to its subject matter.
- (3). As to times and administrations.
- (4). As to dispensational teaching.

We pass over the question of literary form. We would, however, call the attention of the reader to the fact the Bible is a library of sixty-six books: thirty-nine in the Old Testament, and twenty-seven in the New. These books were written by about forty authors through a period of about sixteen hundred years, and they contain history, law, poetry, biography, drama, letters, prayers, speeches, prophecies, science, philosophy; a universe of literature, an inspired book-shelf. But even though written by so many authors through so many years the Bible is a beautiful unity. The scarlet thread of redemption by the blood of Christ is interwoven into the whole fabric of the Book, so that if you cut the Scriptures anywhere they bleed. This fact must be recognized if we would discover its hidden depths of meaning.

6. Rightly Dividing the Word as to Subject Matter.

When it comes to the subject matter, however, we would call attention to the necessity of rightly dividing the Word.

While the Word of God is written for all persons and for all time, yet not every part of it is addressed to all persons about all things in all times.

Every word is written for our instruction and edification and contains what all in every age of the world ought to know; but its subject matter is written concerning one or other of three distinct classes of persons, separately or combined.

The Jews.

The Gentiles.

The believers in Christ.

Every Scripture is written concerning one or the other of these three classes, and is especially addressed to that particular class. The class to whom the Scripture is written has, therefore, the prior claim to that Scripture. The interpretation of it belongs to that class. The other two classes may apply it to themselves and may be instructed by it, but inasmuch as it is only an application and not the true interpretation, such application of the Scripture must be made only so far as it agrees with those Scriptures which are especially addressed and related to the classes in question. Otherwise, we shall find ourselves using one truth to upset another truth. We shall be setting what is true of one class in opposition to what is true of another class.

We must not take that which is written to the Jews and interpret it of the Gentiles.

We must not take that which is written to believers in Christ and interpret it of the world.

We must not take that which is written to the Gentiles and interpret it either of the Church or of the Jews.

If we fail to rightly divide the word as to the various groups to whom it is written, we will get darkness instead of light, confusion instead of instruction and error instead of truth.

7. Dividing the Word Dispensationally.

We must also rightly divide the Word in its dispensational teaching.

God hath spoken, "at sundry times" as well as "in divers manners."

If we would understand what God has said in the Word we must distinguish not only the various people to whom He has spoken, but also the "sundry times" at which He has spoken.

The "time" God spoke "to the fathers" is manifestly set in contrast with the "time" in which He hath "spoken unto us." The "time" in which "He spoke by the prophets" stands in contrast with the "time" in which "He spoke by His Son." And the "time past" is obviously distinguished from "these last days."

Therefore, "times" and "seasons" are inseparable from the Divine Word; not only in the times when the words were spoken, but the times of which they are spoken and the people to whom they were spoken.

These different times are called dispensations.

The word translated dispensation, however, means administration. Hence, we may think of dispensational truth as administrative truth. In fact, I think the Scriptures justify the use of the word Administration in preference to the word Dispensation, and in these studies we shall use the word Administration instead of Dispensation.

In Ephesians (1:10) we learn that God's secret purpose which He hath purposed in Himself is with a view to the administration of the "fullness of times" when He will head up "all things in Christ."

It is manifestly clear that God's principles of administration must always have been perfectly adapted to the "times and seasons" during which they have been respectively carried out.

God's principles of Administration with Adam before the fall must have been quite different from those used with His immediate posterity after the fall.

His administration with Israel "under the Law" was evidently carried out on different principles from those which obtain now, during this present administration of grace.

These, again, are obviously quite different from those principles which will characterize God's coming administration in judgment.

And these, again, will be necessarily quite different from those principles which will belong to the administration of glory in "the fullness of times" when all things shall be gathered together under the headship of Christ (Eph. 1:10).

The present Administration of God is in Grace, not in Law, Judgment or Glory. It belongs to the time which is called "the Administration of the Mystery," that secret, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men (Eph. 3:5). It was hid in God from the "beginning of the world" (Eph. 3:9). It was kept secret since the world began (Rom. 16:25). But Paul was made the special administrator of all the truth connected therewith. It was committed to him by God, and the Word of God could not be "fully preached" without it (Col. 1:25). The Word of Truth can be preached today, but it cannot be "fully preached" without the Truth connected with this mystery.

Hence, we have various administrations suited to the times during which they were in operation.

Now, if we take what God said and did in one administration and carry it forward to another administration under other principles, or if we take a truth subsequently revealed and read it backward into the time when it was hidden from the sons of men, we shall find ourselves taking what is quite true one time and using it to contradict what is also true of another time.

God also deals with three classes of persons, Jews, Gentiles, and believers in Christ, as well as different times and seasons, and if we mix them all up together and indiscriminately take what was said at one time of one class and interpret it of another time to another class, we only create insuperable difficulties and make it impossible for us to arrive at the truth of the revealed Word of God.

We must, therefore, rightly divide the Word of Truth both as to the people to whom God is speaking and as to the times or administrations in which He is speaking.

8. The Seven Administrations.

We find there are at least seven distinct administrations, each having its own beginning and ending clearly revealed and marked off.

These seven administrations are in turn characterized by distinct principles of administration which mark all that God said and did during each special distinct period.

(1). We have the Theocratic Administration suited to the time of innocence before the fall (Genesis—Chapters 1 and 2).

This period is perfectly unique. There is nothing like it until we come to the final or eternal state. In these two Administrations, the

first and the last, there is no sin and God deals directly and immediately with His people. Man is dealt with as an innocent and sinless creature. He can never be dealt with in a corresponding manner during any of the succeeding administrations until the curse of sin and its effects shall have been done away with.

(2). We have the Patriarchal Administration suited to mankind after the fall and before the law was given (Genesis—Chapters 4 to Exodus—Chapter 22).

In the second Administration man was dealt with as a family or as a race. God was his teacher. There was no written law. Jehovah shows man that the way back to Himself was through sacrifice, and each man was required to make his own sacrifice, as in the case of Cain and Abel, or the father of each family was to sacrifice for the family. The underlying principle for man's acceptance with God was faith as it is now, but conditions under which faith was to be exercised were different. This was the period of promise, and extended from the fall of man to the giving of the Law (Ex. 20).

(3). We have the Legal Administration suited to and designed for God's purpose during the long preparation for the coming of Christ and only applicable to Israel and those who became Israelites.

In this period all is changed by the giving of the law. This Administration stands out in contrast with the previous one, which was without law, as it does from the present, which is by grace. This Administration extended from the giving of the Law to Christ.

The ceremonial law was given to Israel, not to Assyria or Egypt or any other nation. Any precepts, of course, that were of universal application were applicable to these nations, but in interpreting the Word of God we are to think of Israel alone. The ceremonial law continued down to Christ who fulfilled the law.

(4). We have the Administration of Grace which is for Jew and Gentile alike; that is, for individuals out of both without the distinctions made in the previous administrations.

In this Administration neither Jew nor Gentile is dealt with as such, but man is dealt with as an individual. Both "transgressors of the Jews" and "sinners of the Gentiles" are called out and made into a new body, a third people, called the church of God in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile, but all are one in Christ.

This Administration will end when the members of Christ's body are "received up to Glory" (1 Tim. 3:16); "caught up to meet the Lord in the air, so to be ever with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17 Phil. 3:30, 21). This is called (2 Thess. 2:1) "our gathering together unto him." This glorious rapture will close the fourth Administration.

The object of this Administration is the formation of the Spiritual

body of Christ by calling out those who were chosen in Him "before the foundation of the world."

To that end is the Good News made known today in all the world. In no former Administration was such a Gospel ever preached and in no subsequent one will the good news of such free grace be proclaimed.

(5). After this will come the Judicial Administration preparatory to "the restoration of all things" which were spoken before by the prophets.

When the church, the mystical body of Christ, has been "received up in glory", the day of Grace will be over. Israel will once more be dealt with, not under law but under Judgment.

The present Administration is called Man's Day (1 Cor. 4:3), but the next Administration is called "the Lord's Day" (Rev. 1:10), because that will be the time when God will judge the "chosen people" and those nations which have mistreated them. Hence, "the Day of the Lord" is the day of the Lord's judging and ruling, over Israel and in Israel's behalf.

It will be the day when—

"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled

And the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down:

And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

(Isa. 2:11)

Israel will not again be under law, but under a "new covenant" in which the stony heart shall be taken away and a heart of flesh given (Isa. 31: 31-34). (Ezek. 34:24-26).

(6). Then will follow the Millennial Administration in which Christ shall reign over the earth, during which reign the earth itself shall be redeemed from the effects of sin.

This is the time of the restitution of all things. It will begin with the binding of Satan (Rev. 20:1-2) on the second advent of Christ, and will end with the great white throne and the lake of fire (Rev. 20:15).

The principle of God's dealings with man during this period will be neither law nor grace nor judgment, but Righteousness, Power, and Glory. It will be the Administration of righteousness in all its purity, for Christ will reign in person over the earth. The prayer for the coming of the Kingdom of God will have found an abundant answer, for the Kingdom will have come at last and God's will will then be done on earth as it is done in Heaven.

(7). And last will come the Administration of Glory with the new Heaven and the new earth and the eternal order.

This is the eternal state. It begins with the "new Heaven and the

new earth" (Rev. 21:1) and there is no end. Beyond this we cannot go. It is the eternal state.

These are the seven Administrations or Times, each of which has its own well defined beginning and ending and its own special characteristics, which must be kept in mind if we would rightly divide the Word of Truth.

Some Bible students divide the dealings of God with men into three great dispensations.

(1). The Patriarchal Administration from the fall of man to the giving of the Law.

(2). The Administration of Law, from the giving of the Law to the coming of Christ.

(3). The Administration of Grace, from the coming of Christ to the end of the world, the resurrection and final judgment.

It seems to me, however, that it is more in harmony with the teaching of the Bible to hold to the seven Administrations or periods in God's dealings with man.

9. The Bible a Missionary Book.

The Bible has under every administration whether seven or three, when rightly divided, only one message to man, namely, the purpose and plan of God to redeem and save the Race; that is, the Bible is throughout a missionary Book.

We need to get this fact fixed in our minds so that in our study of the Bible we will, whenever and wherever we open the Book, remember that we are dealing with some part of the Inspired Revelation of God's purpose and plan to redeem and save the race.

We have not always approached the Bible in this way. Much of our study has been textual and topical. We have studied the Bible as a basis for a system of theology. We have also studied it as a source-book for sermons. Such methods of study have tended to dissect the Bible and to break it up into individual themes more or less unrelated and have not always helped to rightly divide the word of Truth, for a theology may be based on a group of incongruous passages and a sermon may be secured from a text that has no reference to the theme discussed. To rightly divide the Word of Truth we must look at the Bible as a revelation of the continuous operations of God under different Administrations looking to the final consummation in Christ of the Redemption of man and the earth.

We recognize the value of textual and homiletical analysis. We also know that whatever true theology there is it must be based upon and find its support in the Bible. But back of all and fundamental to all textual, homiletical, and theological study of the Bible there is and should be a comprehensive understanding of the general theme,

the structural unity, and the dispensational teaching of the Book.

The purpose of these studies is to give an outline of the Bible with Christ, the Redeemer, and God's purpose of Redemption in Him as the theme. We shall try to show that each book in the Bible has a distinct and essential place in the Revelation of God's purpose and plan, and that when interpreted in the light of the "Times and Seasons", blend into the teachings of all the other books to produce the most beautiful unity and harmony.

CHAPTER II.

THE OLD TESTAMENT AS A WHOLE

In our study of the Word and Words of God as recorded in the Old Testament, let us first of all take a look at this section of the scripture as a whole.

Our thesis in this study is that the Bible is the Revelation of God's purpose and plan to redeem and save the world. If it is, then every book in the Bible fits into and has an essential place in that plan.

We shall, therefore, attempt to discover for the reader the place and the part that each book in the Bible has in the Revelation of God's Redemptive purpose.

In our study, if we may be allowed to give the reader in advance what we have already discovered in our efforts to rightly divide the Word of Truth. We have found that God's purpose and plan for the world's redemption includes both the Old Testament operations of Law and the New Testament operations of Grace.

In the Old Testament we have the record of the Divine movements making for the first coming of Christ as the world's Redeemer; in the New Testament we have the record of the Divine operations of Grace making for the second coming of Christ as the world's King. In the Old Testament God uses a specially called nation as His witness; in the New Testament and the ages following, He uses His spiritually begotten children as witnesses. The testimony of Israel and the witness of Christians have the same objective, namely, the redemption of the race.

We are, therefore, coming to a study of the Old Testament Scriptures with the purpose of tracing the Redemptive idea from the first gospel promise in Genesis through all of God's providential dealing with the race to the last prophetic declaration of the prophets concerning the coming of Christ Who gives to the world the Gospel of Redemption in the New Testament.

Following out this idea, we shall look at the Old Testament as a sort of seedbed of Divine Truth in which the New Testament roots. If it is, then the world-embracing purpose of the Gospel can hardly be fully understood apart from the historic Jewish background. The Old Testament plants the seed and cultivates the field for the New Testament revelation. In the unfolding of God's purpose, Israel existed to produce Christ as the bulb exists to produce the flower. We might write over the entire Old Testament, "Oh! that I knew where I might find Him" (Job 23:3)! Over the New Testament we might write: "We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (John 1:45).

The Old Testament, therefore, is a missionary book. All the currents of its thought, the intermingling streams of all its books, finally converge in the New Testament. These streams are the Law, the History, the Poetry, and the Prophecy. These streams run side by side and intermingle, and cover the whole tract of time from the origin to the full development of Judaism. Each one, individually and as mingled with the others, helps to contribute those great world-wide elements which only waited for Christ to come to appear, as indeed they were, God's long predictions of His purpose to redeem and save the world.

The Old Testament is the record of the way in which God gradually but surely revealed Himself to the race, and is from start to finish inspired with a world vision, energized with a world purpose, and marches to a world goal.

The Bible is also the Revelation of God's method in preparing the world for the Redemption which He had prepared for the world. In this preparation there are four rather distinct divisions or stages in the unfolding of God's Redemptive purpose and plan in the Old Testament. We are grouping the books of the Old Testament according to this plan.

