

41

MARK

Mark's inspired record of the life of Jesus, the Son of God, the one who came to heal, to serve, and to teach an urgent message.



John Mark was the son of Mary, the sister of Barnabas. He went with Paul and Barnabas on their preaching mission to Cyprus (Acts 13:4,5). He was well known to Peter who called him his “son” (1 Peter 5:13) and may have been the “young man” referred to in 14:51.

Four Views of Jesus

An interesting connection has been made between the four Gospels and the four faces of the “living creatures”, or cherubim, of Ezekiel’s prophecy (1:10; compare 10:14,15). Just as those faces each had the four-fold likeness of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle, so the four Gospels, while offering a full portrait, present characteristically different views of the Lord Jesus Christ. The lion is a fitting symbol to represent Matthew’s view of the ‘King’; the ox corresponds to Mark’s view of the ‘Servant’; the human face relates to Luke’s view of Christ the ‘Man’ (often called “Son of Man”); and the eagle is a fitting image for John’s lofty portrayal of the “Son of God”.

Thus Mark shows Jesus as the one who *served*. It is noteworthy how many miracles of healing and other acts of service are found in this short book:

nearly 20 are recorded in chs 1-10. It is also significant how Mark emphasises Jesus’ *closeness to the people*—mingling with them, speaking personally to them, and especially touching those to whom he ministered.

Urgent News

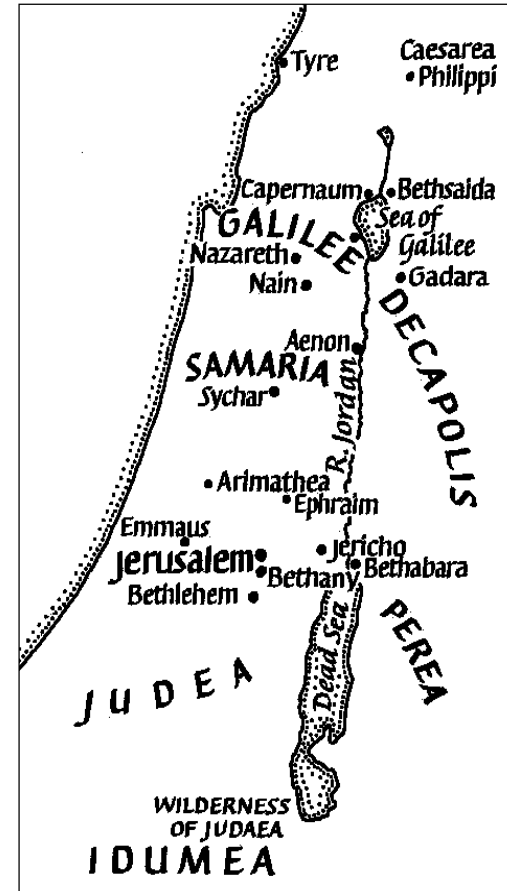
Mark’s 16 chapters are crisp and to the point! The message is simple and urgent. The last chapter gives only a brief account of the resurrection of Jesus—the vital thing was to “go into all the world and preach the gospel” (16:15).

“And they were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.” (7:37)



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>For example:</i> | <i>Compared with:</i> |
| a) Mark 10:45 | a) Philippians 2:7 |
| b) Mark 12:29 | b) Deuteronomy 6:4 |
| c) Mark 16:16 | c) 1 Peter 3:21 |





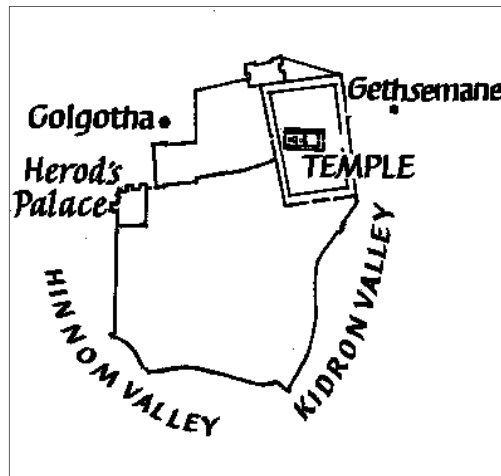
LUKE

42

Events in the life of Jesus, set out in order, showing him as the Son of man, the Saviour and coming King over Israel and all nations.

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

(1:32,33)



Luke’s account shows the ministry of Jesus, literally and spiritually, to be a journey “up to Jerusalem”

The Birth of the Saviour

Luke, a doctor, addresses his account to the “most excellent Theophilus”. He records names, places and events with meticulous care, showing Jesus as both Son of God and Son of man, descended from Adam (ch 3). His birth in Bethlehem was announced by the angels as “good tidings of great joy” to all (2:10).

Jesus was also proclaimed by an angel as the heir to the throne in Jerusalem where David once ruled (1:32,33). He will bring peace and goodwill toward men (2:14). But first Jesus had to become a Saviour from sin. Luke portrays Jesus as a man of prayer and records how he “steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem” and the cross (9:51; 17:11; 19:28,37,41,45).



Temple and City

Jesus foretold that the Temple and the city of Jerusalem would be overthrown—yet he would return as King in a time of “distress of nations” (21:25-28).

God’s Messengers—The Angels

Note the references in Luke to angels: 1:11-19,26-38; 2:9-15; 4:10; 22:43; 24:4,23. When angels were seen they always looked like men. They did not have wings!

A Real Resurrection

The resurrection of Christ was a bodily one. Luke records some of the meetings of the risen Lord with his disciples, including his appearance to two disciples as they walked to the village of Emmaus, west of Jerusalem (24:13-35).

After his resurrection Jesus had “flesh and bones”—a real body (24:39)—and he ate with his disciples (24:41-43).



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

<i>For example:</i>	<i>Compared with:</i>
a) Luke 1:32,33	a) 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Isaiah 9:6,7
b) Luke 17:26,27	b) Genesis 6:1-7; 7:1
c) Luke 21:27	c) Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7

43

JOHN

John portrays Jesus as the divine Son of God and points to the spiritual meaning of the miracles and sayings of Jesus.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (1:1)

The Beloved Disciple

The writer of this fourth Gospel of the Kingdom was John, brother of James, and son of Zebedee, a Galilean fisherman. Jesus called him to be one of his closest followers. He is described in this Book as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”, showing how much John appreciated what Jesus stood for (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7,20).

Miracles as Signs

John focuses on certain miracles of Jesus and calls them “signs”. They underline the authority Jesus had as the Son of God. They also serve as reminders of our need for healing from spiritual sickness and blindness (5:1-9; 9:1-12).

The Exalted View

God used John to reveal lofty truths about Jesus, “the word made flesh” (1:14). The exalted, soaring “eagle” aspect of Christ was noted earlier (page 58). More than any of the other evangelists (Gospel writers), John recorded the Lord’s wonderful discourses on deep spiritual themes with his ‘inner’ group of disciples—lessons, for example, on “the bread of life”, “the living water”, “the good shepherd”, “the true vine” (chs 6; 7; 10; 15).

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have have life through his name.” (John 20:30,31)



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) John 1:14
- b) John 3:14,15
- c) John 17:3

Compared with:

- a) Isaiah 40:5; 2 Peter 1:17
- b) Numbers 21:9
- c) 1 Corinthians 8:6; 1 Timothy 2:5



Events in Judea

Most of John’s record is concerned with events in Judea, rather than Galilee. Chs 7-11 belong to the last few weeks, and chs 12-21 to the last week of Christ’s ministry!

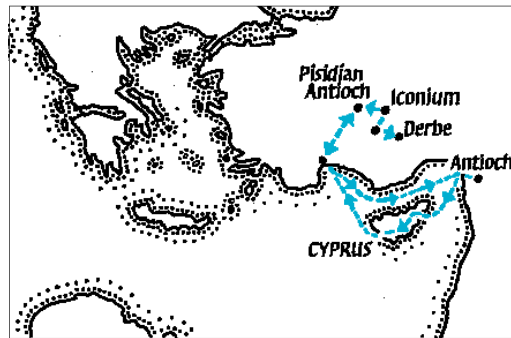


The first of the “signs” recorded by John: changing water into wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee (ch 2)

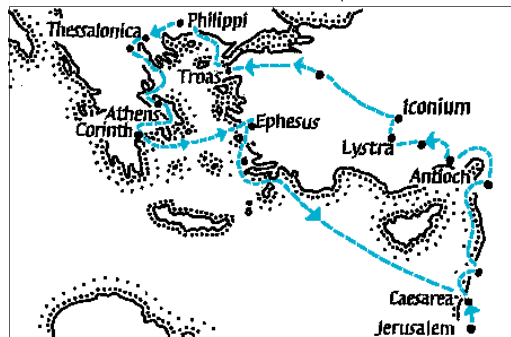
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

44

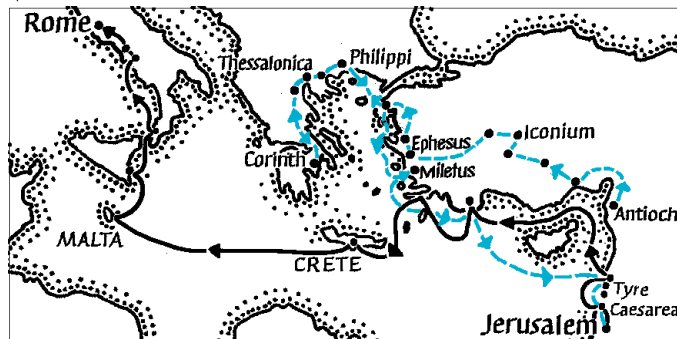
Luke's second book, also addressed to Theophilus, records how believers in Christ separated themselves from Jewish worship and established ecclesias, starting in Judea, and spreading out into Asia Minor, Greece and finally Rome.



1st Journey ↑ ↓ 2nd Journey



↓ 3rd Journey (- - -) and Journey to Rome (—)



The Acts of Jesus ...

Luke reminds us (1:1) that he had previously written—in his gospel record—of “all that Jesus began to do and teach”. After his resurrection and subsequent ascension to heaven, Jesus was still at work in the spread of the gospel.

... and his Followers

Chs 2-12 show how, with God’s power (the Holy Spirit), Christ’s apostles, first of all Peter and John, and then other followers such as Stephen and Philip, so effectively preached the gospel in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria that thousands “believed and were baptized” (2:41,47; 5:14; 11:24). In Jesus’ name the apostles also performed miracles.

Their message always concerned “the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ” (8:12; 19:8; 28:23,31). It was a message rooted in Old Testament history and God’s promises to the fathers of Israel. But it was now based on the work of Jesus Christ and not the rituals of the law of Moses. Moreover, it was a faith open to Gentiles as well as Jews.

Die-hard Jews (‘Judaisers’) opposed the preaching of this gospel; even among Christian converts there were some who wanted to combine their new faith in Christ with adherence to Jewish practices.

