

EPISTLES II.

I. THESSALONIANS.

This is the first of the Pauline Epistles, written at Corinth A.D. 52 or 53. Thessalonica was so named by Cassander in honor of his wife Thessalonice, the sister of Alexander the Great. It is now called Salonika. It was on Paul's second missionary journey that he and Silas visited this city. We are told (Acts 17:1-9) how Paul preached to the Jews in their synagogue on the death and resurrection of Jesus, how incensed the Jews became and the departure of the missionaries to Berea. But his preaching bore fruit and a great multitude believed, consisting of Jews and Greeks. Timothy was left here while Paul proceeded to Athens.

During these labors at Thessalonica, Paul had undoubtedly instructed these people regarding the Second Coming of Christ. They had misunderstood these teachings and the idea became fixed in their minds that Jesus was soon to return. The result was that many ceased to work, which they looked upon as unnecessary if Christ were about to appear. Others bemoaned the fact that those who had died in Christ would not be present to witness the glory of that great event.

Paul was in Corinth working at his trade of tent-making. He sent for Timothy and Silas to join him. From them he received the report concerning the manner in which that church had confused his teachings on the doctrine of the time of the Second Coming of Christ. In this letter he corrects their mistaken idea, that the time of Christ's return is not known, and that when that event does occur those who are asleep in Jesus will first be raised from the dead to participate in the glory of it, and those living will be changed and both the resurrected and the living will meet Christ in the air. Thus it is that this Epistle gives us very essential instruction on one of the greatest subjects of the Bible. It will be noticed that at the close of each chapter reference is made to our Lord's return.

The Epistle falls into three parts:

1. Character and engagement of the Church, i.
The true church is characterized by earnestness and loyalty. The influence of the church at Thessalonica exemplifying such qualities will be such that they will be an example to believers in Macedonia and Achaia..
2. Character and ministry of the Apostle Paul, ii, iii
3. The Second Coming of our Lord, iv. v
 - (1) The claims of the present life and service upon the believer while waiting for his Lord. He should not be indifferent to these claims.
 - (2) The status of the righteous dead and living in regard to that event when it occurs.
 - (3) The effect this great doctrine and glorious hope should have upon Christian life and character.

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II. EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

Propose to straighten out difficulties

This Epistle was written shortly after the first and deals with the same matter upon which this church had become so confused. Notwithstanding the fact that the first epistle had spoken with clearness on the points troubling this church, it is still laboring under mistaken impressions. Believing that Christ would soon return, many had ceased to work. What still more greatly confused this church was a forged letter having Paul's name signed to it and declaring that Christ would soon appear. It was no doubt the work of some one who believed that Paul had so taught these people, or to propagate more thoroughly the idea, attached to it the force of Paul's name. In any case, Paul writes this second letter, and warns them against receiving spurious epistles as his. He now deals more directly with this particular point of the time of the coming of our Lord. He positively declares that prior to Christ's coming will be a great apostasy and the advent of the man of sin, who is usually spoken of as Antichrist. He is described by Paul in definite terms as to his character and conduct. Some have identified him as the Roman Emperor, others the Pope, and others the Turkish power, etc. We know absolutely nothing as to who this man of sin will be, or for what or whom the expression stands.

This brief epistle divides into two parts:

1. The coming apostasy, the coming man of sin, the coming Christ. i, ii. The coming of Christ will destroy the man of sin, and consequently he could not have been the Roman Emperor since Christ has not yet come, and Paul is dealing with the actual coming of Christ.
2. The essential attitudes of the Church waiting for its coming Lord, iii. The Church should be prayerful, engaged in Christian service, and obedient.

EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

Chronologically this is probably the first of the four doctrinal epistles, the other three being I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Romans, the latter being the sixth Pauline Epistle, the first two being the two letters to the Thessalonians. This epistle is addressed to the churches of Galatia, and thus is a circular letter. The Galatians were Gauls or Celts who settled in Asia Minor about B.C. 240. On his second missionary tour Paul established churches in this region. It is probable that this epistle was written from Ephesus in A.D. 56 or the early part of 57, preceding the Epistles to the Corinthians, while some place it between II Corinthians and the Romans. There is difficulty regarding both time and place.

This latter was occasioned by two serious defections that caused great disturbance in these churches. Judaizing teachers contended that the Gentile believers should submit to certain forms of Jewish legalism, and were thus alienating them from the true principles of the Gospel. This was contrary to the teachings of Paul, and to undermine his influence they asserted that he was inferior to the other apostles in his assumed apostleship, that he was not one of the Twelve, and claimed that their doctrines were supported by the other apostles.

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Paul vindicates his apostleship, declaring that he received his apostolic appointment directly from Christ. In support of this and as opposed to their contention, is the fact that the Twelve, and especially Peter, John and James the brother of Jesus, acknowledged his independent apostleship to be fully equal to theirs, and that he was the divinely accredited Apostle to the Gentiles. To save these Christians from the demoralizing influence of this Judaizing legalism; Paul announces and establishes the doctrine of justification by faith, and urges them not to be misled by these false teachers. He sets before them Christ and His redemption as the only way of salvation and urges them to stand fast in the liberty of the Gospel.

