

STEPS THROUGH SCRIPTURE

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by

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COMPANION WITH THIS BOOKLET

The Dispensational Frontier

The New Covenant was made with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

The Mystery was hidden from the ages and from past generations.

We believe both of these statements, and keep them in their true and distinct places in the Divine plan of the ages; in other words we seek to obey the injunction 'Rightly to divide the Word of Truth'.

Acts 28 in this booklet is set forth as a 'Dispensational Frontier'.

Who then is Paul?

Here is given a consideration of the man and his office and especially in relation to his message to us Gentiles, received from our risen and ascended Lord.

The Key of Knowledge.

A brief survey of 'Dispensational Truth', its meaning and implications. Rightly understood, it is verily a key to the Scriptures, explaining apparent contradictions and solving many problems.

The Grapes of Eshcol.

A cluster of peculiar blessings, brought from the high calling of the Mystery, and exhibited to the Lord's people in much the same spirit as prompted the witness of Caleb and Joshua.

Zion, The Overcomer, and the Millennium.

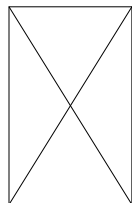
The character and context of the Millennium examined, having regard especially to the association of the Millennium with the Overcomer.

The Eastern Question, or Israel and Egypt in Prophecy.

Movements today in that part of the globe referred to as the 'prophetic earth' must evoke interest in many people who wonder how such events are fitting into the Bible prophecies. Here is no idle speculation, but an unbiased review of relevant passages in Scripture which impinge on the subject.

Acts 13 or 28?

The Epistles of Paul, containing as they do, doctrines peculiar to each epistle, have their link with the chronology of the Acts. It is important therefore to understand whether our calling commenced at Acts 13 or 28. The subject is discussed in this booklet.



Steps Through Scripture

'I do so want to understand the Bible. I have read some chapters in Genesis, some parts of the Gospels, some of the Acts, but there is so much to read and so much that is strange; lists of unpronounceable names, peculiar and almost inexplicable deeds, that I just have to be content with a few well-known and well-loved passages, as Psalm 23 or John 14; yet, I am quite certain such a way of reading is unfair to myself, and quite unfair to the Scriptures themselves'.

Have you ever felt like this? Or have you been approached, as we were by a young believer who could not 'see the wood for the trees'? If so, you might find the present approach a suggestion that will help the earnest reader over this rather formidable barrier, a barrier that largely exists in the mind, because the main outline and general plan of the Scriptures have not been grasped.

Without long preparation or meditation, and immediately after having spoken for an hour on an entirely different Biblical theme - the back of an envelope, a few hurried lines and the following guide for a young believer's reading emerged.

As we have already said, nearly every teacher would favour a different set of books in answer to the problem set before us, and there is no reason why this wonderful Word should not have as many approaches as there are doctrines to learn or failures to admit. Without more ado, therefore, we turn to the first of our readings:

GENESIS

The Hebrew Bible simply lifts the words 'In the beginning' and uses that for the title of this book, and we are indebted to the Greek version of the Old Testament for the title 'Genesis', which obviously is allied to the word 'generation' and the idea of origins.

The believer whom we had in mind when this approach was suggested was one who was much perplexed by the ridicule that fellow science-students poured on the credulity of any one who could possibly accept a book that taught that the universe (with its countless 'suns' and 'systems', its 'light years', its fossils, its geological evidences of deposit and upheaval) was 'created 6,000 years ago', a mere tick of the clock in comparison with geological and astronomical time. The first rejoinder to this, is simply that these so called 'scientific' objectors do not treat the Bible 'scientifically'; they are but attacking what they think the Bible teaches and, as scientists, should be ashamed of their most evident unscientific bias. Let us ask one of these enlightened and superior intellects whether they have ever noticed that the Authorized Version has gone out of its way to use two different types to print the word 'was' in Genesis 1:2, and if not, should not there be some red faces among these scientific objectors whose boast it is that they deal only with observed facts?

These two words are of as much importance to the understanding of Genesis 1 as two sorts of fossils found imbedded in geologic strata would be to the true interpretation of the evidence of the rocks. Speaking simply, 'was' when printed in italics, indicates the verb 'to be' which is not *written* in Hebrew but implied, whereas the word 'was' in ordinary type tells us that the Hebrew verb so translated is the verb 'to become', as for example, 'Man became a living soul' (Gen. 2:7).

However many millions of years or ages are necessary to express the remoteness of 'the beginning', these are all allowed for in Genesis 1:1, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth'; and verse two indicates a geological catastrophe, the last before the reconstruction of the earth for the advent of the man Adam. It is with this man, the purpose of his creation, and the One he foreshadowed, that the Bible is concerned; in other words, the Bible is a book of Redemption.

It is both unscientific and unreasonable to demand that Moses, who was leading a multitude of suppressed and ignorant slaves out of Egypt, should attempt to impose upon them anything more than what would satisfy them as they stood before Mount Sinai, and heard one of the tenets of the covenant there made:

'Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy ... For in six days ... ' (Exod. 20:8-11).

Had this clause not found a place in the terms of the covenant there is no reason why Moses should have said a word about the six days reconstruction of the submerged earth at all, unless as is the case, these days of creation, followed by a Sabbath, sets forth the purpose of the ages. (See booklet by Jack Mills, *Sabbatical Typology*).

The Bible begins with Adam, for he was the first and only man to be created in the image and after the likeness of his Maker. However many and different kinds of *anthropidae* existed before the advent of Adam, there is no evidence to show that 'God breathed' the *neshamah*, 'the breath of life', into any of them, and apart from this 'inspiration of the Almighty' (Job 32:8), early 'men' would simply have been the highest species of mammalia.

With this opening chapter of Genesis, 1 Corinthians 15 and its hope of resurrection stands or falls. It is impossible to believe that Christ is 'The second Man and the last Adam' if there has never been 'The first man Adam'.

'The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit' (1 Cor. 15:45).