Apostle to the Gentiles

Paul, an educated Jew, had once been a zealous persecutor of Christ’s followers. He was converted after seeing a vision of the risen Christ on the road to Damascus. Having believed and been baptized, he became Christ’s appointed “apostle to the Gentiles” (Galatians 2:8). His three missionary journeys—preaching campaigns in Asia and Europe (see maps)—and his subsequent voyage to Rome are vividly related in chs 13 to 28.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <i>For example:</i> | <i>Compared with:</i> |
| a) Acts 3:22; 7:37 | a) Deuteronomy 18:15 |
| b) Acts 1:3; 3:21; 8:12; 28:31 | b) Mark 1:14; 11:10; Luke 11:2 |
| c) Acts 17:31 | c) Psalm 96:13; Daniel 7:27; Revelation 11:15 |

Roman Provinces and Regions of the 'Diaspora'



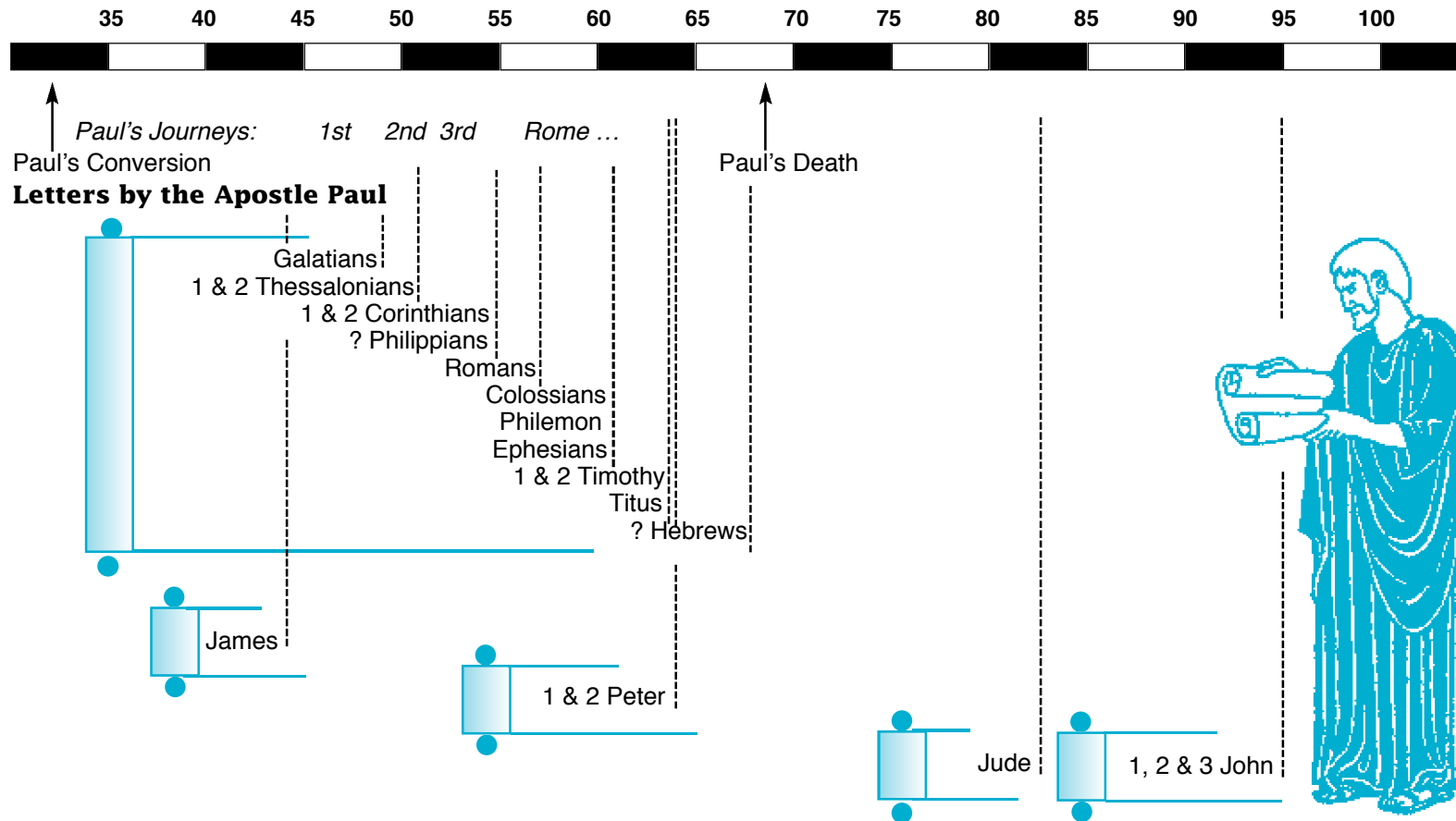
As the Gospel spread, and ecclesias were established throughout the Roman world, communication became important. The apostles wrote letters to specific ecclesias, or to groups of ecclesias: **Galatians**, for example, was sent to the group of ecclesias in Galatia; **James** was sent to Jewish believers scattered in lands of the 'Dispersion' or 'Diaspora' (James 1:1); **1 Peter** and **2 Peter** were sent to "the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1 Peter 1:1).

LETTERS SECTION

*“To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ
which are at ... Grace be unto you, and peace,
from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Books 45-65

Introduction to the LETTERS SECTION



*"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."
(1:16)*

ROMANS

45

Paul writes to the believers at Rome, setting out the vital principles of salvation through faith in God's promises centred in Christ.

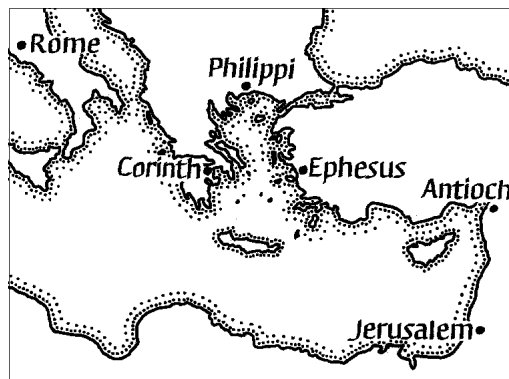
The Believers at Rome

This letter, written with the help of Tertius on behalf of the Apostle Paul (16:22), was sent from Corinth during Paul's third missionary journey.

Paul hoped to come to Rome (15:22-29) but when he came, it was as a prisoner to await trial before the Emperor Nero (see Acts 28:17-20).

Romans is Paul's magnificent summary of the way God's righteousness is shown in the death of Christ; how salvation, by grace, is dependent on faith not works; and that it is open to Gentiles as well as Jews.

With the fulfilling of the law of Moses,



some were asking, "Hath God cast away his people?" (11:1).

With obvious emotion, Paul points out that the Jews, if they believe, are most certainly still within God's purpose—"to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants ... and the promises" (9:4). Using the symbol of an olive tree, Paul shows how some of the "natural" branches (Israel) had been broken off, and "wild shoots" (Gentiles) grafted in—but he adds that the natural branches can still be grafted in again. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness" (11:22).



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| a) Romans 2:5-10;
14:10-12 | a) 2 Corinthians 5:10;
2 Timothy 4:1 |
| b) Romans 3:4 | b) Psalm 51:4;
Luke 18:19 |
| c) Romans 6:3-4 | c) Acts 22:16;
Galatians 3:27 |

Contents of the Letter

Ch 1: Jesus "declared to be the Son of God, by the resurrection from the dead" (1:1-4). Man is "without excuse" (1:20).

Chs 2,3: All men and women are sinners in need of a Saviour, and subject to judgement, whether they are Jews or Gentiles.

Chs 4,5: Righteousness—"peace with God"—is offered to us by faith in Jesus Christ.

Chs 6-8: The new life in Christ, following adult baptism; the bondage of the Jewish Law compared with the freedom in Christ.

Chs 9-11: God chose Israel, and the covenants and promises are still associated with them; but Gentiles and Jews can now both be sharers in the same Hope.

Chs 12-15: Practical instructions for those living the new life in Christ; the problems of being surrounded by a godless world.

Ch 16

Final messages to the believers at Rome.

46

1 CORINTHIANS

A letter dealing with problems which had arisen at Corinth, and reminding believers of the principles which should govern God's 'household'.

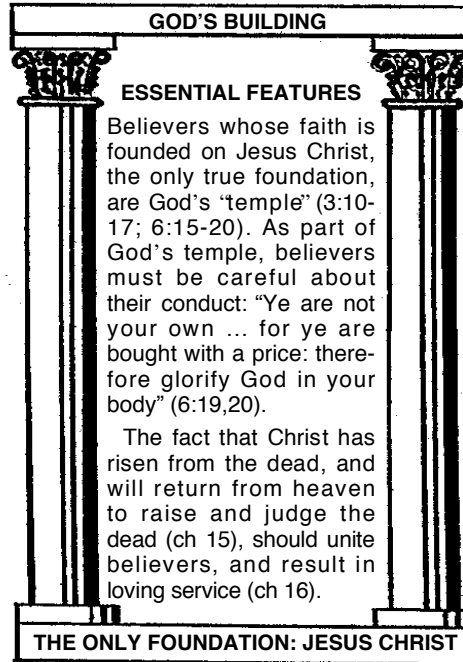
Corinth ecclesia was established by Paul during his second missionary journey (see map on page 61)—there had been a warmer response to the Gospel here than in intellectual Athens. Paul wrote this whilst at Ephesus, during his third journey.

Believers with Problems

In a decadent pagan city like Corinth, it was not surprising that problems would arise: personality factions (1:12-16; 3:1-6), living in a world which boasted of its wisdom (1:17—2:16), idolatry (chs 6,8,10), doctrinal heresies (11:19), and serious moral problems (chs 5-7). The authority of the apostles was being questioned (chs 4, 9). Paul reminded the believers of the basis of their common salvation and of the need to put their house in order.

Phrases like “Now concerning ...” tell us that the letter is responding to questions which the Corinthians had raised (7:1,25; 8:1,4; 12:1; 16:1). There were misunderstandings about the memorial service (‘last supper’ or ‘breaking of bread’) (10:14-22; 11:20-29); and about ‘spirit gifts’ received from God (chs 12-14). Some had been given God’s power (the Holy Spirit), enabling them to perform miracles, make inspired utterances, etc.

But such gifts were temporary and were to cease once the Bible had been completed (see 13:8-10). In any case, more important than gifts such as the ability to speak in tongues, or work miracles, were qualities like faith, hope and love—“and the greatest of these is love” (13:13).



"Now if Christ is preached that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen ... And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ has risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (15:12,13,17-20; NKJV)

In ch 15 we have a masterly summary of the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and clear teaching about the resurrection of faithful believers at Christ's return. The above quotation proves how essential resurrection is to the Christian Gospel.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

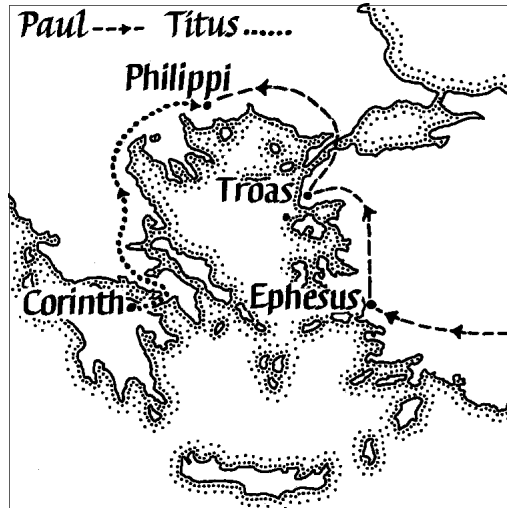
<i>For example:</i>	<i>Compared with:</i>
a) 1 Corinthians 1:27	a) Psalm 8:2; Isaiah 66:2; Matthew 11:25
b) 1 Corinthians 3:11	b) Isaiah 28:16; Ephesians 2:19-22
c) 1 Corinthians 15:20	c) Mark 16:14; Acts 1:3; 17:31

“Be perfect ... be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you” (13:11)

2 CORINTHIANS

47

Another letter to believers at Corinth, stressing the need to be resolute, despite all opposition, as they try to live the new life in Christ.



“I wrote with many tears”

Between the two letters to Corinth, there must have been another which has not been preserved in our Bibles—evidently even more severe in tone than the first epistle (see 2:3,4). In this ‘second’ letter, Paul admits his great relief that, according to news brought to Philippi by Titus (see map), the ‘in-between’ letter had been well received (see 7:6-15).

Though Paul is reassured about the spiritual development of the Corinthian believers, there was still much for them to learn. They had to learn that discipleship of Christ is not easy, and that all true believers must expect opposition (4:7-18).

Suffering for Christ

In Corinth, opposition would mainly come from those who had leanings towards Judaism. The ‘Judaisers’ would insist that believers are bound by the Law of Moses. The reader is shown that the Law was only of a *temporary* nature, whereas those things which have to do with Christ are *eternal* (see chs 3-4).

Objections by those who refused to acknowledge that Paul was a true Apostle are answered in several parts of this Letter. In ch 11, Paul defends his apostle-

ship and lists some of the sufferings he had already endured for the sake of Christ.

All believers can expect persecution if they stand up for the truth. But there will be a Day of Judgement, at which true and faithful followers will be recognised by Christ (5:10).



*Coin referring to Isthmian Games at Corinth
(see 1 Corinthians 9:24,25)*

Collection for the Needy

During his journeys, Paul collected money from the various congregations he visited, to help the poor believers in Judea. In this letter (chs 8 and 9; see also 1 Corinthians 16:1-3), he encourages the Corinthian believers to give heartily to this fund: “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give ... for God loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

<i>For example:</i>	<i>Compared with:</i>
a) 2 Corinthians 4:6	a) Isaiah 40:5; John 1:14; 17:4
b) 2 Corinthians 6:18	b) Jeremiah 31:9; Revelation 21:7
c) 2 Corinthians 11:3,4	c) Galatians 1:8; 1 John 2:24

48

GALATIANS

A letter to a group of ecclesias in Asia Minor insisting that there is only one true Gospel based on God's promises to Abraham, which are inherited by faith in Christ.

Galatian 'Ecclesias'

During the 1st missionary journey Paul established a number of 'ecclesias', or assemblies, in Galatia, which was the First Century name for what is today central Turkey (see map). He visited them again on later journeys (see Acts 13-18).