This brief but stirring epistle falls into three sections:

1. Perverters of the Gospel and an unsettled Church. i-iii:4
Paul's Apostleship and Apostolic authority. His divine call and labors. The ground of justification. The bewitching of the church.
2. Paul's correction of perverted teachings bearing upon justification and the works of the law, iii. 5-v.
Faith and justification of Abraham prior to the law. The law and the covenant distinguished. Taken from under the law. Allegory of bond-woman and free-woman.
3. The church exhorted and enjoined. vi.
What Paul had to contend with in these instructions was the fact that converted Jews had such difficulty in believing that the Mosaic institutions, divinely appointed, should be no longer binding upon them, and that the Gentiles should be admitted to equal privileges in the Gospel with themselves.

I. EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

This is the second of the four great doctrinal epistles and the fourth in the order in which the epistles were written. The first epistles being those to the Thessalonians followed by the Epistle to the Galatians. The group classified as Doctrinal Epistles consists of -

{ Galatians,
I Corinthians;
II Corinthians,
Romans,

[Others are didactic (or teaching)]

and in that order. This first letter to the Church at Corinth was written about A.D. 57 while Paul was at Ephesus. (Corinth was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia.) It was a commercial and wealthy city and morally corrupt. (Paul labored in this city for nearly two years.) The church consisted of Jews and Gentiles.

Paul had to contend with Judaizing teachers and tendencies in some of these churches. It will be remembered that he and Barnabas were sent as commissioners by the Church at Antioch to the Council at

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Jerusalem which was convened for the purpose of considering the standing of Gentiles in the Church, and the Judaistic requirements being made of them. Paul was successful in that controversy in support of the Gentiles and in the compromise he proposed. He had to deal with this same question in various churches and especially the Galatian.

The bigotry of the Jews and worldliness of the Gentiles of the Corinthian Church, disorders and dissensions called forth this letter. A party spirit had grown up in this church; the tendency being to select religious leaders, some choosing Paul, some Apollos and some Cephas. This epistle was designed to correct this error, which Paul does by declaring "all are yours," whether Paul or Apollos be your teachers.

Paul received word concerning disturbing matters pertaining to marriage, eating of meat offered to idols, the Lord's Supper, the wrong attitude to spiritual gifts and the doctrine of the resurrection. These things are handled in Paul's masterly manner in this epistle. He puts the matter of eating meat on the high plane of Christian example and service. Mistaken views of the resurrection call forth the one great treatment of that essential doctrine, To those aspiring to certain gifts he points out what is far greater in the line of Christian graces, and the pre-eminence of Love, the greatest of all things.

The subject matter of this epistle may be gathered under four heads:

1. The essential unity of the Church. i-iv.
Unity threatened by the party spirit. Unity in the cross of Christ. Many workers but one foundation.
2. Disorders and disturbing problems, v-xi.
Relating to marriage, eating of meat, the Lord's Supper.
3. Coveting the greatest spiritual gifts and graces as opposed to shallow ambitions, xii. xiv.
4. Doctrine of the resurrection. xv.
The grounding of faith in Christ. Explained and illustrated.

II. EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

This is the third great doctrinal epistle. It would appear that Paul felt some concern relative to the spirit in which this church would receive his previous letter, which dealt so strongly and so uncompromisingly with certain conditions in this church. Titus found him in Macedonia, having left Ephesus on account of the disturbance that had arisen because his preaching had greatly affected the business of making shrines to the goddess Diana. The riot seems to have been instigated by Demetrius, whose profits in this pagan traffic were greatly diminished. Titus reports the kindly manner in which this church had received Paul's instruction, which

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was very gratifying, and he sends them this second letter expressing his appreciation and adds to the instruction already given. This was in the same year, A.D.57.

There were those in this church, however, who were disposed to call in question Paul's apostleship, denying there had been vested in him apostolic authority. To set forth his credentials and establish his claims as an apostle of Jesus Christ is one of the most important sections of this epistle. He declares in no uncertain terms the ground of his authority and treats in an ironical manner the criticisms of himself by the false teachers of this church.

The book may be divided into three parts as follows:

1. The spirit of fellowship and service, i-vii.
The loving relationship subsisting between the Apostle and this church. Their mutual cooperation in Christian service.
2. The principle, privilege and duty of Christian giving, vii-ix.
Paul was raising funds for the support of poor believers in Jerusalem, and was calling upon these churches to give according as the Lord had prospered them.
3. Paul's Apostleship sustained, x-xiii.
The credentials of the true Apostle.
Paul's Apostleship as related to the divine revelations that had been made to him. His thorn in the flesh to protect him against self-exaltation because of these revelations. The epistle closes with a warning and an exhortation.

EPISTLES TO THE ROMANS.

