

*An Introduction
To
The New Testament*

The Guide To The Holy Bible
Vol. 3



Chris Howard Andrew

**THE GUIDE TO
THE HOLY BIBLE**

VOL. III

An Introduction

To

The New Testament

Chris Howard Andrew

WATER AND LIFE • VIRGINIA • UNITED STATES

Scripture taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Book Title: The Guide to the Holy Bible.
An Introduction to the New Testament
Volume 3\4

Book Author: Chris Howard Andrew.
Author's email address: chris.andrew72@yahoo.com

Web: <https://www.waterandlife.net>

The First print in Arabic in Egypt By Kasr El-Doubarah Presbyterian Church, in 2011.

All scriptures are qouted from World English Bible (WEB).

WATER AND LIFE • VIRGINIA • UNITED STATES



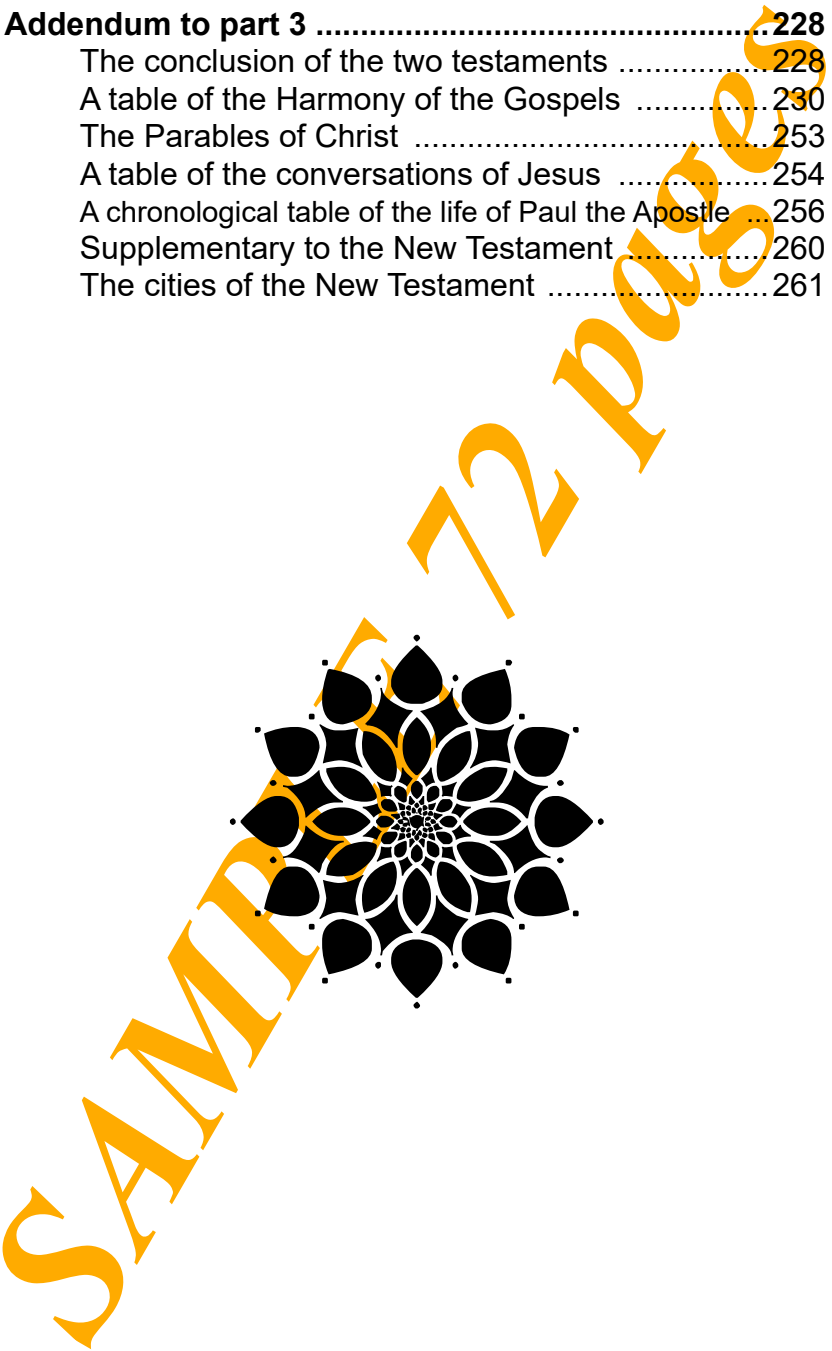
Contents at a Glance

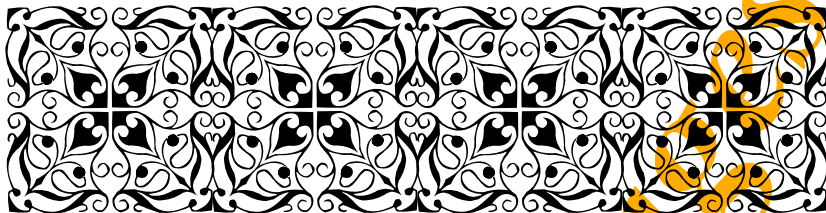
| | |
|---|------------|
| Chapter 1: Introduction | 6 |
| Chapter 2: The Four Gospels | 13 |
| The Gospel of Matthew..... | 14 |
| The Gospel of Mark | 26 |
| The Gospel of Luke..... | 33 |
| The Gospel of John..... | 42 |
| Chapter 3: The Acts of the Apostles | 54 |
| Chapter 4: The didactic books | 70 |
| The Epistle to the Romans..... | 74 |
| The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians | 84 |
| The Second Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians | 92 |
| The Epistle of Paul the Epistle to the Galatians... | 100 |
| The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians | 105 |
| The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to The Philippians | 112 |
| The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians | 119 |