The One True Gospel

Sadly, the Galatian believers were very soon influenced by Jewish elements ('Judaisers') who wanted Christians to continue observing the law of Moses. Paul reminds them of the need to keep to the one true Gospel—which no longer required rituals such as circumcision. His words still apply: "If any one is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:9).

Christ or 'The Law'?

But although Jewish *practices* have been done away in Christ, the Jewish *promises*—God's covenant with Abraham in particular—are still valid. We are asked to follow the example of Abraham, the man of faith: he pleased God by *believing* Him (Genesis 15:6). We too can only be "reckoned (or accounted or credited) righteous" by *faith* in God's promises, through Christ.

Heirs of the Promises

God promised Abraham and his "seed" an eternal inheritance of the Land of Promise (Genesis 13:15). The "seed" here spoken of was Christ (3:16): by becoming associated with him, we too become heirs of the promises God made to Abraham (3:29).

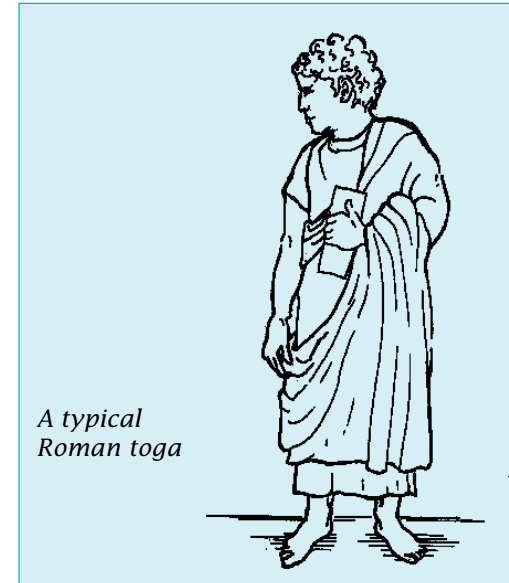
Those who believe the promises and are baptized into Christ change their way of life, curbing their fleshly passions (5:15-21) and cultivating "the fruit of the Spirit" (5:22,23). They have "put on" Christ (3:27) and are thus covered by his righteousness. Paul may well have had in mind the practice of the time when a young man would 'put on' a toga—an outer garment worn by adult Romans—to mark the change to manhood.

**Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible***For example:*

- a) Galatians 2:16
- b) Galatians 3:16
- c) Galatians 3:27

Compared with:

- a) Acts 13:38,39;
Romans 8:3
- b) Genesis 13:15
- c) Romans 13:14



A typical Roman toga





An Ephesian coin showing the Temple of Diana

Although apparently addressed to “the saints which are at Ephesus”, the name of the city is omitted in some manuscripts: so this may have been a circular letter for Ephesus and other ecclesias in the vicinity.

A Holy Temple

The people worshipped idols, the most important being Diana (called Artemis by the Greeks), whose temple was at Ephesus. Followers of Christ are called to a greater Temple—formed of *believers*, both Jews and Gentiles. This Temple, when completed, will be greater than even the Jewish Temple at Jerusalem!

Built on the foundation of the teachings of God’s Word, through the apostles and the prophets of the past, with Jesus Christ as “the chief corner stone”, this Temple will become a dwelling-place for God Himself! (2:20-22).

The Unity of the Faith

Unity is a key theme of this Letter. The barrier between Jew and Gentile has been broken down by Christ (2:14), and all true believers have become one in him; and they are united in agreeing on the basic doctrines of their faith—summarised in 4:4-6 (and set out in the table).

Ch 5 includes a beautiful portrayal of

EPHESIANS

Paul’s letter to believers at Ephesus and elsewhere, calling them to a united life in Christ, as part of God’s exalted purpose.

49

ONE BODY	True believers
ONE SPIRIT	God’s power
ONE HOPE	Eternal life
ONE LORD	Jesus Christ
ONE FAITH	The promises
ONE BAPTISM	Adult immersion
ONE GOD	The Father

marriage, drawing out the spiritual parallel with “Christ and his church” (v 22-33).

The Armour of God

The letter gives sound practical advice on how believers are to live, putting off the “old man” and putting on “the new man” (4:22-24); by their actions they will witness to Christ.

Though raised to a high status (called “heavenly places”), they still have to fight against sin, being protected by “the whole armour of God” (6:10-17).



A Roman Soldier—Ephesus



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) Ephesians 1:22
- b) Ephesians 2:8
- c) Ephesians 2:12

Compared with:

- a) Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 10:17
- b) Romans 3:24; 6:23
- c) Acts 11:18; John 10:16

50

PHILIPPIANS

A warm letter to a faithful ecclesia showing the need for the unity in Christ: the warfare against sin, and the ultimate joy of salvation.

A Colony of Heaven

Philippi was a prosperous Roman colony in Thrace, at the northern end of the Aegean Sea (see map).

Here, the first “ecclesia” in Europe was established during Paul’s Second Missionary Journey. Contrasting with the idea of a colony of Rome, the ecclesia is seen as a ‘colony of heaven’, whose members are citizens of a heavenly kingdom (see 3:20).

When he wrote this letter, Paul was a prisoner in Rome (as he had once been in Philippi, Acts 16:25). Yet he rejoices that his imprisonment had worked out “unto the furtherance of the gospel”—he was able to witness to his guards (1:12-18).

Unity in Christ

The Philippians are encouraged to “stand fast ... with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (1:27). United in fellowship, “having the same love”, they are “of one mind”; and they are to be concerned for each other’s needs, imitating the example of Christ (2:1-5).

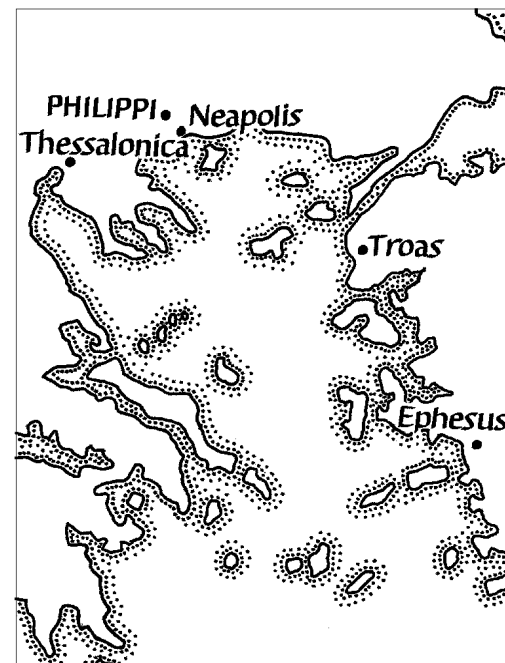
Though he was the Son of God, Jesus behaved as a servant and was “obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”.

As a result, God raised him from the dead and has “given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow ... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (2:6-11). Paul looked forward to the resurrection of the dead, made possible by Christ’s sacrifice (3:10-12).

Think on These Things

The Philippians are to follow the example of the Lord and of the apostles (2:22,29; 3:17) and be examples to others (4:5), showing forth the qualities named in 4:8. In a city where poverty and riches existed side by side, the epistle reminds believers of the true riches of the Gospel (4:19).

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” (4:8)



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) Philippians 2:9
- b) Philippians 3:14
- c) Philippians 3:20

Compared with:

- a) Acts 2:33; Hebrews 2:9
- b) 2 Timothy 4:7,8
- c) Acts 1:11; 3:20,21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16

COLOSSIANS

51

Paul counters heresies appearing amongst the believers at Colosse. He shows that neither Judaism, nor philosophy, can save; but only commitment to Christ.



The Ecclesia at Colosse

When Paul spent three years at Ephesus (Acts 20), the Gospel spread inland to such towns as Laodicea and Colosse (see map).

While Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he learned from Epaphroditus (1:7) of problems which had arisen among believers at Colosse. So he sent this Letter via Tychicus and Onesimus (4:7-9) to the “brethren in Christ” (1:2), encouraging them to “continue in the faith, grounded and settled” (1:23) and to beware of “philosophy ... after the tradition of men” (2:8).

The main problems at Colosse arose from Judaisers and Gnostics. Paul dismissed those Jews who were still preoccupied with the Law of Moses; with “meat ... drink, or in respect of a holyday”, which are done away in Christ (2:16,17). He also warned against being caught up in Greek notions of angel worship (2:18).

The Head of the Body

The Letter underlines the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ: there are no other intermediaries between God and man, such as the gnostics had invented. God has made His Son the head of all things,

the centre of His purpose (1:16). He is the “head of the body” (the ecclesia) and the first of a new creation (1:18).

We can only be saved through association with Christ. The process begins with belief and by being “buried with him in baptism” (2:12).

Risen with Christ

Baptized believers must continue to follow Christ closely; they must live the new life in Christ (3:1). This will involve “putting to death” old ideas and ways, and “putting on the new man” (3:8-14).

‘Brethren in Christ’ (which is what the term “Christadelphian” means) are called to heed the instructions given in chs 3 and 4, regarding the new life.



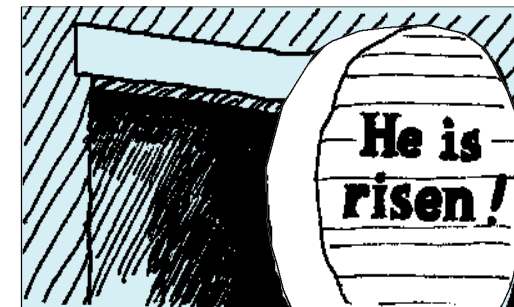
Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) Colossians 1:15
- b) Colossians 2:12
- c) Colossians 3:4

Compared with:

- a) 2 Corinthians 4:4-6; Hebrews 1:3
- b) Romans 6:4-6
- c) 1 John 3:2



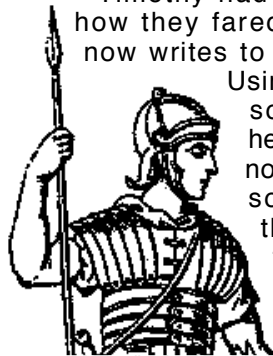
52

1 THESSALONIANS

The apostle Paul encourages and instructs believers as they await the personal return of Jesus Christ.

The Ecclesia at Thessalonica

The apostle Paul established an ecclesia of believers at Thessalonica (see map) during his Second Missionary Journey (Acts 17). The ecclesia thrived, and Paul (writing also on behalf of Silvanus and Timotheus—Silas and Timothy) says: “We give thanks to God always for you ... remembering your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1:2,3).



Timothy had brought news of how they fared (3:6), and Paul now writes to encourage them. Using the imagery of soldiers on watch, he counsels: “Let us not sleep, but ... be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of sal-

The Lord will Descend

Every chapter in this book, written under Divine inspiration, forecasts the return of Christ from heaven to earth (see 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:15,16; 5:2,23).

vation” (5:6-8).

Supposing we die first?

Some believers at Thessalonica had already died, while the rest were hoping that Jesus would return at any moment. The question was being asked, “What about those who have died? Will they participate in the great events associated with his return?”

Paul explains (4:13-18) that believers are not like those who die without hope. They will be awakened from their unconscious “sleep”, at the return of Christ, and will join the believers who are still living at that time. They will be caught up to meet the Lord—to be with him *as he returns to the earth* (not to be taken off to heaven, as believers in the ‘rapture’ claim). Those who are then judged by Christ to have been faithful will become his immortal helpers, to establish God’s



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) 1 Thessalonians 1:10
- b) 1 Thessalonians 2:19
- c) 1 Thessalonians 5:8

Compared with:

- a) Romans 5:9
- b) 2 Corinthians 1:14
- c) Ephesians 6:14-17

2 THESSALONIANS

53

Erroneous Teachings

Since the time of Christ and his apostles, error has crept into the Christian religion. The following are some of the widely held beliefs which the Bible does not support:

1. God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit form a 'trinity'.
2. Man has an 'immortal soul'.
3. Evil and temptation are the work of a supernatural 'devil'.
4. The Kingdom of God is in heaven.
5. The wicked will be punished in eternal hell-fire.
6. God has no further purpose with Israel.
7. Interpretation of Christian faith must be left to 'priests'.
8. Holy Spirit 'gifts' help believers to understand the Bible.
9. Infant sprinkling will suffice for baptism.
10. Believers can fight for their country.

Positive Bible doctrines are given, with Scripture sources, in the "Summary of Bible Teaching" on page 90.

Paul was a tent-maker: he still worked at this trade, when he could, so as not to be a burden on others (see Acts 18:3; 20:34; 1 Thessalonians 2:9)

Paul again comforts the Thessalonians, saying that Christ will come, but not before there has been a "falling away" from true religion.