In some respects the greatest of all the Pauline Epistles, of which there are thirteen, and fourteen if Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. While the epistle is first in order in the Bible, chronologically it is the sixth. It was during his second visit to Corinth that he wrote this epistle, and sent it to the church at Rome by a woman of Corinth who was traveling to Rome. This was about the year A.D.58.

It was the year 62 that Paul went to Rome as a prisoner, or about four years after that church had received this letter. Paul was at that time personally unknown to this church as he was not its founder and who founded this church is unknown. This epistle suggests that the Roman Church was numerically quite strong and had existed for a considerable time. It was distinctive in that its faith was extensively known. It seems evident from certain passages that the Gentile portion of this church exceeded in number the Jewish; while some hold the opposite view. It would appear from xi, 17, 18, and xv. 6-9 that some antagonism existed between the converts from Judaism and the Gentile Christians, but not of such a positive character as was true of the Galatian Church.

The aim of this epistle was not polemical but had a general scope.

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EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS (cont.)

In the opening chapter Paul states the case by declaring his interest in visiting them in order to confirm their faith, and since he was prevented from doing so he is sending by Phoebe this letter which sets forth in such comprehensive manner the doctrines of grace.

This epistle, quoted as early as the first and second centuries by Clemens Romanus and Polycarp, the latter the disciple of John, has never been questioned. It is the most systematic of the didactic epistles, and treats especially the great doctrine that grounded the reformation, the doctrine of justification by faith.

The book falls into two general sections:

1. The world under sin and condemnation, i-iii. Paul argues
 - (1) That the pagan world is under condemnation.
 - (2) That the Jewish world is under condemnation.
 - (3) That all have sinned and the whole world is under condemnation
2. The world under grace, iv-xvi
 - (1) Justification by faith, iv. v.
 - (2) The believer's life in Christ, vi-viii.
 - (3) The salvation of Israel, ix-xi.
 - (4) Christian graces, xii-xvi.

EPISTLE OF JAMES.

This is the first of the seven General Epistles, so-called because of their general character. They were written for the body of believers and not for churches or individuals. The author of this epistle is not to be confused with James, the son of Zebedee, the brother of John. He was put to death by Herod prior to the writing of this epistle. The author of this epistle was our Lord's brother, but whether he was the Apostle James is not certain. He was the President of the Council of Jerusalem (Acts xv) when Judaizing tendencies in the Church were openly discussed. The Jews insisted that Gentiles must come into the Church in the Jewish way. This was opposed by Paul and Barnabas and their views were supported by James.

The date of this epistle has been placed as early as A.D. 44 and as late as 62. From the development of the errors treated by James the latter date seems the more probable. James was the bishop of Jerusalem. This epistle was addressed to Jewish Christians when the Church was suffering persecution, but prior to those persecutions begun by the emperor Nero after the burning of Rome (A.D. 64).

The design of the epistle was to correct the error of failing to put faith into Christian practice. They emphasized the mere understanding of religious doctrines and fell into a state of dead formalism. James insists that faith without works is dead, and thus is reduced to a mere belief, an assent of the mind to certain truths, and a dead faith is equivalent to nothing; that a true living faith finds expression in Christian service and earnest Christian conduct.

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EPISTLE OF JAMES. (cont.)

There is no conflict between this doctrine of faith and works and Paul's doctrine of justifying faith as opposed to the works of the law. The two things are wholly different and these two writers are emphasizing two entirely different things. Paul treats the means of justification, James the evidence or spiritual expression of it. One may be right from the standpoint of Paul's theological position, and wholly wrong from the practical standpoint of the position of James. Paul was in full accord with the viewpoint of James, and James was in full agreement with the viewpoint of Paul.

This epistle deals with four things:

1. The believer's attitude to trial, temptation and a true religious life, i.
2. The essential relation of faith to works, ii.
3. Things exemplified by the true believer, iii-iv.
4. In what true riches consist, v.
The man led away by material riches. The life of faith rich in prayer and consecrated service.

EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

Commercially Ephesus was one of the most important cities of Asia Minor, and under the Romans was the capital of the entire province of Asia. It was celebrated for its temple and the goddess for whom it was constructed - Diana of the Ephesians. It was one of the seven wonders of the world.

This is one of the four letters of the imprisonment, when Paul was a prisoner at Rome, A.D. 62-63. Different views have been advanced as to the design of this letter. The Tübingen School ascribed to the author "the desire to lift the church to a sense of her unity by presenting her to herself as the Body of Jesus Christ and by holding before her at the same time a higher conception of the person of Jesus Christ than had been held hitherto." Several other views have been put forth as to the design of the epistle, but it seems to be clearly expressed in the author's statement, "I therefore beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called." (iv.1). The design is practical. It is an "appeal to the sense of the greatness of the salvation enjoyed by believers, of the exaltation of Christ their Redeemer, of the dignity and unity of the church" in order that they may desire to attain to a pure and exalted form of living.