The reader will see that unless we are watchful, this booklet will be limited to one book, namely Genesis, and we have nine more to introduce. We therefore pass over all the points that cry out for exposition and draw attention to the following simple lay-out of the book of Genesis. Chapters 1 to 11 cover two thousand years. From Abraham to Christ covers another two thousand years, thus showing the important place given to 'the nation' whose history commences with Genesis 12 and fills the rest of the Old Testament and the bulk of the New. The book itself is divided thus:

Genesis 1 to 11
The Race
Adam

Genesis 12 to 50
The Nation
Abraham

EXODUS

The book of Exodus begins with the word 'Now', which is here not used as an adverb of time, but as a connective, linking the close of Genesis with the opening of Exodus.

The Bible is essentially a book of Redemption. That is why it takes no notice of the ages before Adam, for the redemptive purpose starts with the fall of man and the bondage of the true seed to sin and death as a consequence, and so to his need of a Redeemer.

Just as the opening word *bereishith* 'In the beginning' gives the title to the book of Genesis, so the Hebrew title of the book of Exodus is the words 'Now these are the names'. This is in line with the nature of redemption, as the prophet expresses it:

'Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, *I have called thee by thy name*; thou art mine' Isa. 43:1).

The Greek word *exodus* means 'a way out'. It is balanced by the Greek word *eisodus* 'a way in', which we find in Hebrews 10:19. At the Transfiguration, where the Authorized Version reads 'And spake of His decease which He should accomplish', the word 'decease' in Luke 9:31 is the Greek word *exodus*; and both Moses (Exod. 14:21,22) and Elisha (2 Kings 2:13,14) saw in the death of Christ, the real Exodus or Way out that their own miraculous signs at the Red Sea and at the Jordan foreshadowed.

The book of Exodus falls into two parts, the first part from chapter 1 to the Passover in chapter 12 being 'the way OUT', the second part, focusing attention on the Tabernacle and its sacrificial system on 'the way IN' or to quote the words of Exodus 6:6-8 :

'I will bring you out ... I will bring you in ... '.

Exodus 12, The Passover, demands a study of itself. We can but give a few suggestions:

Exodus 12:1,2. The life of the redeemed commences at the Cross (April *Abib* Exod. 13:4) being six months after the beginning of the year in October 'The first month of the year TO YOU'. Let us not miss the precious lesson implied by the words:

A lamb. *The* lamb. *Your* lamb (Exod. 12:3-5).

Nothing other than the sprinkled blood availed that dreadful night - no pedigree, no promise, no prayer.

‘When I see the blood, I will pass over you’ (Exod. 12:13).

The moment redemption becomes operative the redeemed become ‘pilgrims’ (Exod. 12:11) dressed ready for a journey, so unlike the custom of the Bible lands where sandals are removed, and most certainly with no staff in hand.

Exodus 25, the Tabernacle, and its typical furniture should be read in the light of the doctrine of the Atonement, of Access, of Forgiveness and of Sanctification, that are found in the epistles of the New Testament. As a final word, note Exodus 40:17-38, and the blessed fact that ‘leading’ is intimately associated with the truth involved in the Tabernacle type.

We now lose much, very much, by leaping from Exodus to the prophet Isaiah, but we are sacrificing books of the Bible at every step, and so of two evils we are but choosing the lesser, or the better, for the present purpose.

ISAIAH

This prophet has been called ‘The Messianic Prophet’ for he saw two related and glorious subjects:

- (1) That Israel was a Messianic nation, a distinct channel of blessing to the nations.
- (2) That in ‘Immanuel’ and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, was the only hope for peace to the world and to the individual. In the light of New Testament fulfilment, Isaiah is indeed the Evangelical Prophet.

The disposition of subject matter is as follows:

Isaiah 1 to 35.	Isaiah 36 to 39.	Isaiah 40 to 66.
From ruin to the return of the ransomed (Isa. 1:3-15; 35:10)	Historic interlude. What God did with Sennacherib, He can do at the end of the age	Comfort, restoration and glory, based upon the work of the Redeemer (Isa. 40; 53; 60; 61).

Some parts of Isaiah’s prophecy make difficult reading, especially those chapters that deal with the future of Moab, Damascus, Syria, Ethiopia, Egypt and other nations of the Middle East. These nations are all coming to the fore once again, as the days of prophetic import draw near. Much of ‘the burden’ of these prophetic chapters is the awful judgments that are yet to visit these rebellious nations, but one passage unexpectedly shines out as a jewel in the surrounding corruption, namely the amazing conclusion of the ‘burden of Egypt’:

‘In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land’ (Isa. 19:23-24).

The Voice of Isaiah 6 is associated with Israel’s blindness (see Matt. 13:14,15 and Acts 28:25-27). The Voice of Isaiah 40, is a voice of comfort and restoration (Isa. 40:1-5). It should be observed with becoming reverence and faith, that the ‘Lord’ of Isaiah 6, before Whom even the Seraphim veiled their faces, is the Lord we acknowledge as Saviour today.

‘These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of HIM’ (John 12:41).

We have, in three steps, traversed the story of the Old Testament but at what a cost - for no one book can be dispensed with any more than one link can be taken out of a chain without risk and loss. But space forbids a more lengthy treatment. We have seen Adam in the book of Genesis, the head of the race, bringing in sin and death; and Abraham the father of the nation, chosen by means of his Seed, to bring in salvation. We have seen in the book of Exodus, set forth in the experience of the typical nation Israel.

- (a) Bondage, bitterness and burdens.
- (b) Deliverance through the Passover Sacrifice.
- (c) Access through the Tabernacle ministry.

We have seen in the prophecy of Isaiah, the hope and foretelling of the Coming Deliverer. 'The government shall be upon His shoulder'. He, Who is both the Child born, and the Son given, is also at the same time the Mighty God and the Prince of Peace. His name is most blessedly announced; it is Emmanuel, God with us, and this leads us to the Gospel of Matthew.