Till Christ Comes

This letter (written, like the first, in the names of Paul, Silas and Timothy) corrected the idea that Christ would come in that era. He *would* come, but first there would be a "falling away" from the true teachings of Christ and his apostles (2:3). This apostasy, referred to as the "mystery of iniquity" and "the man of sin" (2:3-12), would continue down the ages until Christ comes to end it (v 8).

Stand Fast

Only the second coming of Christ, which is now imminent, can end this situation! In the meantime, the Thessalonians are praised for their devotion to the things of God, and encouraged to hold fast until the coming of the Lord!



This letter emphasises not only Christ's coming, but also the judgement: he comes "to be glorified in his saints", but also to take "vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (1:5-9).

Faith, Hope and Love

Believers can expect to suffer, but they must maintain the true Faith (beliefs) and Hope (in the coming kingdom) and show true Love, as followers of Jesus Christ (1:3; 3:5). Paul is confident that, though they have members who have been walking disorderly, they will "not be weary in well-doing"; this will bring them "peace" (3:13,16).



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:	Compared with:
a) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10	a) Romans 2:8,9
b) 2 Thessalonians 2:10,13	b) 1 Timothy 2:4; John 17:17
c) 2 Thessalonians 3:6	c) Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10

54

1 TIMOTHY

In the first of the three “Pastoral Epistles”, Paul writes to Timothy, with a reminder of how affairs must be guided in the assembly of believers and of the need for sound doctrine.

Paul’s “Son in the Faith”

The apostle Paul met the young man Timothy at Lystra. Timothy had a Greek father and a Jewish mother and grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5). He became a faithful helper in the work of preaching the Gospel. Paul treated him as a son (1:2), training him for the on-going work of shepherding the flock.

Timothy was entrusted with the work of guiding the believers at Ephesus, and needed advice on holding fast to the one true faith, and countering the influence of false teachers (1:3; 6:3).

The Importance of Doctrine

Paul’s words to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:17-31) were already coming true, and “grievous wolves” were at work in the ecclesia, “not sparing the flock”. The vital need for the ecclesia to keep to the original teachings of Christ and the apostles is stressed (1:3,19; 4:6,13,16; 6:3,20). Drawing on the images and language of his times, Paul uses many military, athletic and medical metaphors. He emphasises “*sound doctrine*” using a Greek word which has come down to us in the word “hygiene”—referring to what is ‘wholesome’ or ‘healthy’. “Fight the good fight of faith”

(6:12) may sound like a military metaphor but is actually taken from athletics: the Revised English Bible translates it, “Run the great race of faith”.

Another powerful expression, this time taken from the world of banking, is the “good deposit” (“that which is committed unto thee” in 6:20; “that good thing ... committed unto thee” in 2 Timothy 1:12,14). Paul tells Timothy, and us, that the faith is a precious “deposit” which we are to guard safely.

Missing the Mark

Those who taught false ideas would ‘miss the mark’. This is the literal meaning of

**Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible**

For example:

- a) 1 Timothy 2:5; 6:15
- b) 1 Timothy 6:10
- c) 1 Timothy 6:16

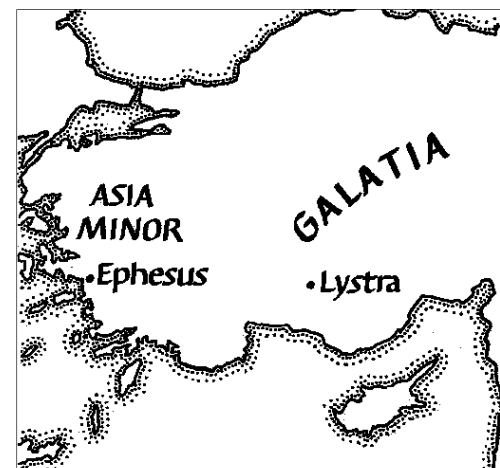
Compared with:

- a) 1 Corinthians 8:6; Isaiah 45:5
- b) Matthew 6:24,25,33
- c) Psalm 49:12; Ecclesiastes 9:5

“There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (2:5)

the original words used in 1:6 (translated “swerved”) and 6:21 (translated “erred”; also in 2 Timothy 2:18). Some of those false teachings are dealt with in this inspired letter. For example:

1. Trinitarian ideas (1:17; 2:5; 6:15)
2. Immortal soul ideas (6:16)
3. Toleration of wrong doctrine (4:7; 5:20; 6:3,4)
4. “Science falsely so called” (6:20)



Timothy, born at Lystra, was appointed as the “bishop” (shepherd) at Ephesus

2 TIMOTHY

55

Paul, nearing the end of his own life, warns Timothy of perilous times ahead—both immediately, and in the last days before the return of Jesus Christ.



This letter, probably Paul's last, was written shortly before his martyrdom at the hands of the Emperor Nero in Rome, about AD 68.

Although Paul had been released after his first trial (his 'crime' was preaching the gospel!), he knew that this time his execution was imminent (see 4:6).

Final Advice

Paul had "fought a good fight" (4:7) and he urges Timothy to stand fast in the true faith, without fear (1:7; 2:1); not to be "ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner" (1:8). Like Paul, he must be "a good soldier" for Jesus Christ (2:3).

Perilous Times

Dangers for the followers of Christ would

not be confined to the First Century. Great perils would come: false teachers arose within the Christian community in those days, but the "last days" before the return of Christ would also be perilous (3:1-7). We need these warnings more than

ever today.

Hope of a Future Life

Paul knew that, although man is mortal, God has offered a "promise of life" (1:1) to all true believers and a "crown of life" when Christ returns, if they have remained faithful. Paul's hope was the "crown of righteousness, which the Lord ... shall give me ... and all them also

"The holy scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (3:15)



The 'stephanos', or victor's crown, given to successful competitors in the Roman Games: "If anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules" (2:5, NIV)



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) 2 Timothy 2:8
- b) 2 Timothy 2:19
- c) 2 Timothy 3:1-7

Compared with:

- a) 2 Samuel 7:12-14; Luke 1:32
- b) Numbers 16:5-7,26
- c) Romans 1:28-31; 2 Peter 3:3,4

56

TITUS

A pastoral letter to another of Paul's "sons in the faith", who had been left to guide the ecclesias in Crete. Paul gives him instruction on how the assembly of believers should function.

Titus was a Greek and, like Timothy, seems to have been a convert of the apostle Paul. In this letter Titus is addressed as "my true child in a common faith" (Titus 1:4; compare 1 Timothy 1:2).

The "common faith" was the true Gospel, preached by the apostles. It is vital that we also hold this, as the letter says.

The Ecclesia in Crete

The assembly of believers in Crete may have been established by some who originally heard the Gospel preached by Peter at Jerusalem (see Acts 2:11). Paul's first visit to Crete was on his journey to Rome, under arrest, just before the shipwreck (Acts 27:7,8). On being released from prison in Rome he evidently visited Crete with Titus, leaving the younger man there (1:5) to "set in order" the ecclesias, "and appoint elders in every city"—there may have been many ecclesias on the island. "Unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers ... heretics" (1:10; 3:10) were threatening to turn the members from the Truth. As in other places, like Galatia, the followers of Christ were in danger of being misled by "Jewish fables" (1:14).

Historically, the Cretans had gained a bad reputation. Even one of their own poets (Epimenides, 600 BC) had called them 'liars' and 'evil beasts', as Paul reminded Titus (1:12). Believers must be different, and 'bishops' (or elders) in particular should show Godly qualities and be free of the vices of the world—see 1:6-9.

Sound in the Faith

As in the letters to Timothy, Paul stresses the need for "sound doctrine" (1:9; 2:1). Believers must "hold fast to the faithful word" (1:9); they must be "sound in the faith" (1:13; 2:2), and set a good example of honesty (3:14).

All these words and phrases show how important doctrine is, as a basis for the Christian life. True beliefs and practices still matter today.

Subject to Authority

The letter to Titus exhorts slaves (of which there were many in those ecclesias) "to be obedient unto their own masters" (2:9); and all believers are "to be subject to principalities and powers" (3:1). The believer today must also respect authority.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

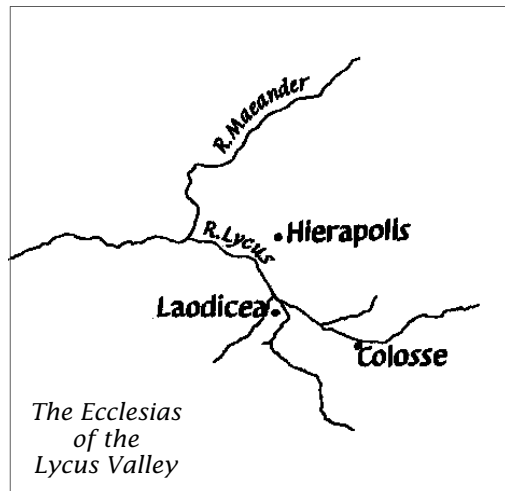
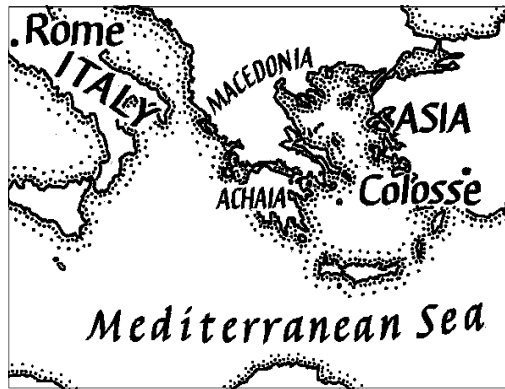
For example:

- a) Titus 1:2; 2:13; 3:7
- b) Titus 2:14
- c) Titus 3:10

Compared with:

- a) 2 Timothy 1:1; Philippians 3:20; Romans 8:24
- b) Deuteronomy 7:7; 1 Peter 2:9
- c) Matthew 18:17; Romans 16:17

“As Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ, I beseech thee for my son Onesimus . . .” (9,10)



PHILEMON

57

Paul’s personal letter to Philemon, about Onesimus—a runaway slave who had become a believer in the true Gospel and was being commended back to his master.

Philemon—the Master

Philemon was a believer belonging to the ecclesia at Colosse in Asia Minor (see map). He appears to have been a wealthy man, for we know that he had at least one slave (called Onesimus).

From Rome, Paul wrote a letter to Philemon, as well as one to Colosse; from that letter to Colosse (4:8) it would appear that Tychicus was the bearer of both letters and that Onesimus accompanied him on his journey from Rome to the Lycus valley. This letter begins by commending Philemon for his faith and love towards Jesus Christ, and his kindness to the believers (v 5).

Onesimus—the Slave

But then the letter appeals to Philemon to



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) Philemon v 3
- b) Philemon v 10
- c) Philemon v 16

Compared with:

- a) Romans 3:24
- b) Colossians 4:7-9
- c) Romans 14:18;
Ephesians 6:9;
Titus 1:1

receive back his slave, Onesimus, who had escaped and run away to Rome. Whilst in Rome, he had met Paul, who had taught him the good news of salvation in Christ. Onesimus (whose name means ‘profitable’) should now be received back (v 16). He had become “profitable to thee and to me” (v 11)—profitable to Paul the prisoner in Rome, to Philemon, and above all to Christ! Philemon will surely have reacted graciously to Paul’s kindly letter, and will have welcomed back Onesimus—not only as a slave but also as a brother.

Who is your Master?

We are unprofitable by nature, but can be received by Christ upon our acceptance of the true Gospel. We have to be willing to obey his commands. It is far better to be a servant of Christ, than a servant of sin (see Romans 6:17). This is true freedom!

Paul asked Philemon to prepare him a lodging in his house (v 22)



58

HEBREWS

A letter to Jewish believers in Jerusalem, probably written by Paul, which stresses the superiority of Christ over the law of Moses and Judaism.

The Supremacy of Christ

This letter to Hebrew believers demonstrates that Jesus Christ is God's final and perfect representative, better and greater in his manifestation of God's nature and purpose than all the patriarchs, priests and prophets who preceded him. He is even greater than the angels!

Christ is greater than ...

The angels — 1:4-14
 Abraham — 7:4
 Moses — 3:3-6
 Aaron (High Priest) — 4:14-15; 8:1-4
 Joshua ("Jesus" in the AV) — 4:8
 The prophets — 1:1-2

Christ—a Better Priest

The writer shows that Christ is of a higher order than the Jewish priests, who were of the tribe of Levi. Jesus was of the royal tribe of Judah, "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood" (7:14). But there was a precedent for this, a 'type' of Christ long before the law of Moses: Melchizedek, the king-priest of Salem (later Jerusalem) (Genesis 14:18-20). Chs 5-7 show how Christ is a "priest after the order of Melchizedek", greater than the priests who were descended from Aaron (5:6; 6:20; 7:1-21). This was

foretold in one of the Psalms of David (Psalm 110:4).