Unlike some of the other epistles it was not written to correct some doctrinal error, but for the confirmation of the church in its spiritual unity as the body of Christ, having on the whole armor of God. This epistle bears a strong resemblance to the Epistle to the Colossians. This may be accounted for on the ground that both epistles were written about the same time. Both letters were carried to their respective churches by Tychicus. The fact that the subject

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of Ephesians is broader and more general than is the more specific theme of Colossians has led to the opinion that Colossians was written first, on the assumption that "progress is generally from the briefer to the more lengthy form."

The following are the two main divisions of this Epistle:

1. Doctrines of Christianity, i-iii.
 - (1) The believer's election and adoption
 - (2) Person and work of Christ.
 - (3) The Gentiles sharing equally in the blessings of the Gospel, and Paul's commission to establish this truth in preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ.
2. Exemplification of these doctrines, iv-vi
 - (1) The unity of the Church, the body of Christ. Unity in the diversity of gifts. Many gifts but all related and reciprocal in one service.
 - (2) The spotless Church in Christ Jesus.
 - (3) Panoplied with the Christian armor. This Epistle aims to give this church a greater vision of the length, breadth, depth and height of the love of Christ.

EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

This was one of the four letters of the imprisonment, the others being Ephesians, Philippians and Philemon, written at Rome A. D. 62-63. Paul was not the founder of the church at Colosse, a city of Asia Minor. It was Epaphras who brought to Paul an account of the religious conditions in Asia, and it is thought that he was the founder of this church.

The spiritual life of this church was seriously endangered by the Gnostic philosophy of that time. The Gnostics held that matter was essentially evil, while God was wholly good. Hence the creation of matter was accounted for by some other creative power than that of God, who could not be conceived as creating evil. When some of these Gnostics became interested in Christianity they brought with them their Gnostic theories. At once Christ became to them a serious problem. They could not believe him to be a real man having a material body which would make him essentially evil. One sect accounted for him by assuming that what seemed an actual human, material body was in reality nothing of the kind and was only so in appearance. In other words, he was pure, unmixed spirit. This denied the humanity of Jesus. Another Gnostic sect admitted his humanity, that he was in every sense a material being, incarnate flesh and blood. By distinguishing between Jesus and Christ they accounted for his materiality by the power of Christ, a creative power that was not God.

When Epaphras brought to Paul his report of the disintegrating influence of this Gnostic philosophy, he realized at once the danger that threatened this church and wrote them this epistle. It sets forth the supreme Headship of Christ in creation and the work of grace That between Jesus and God is no intervening creative power, but on the

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contrary he is the express image of God; that it is he who is the creator of all things and sustains them by his essential presence. Exhibiting the Godhead in bodily form, he is above all principalities and powers. He is both human and divine, the Lord and Saviour of mankind. Thus does Paul expose the shallowness of this philosophy, and warns this church not to be deceived by it, not to be induced to worship angels or to practice the ascetism of the Gnostics. Their only attitude should be that of complete subordination to Christ.

The Epistle falls into two parts:

1. The characteristics of the true believer. i.
There are four marks of Christian character: it is fruitful, enlightened, patient and, what really includes these, abounding in grace.
2. The believer's law of action in dealing with vain philosophy, tradition and worldliness, ii-iv.
If rooted in Christ they will not be led astray regarding theories of angels. Having their Headship in Him they will not be beguiled by superficial philosophy, and will be kept pure from the rudiments of the world.

EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

In the point of chronological order this epistle is some distance from where it belongs. The letter was written to an individual and follows those written to individuals. This was one of the four letters of the imprisonment written at Rome A.D. 62-63, and is the shortest of the Pauline Epistles. It was Tychicus who carried to their respective churches the Epistle to the Ephesians and the Epistle to the Colossians. Onesimus, the companion of Tychicus, carried this epistle to Philemon. The latter was a member of the church at Colosse.

Onesimus was the slave of Philemon. He had committed some crime and fled from his master. He came to Rome and under Paul's ministrations was converted to Christianity. Paul advises him to return to Philemon, and this letter is an appeal to his master to receive him kindly. He commends Onesimus to Philemon as a Christian brother, and is willing to go his security for any loss Philemon might sustain. The letter is a masterpiece of Christian courtesy and intercession. It falls into three parts:

1. The personal element exhibiting Paul's tactfulness in addressing Philemon on a delicate matter.
2. The new Onesimus, his changed life, a basis for Paul's appeal.
3. Intercession for Onesimus and security guaranteed. Paul expresses the conviction that Philemon will exceed his petition in behalf of Onesimus.

EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

Philippi was a city of pronconsular Macedonia, having been taken by Philip of Macedonia, who named it after himself. It was here that the celebrated battle was fought in which Brutus and Cassius were defeated, B. C. 42, which overthrew the Roman republic. The Gospel was first preached in Europe in this city, where Paul and Silas had their unusual experience in jail that resulted in the jailer's conversion. Paul founded this church, and on several occasions it contributed to his necessities.