| The Epistle of Paul to The Thessalonians | 127 |
| The Second Epistle of Paul to The Thessalonians | 133 |
| The First Epistle of Paul to Timothy | 138 |
| The Second Epistle of Paul to Timothy | 145 |
| The Epistle of Paul to Titus | 151 |
| The Epistle of Paul to Philemon | 156 |
| The Epistle to the Hebrews | 159 |
| An introduction to the Catholic Epistles | 173 |
| The General Epistle of James | 174 |
| The First Epistle of Peter | 182 |
| The Second Epistle of Peter | 189 |
| The First Epistle of John | 194 |
| The Second Epistle of John | 201 |
| The 3rd Epistle of John | 204 |
| The Epistle of Jude | 207 |

Chapter 5: THE REVELATION 212

Addendum to part 3 228

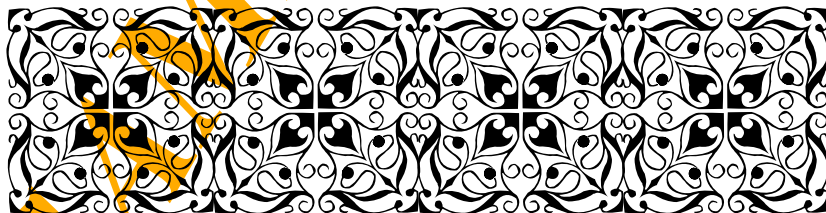
The conclusion of the two testaments 228
A table of the Harmony of the Gospels 230
The Parables of Christ 253
A table of the conversations of Jesus 254
A chronological table of the life of Paul the Apostle ... 256
Supplementary to the New Testament 260
The cities of the New Testament 261





Chapter 1

**AN INTRODUCTION TO
THE BOOKS OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT**



chapter 1

Introduction

The New Testament is composed of 27 books that are often classified into three major groups: Historical, didactic and prophetic. The Historical are the four Gospels ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in addition to the Book of Acts. The Didactic are the 21 epistles addressed by the apostles to many churches and Christian individuals. The Prophetic is the book of Revelation.