1. The Introduction of the Divine Religion into the World.

This period of preparation is divided into five successive steps and is revealed in five books—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy—known as the Pentateuch.

2. The Establishment of the National Life of the Chosen People.

At the close of the Pentateuch, we find the Chosen People at the Jordan ready to cross over into the Land of Promise. The Divine Religion had been given. The people of promise are now to be established as a nation that they may make the Divine Religion the religion of the world. Both, the Chosen People and the world, must be prepared for the coming of the Messiah.

In this period of preparation there are three steps, each given in

three books, which books form a logical sequence in the historical progress of God's redemptive plan.

(1) The strict Theocracy, its trial and failure. In this period God rules over Israel through tribal rulers, judges and priests. This step in the redemptive process is given in three books—Joshua, Judges, Ruth.

(2) The institution, trial and failure of the Theocratic monarchy, ending in the Babylonian captivity. This is the second step in the development of the national life of the Chosen People. The form of government is changed. God rules His people through kings. This period of the national life of Israel is given in three double historical books—Samuel, Kings and Chronicles.

(3) The reestablishment of the Chosen People in the Promised Land to await and prepare for the coming of the Messiah. This period is given in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. In this last group of historical books we have the final step in the development of the national life of the Chosen People preparatory to the coming of Messiah.

3. The Cultivation of the Devotional Life of the Chosen People.

The cultivation of the devotional life of the Chosen People was essential to their full development as a Priestly Nation. This is the practical side of the Divine Religion. What the people were taught to believe must be wrought into conversation and conduct. God must find a place in the everyday life. This can best be accomplished by bringing the Divine Religion into the relationships of life and into living connection with the human feelings. The Poetical Books of the Old Testament—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Solomon—are given for this purpose.

4. The Spiritual Preparation of the Chosen People for the Coming of Messiah.

The written prophecies give to us the fourth stage in the development of the Divine Religion in the life of the Chosen People and the world.

These books of the prophets record the struggles of God's specially chosen messengers in their efforts to save Israel from the chastisements of Jehovah administered through the great successive world monarchies—Syria, Assyria, and Babylon. These prophets tried to lead Israel back to the true worship of God by pointing out the sure judgments of God upon the nation for its sin, but at the same time they held out the hope based upon the sovereign promise of God to Abraham that a remnant would be saved from the national wreckage and out of this remnant God would bring the Messiah who would set up the kingdom foretold by Daniel.

This outline will give us a bird's-eye view of the Old Testament as a whole. The studies to follow will take up section by section the groups of books, and by brief but comprehensive outlines, show that each book has its place and fulfills its part in the revelation of God's Redemptive Plan.

The study of the Old Testament will become a pleasure and a delight, and of great profit, when one grasps its true place and meaning in the Redemptive Plan. We are attempting in this brief outline study of the Word and Words of God recorded in the Old Testament to help the student into a right understanding of the place and meaning of each of the books, and of the Old Testament as a whole.

CHAPTER III.

THE PENTATEUCH

THE FIRST STAGE IN THE DIVINE REVELATION.

The Pentateuch or "Five-Fold Book", written by Moses, is the first part of the Revelation of God's purpose and plan to redeem the Race.

This first section of the Bible goes back to the beginning of things and gives the creation of the world and the religious history of man for the first twenty-five hundred years.

The purpose, however, is not simply to give the history of persons and events; it is more serious than that. Imbedded in the historical records given, and, in fact, the chief purpose of these records, is the story of man's fall and the promise of God to give a Redeemer.

Genesis begins the Revelation of God's plan for the Redemption of the world. This Revelation of God's grace is continued through the succeeding books of the Old Testament and is finally completed in the New Testament.

In these five books of Moses we have the first five steps in the historical introduction of the Divine Religion into the world.

Genesis is the book of beginnings. Exodus is the book of Redemption. Leviticus is the book of worship and communion. Numbers tell of the experience of a pilgrim people who have been redeemed and are passing through hostile scenes to a promised inheritance. Deuteronomy, retrospective and prospective, is a book of instruction for the redeemed who are about to enter into their inheritance.

The Pentateuch is a writing of transcendent value and paramount importance. It contains the only authentic information which has ever yet reached the world of the original dignity of man, the conditions under which he began his career on earth, and the original plan of God to save him from sin.

1. THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

The first step in the historical introduction of the Divine Religion into the world is given in the book of Genesis. This book lays the foundation for all subsequent Revelation. In fact, it might be regarded as the introduction to the Bible, the first eleven chapters forming a sort of preface to the Scriptures. If these chapters be not trustworthy, then the whole Bible is discounted, for these first chapters of Genesis are the seed-bed of all Revelation.

Genesis is the book of beginnings: the beginning of the Revelation of God's purpose and plan of Redemption which culminates in Christ; the beginning of the universe and the earth, which is to be the place of redemption; the beginning of man, who is to be the subject of Redemption; the beginning of sin in the fall of man in Eden, out of which grows the need of Redemption; the beginning of the saving efforts of God in the giving of the first Gospel promise, the starting point of Redemption; the beginning of the Covenant of faith in which all have the promise of Redemption; the beginning of the Chosen People, who were to be the agents of Redemption; the beginning of the prophecy of the coming Messiah who was to make the Sacrifice that secured Redemption.

Genesis is divided into two sections:

Section I. A brief but very comprehensive history of the world from the creation to the confusion of tongues (Chs. 1:1-11:9).

Section II. The beginning of the history of the Chosen People starting with the ancestry of Abraham and closing with the death of Joseph (Chs. 11:10-50:26).

In the book of Genesis we find the beginnings of God's purpose and plan to redeem and save the race. In promise and prophecy and type Christ is fore-shadowed and fore-revealed. The book should be studied in the light of this fact.

Besides the remarkable prophecy of Noah, (Genesis 9:25-27), which reveals a definite plan of God covering the future of all mankind, Genesis contains very distinct and definite promises concerning Christ.

The first of these, rightly called the Protevangelium, i. e., the first Gospel, is the promise to our first parents that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). This promise was the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night to guide the race in its wilderness wanderings from the transgression in Eden to the satisfaction for sin made by Christ on Calvary.

Later on God made this promise more definite by declaring that the Saviour should come from the posterity of Abraham and that in his "seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-31;

22:18). This promise was repeated to Isaac (Gen. 26:4), and to Jacob (Gen. 28:14), and at the end of the book in the dying prophecy of Jacob it was enlarged and broadened in scope to include the nature of Christ's Kingdom together with a preview of the place and part each of the twelve tribes was to have in the future Kingdom.

Christ is found not only in the prophecies in Genesis, but in the types also. The word "type" means image or picture. A type is a divinely purposed picture, or illustration, of some truth. It may be (1) a person; (2) an event; (3) a thing; (4) an institution; or (5) a ceremonial.

Some of the most notable types of Christ found in Genesis are: (1) Melchizedek, King of Salem, King of righteousness, King of Peace (Gen. 14:18; Heb. 7:8-22); (2) Isaac, who as an offering, is one of the most perfect pictures of the great sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God, offered on Mount Calvary (Gen. 22:1-14); (3) Joseph, sold for the price of a slave by his brothers who said "Shalt thou indeed reign over us?" is a type of Christ who was betrayed for the price of a slave and of whom his own people said, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Gen. 37: 8-36); (4) Judah, who in standing surety for Benjamin, is a type of Christ who stands surety for His people (Gen. 44:32-34); and (5) the Ark which is a type of the refuge God has provided for believers in Christ (Gen. Chapters 6 and 8).

This is sufficient to show that the revelation of Christ as Redeemer begins in Genesis. He is the one theme throughout the scriptures; the beginning and the ending of the Bible. Hence, in our study of the scriptures we shall find that the Word at its ending shows how the beginning works out, and how, that to which we are introduced in Genesis is finally completed in Revelation.

A few references will suffice.

In Genesis we have the first intimation of Satan's rebellion and doom (Genesis 3:1-15); in Revelation we have the climax of Satan's rebellion and his final overthrow and doom (Rev. 20:7-10).

We have in Genesis the creation of the heavens and the earth which are now (Gen. 1:1-2; II Pet. 3:7); in Revelation we have the new heaven and the new earth which is to be the consummation of the redemptive work of Christ (Rev. 21:1, II Pet. 3:13).

In Genesis we have the entrance of sin and sorrow and death (Gen. 3:1-19); in Revelation we have the end of sin and sorrow and death, for there is no more sin, no more death, no more sorrow (Rev. 21:3-8).

In Genesis we have the curse pronounced upon man and the way closed to the tree of life (Gen. 3:17-24); in Revelation the curse is

done away with, and the tree of life is made accessible to the redeemed (Rev. 22:1-7).

In Genesis Paradise is lost; in Revelation Paradise is regained. The Bible from Genesis to Revelation is the Inspired Revelation of God's effort to restore all that was lost in the fall of man. It is a continuous, connected, logical story with Redemption as the theme.

II. THE BOOK OF EXODUS.

Exodus means "departure" or "outgoing", and the name was selected because the departure of the Children of Israel out of Egypt constitutes the main subject of the Book. There are, however, two other subjects treated: (1) the growth of Israel into a nation; (2) the adoption of Israel as God's peculiar people by the law given and the Covenant entered into on Mt. Sinai. The theme of the book is Redemption.

This book gives to us the second step in the historical introduction of the Divine Religion into the world. It gives the story of the preparation of the nation for the protection and preservation of the Divine Religion. God, who heretofore has been connected with the Chosen People only by His covenant with Abraham, now brings them to Himself nationally through redemption, and puts them under the Administration of Law, and dwells among them in the Cloud of Glory.

The supreme thing, the thing which this book is intended to show, is the revelation which Jehovah makes of Himself to the Chosen People and the relation which He establishes between Himself and them.

The New Religion brings with it the necessity of fellowship and service, and Exodus tells how to approach God under the new Administration.

Exodus continues the story of the chosen people. The key verse is 12:13. The key character is Moses, whose life is divided into three periods of forty years each: forty years in training in Egypt; forty years in God's school in the desert; forty years as leader and law-giver of Israel.

The Book may be divided into three sections:

Section I. God revealing Himself as the Redeemer of His people in the deliverance of the Chosen People from the bondage in Egypt (Chs. 1:1-18:27).

Section II. God declaring Himself a divine Sovereign in the giving of the Law from Sinai and the establishment of the Theocratic form of Government (Chs. 19:1-23:33).

Section III. God establishing Himself in the midst of His people as a type of that more intimate relation which He would establish with His people under the Covenant of Grace (Chs. 24-40).

Exodus tells the story of the actual giving of the Divine Religion

by Jehovah through Moses to the Chosen People who are to be its guardians, and the establishment of Jehovah's presence with them.

The book of Exodus does not contain promises and prophecies concerning Christ, but it is replete with types of Christ. Paul calls these types the shadow of things to come (Col. 2:17).

The most significant of these types are: (1) The burning bush, which is a picture of the incarnation (Ex. 3:1-8); (2) The passover lamb which is a type of Christ who is our Redeemer (Ex. 12: 1-13; 1 Cor. 5:7-8); (3) The manna, the bread which the Lord rained from heaven which is a type of Christ (Ex. 16:14-16. John 6:30-63); (4) The smitten rock and the water that flowed from it which Paul tells us was Christ (Ex. 17:5-7. 1 Cor. 10:4); (5) The Tabernacle which is a type and shadow of heavenly things, an outward sign of God's presence in the midst of His people (Ex. 25:26. Heb. 8:5).

Exodus has a distinct and definite place in the Revelation of God's purpose and plan to redeem the race. Its chief purpose is to show how the Theocracy was established among the people of Israel by the solemn giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, and how the Divine Religion was instituted with the elaborate equipment and ritual for worship, all of which looked to Christ and found its fulfillment in Him.

III. THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS.

Leviticus gives the third step in the historical introduction of the Divine Religion into the world.

The Divine Religion has been given to the Chosen People. Jehovah, through the Tabernacle service, has made Himself accessible to His people. But how shall they approach Him? This Book answers that question.

Exodus is the record of redemption, and lays the foundation for the worship and service of a redeemed people; Leviticus gives the ritual of worship. In Exodus God speaks out of the Mount to which approach is forbidden; in Leviticus He speaks out of the Tabernacle in which He dwells in the midst of His people. He speaks to tell them how they are to approach Him in the sanctuary.

The Book gives prominence to the priestly point of view. It presents salvation, or man's return to union and communion with God, as it is secured under the Administration of Law.

Leviticus is in five sections:

Section I. The law of sacrifices, or the way of salvation through a Divine Redeemer, revealed (Chs. 1-7).

Section II. The law of priesthood, or the Great High Priest of Salvation, typified (Chs. 8-10).

Section III. The law of purification, or the results of the great salvation exemplified (Chs. 11-15).

Section IV. The law of atonement, or the only ground of salvation pointed out (Chs. 16-22).

Section V. The law of sacred feasts, or special seasons of grace enjoined (Chs. 23-27).

Leviticus leaves the Chosen People organized as a nation with a Divinely given ritual of worship and in communion with Jehovah, who has taken up His abode in the Tabernacle in their midst.

The laws in Leviticus, mostly of a ceremonial character, constitute a manual, a handbook, to the priests in the performance of their functions and duties. God provided two kinds of sacrifices, bloody and unbloody. The bloody sacrifices were substitutionary. The Israelite, by transgressing the Law of God, forfeited his life. The sacrificial victim became his substitute and died in his stead. The priest officiated for the people towards God.

The New Testament, particularly the book of Hebrews, shows conclusively that the entire system of sacrifices in the Old Testament was nothing less than a typical representation of the vicarious sufferings of Christ, which was fore-shadowed by every bloody offering in the temple.

The whole human race has sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:22-23). Jesus Christ became our substitute, taking our sins on Himself and dying for them in our stead. For His sake, because He died for our sins, there is now remission of sins, and salvation.

The ritual of the Divine Religion as given in Leviticus with all of its sacrifices, feasts and forms finds its fulfillment in Christ. He is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believes. Leviticus points definitely to Christ and shows how God prepares His people for the full consummation of His Redemptive purpose.

IV. THE BOOK OF NUMBERS.

Numbers records the fourth step in the historical introduction of the Divine Religion into the world. It gives the civil and military organization of the Chosen People who are to plant the Divine Religion permanently in Canaan, the Promised Land.