THE FOUR GOSPELS

Three gospels, namely Matthew, Mark and Luke are called synoptic, i.e., having a common point of view. John stands alone. The three Synoptics, however, have their own individual standpoint.

- (a) Matthew sets forth Christ as King, the genealogy goes back through David as far as Abraham.
- (b) Mark has no genealogy, it sets forth Christ as the Servant. Even the ascended Christ is represented as 'working with them' Mark 16:20).
- (c) Luke sets forth Christ as the Man, the genealogy goes back to Adam and where Matthew says King, Luke says Saviour (compare Matt. 2:2 and Luke 2:11).

The four Gospels have been likened to the cherubim:

Matthew	The Lion	The King
Mark	The Ox	The Servant
Luke	The Man	The Man
John	The Eagle	The Word

These four-faced creatures meet us in the book of the Revelation where the Authorized Version speaks of 'four beasts'. Space forbids an excursion into the typical meaning of the Cherubim, but the earnest reader will find help in the booklet entitled *The Four Gospels*.

We come therefore without more ado, to the threshold of the New Testament, and take for our next reading:

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Matthew is most certainly the Gospel of the King. The genealogy with which it opens is divided in Matthew 1:1 into two parts (1) The son of David, (2) the son of Abraham. The original son of David was Solomon the King, and the original son of Abraham was Isaac the offering (Heb. 11:17), but in this Gospel, David comes first.

Christ is set forth as 'Born King of the Jews' (Matt. 2:2). In the second section He dies on the cross with the same title over His head. The Sermon on the Mount, while it contains much that every Christian should emulate, was originally a word of comfort to guide those who were looking for the King and the setting up of the earthly kingdom, and who would, during the waiting period, be the object of much persecution and opposition.

The parables of Matthew 13, speak of the Kingdom of Heaven, not as it *will be* when it is set up at the advent of the King, but as it will *lapse* and become during the period of departure and defection that followed His rejection by the people of Israel; these are the *mysteries* or secrets of the kingdom of heaven.

A line can be drawn through the Gospel of Matthew at the sixteenth chapter:

'From that time Jesus BEGAN to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand' (Matt. 4:17).

'From that time forth BEGAN Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day' (Matt. 16:21).

Peter, who had preached the Gospel of the Kingdom with signs following (Matt. 10) had evidently a gospel that we could not preach today - for he knew nothing until the revelation of Matthew 16:21 of the very heart and core of the gospel of grace. His reply to the Lord's revelation was 'Be it far from Thee Lord' and was rebuked as 'Satan' and told that he savoured of men!

The ministry of the Son of God during the period covered by Matthew, was limited to Israel. No amount of 'explanation' can get past the explicit words 'Go not ... but go rather' (Matt. 10:5,6) and to this limitation, Romans 15:8,9 testifies; the blessing of the Gentiles being consequent upon the death of Christ, which does not occur until the end of the Gospel record.

While therefore Matthew's Gospel is a part of 'All Scripture which is given by inspiration of God', like the bulk of the Old Testament which it in part fulfils, it is primarily occupied with 'the promises made unto the fathers'. Just as the parables of Matthew 13 deal with the mysteries and secrets of the kingdom of heaven, so, after the revelation of Matthew 16:21, the next set of parables deal with service in the absence of the Lord. These parables occupy Matthew 16 to 25, the first and the last introduces the word 'reckon, *sunairo*, and the whole set could be covered by the words 'occupy till He come'.

The great prophetic chapter, Matthew 24, speaks of the Second Coming of the Lord to fulfil the prophecies of His Kingship. The Coming of Matthew 24 is tied to Daniel 9 (Matt. 24:15), to the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21) and takes place immediately after the tribulation of those days (Matt. 24:29,30). The 'Church' as is found in Paul's epistles, and especially in Ephesians has no part or lot in this phase of the Lord's Coming. The church most certainly looks for the Saviour, but in different connections and related to a different sphere. In the opening chapter the Saviour is set forth as:

- (1) The Son of David
- (2) The Son of Abraham
- (3) The Son of Mary
- (4) Whose name was 'Jesus', for He was sent to be a Saviour
- (5) But Who was Emmanuel, God with us (Matt. 1:1,20,21,23).

The Gospel of Mark omits the genealogy and stresses 'service'. The Gospel of Luke takes the genealogy of the Saviour back beyond David and Abraham, to Adam (Luke 3:38). It would take us too far afield to attempt to set out the distinctive features of Luke, as compared with Matthew, so we must mount another stair and give attention to:

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

This Gospel, according to Irenaeus, was written from Ephesus, and this statement is repeated by Eusebius and by Jerome. The date of the Gospel is usually assigned to about A.D. 90. The words of John 1:11 :

'He came unto His own, and His own received Him not'

seem to demand that John wrote his Gospel after the rejection of Israel in Acts 28, and in John 12:39,40 he quotes Isaiah 6:10 as does Paul in the last chapter of Acts.

That John had Gentile readers in view is evident:

- (1) No Jew needed the word 'Rabbi' interpreted (John 1:38)
- (2) No Jew needed the word 'Messiah' interpreted (John 1:41)
- (3) No Jew needed the word 'Cephas' interpreted (John 1:42)
- (4) No Jew needed to be told about the feud between the Jews and the Samaritans (John 4:9)
- (5) No Jew needed to be told that the feast of Dedication was in winter (John 10:22), any more than a book published in England would say 'It was Christmas Day, and it was winter'.

The limitations of Matthew 10:5,6 and 15:24 do not apply here. The world, not Israel, is John's parish in this latest Gospel record. The dispensation of the Mystery, consequent upon the blindness of Israel (Acts 28:25-28) had intervened, and John, while not writing a word about the Church which is the Body of Christ, or intruding into the stewardship of Paul, can speak of things that Matthew could not. The main issue of John's Gospel is LIFE (John 20:30,31). What is the peculiar character of the calling of those who thus receive 'life through His name', is not revealed, but there is much to warrant believing that during this present period, two dispensations are running together, the inner one, the Mystery, the outer one dealing with the salvation of 'whosoever believeth'.