Christ—Better than the Law

The Letter shows how the Law of Moses pointed forward to Christ. Ch 9 tells how he was prefigured in the Tabernacle and its contents; and in the calendar of feasts and sacrifices which Israel had to follow. And what was true for the Tabernacle, the temporary shrine in the wilderness, was also true for the Temple in Jerusalem and its rituals—which the Hebrews were reluctant to turn their backs on.

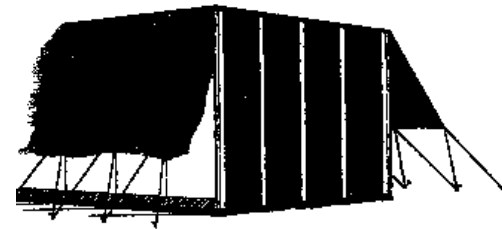
Animal sacrifices (chs 9; 10) pointed forward to a better sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice did away with the need for those sacrifices, and did away also with the need for the Temple and the priesthood.

The Way of Faith

Ch 11 shows that salvation is by faith in God's promises, centred in Jesus Christ. Jesus, though he was God's Son, was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (2:17,18; 4:15). He is a mediator (8:6; 9:15; 12:24) for those who come in faith to ask God's forgiveness. In Jesus there is "a new and living way" (10:20); through him we may "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (10:22).

"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son."

(1:1, NKJV)



The entrance to the Tabernacle in the Wilderness

**Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible***For example:*

- a) Hebrews 2:14
- b) Hebrews 9:22
- c) Hebrews 13:13

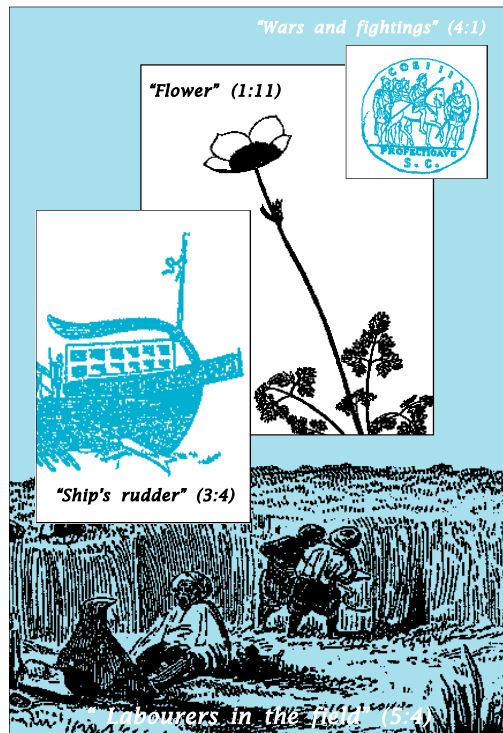
Compared with:

- a) Romans 5:21; 6:23
- b) Leviticus 17:11; Matthew 26:28
- c) Exodus 29:14; 33:7; Numbers 19:2,3

JAMES

59

A practical letter underlining how true brethren of Christ should both speak and act, even under conditions of stress.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:	Compared with:
a) James 1:17	a) Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Malachi 3:6
b) James 2:5	b) Matthew 5:3,5; Revelation 21:7
c) James 5:7-8	c) Hebrews 10:36; 1 Peter 1:7

The Lord's Brother

After Jesus, Mary had other sons, including James—the writer of this Letter. After his resurrection from the dead, Jesus appeared to his followers, who by then included his own brothers (Acts 1:14). James later became the “shepherd” of the flock of believers in the Jerusalem area (Acts 15:13).

Believers Everywhere

The Letter of James was addressed to Jewish believers further afield—those dispersed throughout the Roman world.

It was written to provide help and encouragement in the face of persecution and oppression (1:12; 5:7), but it also teaches the need to put our faith into practice. It is applicable to believers everywhere, in all ages.

Faith or Works?

From the 1st Century AD onwards, there has been debate about which is more important—faith or works. In this Letter we learn that faith (beliefs) should *result* in works (deeds); while works give *evidence* of faith. Both matter!

James gives examples of believers who showed both faith and works:

Abraham (2:21-23)—believed and obeyed God

Rahab (2:25)—showed her belief by helping God’s messengers

Job (5:11)—suffered patiently

Elijah (5:17)—believed, so prayed earnestly

The Mirror of the Word

There is sound practical advice about the curbing of our tongues (ch 3), on the need for humility (ch 4), and on the importance of prayer (ch 5). If we see ourselves as we really are, by looking into God’s Word, and then do nothing about it, we shall not be blessed! See what James says (1:22-25) about this “mirror”.



*“If any one be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a **mirror** ... he goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was” (1:23,24)*

60

1 PETER

Writing to Jewish believers among the ‘diaspora’, Peter proclaims Christ as the Chief Shepherd. True followers must also be shepherds, caring for the flock.

Exiles for Christ

This letter was written to Jewish believers scattered across Syria and Asia Minor (1:1; see map on page 62). Jews had either been deported or had emigrated throughout the Roman world—as far afield as Babylon and Europe. Though many opposed the preaching of Jesus Christ, some responded to the Gospel. All Christ’s true followers are ‘exiles’, looking for the future Kingdom of God. They take no part in the politics of this world; on the other hand, they submit to kings and governors so long as their commands do not conflict with the laws of Christ.

As “strangers” in this world they must maintain their faith patiently until Christ returns, when he will grant a place in God’s kingdom to all who are accepted by God’s grace (1:7-9). Meanwhile, they must be prepared for persecution—those to whom Peter wrote had already experienced suffering (1:6,7; 2:11-23; 4:12-19). In this they were following in the steps of their Master, who “was reviled ... suffered ... bare our sins in his own body on the tree” (2:20-24).

Chosen People

In words once used to describe Israel, the

followers of Christ are called a “chosen people”, a “royal priesthood” (2:9). Christ is the Chief Shepherd, who cares for the sheep, and who even died for them (2:24,25). Believers also must care for the flock, by being good examples and by feeding them with God’s Word (5:2-3).

God’s special people are being prepared as a “spiritual temple” in which God can eventually dwell; Christ is the corner stone of that building (2:4-8). They must endeavour to show God’s ways in their lives (2:9,12).

A Crown of Glory

Those who believe in God’s Word and are baptized (1:23; 3:21) will be granted an eternal crown of life when Christ comes

**Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible**

<i>For example:</i>	<i>Compared with:</i>
a) 1 Peter 1:3,23	a) John 1:13; 3:3; James 1:18
b) 1 Peter 2:9	b) Exodus 19:5.6; Revelation 1:6
c) 1 Peter 3:20,21	c) Genesis 6:5-8; Hebrews 11:7

“God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolises baptism that now saves you also.” (3:20,21, NIV)

Echoes of the Words of Jesus

It is not difficult to see that Peter had been with Jesus Christ: dozens of phrases in this first letter can be traced to sayings of the Master. For example:

1 PETER	GOSPELS
1:4—“Inheritance ... reserved in heaven”	Matthew 6:20
1:10—“Of which salvation the prophets searched diligently ...”	Matthew 13:17
1:23—“Born again ... by the word of God”	John 3:3,5
2:5—“Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house”	Matthew 16:18
4:14—“If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye”	Matthew 5:11
5:2—“Feed the flock of God”	John 21:16



The True Light

The opening verse of ch 3—“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you ...” (3:1)—suggests that the letter is addressed to the same readers as the first letter. Written five or six years later, it tells us that “false teachers” (2:1-3) were threatening to divert the ecclesias from the truth. In the last days, some would even deny the Second Coming of Christ (3:4).

The apostle Peter, inspired by God’s Holy Spirit, proclaimed true teaching, like the prophets of God in Old Testament times (1:21). This letter, meant for believers everywhere, reminds us that God’s Word of prophecy is like a lamp, shining in a squalid world (1:19), to which we need to give careful attention.

Great and Precious Promises

Peter reminds his readers of the “exceeding great and precious promises” (1:4) ... “the words spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of us

2 PETER

61

A warning that false teachers will arise and that God will punish this dark and evil world. However, there will be great blessings for believers, when Christ returns.

the apostles of the Lord and Saviour” (3:2). Faith in these things comes first; then there must be a response (v 5-7), if one’s “calling and election” is to be made sure (v 10).

Eye-Witnesses of his Majesty

Peter was one of three apostles who saw Jesus “transfigured”, while they were with him on a high mountain (see Matthew 17:1-9). In this vision Jesus appeared in glorified immortal nature, as he will be seen in the future kingdom on earth.

The promise that believers might also be made “partakers of the divine nature” (1:4) had been underlined by this incident to which Peter refers (in 1:16-18).

“Where is the promise of his coming?”

Those to whom Peter wrote needed the reassurance that, though the faith was threatened by evil influences, God will judge the wicked and preserve the righteous—just as Noah was saved from the Flood (2:5), and Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (2:6-8).

There were some who were starting to doubt that Christ would return: “Where is the promise of his coming? for since the

fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation” (3:4). Peter assures them: “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise ... The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away ... Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (3:10-13).

Peter and Paul

In the concluding few verses, Peter makes an interesting ‘cross-reference’ to Paul’s epistles (3:15,16)—an incidental confirmation that the apostles knew of each other’s writings.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) 2 Peter 1:19
- b) 2 Peter 1:21
- c) 2 Peter 3:13

Compared with:

- a) Psalms 119:105; Proverbs 6:23
- b) 2 Timothy 3:16; 1 Peter 1:11
- c) Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:1

62

1 JOHN

The Apostle John writes on the twin themes of Truth and Love, in opposition to the false ideas and practices which are put forward by 'antichrists'.

John's epistles were the last to be written: his gospel was probably penned in about AD 85, and these letters between 85 and 95. No recipients are named: this was a circular letter.

Fellowship with Christ

Christ was a reality in the life of the apostle John. Like others, John had seen Jesus, touched him and listened to him, both before and after his death and resurrection. John now wrote of him as "the word of life" (1:1) because belief in him and his teaching could lead to eternal life.

Fellowship "with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1:3) is vital. We need to "walk in the light", that is, be guided by God's Word (1:6,7) if we are to have fellowship with Christ. He is the mediator through whom alone true believers can obtain forgiveness of sins (1:7; 2:2; 4:10). This blessing enables them to walk with Christ and with one another (2:1-6).

The Way of Truth

False teachings were already developing in John's day. Many were influenced by a philosophy called Gnosticism, whose followers claimed special knowledge (Greek

gnosis), contradicting what the Christians had learned about the nature of Christ. John referred to such teachers as "antichrists" (2:18,22; 4:3). They denied that Jesus had come "in the flesh" (that is, having human nature capable of being tempted), because it was inconceivable (in their view) that one who was the Son of God could exist in human form, tainted with evil. This false idea actually paved the way for the later, unscriptural doctrine of the Trinity, which is now believed by most of Christendom.

The truth is that though God was indeed his Father, Jesus could only be a sacrifice for sin, and our "advocate with the Father" (2:1), if he shared our nature.

The Way of Love

Those who believe in the Son of God can themselves become children of God: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God (3:1). "God is love" (4:8) and it was because "God so loved the world" (John 3:16), that He sent His Son into the world, "that we might live through him" (4:9). Such love demands that we show love to others (3:13-23; 4:7-21).

ΕΝ ΑΡΧΗ ΗΝ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ Η
 ΤΡΟΧΗ ΤΩΝ ΝΗΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΟΣ
 ΟΥΤΟ ΧΗΝ ΕΝ ΑΡΧΗ ΤΡΟΧΗ ΤΩΝ
 ΤΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩ
 ΡΕΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΟΥΔΕ ΕΝ
 ΟΓΕΓΟΝ ΕΝ ΕΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΖΩΗ ΗΝ
 ΚΑΙ Η ΖΩΗ ΗΝ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΝΘΡΩ
 ΠΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΚΟΙΤΙΑ ΦΛΙ
 ΝΕΙ ΚΑΙ Η ΚΟΙΤΙΑ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΤΕ
 ΛΑΒΕΝ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΩ
 Σ ΤΑ ΜΕΝ ΟΥΤΑ ΡΑ ΘΥΟΝΟΜΑΥ
 ΤΩΙΩ ΔΑΝ ΗΝ ΟΥΤΟ ΧΑΘΕΝ
 ΕΙΣ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΑΝ ΙΝΑ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΗ
 ΣΗΤΕ ΡΕ ΤΟΥ ΦΩΤΟΣ ΙΝΑ ΤΑΝ
 ΤΕ ΤΙ ΤΕΥΣΩΣ ΗΝ ΔΙΑΥΤΟΥ

The New Testament was written in Greek: this is a sample of text (the first few verses of John's Gospel) in the Alexandrian Manuscript (in the British Museum)

We love God when we believe His Word and keep His commandments. We love others by showing them the way of truth and eternal life (1:2; 5:20).