This Book takes up the story of the Chosen People where Exodus left it off, and is the book of the wilderness wanderings of Israel consequent upon their failure to enter the Promised Land at Kadish-Barnea.

It is the book of service and walk and thus completes, with the preceding books, the story of the preparation of the nation for entrance into the land of promise.

In this Book we have the numbering of Israel, but the numbering is the means to an end, the end being the separation of the Levites for the service of God from those Israelites who were required to bear arms, and the thorough organization of the people, as a political and military body, to guard the Divine Religion given to them by Jehovah.

The Book is in three sections:

Section I. The beginning of service and walk under the new Covenant (Chs. 1-11).

Section II. The failure of the Chosen People to enter the Promised Land through unbelief and rebellion (Chs. 12-15).

Section III. The years of wandering; the conflict of the human and the divine elements in Israel's training, and the final approach to the Promised Land (Chs. 16-36).

God's purpose in bringing the Chosen People out of Egyptian bondage was to settle them in the Promised Land and organize them into a nation so that they might preserve and propagate the Divine Religion. They were to be a priestly nation to the nations of the world.

The ultimate objective in the Revelation given in the book of Numbers as in all the books of the Bible is Christ. Israel was to prepare the world for Christ who in the fulness of time was to come as the world's Redeemer. Hence, we find prophecies and types and forms and ceremonies and religions and military organizations all looking to Christ.

There is in Numbers also a notable prophecy made by Balaam concerning Christ: "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall arise out of Israel. Out of Jacob shall come He who shall have dominion" (Num. 24:17-19). The Star out of Jacob is Christ. He is the bright and morning star.

The brazen serpent in Numbers fore-shadows the Son of Man who is lifted up on the Cross (Num. 21:5-9. John 3:14-15). We find in Numbers also as in Exodus, the rock of which Israel drank, "that spiritual rock that followed them; and that rock was Christ" (Num. 20:11. 1 Cor. 10:4).

The wilderness wanderings of Israel was a part of the necessary discipline of the Chosen People and is a type of the redeemed in Christ in their fight against the world, the flesh and the devil. There is a rest prepared for the children of God of which the Sabbath and Canaan are types (Heb. 4:4-13).

V. THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

Deuteronomy gives the fifth and last step in the historical introduction of the Divine Religion into the world.

The purpose of this Book is to morally and spiritually prepare the new generation for taking possession of the Promised Land and for the establishment of the Divine Religion permanently in the land.

The Book is therefore a completion of the preparation of the Chosen People for entrance into the Land and life in it under the Divine Religion.

It consists in the parting counsels of Moses delivered in three addresses to Israel on the eve of his death. It contains a summary of the wilderness wanderings, which is important as unfolding the moral judgment of God upon the sins of the people, repeats the decalogue to a generation which had grown up in the wilderness, and gives needed instructions for the conduct of Israel in the land to which they are going.

Deuteronomy is not simply a supplement to the other books of the Pentateuch, but a closing appeal by Moses to a people whom he had brought out of bondage and formed into a nation. It is a series of great addresses in which Moses urges the Chosen People to keep inviolate the Covenant of Jehovah, so that it might be well with them and their children.

It might be well to note that while the Land of Promise was given unconditionally to Abraham in Jehovah's Covenant with Abraham as a possession, yet there were conditions imposed upon the people who entered the land under Joshua. These conditions are outlined in God's Covenant with His people (Deut. 28:30-39). The nation was first disrupted by utterly violating this Covenant (1 Kings 12:16-33). The same Covenant unconditionally promises a national restoration of Israel yet to be fulfilled (Gen. 15:18; Deut. 30:3; Jer. 23:5-8; Ezek. 37:21-25; Luke 1:30-43; Acts 15:14-17).

This Book is in five sections:

Section I. A summary of the wilderness history of Israel (Chs. 1-3).

Section II. A rehearsal of the law with special emphasis upon its warnings and exhortations (Chs. 4-11).

Section III. Special instruction concerning the religious, social, and economic life of the Chosen People under the Divine Religion (Chs. 12-27).

Section IV. Prophecies summarizing the history of Israel, showing the advantage of obedience to and the punishment for the neglect of the Divine Religion (Chs. 28-30).

Section V. The final charge to Israel and the closing scenes in the life of Moses (Chs. 31-33).

Among the last utterances of Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy we find a great Messianic prophecy: "The Lord, thy God, will raise

up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall harken" (Deut. 18:15, Acts 3:22).

The Book of Deuteronomy brings the children of Israel up to and prepares them for their entrance into the Promised Land. The forty years of wanderings are at an end. The land of Promise is in sight. These people, redeemed from Egyptian bondage, are to become under the supervising care of Jehovah the preservers and propagators of the Divine Religion. The country into which they are going was devoted to an idolatrous worship of the most seductive kind. On every high hill and in every grove this worship was carried on. Moses in Deuteronomy endeavors to impress Israel with the advantage of obedience to God's law and to show them that disobedience would bring judgment upon the nation.

The Book is a great Home Mission manual, teaching the nation that if it would become a priestly nation to the world that it must show to the world in its own life the fruit of the Divine Religion.

These five books of Moses called the Pentateuch constitute a logical introduction to the whole Divine Revelation. They have a peculiar place in the structure of the Bible. They reveal the great fundamental principles of man's obligation to God and God's care for the race.

Through the institution of worship Jehovah directed the spiritual development of the Chosen People and exerted from age to age an uplifting influence in their social and national life.

The germ of all the great Christian doctrines is found in these books. In fact, the Pentateuch is the seedbed in which the Divine Religion roots and from which it develops.

It is in recognition of the fact that the Pentateuch is the seedbed and that there is a gradual and fruitful development from this seedbed of divine truth that we come to understand the deeper sense in which the Law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. The missionary purpose of Jehovah which underpins the whole structure of the Bible roots in the Pentateuch.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL LIFE OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

We come now to the second phase in the revelation of God's purpose and plan to redeem and save the race.

The Divine Religion has been given to the Chosen People, its repository. They have been brought by Moses to the Land of Promise.

They must now be established in the land permanently as a nation so that they will be able to protect, preserve, and propagate the Divine Religion.

This process of development is given to us in the remaining books of the Old Testament.

The Divine Religion, in which God's Redemptive will is revealed, is to be wrought into the thought and life of the world, in order that Israel and the world might be made ready for the coming of Christ, in whom God's purpose of salvation finds its consummation.

The preparation for the coming of Christ provides:

1. For the development of a God-centered national life.
2. For the development of a God-centered social life.
3. For the development of a God-centered devotional life.

The development of a God-centered national life is given in three groups of three books each; the three groups of books forming a logical sequence as well as a natural order in the historical development of God's Redemptive purpose.

I. THE STRICT THEOCRACY.

In the beginning of the development of the national life of the Chosen People, the form of government set up in the wilderness is continued. Jehovah is King over His people. This period is given in three books—Joshua, Judges, Ruth.

1. The Book of Joshua.

The book of Joshua records the consummation of Israel's redemption out of Egyptian bondage. It gives the history of the conquest of Canaan and its partition amongst the twelve tribes.

Redemption includes "out of" and "into"; Out of Egypt and into Canaan; out of bondage and into freedom. Typically, Moses, the representative of the law, could bring Israel only to the borders of the inheritance. Joshua (Jehoshua, Jehovah the Saviour) must bring them into it.

Joshua presupposes the Pentateuch, and, while it deals with the conquest and partition of Canaan, at the same time it unfolds to us God's great plan for the continuation and propaganda of the Divine Religion.

The time had arrived in God's plans when the Divine Religion was to become national in its character. In the long chain of preparatory events looking to the coming of Christ, no other form of organization could meet the requirements. The Divine Religion must root itself permanently in the world through the political and religious institutions of Israel.

The Book of Joshua shows the establishment of the Chosen People

in the Promised Land and the permanent formation of the national life of Israel preparatory to and for the purpose of making the Divine Religion known to the whole world.

The Book is in three sections:

Section I. The entrance into and the conquest of the Land of Promise (Chs. 1-12).

Section II. The distribution of the land among the tribes; the provision for the Divine Religion in the dedication of the tribe of Levi to the service of the sanctuary; the establishment of cities of refuge and the determination of the national standing of the trans-jordanic tribes (Chs. 13-22).

Section III. Joshua's parting charge to Israel; the renewal of the Covenant and the death and burial of the great leader (Chs. 23-24).

The main object of the Book of Joshua is to show that God is faithful and true, fulfilling the promise made to the Patriarchs that He would give the land of Canaan to His Chosen People. This promise had behind it, however, a much more comprehensive purpose than giving a bit of country to Israel; God was preparing a priestly nation as an agent in the world's salvation.

Joshua is a type of Christ. The name Joshua is the contracted form of Jehoshua, which signifies "Jehovah saves." In the New Testament Joshua is twice called Jesus (Acts 7:45. Heb. 4:8), which is the Greek form of the name.

There are many points of resemblance between the life of Joshua and that of Christ. Both were called and commissioned by God to lead His Chosen People; both saved God's people from their enemies; Joshua brought God's people into the land of Promise and gave them rest and a home therein, while Jesus brings the elect of God into the Heavenly Canaan, into eternal life in Heaven, and gives them true and eternal rest.

The Cities of Refuge, to any of which the manslayer who had killed a person unawares and unwittingly might flee, so that he need not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, may also be regarded as a type of Christ, to whom, by faith we flee for refuge against the avenging law of God. (Chap. 20).

Joshua also tells of "The Captain of the Lord's host", who shall triumph over all His foes (Joshua 5:13-15. Heb. 2:10; 12:2); while Rahab's scarlet cord tells of the sufferings and precious blood of Christ which alone can shelter and preserve the sinner in the day of God's judgments upon a wicked world.

2. The Book of Judges.

In the book of Judges we have the story of the failure of the

Chosen People as a priestly nation under the strict Theocracy. Two facts stand out:

1. The failure of Israel to care for the Divine Religion.
2. The persistent grace of Jehovah.

The book records seven apostasies, seven servitudes to seven heathen nations, and seven deliverances. Its purpose is to give the history of the Chosen People through the first years of their national life and to show that the troubles through which they passed were not due to the Divine Religion or to the divine government, but to their unfaithfulness to God as a people.

We are brought to see, by the continued proneness of the Chosen People to turn from God, that man needs more than a revealed religion; he must have also a changed heart. Without regeneration man, under the most favorable circumstances, is incapable of either just and equitable national government or of individual and personal righteousness.

This Book teaches that man needs to be spiritually changed before he can govern himself justly and righteously. It gives the background for the subsequent revelation concerning Christ.

The Book is in three sections:

Section I. The demoralized condition of affairs immediately following Joshua's death (Chs. 1:1-3:8).

Section II. The rule of the Judges, showing a constant tendency of the people to apostasy (Chs. 3:9-16:31).

Section III. The religious decline followed by idolatry and violence and civil war (Chs. 17-21).

The judges were tribesmen in Israel upon whom the Lord laid the burden of Israel's apostate and oppressed state. They were the spiritual ancestors of the prophets; that is to say, men raised up of God, the Theocratic King, to represent Him in the nation. They were patriots and religious reformers because national security and prosperity were inseparably connected with loyalty and obedience to Jehovah. They lived in an age when the nation was young and their work under Jehovah was to preserve it and save it from destruction so that it might carry out the purpose of Jehovah.

There is in this book an evident reference to Christ in the eighteenth verse of the thirteenth chapter: "And the angel of the Lord said unto him, why asketh thou thus after my name, seeing it is wonderful." In Isaiah 9:6 we are told that "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

3. The Book of Ruth.

The Book of Ruth introduces a new element into the development

of the Divine Religion. If we had no other book except Judges to cover the long period of Israel's history between Joshua and Samuel, we might conclude that the Divine Religion had wholly failed. But the Book of Ruth lifts the curtain which veils the privacy of the domestic life of the people and discloses a most beautiful picture of piety, integrity, sacrifice, devotion, gentleness, and charity growing up right in the midst of the rude scenes of war, strife and wickedness.

The Divine Religion was having a wholesome effect upon the social life of the people.

The purpose of this Book is to show that David, the ancestor of Christ, sprang not only from the Chosen People, but also from the race at large.

The Book is divided into five sections:

Section I. The sojourn in Moab and the devotion of Ruth to Naomi (Ch. 1).

Section II. Ruth in the fields of Boaz (Ch. 2).

Section III. The marriage of Ruth to Boaz (Chs. 3-4: 1-17).

Section IV. The genealogy of David. (Ch. 4:18-22).

These three books, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, complete the first period of the national development of Israel. By the trial and failure of the strict Theocracy, the people are prepared for the next step in the development of their national life, namely, the Theocratic Monarchy.

II. THE THEOCRATIC MONARCHY.

The Books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles record the second phase in the development of the national life of the Chosen People. The form of government is now changed. Jehovah, who has been governing His people directly, is forced, by the unbelief and sin of the people, to appoint a king over them, through whom He rules, with the Mosaic Law as the code.

1. The Books of Samuel.

The first book of Samuel records the moral failure of the priesthood under Eli, and of the Judges in Samuel's attempt, in the appointment of his wicked sons, to make the office hereditary.

In the books of Samuel, we have the transition from the strict Theocracy to the Monarchy. The Book of Judges revealed the incompetency of the people to govern themselves. They needed a strong, central authority to restrain, direct and unify the people in their national life. The books of Samuel tell us how this central authority was established.

These books also give the introduction of the prophet into the na-

tional life of Israel. There were prophets before, but now the prophet becomes a specific mouthpiece for God to the nation.

Jehovah is threading the Revelation of His purpose and plan to redeem the world into the warp and woof of the life and thought of the Chosen People. The very form of their government becomes typical. The king, divinely appointed, is a type of Christ and his throne is to become the throne of Messiah.

The two books might be outlined together in connection with the names of the three great men with which they deal—Samuel, Saul and David.

Section I. Samuel, the prophet; the restoration and guidance of the Theocracy under Eli and Samuel and the conflict of the Chosen People with the Philistines (I Sam. 1-7).

Section II. Saul, the King, after the people's heart, and the history of his kingdom from his ascension till his death (I Sam. 8-31).