Whereas Matthew employs the word *dunamis* mighty work, or miracle, John uses the word *semeion* sign. It is wonderful to note that the Gospel that is most explicit in setting forth the Deity of Christ, begins and ends with exceedingly lowly 'miracles', i.e., the provision of wine at a village wedding (John 2:1-11) and the call to 'come and dine' (John 21:12-14); while the central act of this Gospel is that record of humility, where, in full view of the fact that 'His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father' (John 13:1) :

'He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded' (John 13:4,5).

The Psalmist saw that the greatness of God was not merely that of overwhelming splendour, but of unspeakable condescension:

'Thy gentleness (condescension, humility) hath made me great' (Psa. 18:35).

However great the attraction that this Gospel has upon the believer, we must move on in our outline studies, and so come to the Acts of the Apostles.

THE ACTS

By comparing the opening verses of Luke's Gospel with the opening of the Acts we learn that:

- (1) Luke is the writer of both.
- (2) The words 'Of all that Jesus began both to do and teach' suggest that in the Acts we have a continuance of what the same Lord did and taught, only, this time, no longer the lowly Saviour on earth, but the exalted Son of God at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

The 'Acts' proper, begins with Acts 1:15, the first fourteen verses being a résumé of the closing scenes of Christ's earthly ministry as recorded in Luke 24. There in Acts 1:3, we learn that during the forty days that intervened between the Resurrection and the Ascension, the Lord had spoken to the disciples 'of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God'. Referring back to Luke 24:44,45, we learn two things:

- (1) The Lord traversed the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures;
- (2) He 'opened ... their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures'.

In the light of this statement of the Word of God, we must repudiate the suggestion sometimes made, that the question of Acts 1:6 was an 'apostolic mistake'. In like manner, the appointment of Matthias has been labelled another 'apostolic mistake' (Acts 1:15-26), but *this* involves the Spirit of Truth, for Matthias was baptized with the Holy Ghost immediately after his appointment (Acts 2:1-4). If Matthias, being 'numbered with the eleven' proves that he was not one of the 'twelve', then Peter 'standing up with the eleven' puts him outside the twelve too, which is absurd (Acts 1:26; 2:14). The restoration of Israel and the earthly kingdom is the burden of Acts 3:19-26 and hinges upon Israel's repentance. The Acts of the Apostles registers a movement, which can be set out as follows:

Geographical movement	(1) Jerusalem	(2) Antioch	(3) Rome
Ethnological movement	(1) Jew	(2) Jew and	(3) Gentile

Associated message (1) Restoration (2) Reconciliation (3) Rejection

Precedence (1) Sent (3:26). (2) Sent (13:26). (3) Sent (28:28).

A brief word only can be given to elucidate this analysis.

The geographical movement needs no proof. It is patent to all readers. The ethnological movement deals with the nation, and the nations. At the first, the message is to and concerned with 'Jews only'. Those who attended the Levitical feast of Pentecost were 'Jews ... out of every nation under heaven' (Acts 2:5) and Peter addresses his hearers on that day as 'Ye men of Israel'. Even after the stoning of Stephen and the dispersal that followed, those who travelled as far as Cyprus and Antioch preached 'the word to none but unto the Jews only' (Acts 11:19). At Antioch under the ministry of Paul, the Gentile is included:

'Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God' (Acts 13:26).

That these were Gentiles, who are denominated 'whosoever among you feareth God' is made plain by the context (Acts 13:42,46-48), and the report given at the close of this Antiochian ministry, concludes with the words:

'How He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles' (Acts 14:27).

After the all-day conference with the chief of the Jews at Rome, and after the quotation of that passage in Isaiah 6 of such dreadful import, the Apostle declared:

'The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles' (Acts 28:28).

This passage is unique, for nowhere, since the call of Abraham in Genesis 12 unto this moment in Acts 28:28, has any Gentile ever been called or saved independently of Israel. As our Saviour said to the woman of Samaria 'salvation is of the Jews'.

The word 'sent' occurs in each of these divisions of the Acts, for no change can take place apart from the Divine commission.

SENT

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) First to Israel. | 'Ye are the children of the prophets ... Unto you first God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you' (Acts 3:25,26).

'It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles' (Acts 13:46). |
| (2) Then to both Israel and the Gentile. | 'To you is the word of this salvation sent' (Acts 13:26). |
| (3) Finally to Gentiles only. | 'The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it' (Acts 28:28). |

It is a fundamental mistake, and one of far reaching effects, to believe and teach that 'The church began at Pentecost'. A church, perhaps, but not *the* church which is the Body of Christ, as revealed in the epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. The hope of Israel persists throughout the book (Acts 1:6; 3:19-21; 26:6,7; 28:20). The miraculous signs of Mark 16:17,18 are seen not only at Pentecost, but in Acts 28:1-10. Such spiritual gifts belong to the period covered by the Acts, but have no place in the present dispensation of the Mystery.

During the Acts, the apostles and ministers of the Circumcision wrote seven epistles, namely, 1 and 2 Peter; 1, 2 and 3 John; James and Jude. During the Acts, Paul also wrote seven epistles, namely, Galatians; Hebrews; 1 and 2 Thessalonians; 1 and 2 Corinthians and Romans. In these epistles there are fundamental doctrines, true for all times and dispensations, such as 'All have sinned and come short of the glory of God' which is as true under the present dispensation of the Mystery as it was in the early ministry of Paul, or in Old Testament times. 'The Jew first' however *was* true at the time of writing, but is not true today, for Israel is now temporarily set aside by God. Perhaps the most important of these epistles of Paul is the one to the Romans, but it does not seem right to attempt to crowd into the space available an examination of its wonderful contents. We have therefore suggested the epistle to the Galatians, which, like Romans, stresses the doctrine of Justification by Faith, as the epistle to be read by a young believer first.