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:	Compared with:
a) 1 John 1:5-7	a) 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:5
b) 1 John 2:18	b) 2 Thessalonians 2:3; 2 Peter 2:1
c) 1 John 4:12,20	c) John 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:16

2 JOHN

63

The seconde pistle of S. Iohn

T Defeneour to the electe lady
and her children which love in the
truth: And not I only but also all
that have knowe the truth: for the
truthes sake which remaineth in us and shall
be in us forever.

*The beginning of the Letter in
Tyndale's English translation of 1525*

The Beloved Elder

The apostle John was a “disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23). Now, as an “elder” among the believers, he tried to guide them in the way of truth and love, as taught by Jesus.

The Elect Lady and her Children

This second epistle written by John is addressed to “the elect lady and her children” (v 1). The “lady” may have been a particular believer, but we may also think of her as the “church” or “ecclesia” as a whole.

The ecclesia consists of those who are called out by God from dying humanity to become an assembly of baptized believers. If they remain faithful they will eventually be part of the “bride” of Jesus Christ, to reign with him on earth. She will indeed be the Elect Lady; her “children” will be the individual members.

A letter written by the apostle John, showing that those who walk in the Truth and follow its principles are God's true children.

The Importance of the Truth

John was pleased to learn that the “children” were “walking in truth” (v 4). Knowing “the Truth” (the true message of God) is vital. If we do not “abide in the doctrine of Christ” (v 9), we shall not receive eternal life at his coming (v 8).

The Antichrist

In John's day (towards the end of the 1st century AD), false teaching was already being spread within the ecclesias by “many deceivers”. They are called “the antichrist” (v 7). Their false ideas were the start of an apostasy which eventually affected almost the whole of Christendom.

“Receive him not”

True believers are asked to maintain the distinction between truth and error

Today false teachings still abound. For example, most ‘Christians’ fail to accept the Bible teaching that Jesus was of our nature—a nature from which temptation can arise. They think of him as ‘God the Son’ instead of the Son of God who was “tempted in all points like as we are” (Hebrews 4:15).

and not to allow false teachers to enter their “house” (or ecclesia) or to worship with them (v 10-11).

The Love of Christ

The ecclesia of Christ must continue to show true love, Divine Love, by being concerned for the eternal life of others, their fellow believers included (v 5).



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) 2 John verse 1
- b) 2 John verse 6
- c) 2 John verse 7

Compared with:

- a) John 8:32; Galatians 1:8
- b) John 14:15; 1 John 2:5
- c) 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4; Acts 20:30

64

3 JOHN

A letter written by the Apostle John to Gaius, a beloved believer, showing our need to walk in the way of Truth and Love.

To the Beloved Gaius

The apostle John addressed this letter to “the beloved Gaius whom I love in the truth” (v 1). It may be that John had originally taught him “the Truth” (that is, the true gospel), as v 4 perhaps indicates. However, all John’s fellow believers were also “beloved”, having all been recipients of God’s love, shown to them in Jesus Christ.

The Purpose of the Letter

John wrote asking Gaius to look after the preachers of the true gospel who were currently in his area and to attend to their needs. His letter was written under inspiration of God and so has a message for us too. Because of its personal tone and the warm love shown by the writer to the first recipient, this letter is bound to remind us of Paul’s personal and affectionate letter to Philemon (see page 77).

A Good Report

Gaius was already known for his kindness. Some of the believers had reported this to the Apostle. They had confirmed also that he was following “the truth” (v 3). Strangers too had borne witness to his way of life (v 6).

Another faithful believer mentioned in

this epistle was Demetrius (v 12). John wrote that he too had a good report from all men.

For us the message is clear. What we believe and how we live are both vital. If we are faithful to God’s Word we too can obtain “a good report”—from God Himself (see Hebrews 11:39,40).

Self-Importance Condemned

John had previously written to the believers where Gaius lived (v 9). However, a member of the assembly there was being troublesome. His name was Diotrephes. He was a loud-mouthed man, full of his own importance. The letter shows the Divine estimate of such pride.

“No greater joy”

John rejoiced to know that most of the members walked faithfully in truth and love. If we try to live according to God’s

*Wherely beloved counterfaite not thatt wh^{ch}
is euill, but thatt which is good: Set that do
eth well is off God: but he that doeth euill setteth
not God. Demetrius hath good reporte off all
men, and of the truth. We and we our selves
also beare recorde, and yet knowe that our recoz
de is true. I haue many thynges to wryte:
But I will not with pen and yafe wryte
vnto the. For I trust I shall
shortly see the, and we shall
speake mouth to mouth.
Peace be with the
The louers salute the.
Get the louers
by name.*

*The ending of the Letter in Tyndale’s
English New Testament*

Word, this will bring joy, both to Him and to us. There is no greater joy!

Both the Second and Third Letters of John are short. Probably conscious of this, John ends each one by saying that he has more he could write about, but he will come and visit his readers instead: “I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee, but I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face” (v 13,14).



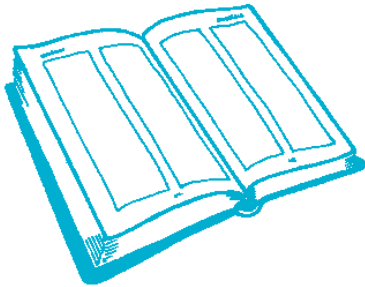
Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) 3 John verse 4
- b) 3 John verse 11
- c) 3 John verse 12

Compared with:

- a) 1 Corinthians 4:15; Philemon verse 10
- b) Psalm 37:27; Amos 5:15; 1 Peter 3:11
- c) Genesis 39:3; Daniel 1:9; Luke 2:52



Jude, Brother of James

The writer of this letter was Jude (sometimes called Judas), the brother of the James who was a step-brother of Jesus. Jesus, Jude, James, Simon and Joseph had all been brought up in the home of Mary and Joseph, at Nazareth in Galilee.

During the ministry of Jesus in Galilee, his brothers did not believe on him, although he was the Messiah and Saviour, being the Son of God and not of Joseph (see John 7:5). After his resurrection, however, they became faithful followers.

Jude, Servant of Jesus Christ

Now Jude wrote as “a servant (slave) of Jesus Christ”. In writing to fellow-believers he says they are “sanctified ... preserved” (v 1). This means that they were set apart, separated and distinct from the beliefs and practices of the world around them. They will be preserved as God’s people, his “saints” through Jesus Christ, if they remain true to their calling. They will look for mercy at the return of Christ if they have been faithful.

JUDE

This short letter reminds believers that there is an urgent need always to keep to the doctrines and practices taught by Christ and the Apostles, as now revealed in the Scriptures

65

The need to contend for the faith

The ecclesia(s) to whom Jude wrote were being undermined by false teachers who had “wormed their way in” (v 4, New English Bible). Jude knew it was urgent to write and remind his readers to “earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints” (v 3, Revised Version). The language is very similar to 2 Peter 2.

He reminded his readers of Old Testament examples of false teachers and of the judgements reserved for such (v 5-15). Against such apostasy true saints, such as Enoch (v 14), had spoken out.

The Importance of the Truth

The need to keep to the original gospel as taught in the Scriptures is underlined in this letter. It is particularly apt, coming as it does almost at the end of the Bible. Those who guard the truth and try to live

*“Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints”
(v 3)*

by its principles can look for mercy and eternal life at the time of Christ’s return. They will form the faultless “Bride” to be presented in that day (v 24).

Judah, Man of Praise!

Jude’s name can also be written as Judah — a name which means ‘praise’. It is fitting, therefore, that the letter ends in a doxology of praise: “To the only wise God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen” (v 25).

To give God glory and praise is the ultimate purpose to which God’s saints are called.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) Jude verse 3
- b) Jude verses 9,23
- c) Jude verses 24,25

Compared with:

- a) Philippians 1:27; 1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 1:13
- b) Zechariah 3:2,4
- c) Romans 16:25-27; Acts 20:32

Some New Testament People

Of several hundred names in the New Testament, a selection is given below

THOSE MARKED WITH AN ASTERISK ARE MENTIONED IN THE GOSPELS

Agrippa	Herod Agrippa II (Acts 25)	Joseph (1)*	Husband of Mary (1)	Peter*	Simon, an Apostle
Ananias (1)	Husband of Sapphira	Joseph (2)*	From Arimathaea, rich man	Philemon	A believer at Colosse
Ananias (2)	Believer who baptized Paul	Judas (1)*	Iscariot, the betrayer	Philip (1)*	An Apostle from Bethsaida
Andrew*	Brother of Peter, an Apostle	Judas (2)*	Lebbaeus, an Apostle	Philip (2)	A preacher, who baptized many
Anna*	Acknowledged the infant Jesus	Jude (3)*	A 'brother' of Jesus	Pilate*	Roman Governor of Judaea
Apollos	A believer from Alexandria	Lazarus*	Brother of Martha and Mary; raised from the dead	Priscilla	Believer, wife of Aquila
Aquila	Husband of Priscilla	Lebbaeus*	Thaddaeus (Judas), an Apostle	Quartus	A 'brother' (Romans 16:23)
Barnabas	Paul's companion from Cyprus	Luke*	He wrote 'Luke' and 'The Acts'	Rhoda	She opened the door to Peter
Bartholomew*	Nathanael, an apostle	Lydia	She was baptized at Philippi	Salome*	Mother of James and John
Caiaphas*	High Priest in Jerusalem	Mark*	John Mark, who wrote 'Mark'	Sapphira	Wife of Ananias (1)
Cornelius	Gentile baptized by Peter	Martha*	Sister of Mary (3) at Bethany	Silas	Paul's travel companion
Dorcas	Peter raised her from the dead	Mary (1)*	Mother of Jesus	Simeon*	Blessed the infant Jesus
Elisabeth*	Mother of John the baptist	Mary (2)*	Mother of James the 'Less'	Simon (1)*	Peter, who wrote 1 & 2 Peter
Epaphroditus	Sent to Philippians by Paul	Mary (3)*	Sister of Martha and Lazarus	Simon (2)*	Zelotes, an Apostle
Felix	Roman Governor who tried Paul	Mary (4)*	Magdalene, who followed Jesus	Stephen	Stoned for preaching Christ
Festus	Replaced Felix as Governor	Mary (5)	Mother of John Mark	Theophilus*	To whom Luke addressed his Gospel and Acts
Gaius	A believer with Paul at Ephesus	Mary (6)	One of Paul's helpers at Rome	Thomas*	Didymus, an Apostle
Gamaliel	Jewish teacher of Saul (Paul)	Mathias	Chosen to replace Judas	Timothy	Young believer from Lystra
Herod(s)*	Puppet kings for Rome in Israel	Matthew*	Levi, an Apostle	Titus	Believer sent to Crete
James (1)*	Brother of the Apostle John	Nicodemus*	A Pharisee who believed	Tychicus	Believer from Asia Minor
James (2)*	The 'Less', an Apostle	Onesimus	A runaway slave of Philemon	Zacchaeus*	Tax-gatherer who was short
James (3)*	The 'brother' of Jesus	Onesiphorus	A believer from Ephesus	Zacharias*	Husband of Elisabeth
John (1)*	Brother of James, an Apostle	Paul (Saul)	The Apostle to the Gentiles	Zebedee*	Father of James and John
John (2)*	The baptist, son of Zacharias				

FINAL PROPHECY SECTION

“And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

(Revelation 22:19)

Book 66

Introduction to the FINAL PROPHECY

The Prophetic Books

A very large part of the Bible is prophecy. First of all, there are the ‘books of the prophets’: no fewer than 17 out of the 39 books of the Old Testament. There are, in addition, those parts of other books—for example, Balaam’s prophecy in Numbers, and Jesus’ Mount Olivet prophecy in the Gospels—which are prophetic.

But besides those chapters or books that can be called prophecies, there are a large number of statements in other parts of the Bible which are prophetic—for example: “You will be a father of many nations” (Genesis 17:4); “I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever” (2 Samuel 7:13).

The Purpose of Prophecy

What is the purpose of prophecy? It is usually thought of as the prediction of future events, but in fact prophecy in the Bible sense has a two-fold meaning: (1) forthtelling (speaking forth, or speaking out, on God’s behalf—not necessarily predicting events); (2) foretelling (showing forth events destined to happen in the near or distant future). Isaiah, for example, writes *forthtelling* Israel’s place as God’s witnesses (chs 42, 43); he also *foretells* the sufferings of the Messiah (ch 53).