Section III. David, the king after God's heart, who is the head of the Covenant line of kings and a type of Christ (II Sam. 1-24).

The books of Samuel reveal the "sufferings" and rejection of David, who as "Saviour" and "Captain" of his followers (I Sam. 22:1-4) foreshadows David's Lord, "The root and the offspring of David" (Rev. 22:16).

In second Samuel (7:12) there is a direct promise concerning Christ. The first promise of the Messiah was given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The second promise was given to Abraham who was to be the progenitor of the Messiah. The third promise of the Messiah was that He should come out of the tribe of Judah. The promise in Samuel is that the Messiah shall spring from the royal house and lineage of David. Read Acts 13:23 and Romans 1:3.

Samuel established schools of the prophets into which were gathered promising young men who were instructed in the interpretation of the Law, in music, and in sacred poetry. Those so instructed became the religious teachers of the people. All this was in God's plan. Israel was to be trained as a priestly nation for the propagation of the Divine Religion to all the nations of the world.

2. The Books of Kings.

After the Theocratic Monarchy is established, the next phase of the Divine Revelation is that of God's care over the kings, given in the books of Kings.

These two Books give the civil history of the Chosen People from the reign of David to the captivities. They show the prosperity of Israel while King and people served the Lord. The story begins with the history of the Kingdom at the time of its greatest glory, as David turns it over to Solomon, records its subdivisions into two separate

kingdoms under Solomon's successor, and then traces the gradual declension of both Kingdoms down to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity.

The first Book of Kings gives to us the period of history in which Elijah prophesied. The second Book of Kings covers the period in which Elisha ministered. During this period also Amos and Hosea prophesied in Israel, and Obadiah, Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah in Judah.

The chief purpose of the books is to show why Israel was punished. The momentous lesson they teach is obedience and blessing, apostasy and ruin.

The Books are in three parts, corresponding to the three periods of Israel's history:

Section I. The reign of Solomon (I Kings 1-11).

Section II. The contemporaneous history of the separated kingdoms, till the destruction of Israel by Assyria (I Kings 12—II Kings 17).

Section III. The history of the kingdom of Judah until the Babylonian captivity (II Kings 18-25).

The first book of Kings tells us about the building and consecration of the temple. This temple is a type of the spiritual temple built out of living stones in which Christ is enthroned (Eph. 2:19-22, I Peter 2:4-8). The consecration of the temple illustrates all consecration. The worship of the temple with all of its sacrifices and ritual foreshadowed Christ. The ark was the most all-inclusive type of Christ of any of the vessels of the tabernacle. When, therefore, the priests brought the ark into the court, the holy place, and the holy of holies, they were in type enthroning Christ over the religious life of the nation.

3. The Books of Chronicles.

First and Second Chronicles cover substantially the same period of history as that covered by the books of Kings, but there is a different purpose. Kings reveals Jehovah's care over the kings in the fulfillment of His promise to David; Chronicles reveals Jehovah's care over the Chosen People in the fulfillment of His promise to Abraham.

In Kings we have the great political events and triumphs; in Chronicles we have the social and religious events. In Kings we have the history of both Judah and Israel; in Chronicles we have the history of Judah alone and Israel is only mentioned when it comes in contact with Judah. In Kings we have the history of the kings to the beginning of the Babylonian captivity when the Monarchy ended; in Chronicles we have the history of the house of David beyond the

judgment and captivity, till the decree of Cyrus for the restoration of the remnant.

Kings makes no provision for the restoration of the people; in Chronicles the chief aim is to prepare for the restoration of the Chosen People to Canaan, preparatory to the coming of Messiah; hence, the records and genealogies, tribal and family, Levitical and priestly, royal and Messianic. In general, Chronicles emphasizes the religious and spiritual history of the period of the Monarchy.

The books are in four parts:

Section I. The genealogies, presenting the various Jewish lines of descent from Adam to Ezra (I Chron. 1-9).

Section II. The reign of David which is looked at as ordained of God for blessing, hence, David's sufferings and faults are passed over in silence, except that of numbering the people (I Chron. 10:29:22).

Section III. The reign of Solomon, in which Solomon's wisdom and glory in connection with the building of the Temple, and his subsequent enterprise, wealth and greatness are especially emphasized (I Chron. 29:23-II Chron. 9).

Section IV. The history of the kingdom of Judah after the separation from Israel, embracing the story of the theocratic kings in the line of David, giving special prominence to the periods of reformation and revival of zeal for the Lord, and concluding with the destruction of Jerusalem, the captivity, and the decree of Cyrus for the rebuilding of the Temple (II Chron. 10-36).

III. THE PERIOD OF FOREIGN RULE.

We come now to the last section in the national development of the Chosen People given in three books, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.

The purpose of these Books is to show Jehovah's care over the Divine Religion and His method of bringing it to its full fruitage and power. There is also a secondary purpose, namely, that of demonstrating the absolute need for a regenerated humanity.

In the first phase of the history of Israel the strict Theocracy was shown to be inadequate to the needs of an unspiritual people. In the second phase, the same thing was shown to be true of the Theocratic Monarchy.

The failure of these two forms of government demonstrated the hopelessness of any successful development of the Covenant religion or the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth under any form of earthly rulers.

With Ezra and Nehemiah, a new era of Jewish history begins and a new phase of the Divine Plan for human redemption is entered. Only a remnant came back to the Land of Promise, but through the

dispersed of Israel in every land, the nations came to know about the promised Messiah. It was God's way of preparing the world for the coming of Christ.

1. The Book of Ezra.

The Book of Ezra, which continues the history given in Chronicles, relates the return of a remnant of the Jews to Jerusalem in two successive migrations with an interval of twenty-eight years, and the rebuilding of the Temple as a future religious center for the nation.

The purpose of the Book is to show how God's promise to His people to gather them from captivity was fulfilled; how they were again provided with a temple in which to worship Jehovah; and how that God rescued them from Idolatry which had crept in under the Theocratic Monarchy.

Ezra, in bringing the Chosen People back to the Land of Promise, in restoring the Divine Religion and in completing the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures, performed a work second only to that of Moses.

The Book is in two sections:

Section I. The restoration of the remnant and the rebuilding of the temple, which includes the edict of Cyrus, the list of those who returned, the restoration of the altar, the opposition of adversaries, the edict of Darius, and the completion and dedication of the temple (Chs. 1-6).

Section II. Ezra's journey to Jerusalem and the work of reformation wrought by him, which includes the completion of the temple, the commission given to Ezra by the king, Ezra's journey to Jerusalem and the social reformation wrought under his supervision (Chs. 7-10).

2. The Book of Nehemiah.

In the ancient canon of Scripture, the book of Nehemiah was joined to Ezra, and sometimes called the second book of Ezra. Its design is to supplement and complete the account of the return of the Jews from captivity as recorded in Ezra, to give the circumstances attending the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and to tell the story of the reforms which were introduced.

After the reestablishment of the Mosaic institutions under Ezra, there remained a final work to be accomplished, namely, the establishment of the necessary defences against the foes of the Chosen People, especially those that immediately surrounded Jerusalem.

The Book of Nehemiah records the history of the activities of Nehemiah in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem as a defence for the Divine Religion in the troublous times through which Israel was to

pass in the centuries before the Advent. It also gives the restoration of the civil government, and reveals God's purpose to protect the Divine Religion under the new order.

The Book is in three parts:

Section I. The work of Nehemiah in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and increasing its population (Chs. 1-2).

Section II. The religious services and rewards of the Covenant, in which the law is read and explained, the people confess their sins and a new Covenant made (Chs. 8-10).

Section III. The work of organizing the people for the future protection and propagation of the Divine Religion (Chs. 11-13).

3. The Book of Esther.

The Book of Esther is the revelation of God's providential care for the Chosen People who did not return to the Land of Promise, and who were scattered abroad over the whole eastern world, as exhibited in one of the great crises in Jewish history.

The purpose of the book is to show that God cares for the Chosen People no matter where they are. Multitudes of Jews remained in the one hundred and twenty provinces of Ahasuerus' empire, and this Book is an inspired commentary on the great promise, "I will not forsake thee" (Deut. 31:6).

The Book is in three sections:

Section I. The elevation of Esther, a Jewess, a foster-daughter of Mordecai, to be the Queen of Ahasuerus in the place of the deposed Vashti, and Mordecai's discovery of a plot to destroy Ahasuerus (Chs. 1-2).

Section II. The exaltation of Haman, an Agagite and mortal enemy of the Jews; his jealousy of Mordecai and his plot to destroy him and all the Jews; the defeat of the plot and the exaltation of Mordecai to be prime minister of the empire (Chs. 3-7).

Section III. The counter decree permitting the Jews to resist; its successful execution; and the institution of the feast of Purim (Chs. 8-10).

The Book of Esther closes the Revelation of the historical development of the national life of the Chosen People. The strict Theocracy and the Theocratic Monarchy have been found wanting. The Chosen People passed under the political control of the great world monarchies. But God is still watching over His people. He protects the remnant which returns to Jerusalem. He protects those scattered abroad and dispersed in foreign lands. He is their God and is working in their history to prepare them, and through them to prepare the world for the coming of Christ.

In these Historical books we have seen the unfolding of God's

plans. The Divine Religion was never intended to be simply the national religion of Israel. Its scope and purpose was world-wide. Israel was to be a priestly nation, selected by Jehovah to minister spiritually to all the nations of the earth. Jehovah committed the Divine Religion to Israel, but Israel received this commitment for all nations as well as for herself.

If Israel as a nation had functioned as an obedient servant of Jehovah, the Kingdom of God, no doubt, would have been established on the earth. But Israel failed. God, however, accomplished His purpose, for through the dispersion of Israel among the nations a knowledge of the Divine Religion was given to the world, thus preparing the world for the coming of Christ.

This completes the history of national preparation. It is during the time of Nehemiah that Malachi lived and labored. His prophecy closes the work of the prophets in their efforts to prepare Israel for the coming of Messiah.

CHAPTER V.

THE POETICAL BOOKS

THE DEVOTIONAL UNFOLDING OF THE DIVINE RELIGION

We come now to the third phase of the Revelation of God's purpose and plan to redeem and save the world. This stage in the Divine Plan is given in the six Poetical Books. The purpose of these books is to develop the devotional life of the Chosen People, and to root the fundamental truths of the Divine Religion in the national life of Israel through their political and religious institutions.

The foundation for the religious life is laid in a spiritual conception of God and a just appreciation of the true relations of God and man. To attain its full redeeming power, however, the Divine Religion must be brought into living connection with the human feelings, which are the springs of action. This is accomplished in God's plan of Redemption through the ritual of worship provided for the Chosen People and developed in the temple service.

The Poetical Books belong to the field of religious emotion. They bring the Divine Religion into the relationships of life and into living connection with the human feelings. They were designed by Divine Grace to fix in the mind and heart of the Chosen People the truths of the Divine Religion. These books do not belong to one age, but to all ages. They have helped to fasten the truths of salvation in the memory of God's people in all ages; they have made themselves

perpetual "Household words" and "songs of the soul" to all lovers of the Word, and have gone on singing themselves into conduct and character wherever read throughout the years.

Of the six Poetical Books, three—Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes—belong to the domain of religious conviction. They are reflective, gnomic, aphoristic, and take the form of didactic poetry. The other three books—Psalms, Songs of Solomon, and Lamentations—belong to the domain of devotional feeling, and take the form of lyric poetry. The two groups taken together give to us the Revelation of Divine Truth for the practical and devotional unfolding of the Divine Religion in the life of the Chosen People.

One group of books deals with the philosophy of the religious life, and the other group deals with the worship of the Chosen People.

I. THE TRUE PHILOSOPHY OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

In Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes we have the true philosophy of the religious life set forth. The purpose of these books is to show that piety is profitable and that obedience to God's law brings blessedness.

In the practical experiences of life we find two apparent exceptions: (1) the case of the good man who is not seemingly blessed; (2) the case of the bad man who is seemingly blessed.

These are world-wide problems and must be solved satisfactorily by the religion that claims to be the only universal Divine method of salvation. The Poetical Books of the Bible deal with these problems.

The Books of Job and Ecclesiastes deal with the exceptions, while the Book of Proverbs shows that piety is the only way of true blessedness.

1. The Book of Job.

The Book of Job attempts to answer the question, why do the righteous suffer? In the case of Job there is great piety and yet great misery. But we are shown in this book that the misery and suffering are only temporary, and that Job, the man of God, is blessed in the end.

It is not a correct and adequate view of God's dealings to suppose that all suffering is sent as a punishment for sin, nor is it right to think that afflictions are always for chastisement. The correct view is given in the Book of Job, where it is shown that the Creator is competent to rule the world aright, that His wisdom in providence is incomprehensible to man, and that man's proper attitude is one of trust and confidence, which attitude if maintained will ultimately bring blessedness.

The Book is a remarkable arrangement of tripartite construc-

tion, throughout, and might be divided into a prologue and three sections:

Section I. The prologue in which the problem is stated (Chs. 1-2).

Section II. The discussion of the problem, Job tells of his misery and despair, which is followed by a series of three debates with his supposed friends (Chs. 3-31).

Section III. The speech of Elihu in which it is shown that God uses affliction for the good of men (Chs. 32-37).

Section IV. The vindication of Job by Jehovah who unfolds to Job and the others His infinite perfections (Chs. 38-42).

Job, in the midst of his great suffering, beautifully expresses his belief in the resurrection and in a Redeemer who lives and who will come in the latter day to the earth. "I know", says he, "that my Redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, then without my flesh shall I see God." (Job 19: 25-26).

2. The Book of Proverbs.

The Book of Proverbs fills an important place in the Divine Library, its special function being "to give prudence to the simple and to the young man knowledge and discretion." The world is full of pitfalls and it is important that men should be warned of the dangers awaiting them, and have their moral judgment quickened before they are assailed by the temptations that await them.

This collection of proverbial sayings meets the needs of the people of God by applying the Divine Wisdom to the everyday affairs of life.

The book teaches positively that piety is the way of true blessedness, and that implety is the way of wretchedness and failure. This is the heart of the Divine Religion.

In this book the great formative ideas of the Divine Religion revealed in the Pentateuch are brought into immediate connection with the daily life of the Chosen People.