GALATIANS

It may strike the reader at first as strange, that while the ostensible reason for writing this epistle was to enforce the doctrine of justification by faith apart from the works of the law, that the Apostle should occupy so much space (Gal. 1:1-23; 2:1:15) in establishing his own independent Apostleship and demonstrating the distinct Apostleship of himself and Barnabas to the Uncircumcision or Gentile, over against the Apostleship of Peter, James and John to the Circumcision. Yet so has the inspiring Spirit ordained.

The opening verse is a challenge:

'Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ' (Gal. 1:1).

The key words are 'not, neither, but', which are repeated in verses 11,12, which refer to the Gospel, and in verses 15-17, which refer to the Apostle's commission. The whole passage is as follows:

- A 1:1-5** Paul's APOSTLESHIP *Not* from men
Neither through man
But through Jesus Christ
- B 1:6-10** No change in gospel - 'Ye have received'
- A 1:11,12** Paul's GOSPEL *Not* according to man
Neither from man, nor by
teaching
But by revelation of
Jesus Christ
- B 1:13,14** His past attitude - 'Ye have heard'
- A 1:15-17** Paul's AUTHORITY *Not* flesh and blood
Neither apostles
But into Arabia
- B 1:18-24** His present attitude 'They had heard'.

One of the special features of this epistle to the Galatians is the place given to the cross by Paul. It at first sounds incredible to be told that 'The Cross', the Greek word *stauros*, is never used by Peter, either in the Acts or in his epistles, although he does use the verb *stauroo* 'crucify' in Acts 2:36 and 4:10. Peter, being the minister of the Circumcision, avoids the Roman 'cross' and uses the Hebrew 'tree' when he speaks of the Saviour's death:

'Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree' (Acts 5:30).

'Whom they slew and hanged on a tree' (Acts 10:39).

'Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree' (1 Pet. 2:24).

In the epistle to the Galatians, *both* aspects of the death of Christ are exhibited, and the death by hanging on a tree as one under the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13), the Hebrew punishment, is placed side by side with the death of the cross, the Gentile punishment, so that the sins of *all men* may find their expiation in that one Offering.

It is in this epistle to the Galatians that we meet for the first time, the doctrine of the believer's identification 'with Christ':

'For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God' (Gal. 2:19).

and then the Apostle to show how he died to the law, and how he could live unto God, by saying:

'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me' (Gal. 2:20).

This emancipating work of the cross is further understood by the word translated 'redeem' in Galatians 3:13 and 4:5. It is the Greek word *exagorazo*, 'to buy out of the market', which has especial reference to redeeming a slave with the intent of granting him his freedom. The words of 1 Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23 'Ye are bought with a price' use the Greek word *agorazo*, the very words that were used for the manumission of a slave, as can be seen in the inscription of 200-199 B.C. on the polygonal wall at Delphi:

'Apollo the Pythian *bought* from Sosibus of Amphissa ... *for freedom ... with a price*'

the full text of which can be seen in Deissmann's *Light from the Ancient East*, page 327.

The Apostle conveys his teaching very forcibly, by employing a series of antithetical statements, which we set out as follows:

GALATIANS

A 1:1 to 2:14 The Apostle's authority. 'Though an angel from heaven'.

FAITH v. WORKS **a** Jerusalem Bondage

b Circumcision not compelled

c Persecution for Gospel

B 2:15 to 4:12

CROSS v. LAW

d I am crucified with Christ

e Not I but Christ

f Redeemed from curse

g Covenant and adoption

A 4:13 to 6:10 The Apostle's infirmity. 'As an angel of God'.

SPIRIT v. FLESH **a** Jerusalem Free

b Circumcision availeth nothing

c Persecution for the cross

B 6:11-16

CROSS v. WORLD
creature

d I am crucified to the world

e Not circumcision but new

f Peace

g Israel of God

A 6:17,18 The Apostle's marks in his body

GRACE and SPIRIT Benediction and signature

(see 2 Thess.

3:17).

Another word that is illuminated by the customs of the time is the law of adoption, Galatians 4:5, the custom being referred to in Galatians 3:15. This precious result of redeeming love is repeated in Romans 8:15,23 and in Ephesians 1:5. It is also the special privilege of Israel according to the flesh (Rom. 9:3-6).

HEBREWS

The need for the epistle to the Galatians arose out of the controversy set out in detail in Acts 15, and the Apostle may well have taken the opportunity to write this letter to his brethren according to the flesh. Peter acknowledges in 2 Peter 3:16 that Paul had written at least one letter to them, and admitted that there were things therein that were

'hard to be understood', Greek *dusnoetos*, even as in Hebrews 5:11 Paul confessed that there were some things about which he desired to speak that were 'hard to be uttered', Greek *dusermeneutos* (Heb. 5:11).

Regarding the evidences contained within the epistle to the Hebrews, the following points of resemblance should be considered:

- (1) Quotations from the Septuagint version. In Hebrews 10:30 and in Romans 12:19 the author of the two epistles quotes Deuteronomy 32:35. Upon examination these quotations differ, both from the Hebrew and from the Septuagint, but are *word for word* alike in the two epistles (in the Greek).
- (2) Certain particles, small words that betray a person far more than lengthy words, are found only in Hebrews and Paul's other epistles. These and a list of Greek words used by Paul as the writer of the Hebrews which cannot be listed here, may be found in Vol. 36, pages 189,190 and Vol. 38, pages 84-88 of *The Berean Expositor*.
- (3) The reference to Greek games, 'the race', 'the fight', and the peculiar comment on 1 Corinthians 15:26-28 and Hebrews 2:5,8,16, indicate the same author.
- (4) The reference to 2 Thessalonians 3:17,18 'so I write' when compared with the ending of Hebrews, practically settles the matter of authorship (Grace ... with you, in every epistle).

However, we are more concerned with the contents of the epistle than the human author, whosoever he may be.

We take the opportunity here of showing the extreme value of discovering the 'structure' of any book of the Bible, for thereby we can perceive the 'scope' of the writer.