All of these books were originally written in Greek as the Old Testament was written in Hebrew except some chapters that were written in Chaldean as already mentioned. It is said that the Evangelist Matthew's purpose of his gospel was to help the Christian Jews in Palestine, so he wrote his gospel in Hebrew. But since it was first found in Greek, they claimed that the book was translated into Greek during his life by him or under his supervision in 60 A.D.

The books of the New Testament are the only basis of our faith and walk; therefore it is good to know something brief about the people who wrote them. They are eight:

1- Matthew: the son of Alpheus, also known as Levi, was as a publican or tax collector, who collected taxes for the Roman government in Capernaum and its surrounding regions (Matt 9: 9; Mark 2: 14; Luke 5: 27). His position was despised by the Jews because he collected money from his countrymen and gave them to the colonist. A tax collector was branded a traitor both morally and nationally. Levi, or Matthew, earned much money from this profession, but he gave up the rich luxurious life to become one of Christ's

disciples. He accepted Christ's call and followed him and became a faithful citizen of his country and a witness of the miracles that Christ performed.

Matthew's spirit of humility and godliness appears in what he wrote, particularly when mentioning the names of the apostles (10: 3). He mentions his name as Matthew the tax collector. He reports the story of his apostolic call in an attractive style: Christ's condescension and the influence of His active grace (9: 9). He writes: "As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him." Thus, he gives us a good example of humility. His walk is a guide to us in seeking Christ's grace and giving up the world's lusts and the love of money and riches and following the Savior just as he did.

Matthew continued accompanying the disciples even after Christ's ascendance. From then on we have fewer reports about him. It is said that he preached the Gospel in Judah for two years then he went out to testify the faith of Christ among the Gentiles. He worked hard to preach in the land of Cush, Persia and Parthia. Then he died a martyr's death by being thrust through with a spear in the land of Cush in 62 A.D. His compilations are on historical, namely the gospel that bears his name.

2-Mark: his Hebrew name was "John" (Acts 15: 37). He was the son of a pious woman of Jerusalem, who was a sister of Barnabas (Col 4: 10), at whose house apostles and first Christians often gathered together for prayer (Acts 12: 12). From Peter's styling him his son, I Pet. 5. 13, the evangelist is supposed to have been converted by that apostle. Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas in their first journey until he arrived at Perga in Pamphylia, where he departed from them and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 22:

15; 5: 13;13: 13). Therefore, Paul did not accept to have him in his company in his second journey, so he sailed with Barnabas to Cyprus (Acts 15: 37- 39). He was at that time in Antioch and it is probable that he was sent to Antioch from Jerusalem by the apostles. However he made up with Paul later on and became his companion. Paul praised him and described him as useful to him for ministry. At last, he accompanied Timothy to Rome (Col 4: 10; 2 Tim 4: 11) and he wrote the gospel that carries his name.

It is said that Peter sent him to Egypt to preach there in the name of Jesus Christ. His labors were successful in Libya, Marmarcia and Pentapolis. He then returned to Alexandria, where a crowd of pagans agitated against him while celebrating the solemnities of Serapis. He died of the tortures he suffered when he had been imprisoned for that night.

3- Luke: It is said that Luke was a proselyte from Antioch. Some claim that he was one of Christ's seventy disciples, but this is not true according to the introduction of his gospel. Luke was a faithful companion of Paul in his many journeys, labors and sufferings, as seen in (Acts 16: 11; 20: 5, 6; 2 Tim 4: 11). He was a physician (Col 4: 14) and wrote his gospel in 64 A.D., which he addressed to well-known Christian man called Theophilus, who is said to be Egyptian. It is said that Luke suffered martyrdom during the reign of Nero, the Roman emperor, a fact that is almost real, since he was a companion of the apostle Paul, who also died there.