The Book might be divided into five sections:

Section I. The delineation of wisdom (Chs. 1-9).

Section II. The folly of sin (Chs. 10-22).

Section III. Justice commended in a series of warnings and instructions (Chs. 22-24).

Section IV. Proverbs of Solomon collected under Hezekiah (Chs. 25-29).

Section V. The words of Agur and Lemuel which may be considered as a sort of appendix to the whole book (Chs. 30 and 31).

3. The Book of Ecclesiastes.

The Book of Ecclesiastes gives another apparent exception to the fundamental proposition, that righteousness is the way of true blessedness. Here we find the very opposite of what we found in the Book of Job, a case of utter Godlessness with remarkable prosperity.

The teaching of the Divine Religion is that, under the government of a wise and holy God, piety is followed by the approval of God, while impiety receives the condemnation of God. But in real life impiety is often followed by great prosperity. Is this general principle of the Divine Religion true or false?

In order to settle the matter for all men and all time, Jehovah selects Solomon, the most suitable of men for the experiment; endows him with special wisdom; puts him on the magnificent throne of David, the best place for the trial; aids him to wealth and the choicest treasures of learning and art from all the world; and then permits him to throw off the restraints of conscience and religion and give himself to the sinful, worldly pursuits of fleshly enjoyments.

This experiment, the results of which are given in this Book, made by the man of all men best fitted to make it, should settle the question. The book shows that true blessedness comes only from disinterested service.

The Book is in five parts:

Section I. The preacher shows that happiness is not genuine prosperity—man can neither gain lasting good by searching after earthly wisdom, nor by enjoying earthly pleasures (Chs. 1-3).

Section II. The preacher shows that there is a divine order not only changeless and permanent, but also benevolent and holy, and that the mal-adjustments of life in which there seems to be happiness in sin are yet to come to a higher tribunal of ultimate appeal (Chs. 3-5).

Section III. The preacher considers and gives the true philosophy of the relations of external prosperity to the righteous moral government of God (Chs. 6-8:15).

Section IV. The preacher considers and gives the final philosophy of the difficulties of Providence in their relations to the practical life of man (Chs. 8:16-12:7).

Section V. The preacher gives a condensed statement of all the conclusions and aims of his investigation, which may be summarized as follows: Mere earthly good is worthless; obedience to God and not happiness is the chief end of man (Chs. 12:8-14).

The three books of didactic poetry—Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes—give the true philosophy of the Divine Religion. They are an invaluable possession of Jew and Gentile for all time. They are wonder-

fully fitted to furnish a sound basis for the inner life of conviction, without which outward practical religious conduct of the genuine sort can have no foundation. Those who read in the Spirit will see that these books fill a necessary place in God's plan of world-redemption.

II. THE CULTIVATION OF THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE.

In Psalms, Songs of Solomon, and Lamentations the religious truths of the Divine Religion are presented in poetic form with the purpose of creating and stimulating right devotional feelings. Men must be developed in their spiritual natures. They must know the beauty of holiness. Hence, these books are given with the purpose of developing the impulse to right, noble and Godly living.

If man is to grow spiritually he must worship. The fountains of his devotional nature must be tapped. But his devotional impulses must not run wild. His feelings must be directed so that in his worship he will come to love and adore the persons and things connected with his religion.

These Books are designed to so direct the devotions of the Chosen People that their hearts will be fixed upon Jehovah.

1. The Book of Psalms.

The Book of Psalms is the revelation of truth, not abstractly, but in terms of human experience; it is truth wrought into the emotions, desires and sufferings of the Chosen People through the sacred songs which they sang in their worship of Jehovah.

History, prophecy, providence, doctrine and law are all in the Psalms, but these form only the framework around which the Spirit of inspiration has built the structure of praise, prayer and adoration for the Chosen People.

The Psalms exalt Jehovah. They ascribe to Him all majesty and glory. They magnify His attributes, hallow His name, reverence His word. Through the singing of these sacred songs in worship, the great truths of the Divine Religion were fastened in the memory of the people. Under the impulse of such a devotional urge, the worshippers came to feel the presence of God and to know from experience that He was their shepherd.

This Book with its one hundred and fifty sacred songs, might be divided into five books or sections, each of which ends in a doxology.

Section I. The Psalms based upon David's individual and personal experience as the chosen and anointed of Jehovah (Chs. 1-41).

Section II. The Psalms voicing the cry of David and his singers to Jehovah, the Almighty maker and moral Governor, first out of the depths of adversity, and then from the heights of prosperity. (Chs. 42-72).

Section III. The appeal of the Psalmist, when in sore distress, to the Covenant God, with anticipations of deliverance—the Psalms in this section are chiefly suited to occasions of peculiar and extreme trial and distress (Chs. 73-89).

Section IV. The Psalms recognizing Jehovah's faithfulness and gracious deliverance (Chs. 90-106).

Section V. The Psalms in which Jehovah and His word are exalted (Chs. 107-150).

Resting upon the great formative ideas of the Divine Religion and springing out of the solid basis of faith in God, the Psalms furnish for the feelings and emotions the same sort of guidance and regulation which the rest of the Scriptures furnish for faith and action.

The Psalms also abound in remarkable prophecies of Christ, and are quoted oftener by Christ than any other section of the Old Testament. There are at least seventeen of the Psalms that refer to Christ: 2, 8, 16, 22, 23, 24, 40, 45, 47, 68, 69, 72, 80, 93, 97, 110 and 118. These Psalms are filled with references to the birth, heritage, agony, death, triumph over death, ascension into Heaven, enthronement at the right hand of God, and second return of Christ.

2. The Songs of Solomon.

Many devout Christian scholars have interpreted this book as referring to the mutual love of Christ and the church. Modern scholars for the most part, however, think that the book celebrates the strength and constancy of human love. But even accepting that view, the book might still be a portrayal of Christ's love for His people, since marriage is the symbol chosen by Christ to show His relation to His people.

Accepting this view, the Song of Solomon becomes an allegory, depicting in dramatic beauty the love of Christ for His people.

Under the finger of inspiration the writer is led to take the deepest and tenderest human feelings, the love of the bride-groom for the bride, and has consecrated them to the holy office of awakening in God's people analogous spiritual affections for Jehovah.

The Book is in seven sections:

Section I. Title of the Book (Chap. 1, 1).

Section II. The mutual affection of the lovers (Chs. 1, 2-2, 7).

Section III. The mutual seeking and finding of the lovers (Chs. 2, 8-3, 5).

Section IV. The fetching of the bride to the marriage (Chs. 3, 6-5, 1).

Section V. Love scorned, but won again (Chs. 5, 2-6, 8).

Section VI. Shulamite, the attractively fair, but humble princess (Chs. 6, 10-8, 4).

Section VII. Unbroken Communion (Chs. 8, 5-14).

This Book furnishes for the people of God of all ages a lesson of fidelity to Christ and a standing warning against declension in piety. Whoever does not understand God's revealed plan of salvation and has not experienced the love of Christ, to him this work is a sealed book. But the saintliest men and women of the ages have found it a source of exquisite delight.

3. The Book of Lamentations.

This book is a dirge, an elegy, written over the desolation of Jerusalem by one whose love for it, guilty as he knew it to be, was like that of a father for a child, a wife for her husband. The book shows how completely the predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem were fulfilled, and the grief that filled the heart of Jeremiah, the prophet of Jehovah, because of this punishment.

The purpose of the book was to arouse the patriotic feelings, in that age of dreadful corruption, declension and judgment, and to use these aroused feelings in calling the people to repentance and a return to loyalty and fidelity to the Covenant and to Jehovah. It is the lesson of divine chastisement brought home to their hearts, as a most powerful appeal, in a series of elegies leading to emotional meditation upon and practical application of the lessons of God's providence in the fall of Jerusalem.

It is for God's people in all ages a standing warning against civic unfaithfulness. The book also teaches among other things this great truth, that the afflictions of God's people, even when they most deserve it, do not escape His eye. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted."

The Book consists of five lyric poems, therefore, it falls naturally into five sections:

Section I. The woes of the degradation of Jerusalem and the sins and sufferings of the Chosen People (Chs. 1).

Section II. The terror over the siege, and famine, and capture, and destruction of Jerusalem (Chapter 2).

Section III. Jeremiah's penitential grief for his own and his country's sufferings, uttered representatively to lead the Chosen People to repentance and to awaken in them the hope of deliverance (Chapter 3).

Section IV. The dreadful woes of the various classes of the Chosen People in their exile, under God's punitive justice, with the dawning hope of deliverance (Chapter 4).

Section V. The passionate and penitent confession by the Chosen

People of their sins, and their agonizing cry for restoration to the Covenant and to the Covenant blessings (Chapter 5).

The Poetical Books appeal to every form of feeling. Sung and recited daily and hourly, up and down the face of the earth, by the Hebrew race for hundreds of years before Christ came, and then, caught up by the Christians and proclaimed through the ages since the coming of Christ, their influence in moulding the devotional life of God's people has been incalculably great.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS.

THE SPIRITUAL PREPARATION OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE FOR THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH

The Prophetical Books are of such vital importance in the Revelation of the Redemptive Plan of God that it might be well for us to make an introductory survey of these books before we begin their study.

The prophets give to us the fourth phase in the Revelation of the purpose and plan of God to redeem and save the world. They come on the field when it seems that Israel is doomed to fail as a priestly nation. They have a message for the age in which they live, but their ministry is mainly to prepare for the coming of Christ. They pick up the tattered threads of religious thought in their day and weave these threads together with the messages that come to them from Jehovah into the inspired fabric of Messianic hope.

The prophets were men specially called of God. They were official spokesmen of God. The difference between the Prophet and the Priest is that the Prophet speaks for God to men and the Priest speaks for men to God; but both the Priest and the Prophet were divinely commissioned spokesmen.

Not all the prophets were moved to write their messages. Only sixteen of the prophets were writing prophets. Four of these, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, because of the length of the books they wrote, are called Major Prophets, while the remaining twelve, for the same reason, are called Minor Prophets.

The period of time in which the prophets lived and wrote covers approximately 400 years, from the latter part of the reign of Joash about 850 B. C., to the reestablishment of the Chosen People in the Promised Land about 433 B. C.

The written prophecies record the struggles of God's specially

chosen messengers in their efforts to save the Chosen People from the Chastisements of Jehovah administered through the great world-monarchies, Syria, Assyria and Babylon. They deal with the struggle of the Divine Religion in its conflict with polytheistic nature worship, on the one hand, and on the other, with an unspiritual conception of Jehovah as God by the Chosen People.

The mission of the prophets was to vindicate the character of Jehovah against all the heathen gods of the nations around about and to show His fidelity to His covenant even when dealing with a rebellious and unfaithful people. They proclaimed His purpose to redeem and save, and pointed the people to the Messiah.

Under whatever form of government and however unfaithful to their Covenant vows, Israel was never allowed by the prophets to lose sight of a coming Messiah, Who would establish a kingdom that would finally replace all earthly kingdoms. This Messianic Kingdom was to be a universal empire of righteousness. Its King was the Redeemer promised to Adam and Eve as the One Who would bruise the serpent's head; He was the seed of Abraham in Whom all the families of the earth should be blessed; He was the King of the house of David unto Whom the people should turn.

The order in which the Prophetical Books are given in the Old Testament is not the chronological order, and if we would fit their prophecy into the unfolding Revelation of God's Redemptive purpose and plan, it will be necessary to group the books into periods corresponding with the historical development of the national life of the Chosen People.

Now, since the history of Israel is directly connected with the history of three great world monarchies, Syria, Assyria, and Babylon, and since much of the prophecy of the prophetical books is directed against these nations, it seems best, in order to show how God's plan for man's redemption is unfolded, to group the Prophetical Books with reference to Israel's struggle against these world empires.

We shall follow this plan and group the Prophetical Books under four periods in the life of the Chosen People as follows:

(1) The Assyrian Period, from about 850 to 700 B. C. The purpose of the prophets of this period was to save Israel and Judah from destruction by Assyria.

The prophets of this period were divided into two groups: (1) the prophets to Israel, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, and Micah, who was also a prophet to Judah; (2) the prophets of Judah, Obadiah, Joel, Isaiah, and Micah, who is also a prophet to Israel.

(2) The Babylonian Period, from about 640 to 606 B. C. The pur-

pose of the prophets of this period was to save Judah from the Babylonian captivity. The prophets of this period were Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Nahum and Habakkuk.

(3) The Period of Exile, from about 606 to 536 B. C. The purpose of the prophets of this period was to call out and encourage a faithful remnant who would be the nucleus of a new effort to preserve the Divine Religion and prepare for the coming of Christ. The prophets of this period were Ezekiel, Daniel and Jeremiah.

(4) The Period of Restoration, from about 536 to 433 B. C. The purpose of the prophets of this period was to encourage the remnant that returned to the Land of Promise to rebuild the Temple and re-establish the worship of Jehovah, looking to and preparing for the coming of the Messiah. The prophets of this period were Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

We go now to a study of the Prophetic Books as we have grouped them. In this study we shall find longing and hope, which longing and hope find fulfillment and realization in the New Testament.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PROPHETS OF THE ASSYRIAN PERIOD.

The first great enemy of both Judah and Israel was Assyria. From about 850 B. C. until the downfall of Israel, 721 B. C., the aim of the Prophets was to save both Judah and Israel from Assyria, and for twenty-one years after the fall of Israel, the prophets of Judah in Hezekiah's time continued their work for Judah.

The prophets of this period strove to stem the tide of idolatry and corruption in the two kingdoms, and to prevent the destruction of the Covenant People by their enemies.

Some of the prophets of this period were sent specifically to Israel, others to Judah. These two groups of prophets had a different task and a different object in view and should be studied separately.

1. THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL.

The prophets whose work was chiefly with Israel during this period were Jonah, Amos, Hosea and Micah. Micah was also a prophet to Judah. These prophets sought to save Israel from apostasy and destruction, and failed. Their writings reveal the sovereign care of Jehovah for the Chosen People. God did not turn His People loose until He had exhausted every means for their restoration. But

Israel refused to repent. A chosen few were led to renounce the idolatrous worship and to adhere to the Covenant with Jehovah. These became identified with Judah, but the masses of the people were carried away into captivity and the ten tribes scattered and lost.