Hebrews opens with the statement 'God hath spoken' (Heb. 1:1,2). It is echoed in Hebrews 2:2,3 'spoken by angels'; 'spoken by the Lord'. The intervening subject matter stresses the superiority of the 'Son' to Prophets, of the 'Lord' to angels. We read of others who 'spoke' in the chapters that follow, but we are arrested at the reference in Hebrews 12:25 because it is a most evident allusion to chapter two:

'See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they ESCAPED NOT who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven'.

Here the Apostle is most evidently resuming the theme of chapter two:

'How shall we ESCAPE, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord' (Heb. 2:3).

So far, so good, but we remind ourselves that 'one swallow does not make a summer' and thus we continue our investigation. In chapter 13 the Apostle seems to sum up Christian ministry under the heading:

'Who have spoken unto you the word of God' (Heb. 13:7).

We can tentatively record our findings thus:

A Hebrews 1 & 2. The word spoken, the Prophets, the Son.

* * *

A Hebrews 12 & 13. Him, and they that speak the word.

If these are indeed the opening and closing members of the underlying structure, there will be confirmation in the context. These soon emerge:

'Thou remainest. Thou art the same' (Heb. 1 and 2).

'Things that remain, Jesus Christ is the same' (Heb. 12 and 13).

'How escape if neglect. Not escape if refuse' (Heb. 2 and 12).

'Bring in again the first Begotten' (Heb. 1).

'Brought again from the dead' (Heb. 11 and 13).

The matter now passes from the possible to the certain. We have the opening and closing members of the structure confirmed to us. We seek further and are struck with the alternations that are brought forward in chapters 6 and 10:

‘Let us GO ON unto *perfection*’ (Heb. 6:1).

‘We are not of them who DRAW BACK unto *perdition*’ (Heb. 10:39).

These two headings commend themselves at once, and we soon discover that they are supported ‘up to the hilt’ by their contexts. ‘Let us ... come boldly’ is answered by ‘let us draw near’ (Heb. 4:16; 10:22).

Let us now assemble our material, and see the structure of

HEBREWS AS A WHOLE

A 1:1 to 2:18	THE WORD	Thou <i>remainest</i> . Thou art the same
	SPOKEN	How escape? Bring the First begotten
B 3:1 to 6:20		Let us come boldly
		Examples of unbelief
	ON TO	Perfect v. Babes
	PERFECTION	No renewal unto repentance
		Senses exercised
C 7:1 to 10:18		Crucify afresh the Son of God
		<i>But this Man</i>
	PERFECTION	No perfection in priesthood,
	WHERE FOUND	law, ordinances, sacrifices
		<i>But this Man</i>
B 10:19 to 12:25		Let us draw near
		Examples of faith
	BACK TO	Sons v. Firstborn
	PERDITION	No place for repentance
		Discipline exercised
A 12:25 to 13:25		Trod under foot the Son of God
A 12:25 to 13:25	HIM THAT	Things that remain. The same.
	SPEAKETH	Not escape. Brought from the dead.

The examples of unbelief of chapter 3 are gloriously answered by the examples of faith in Hebrews 11. In chapter 5 we have ‘babes’ set over against ‘full grown’, but in chapter 12 we have ‘sons’ over against ‘firstborn’. That dreadful passage which has caused so much anxiety to sensitive souls, ‘no renewal unto repentance’, finds its explanation in the corresponding section of the epistle in Esau who ‘found no place for repentance’, and which shows us that the fear in chapter 6 was not the loss of salvation but of birthright and the firstborn’s position.

The two foci ‘Perfection’ or ‘Perdition’ must now be given attention, for if we are wrong in our apprehension of their respective meanings, we shall necessarily miss the argument of the whole epistle. The English word perfect is made up of *per* ‘through’ and *facio* ‘to do’, and from this *facio* comes our word ‘fact’. So the English word suggests the salutary idea of ‘making a doctrinal truth an experimental fact’. The Greek word ‘perfection’ is *teleiotes*, one of a number of words derived from *telos* ‘the end’. The fundamental conception in all the variants of this word *teleios*, *teleioo*, *teleiotes*, *teleiosis*, to say nothing of compounds made with *apo*, *ana*, *en*, *epi*, *dia* and *sun*, is that of taking whatever is in hand or in view to a finish or conclusion.

(1) ‘Perfecting holiness’ (2 Cor. 7:1).

Of all subjects, the one that cannot conceivably be ‘improved’ must be holiness, and without the context, such an expression to ‘perfect’ holiness seems to be more senseless and impossible than it would be ‘to paint the lily or to gild the rose’. If however we observe the context of this exhortation, we shall see that *practical* sanctification is in view. Not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, is to ‘perfect holiness’, to remember that if we are looked upon as the temple of the living God, there can be no possible agreement with idols, and with the promise attached to the separation from any unclean thing, the Apostle says ‘Having therefore these

promises, dearly beloved, let us CLEANSE OURSELVES from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, PERFECTING HOLINESS in the fear of God' (2 Cor. 7:1). Perfecting, making what is yours by gift, grace and reckoning 'a fact', per-fect, in other words taking sanctification to its logical conclusion.

- (2) Perfection is sometimes placed over against 'the beginning'. Hebrews 6:1 urges the believer to leave the *arche* 'the word of the BEGINNING of Christ', and to go on unto the goal, the end, the conclusion, 'perfection'. So, in Hebrews 12:2 the 'Author' the Greek *archegos*, is placed over against the 'Finisher' or 'Perfecter', *teleiotes*. This emphasizes the presence in all words dealing with perfection of the root *telos* 'the end'.
- (3) 'The perfect' is sometimes used to indicate an adult, as over against the immaturity of the babe:
 'Ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age (*teleios*)' (Heb. 5:12-14). The connection between this passage and the opening exhortation of Hebrews 6 is plain. In Ephesians 4:13,14 we have the perfect man placed over against children, and 1 Corinthians 2 and 3 with its use of 'perfect' and its 'babes', its 'milk' and its 'meat', is another evidence that the writer of Corinthians wrote the epistle to the Hebrews.
- (4) The figure of a race or contest uses these words. Hebrews 12:2 just quoted, associates the 'finisher' with running 'the race' (Heb. 12:1), and Paul, who in Philippians was running for the prize of the high calling in view, confessed that he was not at that time 'perfect', is permitted in his last epistle to realize that he had touched the tape, saying:

'I have fought a good fight (*agona*) "race"':

'I have finished (*teleo*) my course'.