4- John: This man was both evangelist and apostle. He was the son of Zebedee, a fisherman (Matt 4: 21) from Bethsaida in Galilee. Christ called him and his brother

James to be of his apostles, to whom he gave the name, "Sons of Thunder" (Mark 3: 17). Christ loved John so much that when he was on the cross, he entrusted his holy mother Mary to his charge. When John departed from Judeah, before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., he labored in Anatolia, particularly in Ephesus. It is said that he established the churches of Bergamus, Thyatira, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

During the persecution under the reign of the Roman emperor Domitian, he was banished to the isle of Patmos, where he had the revelations and was inspired to write them. Then he returned to Ephesus and remained there until 100 A.D. John was loved by everyone. When he grew old, he died in peace among his Christian brethren. John wrote the Gospel of John, The Revelation, and the three epistles bearing his name.

5- Paul: Paul was an Israeli of the tribe of Benjamin. His parents were Hebrews and he was born in Tarsus, Cilicia. Before he was called to apostleship, his name was Saul, but when called to preach among the Gentiles he was called in Greek, "Paul". His father had sent him to Jerusalem to learn the Jewish law at the hand of the celebrated rabbi Gamaliel. Paul succeeded in his knowledge and was skilled in proving the Jewish traditions and fighting Christ and His church. Yet, as he exerted every effort to persecute the Christians and threaten the Lord's disciples with death, the divine grace renewed his heart, so he turned from that resolution and gave all he had of power and gifts to serve Christ (Acts 22). It is probable that none of Christ's followers gave a good example and faithful toil as this chosen vessel did. I would not go too far if I said that contemplation on the Paul's life, repentance and apostleship leaves no excuse for a non-believer in rejecting the Christian faith.

After having been a means of many blessings for God's church through his preaching, his good example and his writings, this faithful apostle sealed the truthfulness of the Gospel with his blood as he suffered martyrdom in Rome 66 A.D. by order of Nero, the king. He left the fourteen epistles which he had written as a precious treasure in the church of Christ.

Paul was an apostle of holy war by the sword of the living word and he paid his life for his love and his faith in his Lord. He was not a sword drawn or hanging threateningly over the heads of men, nor was he an invader, athirst for the blood of the innocent.

6- James: Was called James "the Less", or "the Little" to distinguish between him and James the brother of John who was killed by Herod (Acts 12: 2). It is thought that he was the son of Alphaeus, or Cleopas (Luke 6: 15; Acts 1: 13; John 19: 25) and was called, "the righteous one" because of his righteous walk. It is said that he was the first bishop of the Christian church in Jerusalem. He was of good conduct and suffered martyrdom around 62 A.D. This apostle was the author of the epistle which bears his name.

7- Peter: Peter was the son of Jona and brother of Andrew the apostle, his native town was Bethsaida. Peter was originally called Simon but Christ called him "Cephas", the Greek word for Peter, both meaning a stone tantamount to his established faith "One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone)." (John 1: 40- 42) Peter was the most faithful and zealous among the Disciples of Christ, but his zeal led him sometimes to

hastiness, which was the reason for his terrible fall. Yet, his repentance after that was great and his walk and toils confirm that he was one of the most honest disciples and most useful apostles of Christ. The reports about this apostle in the New Testament are few and his name is infrequently mentioned when the Gentiles entered into the church of Christ through his efforts (Acts 15).

It is said that he had been a bishop of Rome for 25 years, but there is no satisfactory evidence that he was ever at Rome or he was bishop there. It is reported that when he was sentenced to death, he remembered his sin when he denied his Savior, so he asked to be crucified upside down as if he were not worthy to die as his Lord. This was the way he died in 66 A.D. The great apostle was the author of the two epistles which bear his name.