1. The Book of Jonah.

Jonah doubtless began his work at an earlier date than Hosea, Joel, or Amos. From II Kings (14:23-25) we learn that Jonah lived and testified during some portion of the reign of Jeroboam II, which extended from about 825 to 784 B. C.

The Book of Jonah is a narrative of facts. The miraculous element in it need not shake the faith of those who believe that God is Almighty. Moreover, the Son of God, our Saviour, refers to the Book of Jonah as a record of facts and even uses it as a type and prophecy of His burial and resurrection.

The chief lesson which the Book of Jonah is meant to teach is that God is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also. He would have all men, the Gentiles included, to come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved. The Book of Jonah is a missionary book.

The Book may be divided into two sections:

Section I. The commission from Jehovah in which Jonah is commanded to go to Ninevah with a message of judgment. This section contains: (1) Jonah's disobedience and flight; (2) his shipwreck and miraculous preservation by a great fish; (3) his prayer of thanksgiving and his acknowledgement that salvation is of Jehovah, Chaps. 1-2.

Section II. The second commission of Jonah to go to Ninevah. This section contains: (1) the preaching of Jonah in Ninevah; (2) the repentance of the people; (3) the salvation of the city; (4) Jonah's feeling of resentment; (5) God's reproof, Chaps. 3-4.

This book reveals God's readiness to forgive the repenting and shows by act what other prophets taught by word, namely, that the Gentiles were objects of God's grace. Jonah typifies Christ as the sent one, cast out, raised from the dead, and carrying salvation to the world.

2. The Book of Amos.

Amos who was not of the order of the prophets, but a farmer, prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah in Judah and Jeroboam II in Israel. He foretold the destruction of Israel by the Assyrians, and like Hosea, concluded his prophecy with a wonderful picture of the coming of the Messiah.

The Book might be divided into four sections:

Section I. The denunciation of the surrounding nations for their characteristic sins as a preparation for his denunciation of the people of Israel, whom he accuses of covetousness, injustice, lasciviousness, sacrilege, and ingratitude, Chaps. 1-2.

Section II. Three discourses upon Israel's wickedness and the punishment that must fall upon the sinful nation, Chaps. 3-6.

Section III. The main burden of Amos is given in five visions in the midst of which occurs the story of the conflict with the priests of Bethel, Chaps. 7-9:10.

Section IV. The Book closes with a promise of the restoration of the tabernacle of David, and a return of Israel to their own land, Chap. 9:11-15.

Amos preached civic righteousness as few men in all history have been able to preach it. Every message he delivered throbbed with moral energy and a love of justice.

3. The Book of Hosea.

At the time of Hosea's appearing, Israel had reached the zenith of its power and greatness under the reign of Jeroboam II (See II Kings 14:23-29). But in the midst of civic glory there was religious degeneration and decay. In all Israel God was forgotten; the people had lapsed into idolatry; the rulers and leaders looked to heathen nations for help; the kings and princes were profligate; crime in all its forms was prevalent.

Against these things Hosea prophesied. For sixty-five years, from about 795 to 730 B. C., through a period of misrule and anarchy, until the reign of Hoshea, Hosea sought to save Israel from destruction by pleading with the people to return to their covenant vows; by exhibiting and denouncing wickedness, the inconstancy and impiety of priest and people and court; by announcing coming punishment and predicting the destruction of the nation by its enemies, the Assyrians; and by the promise of restoration to divine favor on the condition of repentance and a return to covenant obedience.

The Book might be divided into two sections:

Section I. A symbolic delineation of Israel's apostasy and God's love under the image of a marriage, Chaps. 1-3.

Section II. Threatenings and exhortations in which Israel's sins are described, warnings and threatenings are announced and exhortations and appeals are made, Chaps. 4-14.

The chief object of this Book is to show God's unchanging love for His people. The downfall of Israel is inevitable, but Hosea looked far beyond the fall of Israel and concluded his prophecy with a picture of the glory of Israel under the Messiah.

II. THE PROPHETS OF JUDAH.

Side by side with the prophets of Israel who sought to save Israel from destruction by the Assyrians, the prophets of Judah labored to save Judah from the same fate. They continued their ministry after the fall of Samaria in 721 B. C., for twenty-one years until about 700 B. C.

The prophets for Israel and Judah give not only an inspired picture of their age, but they give also a prophetic picture of subsequent ages, developing with peculiar clearness, the promise of the coming Messiah who is to establish the Spiritual Theocracy of the future. They represent the struggle of the Divine Religion with the outside world influences of paganism and unbelief. They failed to save Israel and Judah, but they paved the way for the Kingdom of God by laying the spiritual foundations for the Messianic Kingdom. The prophets of Judah are Obadiah, Joel, Isaiah, and Micah.

1. The Book of Obadiah.

Obadiah's purpose is to assure God's people that the triumph of their enemies is to be transient; that God will deliver His people from their enemies and establish them in their possessions.

This prophet gives the key to those prophets that treat of the punishment of Edom—Joel, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel—and for the first time uses the phrase "Day of Jehovah," which furnishes the theme for much of the later prophecy. The central thought of the book is the Kingdom of God, which thought is developed by later prophets.

Obadiah holds up the Edomites as the representatives of the hostility of the heathen world to God and His Kingdom, and encourages Judah, by predicting the destruction of Edom, to expect deliverance through the destruction of all other worldly powers.

The Book might be divided as follows:

Section I. The prophecy of Edom's overthrow and the cause of its overthrow which is its bitter enmity to the Theocracy, Verses 1-16.

Section II. The glorification of the Theocracy, the declaration of its triumph over Edom and the world when the Kingdom shall be the Lord's, Verses 17-21.

2. The Book of Joel.

Joel prophesied in the time of Joash, while Jehoida the high priest was regent. This prophet has many points of resemblance to Hosea and Amos. The reigns of Joash, Amaziah, and Uzziah, which followed the wicked reigns of Joram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah, was a period of unsteady religious profession and lack of adherence to Jehovah and the Covenant by the people.

It is not easy to give a satisfactory analysis of this prophecy, for the book is a compact unit. The contents might be summarized in three sections:

Section I. The book gives with a graphic and powerful description the devastation caused by a swarm of locusts and an extreme drouth, Chaps. 1-2:11.

Section II. In this great calamity Joel sees a token of a greater judgment on the "Day of the Lord." This "Day of the Lord" forms the main theme of the book, Chaps. 2:12-3:13.

Section III. But terrible as is the "Day of the Lord," the people of God need not fear for there will be a glorious state of peace and prosperity to be theirs in the Kingdom of the Messiah, Chaps. 3:14-21.

His prediction of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit had a fulfillment on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:14-21.

3. The Book of Isaiah.

Isaiah prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah, from about 758 to 695 B. C.

Isaiah is placed at the head of the list of Old Testament prophets because he is the greatest of them all. The volume of his prophecies together with the variety, beauty, and force of his style and also the fullness of his predictions respecting the Messiah, give this highly gifted prophet prominence among all the prophets. Isaiah is called the Evangelist of the Old Testament. His book is quoted 120 times in the New Testament.

Isaiah lived midway between Moses and Christ and his active ministry fell in just that crisis of struggle between Assyria and Egypt for the mastery of the world that brought the former power into conflict with the kingdoms of Judah and Israel and resulted later in their overthrow.

Palestine was on the route of the Kings of the East on their march to Egypt and therefore became the crossing place and the battleground for hostile armies on their march of conquest. Into this whirlpool of world-strife, Israel, Judah, and all the neighboring nations were drawn from the very beginning, at first as independent factors and later as subject provinces.

Isaiah lived and prophesied in these troublous times. The purpose of his prophecy was primarily to save Judah from the disaster that awaited the nation if it turned away from Jehovah. There was, however, an additional purpose in the prophecy of Isaiah. He assured the true Israel of God that whatever Judah might do, it would not pre-

vent the fulfillment of the purpose of God to establish the Messianic Kingdom where peace and righteousness would prevail.

The Book of Isaiah may be divided into three sections:

Section I. Prophecies closely connected with Judah's history, Chaps. 1-35. This section contains: (1) reproofs, warnings, and promises addressed to Judah and Jerusalem, together with hopes held out to the Gentiles; (2) predictions respecting the nations which were especially hostile to Judah; (3) predictions of judgments on the world, on Samaria and Judah, and the final deliverance of Jerusalem.

Section II. The historical portions of the book, Chaps. 36-39. This section contains: (1) the story of the Syrian invasion and its results; (2) an account of Hezekiah's illness and recovery; (3) the prophecy of Judah's captivity.

Section III. This section looks beyond the captivity to the coming of Christ. The prophecies in this section are grand in style, lofty in conception, and precious in the wealth of their promises, Chaps. 40-46. This section contains: (1) the incomparable greatness of Jehovah and the glorious Redemption which He has prepared for His people; (2) the suffering servant of Jehovah and the glory which shall come to the people of God through his reign; (3) God's judgments on the nations and Zion's enlargements.

4. The Book of Micah.

Micah was a native of Moresheth, near Gath, in Judah. He prophesied probably in Jerusalem, against both Israel and Judah, in a period approaching the overthrow of Israel.

The prophecy of Micah, like Hosea and Amos, deals with the moral condition of the people and connects their afflictions with their unfaithfulness to Jehovah. Judgment for national sin, the theme of so many of the prophets, is the burden of Micah. He denounces Samaria and Jerusalem as centers of evil that infest the two kingdoms of which they were capitals.

The message which Jehovah gave to Micah was not, however, limited to denunciation and threat. The advent of the Messiah and the blessings of the people under His peaceful reign are announced in glowing terms.

The Book might be divided into three sections:

Section I. Micah, in Jehovah's name, calls upon all nations to hearken to the judgments of Jehovah against Israel and Judah, Chaps. 1-2.

Section II. Micah, in Jehovah's name, calls upon all nations to hearken to the salvation which shall come to the people in Messianic times, Chaps. 3-5.

Section III. Micah, in Jehovah's name, calls upon all the earth, its mountains, hills, and strong foundations, to hearken to what Jehovah has to say in His controversy and pleading with His Covenant People, Chaps. 6-7.

The work of the prophets to Judah during the Assyrian period carried Judah and the Theocratic Monarchy through the crisis that swept away the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, 721 B. C. The work of Isaiah and Micah was continued down to about 700 B. C., and carried Judah through the crisis that came with the invasion of Sennacherib whose army was destroyed by the "Angel of the Lord."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PROPHETS OF THE BABYLONIAN PERIOD

In the closing years of the independence of the Kingdom of Judah—from about 640 to 606 B. C.—the prophets Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah and Jeremiah wrought. Their purpose was at least three-fold:

- (1). To save the Kingdom of Judah, if possible, from the then impending destruction by the Chaldean or Babylonian Empire.
- (2). To prepare the Chosen People for the seventy years of captivity and exile which were necessary for correction and sifting, preparatory for the coming of Messiah.
- (3). To give direction to the service of the Chosen People during the captivity to the wider and larger task of infusing the East with the Divinely revealed truths of the Divine Religion, looking to the making of the Divine Religion universal under the Messiah.

The prophets of this period represent the struggle of Divine Grace to save Judah from destruction by Babylon, which was then rising to take the place of Assyria as a great world-monarchy. The prophetic visions of these prophets are directed especially against Babylon in its relation to the Divine judgments upon Judah, while at the same time giving foregleams of the restoration and future theocratic glory of Judah. These prophets are, therefore, peculiarly prophets of judgment.

1. The Book of Nahum.

Nahum was a native of Elkosh, probably in Galilee. He prophesied probably between 660-630 B. C. His burden concerning Nineveh was uttered while Assyria was still at the height of its power, but after it had annihilated Israel, and had also deeply humiliated Judah.

His mission was to encourage Judah in its deep humiliation and

anxious suspense, by predicting the destruction of Nineveh, and by showing the Chosen People that Jehovah was an Almighty protector and a sure refuge in their impending struggle with the rising Babylon, the Chaldean World-Monarchy, if the nation would trust Him.

The prophecy of Nahum falls into three parts exactly, corresponding to the three chapters:

Section I. The prophet first calls attention to the character of Jehovah, and what it means for cruel Nineveh and for down-trodden Judah, Chapter 1.

Section II. Next comes a vivid picture of the siege and capture of Nineveh, Chapter 2.

Section III. Then the prophet declares that Jehovah is against the bloody city. She shall fall like mighty Thebes, and all the earth shall rejoice over her downfall, Chapter 3.

2. The Book of Habakkuk.

The message of Habakkuk was evidently delivered in an age of great moral corruption, in short, of incredible wickedness. His prophecies were uttered probably in the latter years of Josiah of Judah who reigned from 641 to 610 B. C., just before the Chaldeans attacked Judah, which invasion began in 606 B. C.

This prophet of all the prophets, was more concerned that the holiness of Jehovah should be vindicated than that Judah should escape chastisement. As a whole the book answers the question of God's consistency with Himself in view of permitting evil. The prophet thought that the holiness of God forbade him to go on with evil Israel. The answer of Jehovah announces a Chaldean invasion, and the dispersion. But Jehovah is not mere wrath. "He delighteth in mercy," and introduces into his answers to the perplexed prophet, the great promises.

The Book is in three parts:

Section I. The dramatic announcement of the fearful impending punishment of the Theocracy, Chapter 1.

Section II. The downfall of the world-wide Chaldean Empire, Chapter 2.

Section III. The prophet's prayer, Chapter 3.

3. The Book of Zephaniah.

From the general and more remote, the prophets of this period pass in Zephaniah to the more specific, concrete and definite. Zephaniah was a contemporary of Habakkuk, and prophesied during the reign of Josiah. He portrays the dreadful corruption, and predicts the equally terrible judgment in the downfall of Jerusalem; yet promises restoration.

In common with Jeremiah and Ezekiel he takes up utterances of judgment by the older prophets that had only in part been fulfilled by the Assyrians, and repeats them as now about to find a new and complete fulfillment at the hands of Babylon. His prophecies take in not only Judah, but the world. History at that time had reached the point where the power of the Chaldeans began to rise in such a manner as to threaten all nations.