'I have kept the faith, henceforth ... a crown' (2 Tim. 4:7,8).

The alternatives in Hebrews are 'going on unto perfection' or 'drawing back unto perdition' and we must not so interpret 'perdition' as to leave in the mind that the alternatives are 'going on unto *salvation*' or of 'drawing back to *eternal punishment*'. The former word 'perfection' with its associated meanings, influences the application of the latter word 'perdition' with its associated warnings. Perdition (Gk *apoleia*) = 'waste' (Matt. 26:8).

We have seen the scope of this epistle set out in the structure and have some idea of the meaning of the alternatives set before the reader. We must now return to the opening chapter to learn what encouragements are offered and what warnings given to accomplish the twofold purpose of these exhortations. We close the present study with a comparison. What the Sermon on the Mount is to the calling of the kingdom on earth, and what Hebrews is to the calling of the Jerusalem which is above, so Philippians is to the high calling of the Mystery. In each we have the alternations Perfection or Perdition (Matt. 5:48; 7:13^{*}; Heb. 6:1; 10:39 and Phil. 3:12,19^{*}) together with Reward or Prize. It will therefore be a fitting close to the present study if we exhibit the extraordinary literary correspondence that exists between Hebrews and Philippians.

HEBREWS		PHILIPPIANS	
Things accompanying salvation	6:9	Work out salvation	2:12
Heavenly city	11:10; 12:22	Citizenship in heaven	3:20
Reproach	11:26; 13:13	Fellowship of sufferings	3:10
Reward	10:35; 11:26	Prize	3:14
The race set before us	12:1	I press toward the mark	3:14
Leaving ... let us go on	6:1,2	Forgetting things behind	3:13
Obtain a better resurrection		Attain unto an out-resurrection	
(condition attached)	11:35	(condition attached)	3:11

* A.V. destruction = *apoleia* = perdition

Power of His resurrection	13:20	Power of His resurrection	3:10
Work in ... His will	13:21	Work in ... His will	2:13
Christ the Image	1:3	Christ the Form	2:6
Angels worship Him	1:6	Every knee bow	2:10
Thou, Lord, in beginning	1:10	Jesus Christ is Lord	2:11
A little lower than angels	2:9	No reputation ... He humbled Himself	2:7,8
Cross endured for the joy and used as an example	12:1,2	Cross suffered ... wherefore ... exalted ... Let this mind be in you	2:5,9
Crucify to themselves afresh	6:6	Enemies of the cross of Christ	3:18

PERFECTION (6:1; 10:39)		or	PERDITION (3:12,19)	
Fight of afflictions (<i>athlesia</i>)	10:32	Strive together (<i>sunathleo</i>)	1:27; 4:3	
Discernment	5:14	Discernment ... differ	1:9,10	
Look diligently	12:15	Mark them that walk	3:17	
Esau ... for one morsel of meat sold his birthright	12:16	Whose God is their belly	3:19	
That generation - tempted God in the wilderness	3:7-10	Perverse generation ... without murmurings	2:14,15	
Be content with such as ye have	13:5	Whatsoever state ... content	4:11	
Communicate	13:16	Communicate	4:14,15	
With such sacrifices well-pleased	13:16	Sacrifice ... sweet smell ... well pleasing	4:18	
Fruit of righteousness	12:11	Fruit of righteousness	1:11	
Compassion in bonds	10:34	Partaker in bonds	1:7	
Whose faith follow (<i>mimeomai</i>)	13:7	Be followers together of me (<i>summimetes</i>)	3:17	
Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods	10:34	Let your moderation be known unto all men	4:5	
You have in heaven an enduring substance (<i>huparchonta</i>)	10:34	Our citizenship is in heaven (<i>huparcho</i>)	3:20	
Salutation from Italy	13:24	Salutation from Caesar's household	4:22	
Paul's sign manual	13:25	Paul's sign manual	4:23	

EPHESIANS

Here we commence by saying:

'Ephesians, the epistle written by Paul the Prisoner after Israel were set aside at Acts 28, and became *lo-ammi* "Not My people" (Hos. 1:9) directly ministers to that church, the Body of Christ, under the terms, not of a new covenant, but of "the dispensation of the mystery" (Eph. 3:9 R.V.)'.

To those who have seen that Acts 28 is the dispensational boundary, the epistle to the Ephesians is what the Magna Carta is to English freedom. There, the member of the Body of Christ learns the nature and sphere of this high calling, and with this epistle as his standard he can freely range all Scripture, receiving blessing and illumination from Law, or Prophets, from Psalm or Gospel, yet without confusing the various callings or robbing others of their own peculiar blessings. Let us first of all see the structure of the epistle, and then seek to discover some of its distinctive teaching. Upon examination, it will be found to divide itself up into two main portions, chapters 1 to 3:13 being mainly DOCTRINAL, chapter 4 to 6 being mainly PRACTICAL, the whole pivoted as it were upon the great central prayer, chapter 3:14-21, and the word 'worthy' of Ephesians 4:1.

The epistle to the Ephesians has seven sections of Doctrine, seven corresponding sections of Practice, and a central section devoted to Prayer that leads up to 'All the fulness of God'.