This was one of the four letters of the imprisonment and was written at Rome A. D. 62-63. Epaphroditus, a member of the church at Philippi, and had been sent to Rome with a pecuniary contribution for Paul. This epistle was sent back with him in which Paul expresses his gratitude and sets before them Christ as the great exemplar. He commends the Philippians and in no part of the epistle is there any word of censure.

The letter falls into two sections:

1. Exhibiting the mind and characteristics of Christ, i, ii
From the exhortations of this section it is thought by some that this church was given to vain glorying. That would not necessarily follow. Christ's humility our example in having a lowliness of mind.
2. The believer's spiritual goal as expressed by the Apostle's aspirations, iii-iv.
 - (1) Losing all else for Christ,
 - (2) Pressing toward the mark for the prize.
 - (3) The things that command attention and interest - things that are true, honest, pure and lovely.

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

Who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews? is a question that has been asked for centuries. So clearly does it resemble Paul's style of reasoning that for a long time he was regarded the author and was accepted as such by the Alexandrine Church, also Jerome, but the Pauline authorship was rejected by Calvin and Beza. The view has been advanced that the author was one who followed Paul both in thought and style, that he submitted the epistle to the Apostle, which received his endorsement. That the author was a Jew has never been doubted. Some have ascribed it to Apollos. Whether the epistle was addressed to the Jews of Palestine or of Rome is uncertain, and the same uncertainty attaches to the place of writing. As to the time, it is generally accepted that it was written shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem (A. D. 70). If this is correct, and Paul was the author, then it was written before A. D. 68, as it was in that year or shortly before that Paul suffered martyrdom.

There is no doubt as to the design of the epistle. The author is placing before the Jew the claims and pre-eminence of Christ and Christianity as compared with Judaism. The besetting sin of the Jews was unbelief, and there was the constant tendency to renounce

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Christianity and return to Judaism. It would seem from this epistle that some had done so. The author sets forth the Messiahship of Jesus, our Great High Priest, who exceeds the angels, the prophets and Moses. He then points out the difference between the Aaronic priesthood and that of Christ, and the Levitical sacrifice and that of Jesus that alone can atone for sin and was offered by once. In other words, the Mosaic institutions were but types, while Jesus was the Proto-type, and the shadow must not be mistaken for the substance. The heroes of Old Testament faith are enumerated and their faith distinguished, and these the author sets before these Jews as a cloud of witnesses, living under the old covenant, but testifying to the truth as it is in Christ. The epistle is a powerful appeal in contrasting Christ and Christianity with Judaism.

The epistle falls into four sections:

1. Christ as compared with the angels, the prophets and Moses, i-iv. In all this he has the preeminence.
2. Mosaism and Christ, v-x
Christ and the Levitical system, contrasted, especially regarding the priestly, and sacrificial institutions.
3. Faith and its Old Testament examples, xi. *XII 1-2*
From Abel to the prophets. The cloud of witnesses for New Testament believers.
4. Christian virtues, xii - xiii. Christ our great exemplar.
XII 13 - to end of book

I, EPISTLE OF PETER.

The Apostle Peter, the author of two epistles, held a prominent place in the Apostolic band during the ministry of Jesus, and in the early Christian Church. This epistle was addressed to Jewish converts in Asia Minor, and was written between A.D. 64 and 67. It was written from Babylon, which is understood by some to mean Rome, the mystical Babylon. It was the first period of the Roman persecution of the Church under Nero, who is prosecuting a carnival of bloodshed by all the fiendish means he can invent, both in the Colliseum and in his gardens about his palace. They were indeed "fiery" trials, as Nero indulged in the Satanic sport of making the night luminous by the burning of Christians. Within a brief time both Peter and Paul will be victims of this monster.

The epistle bears a strong resemblance to some of Paul's writings and uses various expressions of Romans, I Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, Thessalonians, I Timothy. It is a stirring appeal to believers in this time of bitter persecution. But their eternal security is in Christ, who also suffered and by suffering redeemed us to God. He is held up as the believer's source of strength in these trying times. Peter also instructs these converts in the attitude they should maintain to temporal powers under these conditions. Three things are set forth in this epistle:

1. The believer's life in Christ, i, 11
His election, sanctification and resurrection. He enjoys

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salvation through the risen Christ, and should glorify Christ by Christian conduct guided by his Lord's example.

2. Exhortations for a suffering Church. iii - iv.
A righteous attitude in the midst of trials, escaping thereby all false accusations. The Christ who suffered for us can cause us to rejoice in suffering for Him under the keeping power of God.
3. The under-shepherd and the flock. Suffering makes perfect and is followed by a crown promised by the Chief Shepherd.

II EPISTLE OF PETER.

So different is the style of this epistle from that of the First Epistle of Peter that the Petrine authorship has been seriously questioned. It may be that another hand worked upon the First Epistle and greatly improved the style, which would account for the difference. Aside from the style referred to, the lack of finish in the Greek, we can detect Peter in this epistle, and certain references in it argue strongly for the Petrine authorship. The arguments against such are not conclusive. This epistle refers to the first, and bears a certain resemblance to the Epistle of Jude.