There are a few Bible prophecies in the form ‘This or that will happen so many years from now’: Jeremiah’s prophecy of 70 years’ captivity in Babylon (25:11) is an example. Most ‘foretelling’ prophecies, however, are presented in a way that makes it impossible to predict exactly when they will be fulfilled; and in relation to the events of the last days, and Christ’s coming, we are clearly told that “of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark 13:32).

Foretelling future events in exact detail is, in any case, not the object of most Bible prophecies: time and again, prophecies were given so that people had an opportunity, before it was too late, to be on the look-out and to mend their ways—to make sure that they would be ready for whatever was going to happen—when-ever it happened.

The Book of Revelation

When we come to the Book of Revelation, all the above principles apply. Revelation is a God-given book of prophecies about the future—“to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass” (1:1). It is full of symbols, including many with which we are familiar from the visions

and prophecies of the Old Testament. It is given to us, not to provide precise dates for future happenings, but so that believers down the ages could be warned that cataclysmic events were about to happen, *and be ready*—and to forthtell God’s involvement in them all.

Revelation may at first seem a daunting book. It often speaks in strange language; and yet, if we refer back constantly to earlier prophecies—particularly Daniel, and also the Lord’s Mount Olivet prophecy—we shall begin to find meaning. In particular, many of the symbols in Old Testament prophecies—heavenly bodies, beasts, trees, etc.—reappear in the visions which John was given; and we can generally assume that such symbols have a similar significance in this final prophecy.

A Prophecy for Us

As we read the Revelation, we shall realise that this last book of prophecy, this last book of the Bible, is very relevant to our own times—and to us personally! The time is close when God shall “send Jesus Christ, who was preached unto you before, who heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:20,21).

66

REVELATION

Also called the 'Apocalypse', this is a prophecy foretelling (in symbol) events leading to the return of Christ and his revelation to the world. It contains important visions of the Kingdom of God.

John, a Servant of Jesus Christ

The Apostle John was a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos (see map) at the end of the first century AD, when he received this prophecy. He received it directly from Jesus, and wrote it down for the benefit of Jesus' followers in all subsequent ages.

As the last of the divinely inspired writings, Revelation has many links with the first book: Genesis. The Bible begins with paradise in Eden and ends with paradise restored (Revelation 22). The prophecy is a 'revelation' or an 'uncovering' of events affecting Jesus' followers from the time of John, until Christ returns to be revealed in glory.



A Book of Symbol

It is important to note (1:1) that the book is "signified" (i.e. in symbolic form). For example, "heaven" means 'the ruling powers', and "war in heaven" refers to conflicts in human governments.

Seven-fold Visions

The number seven appears many times in the book. Seven is often used in the sense of completeness, and this is fitting as Revelation completes the Bible record. Jesus' first message is to seven churches (ecclesias) in the province of Asia, representative of his followers throughout the world (see map).

Indicating the unfolding purpose of God, there is revealed to John:

- a 7-sealed scroll—various stages in the Roman Empire until it becomes Christianised;
- 7 trumpets sounding warnings—the overthrow of the Roman power: in the West by the Barbarians, in the East by Saracens and Turks;
- 7 bowls ("vials", AV) containing plagues—aimed at the destruc-



"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." (1:1)

Visions of Glory

Each of these seven-fold sections is introduced by a vision of the coming Kingdom, to which the events move forward relentlessly and in increasing detail.

War with the Lamb

In a separate but parallel sequence, world political and religious systems are depicted as frightening beasts who make war on the Lamb—the Lord Jesus Christ—"who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29)

The Final Stage

The events in the prophecy lead to the overthrow of all these systems by Christ at his "revelation" (i.e. his coming) and the setting up of God's Kingdom on earth.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

<i>For example:</i>	<i>Compared with:</i>
a) Revelation 1:7	a) Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 24:30
b) Revelation 11:15	b) Daniel 2:44; 7:27; Zechariah 14:9
c) Revelation 22:18,19	c) Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6

Summary of Bible Teaching

Theme	Teaching	Key Passages
THE BIBLE	Divinely inspired source of true teaching	Psalms 119:160; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20
GOD	One God, Creator, Father Holy Spirit is God's power	Deuteronomy 6:4; John 17:3; 1 Timothy 2:5 Genesis 1:2; Psalm 104:30; Acts 10:38
MAN	Made in the image of God Sinful, in need of redemption Mortal, in need of salvation	Genesis 1:26,27; 5:1; James 3:9 Psalm 14:2,3; John 1:29; Romans 3:23 Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 9:5; John 3:16
GOD'S PURPOSE	To fill the earth with His glory To save man from sin and death	Isaiah 45:18; Habakkuk 2:14; Revelation 21:1,10,11 Ezekiel 18:23; Luke 2:11; 1 Timothy 2:4
JESUS CHRIST	Son of God, born to Mary Tempted like us, but sinless Crucified; raised from the dead Ascended to heaven; will return	Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35 Mark 1:12,13; Hebrews 2:17; 4:15 Matthew 28:15,16; Acts 2:23,24; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4 Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16
KINGDOM OF GOD	Israel in the past was a prototype God's promises to Abraham concerned a land and people David was promised a descendant who would be king Christ is the king, who will return, raise and judge the dead, and set up God's everlasting kingdom Israel will be its centre; Jerusalem its capital	2 Chronicles 9:8; Ezekiel 21:25-27; Acts 1:6; 13:22 Genesis 13:14-17; Acts 7:2-5; Galatians 3:29 2 Samuel 7:12-14; Luke 1:32; Acts 13:22,23 Matthew 16:27; 1 Corinthians 15:22-24; 2 Timothy 4:1,8 Jeremiah 3:17; Micah 4:2; Matthew 5:35
SALVATION	God's plan to save man by Christ's sacrifice By faith, shown also in works Eternal life offered to those who repent, believe and are baptized	Isaiah 53:4-6; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 1:15 Genesis 15:6; Romans 10:9; James 2:14-26 Mark 16:16; Romans 6:4,5; Galatians 3:27-29
DISCIPLESHIP	Following Christ's standards Moral separation from the ungodly world	Romans 6:12-14; Galatians 5:22-24; 2 Peter 3:11,14 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Philippians 3:20; 1 Peter 2:9

Index

Place names on maps are indicated by numbers in italics

- A**
- Aaron 7,8,78
 Abdon 11
 Abel (son of Adam) 5,24
 Abel (place) 14
 Abijah 18,34
 Abimelech 11
 Abraham 5,24, 68,78,79,90
 Absalom 14
 Achaia 62,77
 acrostic 37
 Acts of the Apostles 61
 Adam 5,23,24,59
 Aegean Sea 70
 Aenon 58
 Agrippa 86
 Agur 29
 Ahab 34
 Ahasuerus 21,34
 Ahaz 16,18,34,45
 Ahaziah 16,18,34
 Ai 10
 Alexander 53
 Alexandria 54,62
 Alexandrian ms. 82
 Amalek 2,14
 Amalekites 11,21
 Amaziah 16,18,34
 Ammon 2,11,14,16,42
 Amon 16,18,34
 Amos 34,42
 Ananias 86
- Andrew 86
 angels 59,71,78
 Anna 56,86
 Antioch (Pisidia) 61,68
 Antioch (Syria) 54,61,65
 antichrist 73,82,83
 ants 29
 Apocalypse (see Revelation)
- B**
- Baasha 34
 Babel 5,23
 Babylon 5,16,19,21, 34,36,38,39,41,42, 46,46,47,48,50,54,80
 Balaam 8,88
 Balfour Declaration 36
 baptism 16,61, 65,68,69,71,80,90
 Barak 11
 Barbarians 89
 Barnabas 58,86
 Bartholomew 86
 Bathsheba 14
 beasts 39,88,89
 Beatitudes 56
 Beersheba 2,11,14,15
 belief (see faith)
 believers 65,67,72
 Belshazzar 34
 Benjamin 5,8
 Berea 72
 Bethabara 58
 Bethany 58
 Bethel 2
- Athens 54,61,66,72,76
 athletics 74,75
 atonement 7
 authority, obedience to 76,80
 Azariah (Uzziah) 34
- Bethlehem 2,12,14, 45,45,57,58,59
 Bethsaida 58,57
 Bethshean 11
 Bezer 10,11
 Bible, inspired word of God v,1,90
 —origins of viii
 —versions viii
 Bildad 27
 bishops 74,76
 Bithynia 62
 Black Sea 48,54
 blessings 41,47,49,51
 Boaz 12,24
 breaking of bread 66
 breastplate 51,72
 brethren in Christ 71
 bride 31,83,85
 bridegroom 31
 burden 46
 bush, burning 6
- C**
- Caesarea 61
 Caesarea Philippi 58
 Caiaphas 56,86
 Cain 5,24
 Caleb 8
 Cambyses 19
 camp of Israel 8
 Cana 57,60
 Canaan 2,6,8,10
- Capernaum 58,57
 Cappadocia 62
 captivity 19,36,38,39,49
 Caspian Sea 48
 Caucasians 54
 Celts 54
 chariots 41
 chastisement 35,37
 Chebar 38
 Cherith 15
 cherubim 17,38,58
 Chorazin 57
 chosen people 9,80
 Christ (see Jesus Christ)
 Christadelphians 71
 Chronicles 17,18
 Cilicia 62,76
 circumcision 68
 cities of refuge 10
 citizenship 70,73
 coins 45,69
 colony 70
 Colosse 71,71,77
 Colossians 71
 conversion 61
 Corinth 61,65,66,67,72
 Corinthians 66,67
 Cornelius 86
 corner stone 69
 covenant, new 51,53
 creation 5,23,27,30
 —new 35,71,89
 Crete 56,61,62,76,76

- Hope of Israel 51,65
 horn 28
 Hosea 34,40
 Hoshea 16,34
 household 66
 humility 16,79
 hygiene 74
- I**
- Ibzon 11
 Iconium 61,68
 idolatry 15,42,48
 Idumea 58
 Immanuel 35
 'immortal soul' 73,74
 India 21
 'infant sprinkling' 73
 inspiration 72,90
 Iran (see Persia)
 Isaac 5,23,24
 Isaiah 34,35,45,88
 Ishmael 5,24,29
 Israel 5,13,16,38,
 38,40,43,45,51,65,73,90
 — modern state 36,50
 — tribes 5,8,24,51
 Israelites 10
 Issachar 5,8
 Italy 62,77
- J**
- Jabesh-gilead 14
 Jacob 5,24,43,45,59
 Jair 11
 James(es) 60,61,79,85,86
 — letter 62,64,79
 Japheth 5,24
 Jehoahaz 16,18,34
 Jehoash 16,34
 Jehoiachin 16,18,34
 Jehoiakim 16,18,34
 Jehoram 16,18,34
 Jehoshaphat 16,18,34
 Jehu 16,34
 Jephthah 11
 Jeremiah 19,34,36,37
 Jericho 2,6,10,14,58
 Jeroboam 16,34,44
 Jerusalem 2,13,14,17,
 20,35,36,37,38,43,45,46,
 49,50,58,59,61,62,78,90
 Jesse 12,24
 Jesus Christ 5,12,17,
 29,31,36,37,39,47,
 57-61,65,68,69,78,85
 — ascension 56,90
 — baptism 56
 — betrayal 56
 — birth 45,56,57
 — Chief Shepherd 80
 — crucifixion 21,56,90
 — High Priest 49,56,78
 — Judge 11
 — King 38,45,57,59,78,90
 — Lamb of God 35,89
 — Mediator 71,74,78,82
 — Messiah 28,35,39,45,57
 — Priest 7,51
 — resurrection 28,44,56,59,66,90
 — return 41,50,59,
 72,73,75,81,88,90
 — sacrifice 7,78,82,90
 — Saviour 10,35,53,59,70,78,90
 — Servant 35,37,58,70
 — Son of David 13,57
 — Son of God 59,60,71,
 73,78,82,83,90
 — Son of Man 58,59
- temptations 9,56,
 78,83,90
 — transfiguration 56,81
 — trial 56
 jewels 51
 Jews 9,19,36,61,65
 — re-gathering 36,38
 — scattering 36,38
 — Sephardic 43
 Jezreel 2,14,15
 Joash 16,18,34
 Job 26,27,79
 Joel 34,41
 John 60,61,82-84,86,89
 — letters 64,82-84
 John Mark 58,86
 John Baptist 51,53,56,86
 Jonah 34,44
 Joppa 44,44
 Joram 16,34
 Jordan (country) 43
 Joseph 5
 Joseph (husband of Mary)
 56,85,86
 Joseph of Arimathea
 56,86
 Josiah 85
 Joshua 8,10,78
 Joshua (high priest)
 19,49
 Josiah 16,18,34,48
 Jotham 16,18,34,45
 Judah 5,8,16,16,18,
 24,35,36,45,47,48,78
 Judaisers/Judaism
 61,67,68,71,78
 Judas Iscariot 56,86
 Judas Lebbaeus
 (Thaddeus) 86
 Jude 85,86
 — letter 64,85
- Judea 58,60,61,62,67
 Judges 11
 judgement 30,39,41,
 42,48,51,67,72,73,85,90
 justice 45
- K**
- Kadesh-barnea 2,6
 Kedesh 10,11
 Kidron Valley 20,59
 king 13,38,49,57,58
 kingdom of God 15,18,
 35,38,39,43,45,50,57,
 72,73,89,90
 Kings, Books of 15,16
 Kohath 8
 Korah 8,28
- L**
- Lachish 10
 Lamb of God 35,89
 Lamentations 37
 lampstand 50,89
 Laodicea 71,77,89
 Lasea 76
 last days 38,39,41,
 42,50,75,88,89
 last supper 56,66
 law of Moses 6,7,61,65,68,71,78
 Lazarus 86
 Lebanon 45
 Lemuel 29
 leprosy 16
 Letters 64-85
 Levi 5,51,78
 Levi (Matthew) 57,86
 Levites 8,10
 Leviticus 7
 Libya 38,38,62
- life, eternal 69,75,82,90
 light 81,82
 lion 46,58
 lions' den 39
 locusts 41,42
 Lord's Prayer 56
 Lot 5,24,81
 love 31,66,73,82,83,84
 Luke 59,61,86
 Lycus Valley 77
 Lydia (convert) 86
 Lydia (place) 21,48
 lyre 28
 Lystra 61,68,74,74
- M**
- Maccabees 53
 Macedonia 54,62,
 72,76,77
 Magog 38
 Mahanaim 14
 Malachi 34,51,53
 Malta 61
 man 58,90
 man of sin 73
 man of sorrows 35,37
 Manasseh (tribe) 5,8
 Manasseh (king) 16,18,34
 manhood 68
 manna 6
 Marah 6
 Mark 58,86
 marriage 31,40,69
 Martha 86
 martyrdom 75
 Mary(s) 12,24,
 56,58,86,90
 Mathias 86
 Matthew 57,86
 Medes 19,46
 Media 21,62