DOCTRINE 1:3 to 3:13

(1) THE THREEFOLD CHARTER

(1:3-14)

- (a) The Will of the Father
- (b) The Work of the Son
- (c) The Witness of the Spirit

(2) THE THREEFOLD PRAYER

(1:15-19)

- (a) That ye may know - Hope
- (b) That ye may know - Inheritance
- (c) That ye may know - Power

(3) THE THREEFOLD UNION

(1:19 to 2:7)

- (a) Quickened together
- (b) Raised together
- (c) Seated together

(4) THREE WORKS

(2:8-10)

- (a) Not of works
- (b) We are His work
- (c) Unto good works

(5) THREEFOLD PEACE

(2:11-19)

- (a) Far off nigh - Peace
- (b) Two made one - Peace
- (c) He came and preached -Peace

(6) THREEFOLD UNION

(2:19-22)

- (a) Citizens together
- (b) Framed together
- (c) Builded together

(7) THREEFOLD EQUALITY

(3:1-13)

- (a) Heirs together
- (b) Members together
- (c) Partakers together

PRACTICE 4:1 to 6:20

(1) THREEFOLD

EXHORTATION

(4:1-6)

- (a) Walk worthy of calling
- (b) Forbear in love
- (c) Keep the unity

(2) THREEFOLD MEASURE

(4:7-19)

- (a) The gift of Christ
- (b) The fulness of Christ
- (c) The measure of every part

(3) THREEFOLD APPLICATION

(4:20-32)

- (a) Put off old man
- (b) Put on new man
- (c) Put away the lie

(4) THREEFOLD WALK

(5:1 to 6:9)

- (a) Walk in love
- (b) Walk as light
- (c) Walk circumspectly

(5) THREEFOLD STAND

(6:10-13)

- (a) Stand against Devil
- (b) Withstand evil day
- (c) Stand, having 'worked out'

(6) THREEFOLD EQUIPMENT

(6:14-18)

- (a) Girdle and breastplate
- (b) Shoes and shield
- (c) Helmet and sword

(7) THREEFOLD PRAYER

(6:19,20)

- (a) Open mouth
- (b) Speak boldly
- (c) As I ought

THE CENTRAL PRAYER (3:14-21)

- (a) That He would grant strength
- (b) That ye may be able to comprehend

(c) That ye might be filled unto all the fulness of God.

We have called Ephesians 1:3-14 'the charter of the Church' because it includes some of the distinct features that make this Church a unique company in the Scriptures. One way in which the teaching of Ephesians 1:3-14 can be set before the eye of the reader is to take the recurring word 'according' as the pivot, and make a simple alternation as follows:

A Eph. 1:3 BLESSING

B Eph. 1:4 PURPOSE 'According as He chose us'

A Eph. 1:5 PREDESTINATION and SONSHIP

B Eph. 1:5-8 PURPOSE 'According to the good pleasure of His will'

A Eph. 1:9 REVELATION

B Eph. 1:9,10 PURPOSE 'According to His good pleasure'

A Eph. 1:11 PREDESTINATION and INHERITANCE

B Eph. 1:11-14 PURPOSE 'According to purpose ... will'.

This fourfold revelation of blessing beyond compare is interlinked with four statements of purpose, immutable grace, irreversible will, unfaltering counsel, and unalterable purpose.

The sphere of blessing that pertains to the Church of the One Body is not the new earth, neither is it the heavenly Jerusalem, but 'heavenly places' 'where Christ sits' 'far above all principality' (Eph. 1:3; Col. 3:1; Eph. 1:21). This church was chosen in Christ *before* the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4), whereas the early callings of the New Testament are all dated as '*from* (or *since*) the foundation of the world'. There are but three passages which use the word 'before';

(1) With reference to Christ alone:

- (a) 'Thou lovedst Me *before* the foundation of the world' (John 17:24).
- (b) 'As of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained *before* the foundation of the world' (1 Pet. 1:19,20).

(2) With reference to the Redeemed:

'Chosen us in Him *before* the foundation of the world' (Eph. 1:4).

REVELATION

Genesis tells us of the creation, the Serpent's deception, the loss of Paradise, the forfeiture of the right to the tree of life, the entrance of sin, death and the curse. *Revelation* tells us of the new creation, the end of the Serpent's deception, the restoration of Paradise, the right to the tree of life, and the blessed fact that there shall be 'no more death' and 'no more curse'. *Genesis* three contains in a brief statement the great prophecy concerning the Seed of the woman, and the seed of the Serpent. *Revelation* shows us in fuller detail the final and complete fulfilment of this basic prophecy.

Coming to the New Testament we find in the opening book, the Gospel of Matthew, a striking and obvious connection between this Gospel of the Kingdom and the Revelation. Matthew presents us with the coming of the 'Son of man' in lowliness, finally showing us His rejection by Israel as their King, His head crowned with thorns, and the Gentile successor of Nebuchadnezzar's dominion preferred to the King of God's appointment.

The Revelation has an answer to this, just as it had an answer to all that was said in *Genesis*.

It is not until the seventh angel sounds his trumpet that:

'the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets ... And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever (unto the ages of the ages)' (Rev. 10:7 and 11:15).

One item more: 'The Day of the Lord' (Rev. 1:10) and the prophetic period of the Book.

'I came to be in spirit in the day of the Lord, and I heard behind me a loud voice as of a trumpet' (Author's translation).

Verse 9 tells us that John *came to be* in Patmos for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ; verse 10 tells us that he *came to be* 'in spirit' in the day of the Lord, and verse 11 completes the parallel by saying, 'What thou seest, write in a book'.

There are four occasions where John tells us that he was 'in spirit', viz., Revelation 1:10 he became in spirit in the day of the Lord; in 4:2 he became in spirit, and saw the throne in heaven; in 17:3, he is carried away into a desert in spirit to see the woman sitting on the scarlet beast; and in 21:10, he is carried away in spirit to see the Holy City. When John is to be taken to a desert or a mountain he is 'carried away in spirit', and when he is transported into time, 'the day of the Lord', or to the future heavenly sphere, he writes, 'I became in spirit'.

We must now say with the apostle 'But time would fail me' for our space is well nigh filled. We conclude this attempt to display the general purpose of the Scriptures, and to help the reader in his early approach to the Sacred volumes by providing a pictorial outline of the Book of the Revelation as a whole.

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