This epistle is also addressed to Asiatic converts, but to no particular church. It was probably written shortly before Peter's death (i,14) hence the time of writing could not have been later than A.D.68. In this respect it reminds us of Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy. "It is only as we get a vivid picture of this Apostle standing in the midst of persecutions, this general breaking up of things, seeing the ravages made by the mockers and false teachers, and with death just before him, that we can understand with what earnestness he is appealing to these believers."

1. The Christian virtues and the transfigured Christ, i.
The linking of one virtue to another by the use of the word "add" signifies in the original the harmonious blending of these graces. Peter was one of the three who witnessed in Hermon the great scene of the transfiguration of Jesus. Note the pronoun used in his statement. A few days before, Peter refused to accept Christ's declaration of his coming death. Moses and Elias are brought into the scene to speak of his decease not far away. Peter heard these words and the statement of Jesus must have come back to him with a new great force.
2. The inspired Word of God the source of spiritual instruction, ii. Opposed to its doctrines are the false teachers upon whom judgment will fall.
3. The coming heresies and scoffers, iii.
They will deny the coming of Christ, and Peter announces the certainty of this great and glorious event, and the things that will attend it. He emphasizes the influence this should have upon Christian character.

I EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

This is the first of Paul's Pastoral Epistles written to two individuals, Timothy and Titus. It was written in Macedonia, probably about A. D. 65; and a short time prior to Paul's death, which occurred about A. D. 68. His imprisonment in Rome, 62-63, was followed, it is believed, by a fourth missionary journey, and it is during that time this Epistle was written. Timothy was the beloved disciple of the great Apostle. He was probably converted to Christianity by the preaching of Paul when the latter first visited Lycaonia in Asia Minor. He was Paul's companion in his missionary labors. His father was a Greek, but his mother was a Jewess. She had carefully instructed Timothy in the Old Testament Scriptures, and Paul refers to the fact in his next Epistle, Timothy was left in charge of the Church at Ephesus. Paul's labors in that city had caused an upheaval by greatly diminishing the traffic in the making of shrines of the goddess Diana. He left Ephesus, but placed Timothy in charge of that church. The city was the seat of pagan superstition, hence the responsibility that was placed upon this young minister settled in this profligate city. Under these conditions he was in need of just such a letter from one who understood so well with what he had to contend.

The Epistle is divided as follows:

1. Paul's charge to Timothy, i,2
 - The office of the minister and steward, ii-vi
 - (1) In dealing with official matters.
 - (2) Regard to spiritual principles.
 - Following after righteousness. How to preach to the rich.

EPISTLE TO TITUS.

This is one of the three Pastoral Epistles. It was probably written about A. D. 65, from Macedonia, and in point of time falls between the two Epistles to Timothy. We know very little about Titus. He was with Paul and Barnabas at the Council at Jerusalem (Gal. 2:1) It will be recalled that Paul and Barnabas were sent to this Council as commissioners from the Church at Antioch. This was at the close of the first missionary journey. When the Judaizing sect tried to carry their point and insisted that Titus receive the Jewish seal of the covenant, Paul took the ground that to grant that under those circumstances would be compromising a principle. The same was not true relative to Timothy at another time and under wholly different conditions Paul placed Titus in charge of the church on the island of Crete, which place was noted for its corruption. Paul's instructions were, in several respects, similar to those to Timothy, who was in charge of the Church at Ephesus and had to contend with a similar state of things. Titus must sustain the principles of Christianity in opposition to false teachers, and in a community morally corrupt. It called for certain qualifications set forth by the Apostle.

The epistle is divided into three parts:

1. The qualifications and needs of a true bishop, i.
He must be sound in doctrine to meet the Judaizing tendency of that time.
2. His instructions adapted to the social and moral conditions about him, ii.

EPISTLE TO TITUS.

Note the scope of his admonitions.

3. The four situations in which Titus must be qualified to act, iii.

II EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

This is the last Epistle of the great Apostle. It was written from Rome A. D. 67 or 68. Following his release from his first imprisonment (A.D.63) it is generally believed that Paul resumed his labors in Asia Minor and Macedon and went to Spain. False teachers in Ephesus and Crete were trying to undermine the principles of Christianity. In A. D. 64, more than one-half of the city of Rome was destroyed by fire, instigated, no doubt, by the Emperor Nero. The Christians were falsely charged with the deed. According to Roman writers they had become very numerous and held influential positions in the State. Charged with the burning of the city afforded Nero the pretense for persecuting them, which he conducted in the most fendish and diabolical manner. These persecutions were to be continued for many decades under the various emperors, but not for purely personal reasons, as characterized the wholesale murderous slaughterings of Nero.