The Book falls into three parts:

Section I. The punishment of Judah, Chaps. 1-2:3. In this division the prophet in the name of Jehovah denounces the idolatry and other sins of Judah, and predicts the approaching day of Jehovah's wrath.

Section II. The punishment of the heathen nations, Chaps. 2:4-3:3. In this division the prophet calls all the meek of the earth to repentance, and predicts the approaching day of Jehovah's wrath for all nations as well as for Judah and Jerusalem.

Section III. A remnant saved, Chaps. 3:9-20. In this division the prophet promises and predicts the Messianic salvation for the faithful remnant, when the judgment shall pass by and Jehovah "shall make them a praise among all the people of the earth."

Zephaniah was a powerful auxiliary to Josiah in the great reform in religion.

The prophets had been unable to save the Theocratic Kingdom. Judah had apostatized and their fall was inevitable. But there was a message of rehabilitation to cheer the hearts of the faithful. The discipline of the bondage was necessary in order to save even a remnant and prepare the way for a new and more glorious kingdom, the Kingdom of Messiah.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PROPHETS OF THE EXILE

In God's dealings with His people, even His judgments upon them for their disobedience are designed for beneficent purposes. This is especially true in His dealings with the Chosen People. Because of their disobedience they were carried away into captivity, but their exile and subsequent restoration were made to bring about the things that God had planned for the redemption of the race.

Two very essential things were accomplished by the 70 years of exile: (1) Judah was permanently cured of its idolatry; (2) there was a general dissemination of the teachings of the Divine Religion among the Gentile nations.

Two sets of prophets, the prophets of the exile and the prophets of the restoration, were used by Jehovah in the inauguration of this two-fold preparation of Jew and Gentile for the coming of the Messiah, and the setting up of the Messianic Kingdom.

The prophets of the exile were Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. Jeremiah prophesied also in the Babylonian period, but the bulk of his ministry was after the dispersion. Ezekiel foretold the judgments of God upon the enemies of Judah, the restoration of the Theocracy, and symbolically pictured the new temple and the new regulations of the land. Daniel unfolds a broad historic panorama of the kingdoms of the world until the Second Advent and the establishment in the earth of the Kingdom of God.

1. The Book of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah, a priest of Anathoth, was the last and greatest prophet of the Babylonian Period, as Isaiah had been of the Assyrian Period. He began to prophesy while yet a youth in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, two years before the fall of Nineveh, and about seventy years after the death of Isaiah, about 628 B. C. He was a contemporary of Habakkuk and Zephaniah and of Ezekiel and Daniel in the early years of their ministry. He was a prophet of both the Babylonian period and the period of exile.

He prophesied under the kings, Josiah, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, and, after the destruction of Jerusalem, among the few left behind by Nebuchadnezzar in Judah, and later in Egypt to his countrymen, who, contrary to the command of Jehovah, had fled thither. His prophecies, therefore, covered about fifty years and extend through the period of the death-struggle of the Kingdom of Judah, in which the Kingdom was hurrying irresistibly to its final doom.

The central message of destruction is recorded in Chapter 25:11. This seems to be a fulfillment of the prophecy in Leviticus 25:34, of the punishment to follow the neglect of the Sabbath Year. By actual calculation this neglect had extended over a period of exactly 490 years, so that Jehovah had been robbed of 70 years. This Jehovah was to take in exact Sabbath measure, in the captivity from 606 to 538 B. C. This emphasis of the "seventy years" is peculiar to Jeremiah. It also accounts for the fact that he announces submission to the Chaldean rule as the will of Jehovah.

The prophecies of Jeremiah are arranged according to subject matter rather than the order of time. There are two main divisions and a conclusion:

Section I. Prophecies relating to Judah, including the call of the Prophet, rebuke and threatenings for the nation, special messages

concerning the overthrow of Jerusalem, announcements concerning the future redemption and glorification of Judah and the ministry of the Prophet to the remnant left in Judah, Chaps. 1-45.

Section II. The second division is given to prophecies against foreign nations. This includes Egypt, Palestine, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Keder, and Hazer. There are also messages delivered against Elam and prophecies against Babylon, Chaps. 50 and 51.

Section III. Conclusion—this contains an historical appendix giving an account of the destruction of Jerusalem.

2. The Book of Daniel.

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, about 606 B. C., Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem and besieged it. The Lord gave Jehoiachin into his hands, and he deported a number of young men from distinguished Jewish families to Babylon. Among these was Daniel.

Under very trying circumstances Daniel remained true to Jehovah. Because of his fidelity and faith, God gave him wisdom and understanding, and the power to interpret visions and dreams as well as prophetic insight. It was in the exercise of this power that he came into prominence in Babylon. He interpreted a dream that the king had when all the wise men of the realm had failed. The king was so delighted that he made Daniel master of all the magicians. Daniel became a man of great influence in the Kingdom. He preached the Divine Religion in the court of the king.

The task of Daniel was to proclaim Jehovah as the only true and living God to the great monarchies that were to shape the destiny of Judah. He also gave historic perspective to the Messianic Kingdom. There is also in his prophecies a foreview of Gentile world-rule to its end in the great catastrophe, when the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our Lord.

The Book of Daniel is divided into two sections:

Section I. The personal history of Daniel from the conquest of Jerusalem to the reign of Darius, Chaps. 1-6. This section contains Daniel's faithfulness, the king's dream interpreted, the fiery furnace, the second dream of the king, the feast of Belshazzar, and Daniel in the lions' den.

Section II. Prophetic visions of the coming monarchies and of the Kingdom of God, Chaps. 7-12. This section contains the vision of the four beasts and the Ancient of Days; the ram-and-goat vision; vision of the seventy weeks; vision of the glory of God; the vision of the "little horn"; the great tribulation.

3. The Book of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel, son of Buzi, a priest, was carried into captivity with ten thousand prominent people of Jerusalem along with Jehoiachin in 598 B. C. In the sixth year of his captivity, he was called to be a prophet and he labored in this capacity for at least twenty-two years among the exiled Jews.

The fall of Jerusalem has a central place in his prophecy. Before the fall of Jerusalem he prophesied the complete collapse of the kingdom of Judah; after the fall of Jerusalem, he turned to a denunciation of the nations hostile to God's people with a promise of the return of the Jews from exile who would restore the worship of Jehovah.

The chief purpose of Ezekiel's prophecy was to help the Jews to understand the meaning of the exile; to make them realize the purpose for which they were chosen; to interpret to them the spiritual possibilities connected with their restoration; and to prepare them for, as they began their new career, a fuller conformity to the law of God. Ezekiel paved the way for the restoration of the Jewish ritual in the new temple after the exile.

The Book may be divided into three sections:

Section I. The message from God against Israel in general, and against Jerusalem in particular, Chaps. 1-24. In this section there is Ezekiel's call and the announcement of Judah's destruction; a series of visions and discourses touching the rejection of the Covenant People; idolatry rebuked and judgments announced; the destruction of Jerusalem symbolized.

Section II. This section contains judgments announced against surrounding nations, Chaps. 25-32. This section contains prophecies against seven foreign nations representing the heathen world and showing that the fall of the Theocracy is not a triumph of heathenism.

Section III. The restoration and blessing of Israel is foretold, Chaps. 33-48. There is in this section the restoration of the Theocracy; the future salvation of the Chosen People; the final triumph and glory of Israel in the Kingdom Age.

The prophecy of Ezekiel completes the messages of the prophets of the exile. The faithful Jews in this period of trial are prepared by these God-called spokesmen for a better and more spiritual work, when Jehovah's time for restoration should come. The prophets had been unable to save the Theocratic Kingdom. Israel and Judah had apostatized and their fall had followed. But the message of hope which they brought cheered the hearts of the faithful. They came to

understand the meaning of the exile and were prepared spiritually for the restoration.

CHAPTER X.

THE PROPHETS OF THE RESTORATION

In 536 B. C., Cyrus, who had overthrown the Chaldean Monarchy and established the Persian or Medo-Persian Empire in its place, issued a decree authorizing the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. Only about 42,000 at once availed themselves of this opportunity to return to their fatherland. There were, however, other groups that followed, one under Ezra in 458 B. C., and another under Nehemiah in 445 B. C., making in all a goodly number—the elect remnant—who went back to their native land to establish again their national and religious life.

The Return had pre-eminently a religious impulse. Weaned forever from idolatry, profoundly penitent for the former backslidings of their nation in this respect, and kindled into enthusiasm for Jehovah by the glowing and burning words of the prophets of the Exile, the "remnant" returned to the fatherland with the hope of the glorious Messianic Kingdom illuminating their souls. They had passed a crisis in their national life. The name "Israel" which had heretofore superseded the national name of "Hebrew" is dropped, and from now on they are to be known as "Jews" or "Judeans."

Those who returned from exile found the land desolate, Jerusalem in ruins, and the country inhabited by a mongrel people, descendants of the mixed races settled in the land by the Assyrian kings, after the destruction of Samaria. In 534 B. C., they laid the foundations of the temple, but the opposition of those whom they found in the land and the bigness of the task discouraged the people so that for fourteen years they did nothing on the building.

The mission of the prophets of the Restoration was to inspire the people to continue their efforts until the national and religious life was restored. The building of the temple was the heart of the whole enterprise. Haggai and Zechariah, the first prophets of the Restoration, began their prophecy in 520 B. C., with the purpose of encouraging and stimulating the people to build the Temple.

1. The Book of Haggai.

Haggai was probably one of the company that returned with Zerubbabel. He began his prophecy under Zerubbabel sixteen years after the decree of Cyrus and in the second year of the Persian King

Darius who authorized the resumption of the work of rebuilding the temple that had been so long interrupted.

There were two occasions when his influence was especially needed. The first was on the issuance of the permission to resume the work. The people had become indifferent to God and religion, and to the work of rebuilding, and were devoting themselves to the furtherance of their own interests. The second was when the work was so far completed that the people began to contrast the New Temple with the Old and were filled with despondency and discouragement.

The book is in two sections:

Section I. Haggai reproves the people for neglecting the building of the Temple, shows that the prevailing drouth and famine have been sent as punishments, and urges them to go to work on the Temple, Chapter 1.

Section II. He assures them of the greater glory of the temple they are building because Christ will come to it, Chapter 2.

2. The Book of Zechariah.

Zechariah, who was of priestly descent, and who also returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel, began his prophecies only two years later than Haggai, to whom he attached himself and with whom he cooperated in urging the rebuilding of the temple and the restoration of the religious worship of the people. He was peculiarly the Messianic prophet of the period, his Messianic prophecies being only second to those of Isaiah in their importance and distinctness.

His prophecies take different forms, combining simple discourse with prophetic images.

The Book is in three sections:

Section I. Encouragement to the builders (Chapters 1-8). A series of visions in which God's providential dispensations are outlined and a message on fasting delivered.

Section II. Messages of promise and warning to Israel (Chapters 9-11). In which the prophet declares that Jehovah will protect the land of His Chosen People; that Israel will be victorious through Zion's King; that Jehovah will lead His people; that wicked rulers will be punished.

Section III. The prophecies concerning Israel (Chapters 12-14). The prophet foretells the glorious reign of Messiah; declares that God will protect His people from the world-powers; and gives a picture of the final exaltation of Jerusalem as the center of world-worship.

3. The Book of Malachi.

The prophecy of Malachi, the last of the prophets of the restora-

tion, closes the Old Testament canon. He prophesied considerably later than Haggai and Zechariah, about 435 B. C. He was contemporary with Nehemiah and more than likely supported his reformation during his second visit to Jerusalem. Of his personal history nothing is known. He lived in a period marked by moral and religious decay. His prophecy is the "burden of the Lord to Israel," and the conclusion makes it quite certain that the Jews are to expect no more prophets until the forerunner of Messiah should come.

The Book may be regarded as made up of three parts, portraying the future relations of Jehovah to His people:

Section I. Jehovah's long-suffering attitude toward His people (Chapters 1-2:9).

Section II. Jehovah, the only God of His people (Chapters 2:10-16).

Section III. Jehovah, the righteous Judge of His people (Chapters 2:17-3).

In summarizing the mission of Malachi, it might be said that he appeared after the restoration of Israel and the reestablishment of the Divine Religion to correct the growing abuses among the priests, and to give a new impulse to a righteous development of the national life which should reach to the coming of Christ.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GOSPELS

THE FIRST STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE

The first stage in the development of the Covenant of Grace is recorded in the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. This division of the New Testament is analogous to the Pentateuch in the Old Testament.

Each one of the Gospels is a distinct and essential part of an organic whole and must be so studied if we would rightly divide the Word of Truth. They record the eternal being, human ancestry, birth, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, the Son of God, who came into the world to establish the Covenant of Grace and to consummate God's purpose and plan for the world's salvation.

The Gospels were written, as even a superficial study will show, not to give us a biography of Christ simply, but to interpret Him and His message to the world in the light of His mission to man

(John 20:31). As interpreted in the Gospels He is shown to be the world's Saviour. Taken together, the Gospels set forth not a biography but a personality, and, although incomplete as a story, they are divinely perfect as a revelation.

The four Gospels may be characterized as follows:

(1) Matthew is the Gospel for the Jews. He writes to the people to whom God gave the Divine Religion, and shows that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah. The Jews, however, as a race represent the Oriental world, the religiously inclined among the nations.

(2) Mark is the Gospel for the Romans. This was the nation of progress, power, action, universal empire. Here is the practical mind appealed to by the Gospel of Salvation.

(3) Luke is the Gospel for the Greeks. This is the race of intellect and culture, the representative of universal humanity in the higher brackets of mental development.

(4) John is the Gospel for the Christian. The address is made to the man of faith, the one in Christ, saved out of the world-races—Jew, Greek, Roman—Calling him to a higher plane of thought concerning the Messiah.

Thus every plane of human thought is touched. Every type of mind is addressed. These types still exist. Hence, the Gospel is a living message addressed not only to the need of the world, but to the peculiar construction of its mental life.

I. MATTHEW, THE GOSPEL TO THE JEWS.

The writer of the first of the Gospels, as all agree, was Matthew of Alpheus, a native of Galilee, Receiver of Custom at Capernaum, and afterwards one of the twelve Apostles. He wrote probably in Hebrew and revealed Christ to his countrymen as interpreted in the light of Old Testament revelation.