8- Jude: This apostle was called “Lebbaeus” and was entitled “Thaddaeus”. He was the youngest brother of James (Matt 10: 3). It is said that at the beginning of his ministry, he preached the Gospel in Judah, Samaria, Galilee, Edom in Arabia, Syria, Metosopia and Persia and he supported his teachings with wonders. However we do not know exactly where he ended his ministry. Some say that he was killed by the magus. This apostle was the author of a brief epistle which bears his name.

The Historical Books, the four Gospels and the Book of Acts

The word “Gospel” is a Greek word meaning good tidings or good news. It was so called because it proclaims the coming of the Lord in flesh to the world to save the sinners *“Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a*

Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2: 10, 11) The writers of the Gospel are called Evangelists.

These gospels were written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They include the life and teachings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Each epistle wrote the biography of our Savior according to the purpose of his gospel as we will see later in detail.

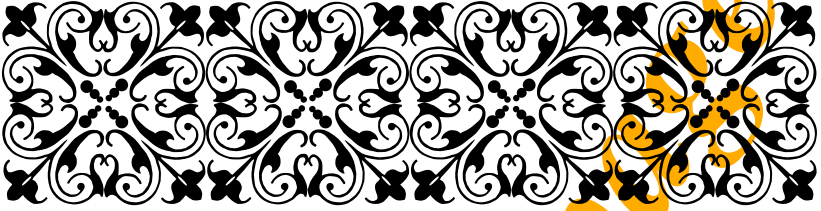
Matthew and Luke began with the mention of the biography of our Savior from his virgin birth by the power of the Holy Spirit. But Mark and John began from his baptism and the commencement of his ministry.

The first three gospels are correspondent in their order, their style of writing and the events included in them. Some are included in two chapters only, or in three, and are not found in others at all. This shows that that the evangelists profited from those who had certain knowledge of the events. Matthew, for example, was not with Christ at transfiguration, but he mentions this event as was reported by those who had witnessed it.

The Gospel of John excels the other three gospels in its style of writing and in not including many things.

There are many external differences between these gospels, such as one gospel mentions what others do not, but each one of them reports the events and conditions that are most fit for the purpose of writing. This supports the truth of their testimony and proves that they all wrote independently without previous agreement among themselves.

The purpose of writing the Gospel was what the Evangelist John declared, *“but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”* (20: 31)



Chapter 2

THE FOUR GOSPELS



The Gospel of Matthew

Most probably written 39 A.D in Palestine

“You are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matt 5: 14, 16)

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” (Matt 6: 33)

Matthew wrote about Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews and the long-awaited Messiah to convince the Jews that Jesus was their expected Messiah through a chosen series of Old Testament prophecies. His genealogy, his baptism, his sermons and his miracles all support the fact that he was the expected Messiah. Christ is a king in spite of his defeating death. His death turned into victory through his resurrection from the dead and Christ became the eternally living King.

The Hebrew name “Matthew” means “the gift of God”. Matthew wrote his gospel in Greek. He also wrote some of the reports about Christ in Aramaic. Matthew the son of Alphaeus (Mark 12: 4) was a tax collector for the Roman government at a time when tax collectors were disliked by the Jews. Yet, when Jesus called him to discipleship (9: 9-13; Mark 2: 14; Luke 5: 27, 28), his quick response meant that he had already been stirred by Jesus’ public preaching. He gave a large reception for Jesus in his house so that his associates could meet Jesus. He was chosen as one of the twelve apostles. Matthew made a great feast, to which he invited Jesus, where all Matthew’s friends could meet Jesus, who chose him to be one of the twelve disciples.

The last appearance of Matthew's name in the New Testament is found in Acts (1: 13). His Gospel may have been written in Palestine or Syrian Antioch.

According to many, Matthew wrote his gospel before Mark, Luke and John. Mark and Luke wrote their gospels before the destruction of Jerusalem. It remains undecided in which year each of them wrote his gospel after the Savior's ascension since we have no divine text in this regard. It is most probable that Matthew wrote five years after Christ's ascension, while he was in Palestine, i.e. in 39 A.D.