Under this tyrant, who murdered his own mother, fell the Apostle Paul. For the second time he is imprisoned in Rome, and is now writing his last message to Timothy. He realizes that the end is near, but, sustained by his unswerving faith, he is looking forward to the crown awaiting him. "His friends carried the headless corpse to the catacombs or subterranean vaults below Rome, to which in after times the martyrs used often to flee for concealment. There, in some unknown vault, rests the body of the greatest of apostles, awaiting the fulfillment of his own words, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'"

This dying message falls into three parts:

1. The fundamentals of Christian character and service, i,ii.
Soundness of doctrine, Christian endurance, rightly dividing the word of truth, etc.
2. Coming perilous times, iii.
And we know how truly Paul spoke - a forecasting of the days of bloodshed through which the early Church passed.
3. Last words of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, iv.
His closing injunction to Timothy. His triumphant testimony to his faith in Jesus Christ. He who wrote the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the church in this same Rome is, in these last moments, experiencing the power and fulness of these blessed truths.

EPISTLE OF JUDE

Jude, according to his own statement, was the brother of James, the writer of the Epistle of James. From this it is assumed by some that he was not a full brother of Jesus, but a son of Joseph by a former wife. But neither does James speak of himself as a brother

EPISTLE OF JUDE.

of Jesus, and it may be that both refrained from doing so that it may not appear they were doing so for a purpose. The fact that the second chapter of Second Peter contains matter found in Jude has raised the question whether Peter drew from Jude or Jude from Peter. This involves the question of date, and not knowing the exact date of either we cannot say which antedated the other. This epistle deals with the same heresies dealt with by John and Peter, and warns those for whom he is writing against these damaging doctrines. In denouncing these heresies he calls attention to the judgments that were visited upon Korah, Balaam, Sodom and Gomorrah, and makes application of the fact to those who wantonly deal with the faith once delivered to the saints. The unbelief of the one class and the fidelity of the true followers of Christ are strongly contrasted by this epistle.

I EPISTLE OF JOHN

John was the last of the Apostles. The others have passed on to their eternal reward, and it was left to the "disciple whom Jesus loved" to write the last words of the New Testament Scriptures. Whether these epistles or the Book of Revelation were the last words is a disputed point with scholars. John is far advanced in years and is spending his last days in Ephesus. He is in the midst of that Gnostic philosophy that Paul refuted in his Epistle to the Colossians. It denied the incarnation of Jesus, that he was very man as well as very God. This heretical teaching did not deny that he actually took upon himself our human nature, a denial of the fact that Jesus came in the flesh, which John brands as the doctrine of Antichrist. He was in a position to speak most positively regarding the humanity of Jesus. He was in his life for three years. He sustained the most intimate relation to him and saw every expression of his human nature. He saw him die on the cross, and these facts will outweigh all the superficial and hazy speculations of Gnosticism. John declares in the most positive manner, four great truths: the incarnation of Jesus; the fact of sin; the fact of propitiation and pardon; the fact of regeneration.

These four truths may be reduced to two in the analysis of the epistle:

1. The incarnate Christ the ground of the believer's spiritual life, i-ii.
He was seen and heard by the disciples. He was the Light of the world and is the believer's light in which to walk. It is impossible to deny the incarnation and have the spirit and life of Christ.
2. The significance and consciousness of regeneration, iii-v.
Sin and the regenerated life. Christ our Advocate with the Father. Regeneration expressed in love. Love for one another and for God and God's love for us. Faith in the incarnate Christ the ground of the consciousness of regeneration.

II EPISTLE OF JOHN.

This epistle is addressed to the "Elect Lady," but whether by this is meant a church or an individual is not clear, and both views are held

EPISTLES II.

II EPISTLE OF JOHN.

The manner in which she is addressed is strongly suggestive of the view that it refers to an individual. In any case the teaching of the epistle is clear. John had enjoyed her hospitality and speaks in a familiar way of her children. He calls her attention to the existing heresy and warns her against giving it any support. The central truth is accentuated that the true Christian life is grounded in its love for Christ. Such a life is a sufficient safeguard against false teachings. The false teachers and Antichrist are clearly characterized.

III EPISTLE OF JOHN

This epistle speaks of three individuals and a class of individuals. It is addressed to Gaius, but we cannot say with certainty whether it was the Gaius of the city of Corinth (I Cor. 1:14) or another. He had extended to John a Christian kindness, and now John entreats him to do the same for some brethren engaged in missionary work for which they receive no remuneration. The second individual referred to is Diotrephes, who had not only treated John unkindly, but had taken a high-handed position in threatening others if they acted otherwise. John denounces him and expects to do so in person. The third person is Demetrius, whom John commends for his goodness and loyalty.

EPISTLES II.