The scope and purpose of the book are indicated in the first verse. Matthew is "the book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." This connects Christ with two of the most important of the Old Testament Covenants—the Davidic Covenant of kingship and the Abrahamic Covenant of promise (Gen. 15: 18; 2 Sam. 7:8-16). Matthew closes his book with a vision of Christ returning to the earth in great glory and power. The key verse is "Thy kingdom come, they will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven" (Matt. 6:10).

The need for such a presentation of Christ can be seen when we look at the facts in the light of the Old Testament. The Jews were God's chosen people. They had the divinely ordered forms of religion.

To them, Jesus must be shown to be the Messiah, fulfilling every prophecy of the Old Testament Scriptures. He must be set over against the prophetic Messiah of the Old Testament so that both shall be seen to be one and the same. This work properly done no Jew could escape the conviction if he had an open mind, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. Matthew wrote for this purpose.

The Gospel of Matthew consists of five parts or sections:

Section I. The introduction—the official preparation for the Messiah, containing the genealogy and the early life of Christ, Chapters 1-2.

Section II. The public proclamation of the Messianic kingdom, first by John and then by Christ who tour Galilee, Chapters 3-18.

Section III. The distinct and public claim of Christ to Messiahship in his ministry in Judea, Chapters 19-25.

Section IV. Christ consummates his work as Messiah in the sacrificial offering of Himself as the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, Chapters 26-27.

Section V. The triumph of the Messiah in His resurrection and the assumption of Messianic authority in sending forth His disciples to disciple the nations, Chapter 28.

Matthew's Gospel was written for the purpose of showing that Christ was King of the Jews in David's line and to be the World's King in the Kingdom of God. Hence, it is the Gospel of his authority: authority by all rights; the right of inherent royalty as revealed in his character; the right of perfect administration as revealed in his redemptive work; the right of revelation as revealed in his teaching.

It is thus seen that the first Gospel everywhere bears the mark of its Jewish origin and aim. The prominent character of Christ is that of Covenanted king, David's righteous branch. It is peculiarly the Gospel to the Jews and, as flowering in the death and resurrection of Christ, a Gospel for the whole world.

II. MARK, THE GOSPEL TO THE ROMANS.

It is a very well attested fact that John Mark, a Levite, nephew of Barnabas and the associate of Peter, wrote the Gospel that bears his name. He evidently wrote down what he recollected of the sermons of His Apostle, or from direct dictation, the things in the life of Christ which the Holy Spirit led him to record as being of supreme importance (John 16:13) and gives them to us in his Gospel. The Gospel was probably written while Peter was yet alive and might have been revised by this Apostle.

This Gospel is preeminently a Gospel of action and is therefore peculiarly fitted to present the character and career of Jesus from

the Roman point of view, answering to the idea of divine power, work, law, conquest and universal sway.

Hence, we find Jesus presented in Mark's Gospel as the divine and Almighty Worker, entering into conflict with and making conquest of every form of power and hence, Almighty to save.

In this Gospel the Servant character of Christ is continuously set forth. The key verse is 10:45, "For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." The characteristic word is "straightway", a servant word. There is no genealogy, for who gives the genealogy of a servant? But this lowly Servant, who emptied Himself of the "form of God," and, "was found in fashion as a man," was, nevertheless, "the mighty God," as Mark distinctly declares (1:1), and therefore mighty works accompanied and authenticated his ministry.

As benefits a Servant-Gospel, Mark is characteristically a Gospel of deeds rather than words. Christ is revealed as a Divine worker, laboring for the restoration of a lost and ruined world. He casts out demons, heals diseases, makes anew those who have been blinded by sin, flings out death and gives back life.

He destroys things that destroy in order that those destroyed might be restored. He rebukes and drives out Satan in order that man might be released, helped and healed. He is the Servant of God, mighty in power, great in suffering, working without cessation, even to the point of weariness, until He crowns service in actual and absolute sacrifice. He gave Himself without stint that men might be saved.

He imparted this same spirit to His disciples, for we are told that after His death "they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word through the signs that followed" (Mark 16:20). Mark's Gospel is a call to sacrificial service with Christ for a world's redemption.

Mark's Gospel is divided into five parts or sections:

Section I. The manifestation of the Son-Servant, Who He is and how He came, Chapter 1:1-13.

Section II. The Son-Servant at work, ministering and not being ministered unto, Chapter 1:14-10:52.

Section III. The Son-Servant presented as King and rejected by His people, Chapters 11-13.

Section IV. The Son-Servant meeting the world's need by giving Himself for the world's sin, Chapters 14-15.

Section V. The Son-Servant risen and exalted to all authority, and giving commission to His disciples, Chapter 16.

In Mark's Gospel Christ Jesus is at first set forth as the Son of God, wielding Almighty power in its most tangible form, exercising

the prerogatives of God in the forgiving of sins, and demonstrating his lordship over nature by bringing its forces under subjection. As Mark proceeds, however, the spiritual element assumes increasing prominence, until in the conclusion of his Gospel he proclaims the spiritual victory of Christ over sin and death, sets out His sacrificial suffering, records His resurrection, and reveals Him as establishing a new spiritual order with new spiritual forces and weapons for the conquest of the world.

The Gospel is thus a true presentation of the many-sided Christ, but with a Roman ideal and element predominating. Mark's Gospel presents a Christ of power.

III. LUKE, THE GOSPEL TO THE GREEKS.

Luke, the author of the third Gospel, who was a co-laborer with Paul, was a physician and a man of culture. He wrote his Gospel for the Greeks who idealized humanity, hence, he sets Christ forth as the perfect Son of Man.

Luke saw in Jesus of Nazareth the full realization of God's purpose when He said, "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). In Jesus the real image and likeness of God in human form is realized. Christ is the Universal Man.

In order to reveal more fully Christ's relation to the race, Luke gives incidents connected with His early life (Luke 2:1-52). He also emphasizes the human sympathies in the life of Christ and shows that Christ related Himself to all sorts of people in His work. In fact, Christ is revealed as taking interest in those classes of mankind for which His age cared the least—women, children, and outcasts from society. This is the basis of the universal missionary appeal.

This universal brother of the race is God as well as man. Luke begins his Gospel by giving the miraculous incidents connected with the birth of both John and Jesus. He tells about the visit of the angel, Gabriel, to Mary and the annunciation to her of the glorious fact that she is to become the mother of the Messiah: "Therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (1:28-38).

The whole Gospel of Luke is a revelation of the way sinful men may find salvation and come into perfect, holy, blessed, and immortal manhood. The key phrase is, "Son of Man." The key verse is, "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (19:10).

The Gospel consists of five parts or sections presenting the successive stages of the work of Jesus as the Divine-Man for the redemption of all mankind:

Section I. The advent of the Divine-Man—the origin, development and preparation of Jesus for His work as the Saviour of mankind, Chapters 1-14:13.

Section II. The Divine-Man presented as the Messiah to the Jews and rejected, Chapters 4:14-9:50.

Section III. The Divine-Man presented as the world's Saviour to the Gentiles in His ministry in Perea and on His last journey to Jerusalem, Chapter 9:51-18:30.

Section IV. The sacrifice of the Divine-Man who voluntarily offers Himself as a propitiation for the sin of the world, Chapters 18:21-23:49.

Section V. The triumph of the Divine-Man over death and His proclamation as the universal Saviour of the world, Chapters 23:50-24:53.

Luke wrote for the Gentile world of culture and science. He was himself a Greek, and the first scientist to confront the facts of faith. He shows the historian's care and the scientific temper in his work. There is also deep reverence combined with a full acceptance of the mystery in Christ.

He sees Christ as related to the race. Hence, in his genealogy he traces Christ in His lineage back beyond Abraham and ties Him up with Adam, the head of the race. This makes Christ, the Son of Man, the common property of all nations. To Luke, Jesus is not the Jewish Messiah only; He is the Saviour of all mankind.

The Gospel of Luke is a call to the followers of Christ to demonstrate in their lives the victory which divine grace can give. Therefore, in the power of the Spirit the consummation as given in Luke calls upon the disciples of Christ to be witnesses both in Jerusalem and into the uttermost parts of the earth (Luke 24:46-49).

IV. JOHN, THE GOSPEL TO CHRISTIANS.

John, the author of the fourth Gospel, was the son of Zebedee, brother of James, and distinguished as the beloved disciple. After the ascension of Christ he labored with Peter in Jerusalem. Later he moved to Ephesus, suffered exile in Patmos, wrote the three Epistles bearing his name and the book of Revelation. He died about the close of the first century.

The first three, or synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, are evangelistic and missionary in their origin and aim, seeking to present Christ to the great Gentile races as a Saviour from sin. John's Gospel, while it is intensely evangelistic and missionary, is, nevertheless, written primarily to and for Christians.

As Dr. A. T. Robinson says, "Mark wrote for the Romans; Mat-

threw for the Jews; Luke for the Greeks and other Gentiles; John for the spiritually minded of all lands and ages, as with eagle eye he sees the central facts in the life and the teaching of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

At the time John wrote his Gospel, Christianity had spread over a large part of the Roman world and had come in conflict with various pagan cults and philosophies which threatened the purity of the Gospel. John wrote to meet these corrupting influences.

The fitness of this Gospel to meet the needs of the churches in this crisis will appear from an examination of the Gospel itself. John wrote his Gospel to set forth the Deity of Christ. In it we have an orderly setting forth of certain words and works with a view of showing that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. As we read what John has to say about Jesus, we are conscious of mystery, yet, out of the mystery there flashes such light as had never been seen before. He shows that Christ is God with us.

Hence, it is the Gospel of faith, of life, of love. It is a Gospel that gives the Christian the requisite instruction concerning: (1) the nature and origin of the divine life; (2) the secret springs and laws of the life of obedience to God; (3) the mission of the Holy Spirit as Man's divine helper in living the Christian life. In short, all the great moving and controlling principles of the Christian life are in this Gospel given in the form needed to prepare the way for intelligent Christian living and service.

The purpose of this gospel is to show that Christ is in reality the Son of God and to establish the identity of His presence with the believer and the reality of His presence in the believer. Hence, He is not, as in Matthew, the Son of David and Abraham, nor as in Mark, the mighty Worker, nor as in Luke, the Son of Man, but He is the Logos, the Son of God (1:14). He is God incarnate who is able to give man power through faith to become the sons of God. The key verse is, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (1:14).

The Gospel of John is in five parts or sections:

Section I. The pre-incarnation and mission of the Eternal Word, Chapter 1:1-13.

Section II. The Incarnate Word, revealed as the only source of Life to the world, Chapter 1:14-6:71.

Section III. The Incarnate Word, the Light and Life of the world in conflict with the spiritual darkness, Chapters 7-11.

Section IV. The Incarnate Word preparing for and securing spiritual Life for the world by His sacrificial death, Chapters 12-19.

Section V. The Incarnate Word raised and glorified, the Saviour and Lord of all believers, Chapters 20-25.

The key verse is: "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). In His being we come to a knowledge of the being of God. In His sayings we come to learn the truth of God. In His doings we discover the activities of God. In this Gospel Christ links His disciples on to Himself in such a way that their life and activity become the continuation of His redemptive service: "As the Father hath sent me even so send I you" (John 20:21).

V. THE GOSPEL FOR ALL THE WORLD.

The four Gospels taken together are designed to meet the needs of all men—the unspiritual and unrenewed man whether he be Jew, Roman or Greek, and the spiritually renewed man whatever his nationality may be—hence, these four Gospels make up the one Gospel for all the world.

1. **A Four-Fold View of Christ.** In the four Gospels a four-fold view of Christ is presented which meets the four-fold need of the world, and under a four-fold aspect displays the infinite riches of revelation.

Matthew, writing from the Jewish point of view, shows that Jesus was the promised Messiah of the seed of Abraham and through the kingly line of David. Hence, the world's King—Redeemer.

Mark, written from the Roman point of view, presents Jesus as the Mighty Worker, the faithful Servant of God doing the will of God perfectly. Hence, the world's mighty Servant-Redeemer.

Luke, written from the point of view of the Greeks who idealized humanity, shows that Jesus is the ideal man, the perfection of manhood; a Son of Man, the Son of God. Hence, the world's perfect Man-Redeemer.

John, writing from the Christian point of view, presents the Deity of our Lord and shows that Christ was God, thereby asserting the pre-existence and equality of Christ with God, the Father. Hence, the world's God-Man Redeemer.

It is no less apparent that the four Gospels grow in the intensity of their teaching when the separate view of each is clearly understood. The purpose of each of the four is to present Jesus Christ as the Divine Saviour of the world; but each of the four presents Him as such in a distinctive light.

Matthew's picture is a *profile* wherein Jesus is presented in clear

cut outline against the background of Old Testament history, prophecy, promise and type as the promised Messiah.

Mark's picture is a *steel-engraving* wherein the very straightforwardness and directness of the inspired artist, and his boldness of delineation leaves an irresistible impression of the powerful One who is able to save.

Luke's picture is a *half-tone* wherein the strong light of Divinity is sifted and, in a sense, moderated as it passes through the fine lines of humanity, showing Jesus as the Son of Man, the Friend of sinners, the Elder Brother Who can restore us to the love of the Father.

John's picture is the *life-size portrait* wherein the latest of the four artists, the one who was closest to Jesus, paints a picture of Jesus as the loving heart of faith is bound to see Him, His divinity and His humanity rounded out into completeness, in Whom is unfolded the whole secret of life and salvation.

How necessary it is for the believer to be familiar with each of these pictures of Christ in order that the composite picture of Christ in the heart may contain the fullness of His Person.

WHAT THIS OUTLINE STUDY HAS MEANT TO ME

I do not know whether this method of approach to the study of the Bible will mean anything to others or not, but to me it has meant a new appreciation of the Bible as a whole. I have come to understand that every bit of the history given, every incident recorded and every truth taught by every one of the books have a place and a meaning, and are necessary to complete the story of God's redemptive efforts. The Bible has become, in a new way, a living, real and precious book of untold value in all of its parts.

We will never become a real missionary people until we come to know, understand, and love the Bible. My heart longs to have our people learned in the Word of God. I crave no higher privilege than that of helping them, if I can, to learn, love and live God's Word.