This evangelist wrote his gospel for the benefit of Jewish Christians. He included accurate reports about the Savior's life and teachings for establishing them in Christianity. Therefore his style of writing differs from Mark's and Luke's who wrote to the converts in considering the particular needs of those who had a Jewish background. For this purpose, he showed the genealogy of Christ from Abraham's and David's family according to what had been decided by common Jews. Matthew began his gospel with mentioning the genealogy of Christ. He also mentions the Savior's birth in Bethlehem as prophesied by Micah the Prophet since the knowledge of this thing was common and well-known to every Jew.

Matthew's gospel differs from Mark's and Luke's in referring to many of the Old Testament prophecies and prophets statements that had been fulfilled so that he might have a strong proof with the Jews. It also differs in that he concentrated on the discourses of Christ with more exactness such as the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5- 7), the parables of Christ (Matt 13) and Christ's warning to the scribes and Pharisees eight times (Matt 23).

Matthew quoted from the Old Testament more than any other evangelist did. He uses the expression "kingdom of heaven" about 43 times in his gospel to such an extent

that his gospel was called “the gospel of the kingdom”.

Matthew did not only observe the chronological order of events, but also classified the stories and events according to their subjects. He wrote the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5- 7) and about the end of the word (Matt 24- 25).

Matthew refers to himself, among the other Disciples of Christ, as Matthew, the tax collector for the Roman colonists. His position was despised by the Jews because a tax collector collected money from his countrymen and gave them to the colonist. Moreover, he took more money from the people than he was entitled to under other names such as usury and interest, which was not permitted according to Moses' Law, which says, “Take no usury or interest from him; but fear your God, that your brother may live with you.” You shall not charge interest to your brother --- interest on money or food or anything that is lent out at interest. To a foreigner you may charge interest, but to your brother you shall not charge interest, that the LORD your God may bless you in all to which you set your hand in the land which you are entering to possess.” (Lev 25: 36; Deut 23: 19- 20) A tax collector was branded a traitor nationally, morally and religiously.

Matthew accompanied Jesus in most of his ministries. The Evangelist Luke reports that Matthew gave Jesus a great feast (Luke 5: 27- 31) and how quick Matthew's response was when Jesus said to him, “Follow Me!” “After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.” By this, Matthew gives us a practical lesson in humility and self-denial.

Theme:

The Old Testament prophets predicted and longed for the coming of the Anointed One who would enter history to

bring redemption and deliverance. The first verse of Matthew succinctly announces the fulfillment of Israel's hope in the coming of Christ: "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham". Matthew was placed first in the canon of New Testament books by the early church because it is a natural bridge between the Testaments. The Gospel of Matthew describes the person and work of the Messiah-King.

The Gospel of Matthew contains 28 chapters that can instructionally be divided into five points:

- 1- The genealogy of Jesus from Abraham and David, his birth and his infancy, chapters 1, 2.
 - The visit of the Magi to worship to the baby Jesus and offer him their presents.
 - God's particular attention in protecting him from Herod, who was intended to kill the baby.

- 2- The report about John the Baptist, Jesus' baptism by him, and the beginning of Jesus' ministry, chapters 3, 4.
 - John's characteristics and ministry.
 - The baptism of Jesus.

- 3- The teachings and miracles of Jesus until transfiguration, chapters 5- 17.
 - The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5- 7).
 - The miracles performed by Jesus (Matt 7- 9).
 - Jesus sends out the twelve apostles to preach the gospel (Matt 10).
 - The apostles boldly confess their faith in Christ (Matt 16).
 - The transfiguration, where Moses and Elijah appeared speaking about his forthcoming death in Jerusalem to redeem us (Matt 17). This is the first time