INDEX

- mediator 7,71,74,78
 medical metaphors 74
 Mediterranean Sea 43,54,77
 Medo-Persian Empire 39
 Melchizedek 78
 Memphis 2
 Menahem 16,34
 Merari 8
 merchants of Tarshish 38
 Meshech 38,38
 Mesopotamia 11,62
 messenger 51
 Messiah 28,35,45,57
 metals 39
 Methuselah 23,24
 Micah 34,45
 Midian 2,6,11
 Midianites 11
 Miletus 61,71
 military metaphors 74
 ministry 60
 miracles 9,16,56,58,60,61,66
 Miriam 8
 mirror 79
 missionary journeys 61,65,72
 Moab 2,12,14,42,48
 Mohammedans 41
 money 67
 Mordecai 21
 Moresheth 45
 mortality 30,73,75,90
 Moses 6,8,28,65,67,68,71,78
 Mt Carmel 2,15
 Mt Ephraim 43
 Mt Esau 43
 Mt Gilboa 14
 Mt Hor 2
- Mt Horeb 15
 Mt of Olives 50,56
 Mt Olivet prophecy 56,88
 Mt Seir 43
 Mt Sinai 2,6
 Mt Zion 43
 music 26,28
- N**
 Naaman 16
 Nabonidus 34
 Nadab 34
 Nahum 34,46
 Nain 57,58
 Naomi 12
 Naphtali 5,8
 Nathan (prophet) 14
 Nathan (son of David) 12,24
 Nathanael 86
 nations 39,41,42,48,50
 Nazareth 57,58,85
 Nazarites 8
 Neapolis 70
 Nebuchadnezzar 16,34,38,39,48
 Negeb 43
 Nehemiah 20,34,51
 Nero 65,75
 new creation 35,71,89
 new life 65,67,71
 new man 69,71
 Nicodemus 56,86
 Nimrod 46
 Nineveh 21,44,44,46,46,48
 Noah 5,23,24,46,80,81
 No-Amon (Thebes) 46,46
- Northern Kingdom 15,16,40
 Numbers 8
- O**
 Obadiah 34,43
 Obed 12,24
 offerings 7
 olive tree 50,65
 Omri 34
 Onesimus 71,77,86
 Onesiphorus 86
 Orion 27
 Orpah 12
 Othniel 11
 ox 58
- P**
 pagan 66,89
 Palestine 36
 Pamphylia 62,76
 parables 38,56,57
 paradise 89
 Parthia 21,62
 Passover 6,7,10
 Pastoral Epistles 74–76
 Patmos 89
 patriarchs 5,23,24,78
 Paul 61,65–78,86
 –journeys 61,67,70,72
 –letters 64–78
 –prisoner 70,71,75,76
 –tent-maker 73
 –trial 75
 peace 18,67,73
 Pekah 16,34
 Pekahiah 16,34
 Pentateuch 4
 Perea 58
 Pergamos 89
- perilous times 75
 persecution 79,80
 Persepolis 21
 Persia 19,21,21,34,38,39,50
 Peter 58,61,80,81,86
 –letters 62,64,80,81
 Pharaoh 5
 Philadelphia 89
 Philemon 77,84,86
 Philip(s) 61,86
 Philippi 61,65,70,76
 Philippians 70
 Philistia 2,13,14,42,43,48
 philosophy 71
 Phoenix 76
 Phrygia 21,62
 phylactery 9
 Pilate 56,86
 Pisidia 61,62
 plagues 6,41,89
 Pleiades 27
 plough 40,45
 plumbline 42
 poetry 26,28,31,37
 politics 80
 Pontus 62
 potter 36
 praise 28,85
 prayer 19,20,28,47,56,59,79
 Preacher 30
 preaching 44,58,68
 priesthood 7,51,78,80
 priests 7,73
 Priscilla 86
 Promised Land 5,6,8,9,10,47
 promises of God 5,14,45,51,58,68,75,78,81,90
- prophecy 81,88
 prophets 28,34–51,78,81,88,89
 Proverbs 26,29
 Psalms 26,28,78
 Ptolemies 53,54
 punishment 40,47,48,51
 Purim 21
- Q**
 Quartus 86
 Queen Athaliah 16,18,34
 Queen of Sheba 15,18
 Qumram viii
- R**
 Rabbah 11,14
 Rahab 79
 ram's horn 28
 Ramoth-gilead 10,11
 'rapture' 72
 Red Sea 2,6
 redemption 65,90
 Rehoboam 15,18,29,34
 religion 73,89
 repentance 41,44,50,90
 Rephidim 6
 restoration 36,42,45,47
 resurrection 30,39,44,66,70,72,90
 return (of Jews) 38,41
 Reuben 5,8
 Revelation 88,89
 Rhoda 86
 Rhodes 76
 riches, true 70
 righteousness 47,65,75
 River Euphrates 5,44,46
 River Jordan 2,10,16,54
 River Lycus 77
 River Meander 71,77

- River Nile 2,46
River Tigris 5,44,46
Roman Empire 39,41, 50,53,57,62,68,70,89
Roman house 77
Romans 65
Rome 54,61,62,65
65,70,75,76,77
Ruth 12,23
- S**
- sacrifices 7,70,78
saints 85
Salmone 76
Salome 86
salvation 35,48, 61,65,66,70,72,90
Samaria 16,43, 45,45,58,61
Samson 11
Samuel 11,13,14
Sapphira 86
Saracens 89
Sardis 43,89
Sargon 34
satan 27
Saul (king) 13,14,34
Saul (Paul) 86
Saviour 5,35,59,65
science 74
scroll 89
Scythians 48,48,54
Sea of Galilee 57,58
Second Coming (see Jesus-Return)
Seed 5,14,68
Seleucids 53,54
Sennacherib 34,35
Sepharad 43
Sermon on the mount 56
servant 58,70,77,85
- Servant, suffering 35,37
Seth 23,24
seventy weeks 39
seventy years 36,88
Shallum 16,34
Shalmaneser(s) 34
Shamgar 11
Sheba 38,38
Shechem 2,5,10
Shem 23,24
shepherd 13,50,60,74,80
shepherds of Bethlehem 56
Shiloh 2
Ships of Tarshish 15
shipwreck 44,68,76
Shulamite 31
Shunammite 16
sickle 41,89
signs 60,89
Silas (Silvanus) 72,73,86
Simeon (in the Temple) 56,86
Simeon (son of Jacob) 5,8
Simon (Peter) 86
Simon Zelotes 86
sin 5,69,70,77,90
Sinai 6,8,9
Sinai Desert 6
slaves 68,76,77
Slavs 54
sleep of death 72
Smerdis 19
Smyrna 89
Socoh 11
Sodom 5,81
soldier 69,72,75
Solomon 15,17,18,29,30,34
Son of God 35,58,59,60,65,90
- Son of Man 58,59
Song of Solomon 26,31
sound doctrine 74,76
Southern Kingdom 16,45
Spain 43
spies 8,10
Spirit (see Holy Spirit)
standards (of conduct) 76,85,90
standards (of tribes of Israel) 8
stephanos 75
Stephen 61,86
stone 39,69,80
Succoth 6
suffering 27,36,37,79
summer fruit 42
Susa 21
Sychar 58
symbols 88,89
Synoptic Gospels 56
Syria 14,16,42,45,62
- T**
- Tabernacle 6,8,15,78
Tabernacles, Feast of 7
Tarshish 38,44
taxes 57
Tekoa 14
Temple 14,15,17,18, 19,20,49,59,66,78
—future 38,49
—spiritual 69,80
temptation 73,90
Thebes 46,46
Theophilus 59,61
Thessalonians 72,73
Thessalonica 61,70,72
Thomas 86
Thrace 54,62,70
Thyatira 89
- Tiberias 57
Tiglath-pileser 34
Timothy 72,73,74,75,76,86
Tishbe 15
Titus 67,76,86
toga 68
Togarmah 38,38
Tola 11
tongues (speaking in) 66
transfiguration 56,81
tree(s) 21,39,88
‘trinity’ 73,74,82
Troas 61,70,72,76
trumpet 17,28,89
Trumpets, Feast of 7
truth 81,82,83,84,85
Tubal 38,38
Turkey 68,89
Turks 36,89
Tychicus 71,77,86
Tyndale 83,84
Tyre 10,14, 61,42,42,58,61
Tyropoeon Valley 20
- U**
- uncircumcised 61
unfaithfulness 40
unity 69
Ur of the Chaldees 5
Uriah 14
Uz 27
Uzziah 16,18,34
- V**
- Valley of Dry Bones 38
vanity 30
Vashti 21
- vials (bowls) 89
vine 40,60
visions 38,39,47,50,89
- W**
- watchman 38
watchtower 47
water, living 6,60
wilderness 9
Wilderness of Judaea 58
wisdom 29,30
wise men 56
wolves 74
Word of God 9,20,28,79
Word made flesh 60,82
works (evidence of faith) 79,90
worship 28,61,83
- X**
- Xerxes 19,21,34
- Z**
- Zaccheus 86
Zachariah 16,34
Zacharias 56,86
Zarephath 15,43
Zebedee 60,86
Zebulon 5,8
Zechariah 19,34,50
Zedekiah 16,18,34,38
Zephaniah 34,48
Zerubbabel 19,34,49
Ziklag 14
Zion 43,45,50
Zoan 5
Zophar 27

Further Reading

The following is a small selection of leaflets and books which will help the reader to explore the Scriptures.

Helps to Bible Reading

Bible Companion (daily Bible reading calendar)
The Bible our Guide (texts supporting Bible doctrine)

Helps to Bible Study

Analytical Concordance to the Holy Bible (R. Young)
New Bible Dictionary (IVP)
Oxford Bible Atlas

Background Books by Christadelphian Authors

The Christadelphians: What they Believe and Preach (H. Tennant)
A Life of Jesus (M. Purkis)
Women of the Bible (various authors)
God's Living Word—How the Bible came to us (D. Banyard)

Other Titles in the “Study Guide” Series

Philippians Study Guide (M. G. Owen)
Song of Solomon Study Guide (S. G. Owen)
Tabernacle Study Guide (M. J. Ashton)

The above are available from the Christadelphian Office, 404 Shaftmoor Lane, Birmingham B28 8SZ, UK

Notes