II THESSALONIANS - (Juniors)

1. About when was this letter written?
 - a. What does it deal with?
 - b. Had the First Epistle spoken clearly on the subject?
 - c. What was the wrong impression under which the believers were laboring?
 - d. What was the result?
2. By what was the Church more greatly confused?
 - a. From what source came this letter?
 - b. Whose name was signed to it?
 - c. What idea did it propagate?
 - d. Upon what was the idea based?
3. How does Paul deal with this situation?
 - a. What does he (Paul) declare must come to pass before Christ will come?
 - b. What is an apostasy?
 - c. What other name have we for the man of sin?
 - d. Do you know who this mystery man will be?
4. About how many times have you read this book through since we began to study it?
 - a. Who were associated with Paul in the salutation?
 - b. were they associated with him in the preparation of any other Epistle? If so which one or ones?
 - c. Was this Epistle written to approve or disapprove these believers for their conduct?
 - d. By whom was it signed?
5. Into how many parts does this Epistle divide?
 - a. State which chapters constitute the different divisions.
 - b. What are the three comings spoken of in our notes under the first division?
 - c. What will the coming of Christ do to the man of Sin?
 - d. Does this refer to the rapture?
6. What is meant by the statement "The day of Christ"?
7. What is meant by the statement "Day of the Lord"?
8. Which one is referred to in Chapter 2, verse 2.
9. What is Paul's request for prayer Chapter 3:1.
10. What is meant by "that the Word of the Lord have free Course and be glorified."

Refer to your Bible in connection with last two questions.

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EPISTLES II. (Juniors)

Test - - Galatians

1. To whom was this epistle addressed?
2. Who were the Galatians?
3. What occasioned the writing of this letter?
4. How did Paul vindicate his apostleship?
5. What doctrine is given most prominence in this epistle?
6. Into how many sections does this epistle divide?
7. Explain the different divisions.
8. Explain the difference between justification and regeneration
Also conversion, adoption and sanctification.
9. What is meant by Judaizing teachers?
10. How did these Judaizing teachers differ from Paul doctrinally?

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EPISTLES II.

"Juniors".

I CORINTHIANS.

1. Of the four great doctrinal epistles, which one are we now ~~studying~~ studying? Name the other three.
2. Where was Corinth located?
What kind of a city was it?
What kind of people were its inhabitants?
3. What called forth this letter?
4. What called forth Paul's treatment of the resurrection?
5. What did Paul consider greater than the Gifts of the Spirit?
6. Explain the four heads under which the subject matter of this epistle may be gathered?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
- optional* 7. Give the general outline of the book
8. What did Paul recommend as a cure for the party spirit that had gotten into the Church?
9. How many messages in tongues are permitted in one service?
Should a message be given when some one else is preaching?
10. How should individuals prepare for the Lord's supper?
What is the penalty for coming to the Lord's table without heart preparation?

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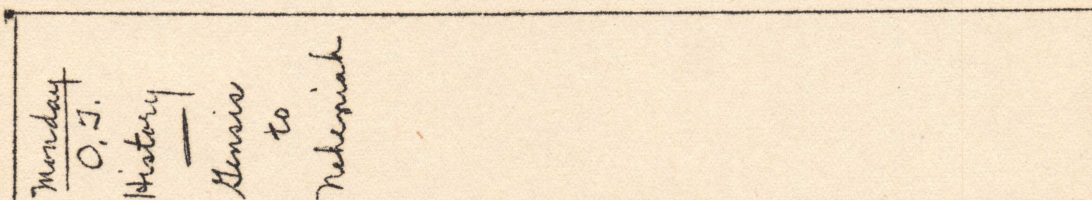
THE "PARALLEL" METHOD
OF PERSONAL BIBLE READING

INTERESTING, VARIED and COMPREHENSIVE

For the purpose of this method of Private Bible Study the Scriptures are divided into Six Sections, as follows:-

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY | Genesis to Nehemiah |
| 2. | " " POETRY | Esther to Song of Solmon |
| 3. | " " PROPHECY | Isaiah to Malachi |
| 4. | NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS | Matthew to Luke |
| 5. | " " " | John, Acts and Revelation |
| 6. | " " EPISTLES | Romans to Jude |

Six strips of stiff paper are then prepared for Bookmarks. Make strips of the following schedule like the illustration and cut out for the six days.



MONDAY	O. T. HISTORY	Genesis to Nehemiah
TUESDAY	N. T. GOSPELS	Matthew to Luke
WEDNESDAY	O. T. POETRY	Esther to Song of Sol.
THURSDAY	N. T.	John, Acts, Revelation
FRIDAY	O. T. PROPHECY	Isaiah to Malachi
SATURDAY	N. T. EPISTLES	Romans to Jude

Each day of the week a portion is read, according to desire and convenience, in the appointed section for the day. When the reader has finished the marker is left there, for continuing at the same place the following week.

In this way the whole of the Bible is being read through continuously, but in six different sections a week. This provides a variety which not only makes Bible reading much more interesting, especially for beginners, but also gives that variety of spiritual diet from the Word of God which is so necessary for preserving balance in appreciation of Scriptural truth. It is an added advantage that no fixed amount is allocated for each day; the reader is free to read either a few verses or many chapters, according to circumstances.

On SUNDAYS THE reader is left free to read at choice.

This method has been tried, and found most helpful, over a period of many years by many preachers, missionaries, and devout believers in every walk of life. Ideal for busy people.