- that Moses enters the promised land. He entered it with Jesus Christ having eyed it in the Old Testament.
- 4- The discourses and miracles of Jesus from the day of transfiguration until two days before his crucifixion (Matt 18- 25).
 - Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem (Matt 12).
 - The Savior's prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple because of the Jews' rejection and denial (Matt 24).
 - Description of the judgment (Matt 25).
 - 5- The sufferings, death and resurrection of our Lord (Matt 26- 28).
 - Judas betrays and delivers his Master (Matt 26).
 - Peter's sin and weakness when he had denied his Master (Matt 26).
 - Jesus' trial before Pilate and his crucifixion (Matt 27).
 - Judas repents and testifies to Jesus' righteousness and innocence (Matt 27).
 - Jesus' resurrection, the miracles that accompanied his resurrection, the confirmation of their truth, and the sending out of the disciples (Matt 28).

The following show a number of areas that are mentioned in Matthew but not in other gospels:

- 1- The visit of the Magi to Jesus (Matt 2).
- 2- The visit of Jesus to Egypt (Matt 2: 14).
- 3- Herod kills the children of Bethlehem (Matt 2: 16).
- 4- The parable of the ten virgins (Matt 25: 1- 13).
- 5- The dream of Pilate's wife (Matt 27: 19).
- 6- The resurrection of many saints upon the death of Jesus and their appearance to many (Matt 28: 52- 54).
- 7- Bribing the high priests, the elders and the Roman guards (Matt 28: 12, 13).

Key Words:

Jesus, the King

Matthew, a Jewish tax collector writes to a Jewish audience to convince them that the awaited King of Jews has come. By quoting repeatedly from the Old Testament, Matthew validates Christ's claims that He is, in fact, the prophesied Messiah. Everything about this King is unique: His miraculous birth of a virgin, His obscure yet His birthplace carefully prophesied by Micah, his flight into Egypt, His announcement by John the Baptist, His battle with Satan who tried to tempt him in the wilderness, all support the only possible conclusion that Jesus Christ is the culmination of promises delivered by the prophets over a period of 400 years from the prophecies of Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets.

Key Verses:

“Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (Matt 16: 16- 19)

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” (Matt 28: 18- 20)

Key Chapter:

Chapter 12: The turning point of Matthew comes in chapter 12, when the Pharisees, acting as the leadership of the Jewish nation, rejected Jesus Christ as their awaited Messiah, saying that He cast out demons not by the power of God but by the power of Satan. Christ's ministry changes immediately with His new teaching of parables, increased attention given to His disciples, and His repeated statement that His death on the cross is now near.

Christ in the Gospel of Matthew

Matthew presents Jesus in his gospel as the awaited Messiah King. In (Matt 1: 23) he writes a prediction, "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." In (2: 2) the Magi ask, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." In (2: 6) he writes, "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel." A prediction about the place of his birth. When Jesus was baptized (3: 16, 17) "When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then he clarifies that Jesus dwelt by the way of the sea (Matt 4: 14- 17) on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned."

The phrase "the kingdom of heaven" appears thirty-

two times in Matthew but nowhere else in the New Testament. To show that Jesus fulfills the qualifications for the Messiah, Matthew uses more Old Testament quotations and allusions than any other book (almost 130).

Jesus, in the gospel of Matthew, is the climax of the prophets: He is the servant of God, whom He had chosen (12: 14- 21). When the Pharisees plotted to put Him to death, he knew about it and withdrew from among them. Great multitudes followed him and he healed them all yet He warned them not to make Him known that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying (Is 42: 1- 5): “Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, And He will declare justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; And in His name Gentiles will trust.” (Matt 12: 18- 21) And when some of the scribes and Pharisees asked him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.” He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” (Matt 12: 38- 40)

The disciples asked Jesus, “Why do You speak to them in parables?” (Matt 13: 13- 15; 35) and He answered them, “Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are

hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' ... I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world." Jesus was not the first to teach using parables. The Old Testament prophets and many others had practiced this way of teaching. But Jesus' parables are void of fairy tales and conversations between trees and animals. He is the way, the truth and the life, who proclaimed the truly good news in the way of God's dealing with men. So His parables came realistic, bearing the lessons of eternity to all humans at all times and in all places. He said, "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." (John 6: 63)

In the transfiguration on the mount (Matt 17: 4- 13) Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead." And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist."

In Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem (Matt 21: 4, 5), Matthew refers to the prophecy, "All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, ' Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'" And in the temple (Matt 22: 42- 45) Jesus asked the Pharisees, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "The Son of David." He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying: ' The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool" ' ? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?" (Jesus is the son of David in the flesh and the Son of God in the Spirit).

In the second coming of Christ (24: 29, 30) Jesus clarifies that in those days the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

When Jesus had been arrested (Matt 26: 63, 64), the high priest said to Him,

The high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!" Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." And in Jesus' trial before Pilate (Matt 27: 27; 11- 30) "Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus said to him, "It is as you say."... Then the

soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified. Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink. Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

Joseph of Arimathea (Matt 27: 58- 60) "went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed."

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (Matt 28: 1- 6) came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the

Lord lay.” Then Jesus appeared to the disciples (Matt 28: 18- 20) “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.”

Comparison between the Gospel of Matthew and the Old Testament

| Matthew | Old Testament | Matthew | Old Testament |
|-----------|----------------|------------|-------------------|
| 1: 23 | Is 7: 14 | 12: 42 | 2 Chronicles 9: 1 |
| 2: 2 | Num 24: 17 | 13: 14, 15 | Is 6: 9, 10 |
| 2: 6 | Mic 5: 2 | 13: 35 | Ps 78: 2 |
| 2: 15 | Hos 11: 1 | 15: 7- 9 | Is 29: 13 |
| 2: 17 | Jer 31: 5 | 15: 30 | Is 35: 5, 6 |
| 2: 23 | Judg 13: 5 | 19: 7 | Deut 24: 1 |
| 2: 23 | 1 Kings 1: 11 | 21: 4, 5 | Zech 9: 9 |
| 3: 3 | Is 40: 3 | 21: 13 | Is 56: 7 |
| 4: 4 | Deut 8: 3 | 11: 42 | Ps 118: 22 |
| 4: 7 | Deut 6: 6 | 22: 4 | Prov 9: 2 |
| 4: 14- 16 | Is 9: 1, 2 | 22: 24 | Deut 25: 5 |
| 10: 35 | Mic 7: 6 | 22: 44 | Ps 110: 1 |
| 10: 36 | Ps 41: 9 | 24: 15 | Dan 9: 27 |
| 11: 10 | Mal 3: 1 | 27: 9, 10 | Zech 11: 12, 13 |
| 12: 3, 4 | 1 Sam 21: 1- 6 | 27: 34 | Ps 69: 21 |
| 12: 5 | Num 28: 9 | 27: 35 | Ps 22: 18 |
| 12: 7 | Hos 6: 6 | 27: 38 | Is 53: 12 |
| 12: 42 | 1 Kings 1: 1 | 27: 60 | Is 53: 9 |



THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Written by Luke the Evangelist about 64 A.D. in Rome

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4: 12)

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” (Acts 16: 30- 31)

The last words Jesus said to the disciples “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” Were a charging letter for them to bear the great responsibility “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1: 8) The Acts of the Apostles written by Luke the Evangelist is a story of men and women who bore the great responsibility powerfully and began to spread the good news about the Savior who rose from the dead throughout the whole earth known at that time.

We have already spoken, in the introduction of this part about the life of Luke, the author of this book. However, we add that the humility of this virtuous man appears particularly in the book of Acts from not mentioning any of his works that would praise himself though it was mentioned several times he accompanied Paul. This apostle praised him often in his epistles (see Col 4: 14; 2 Tim 4: 11). How

beautiful is the statement of the wise man: “Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.” (Prov 27: 2)

Luke wrote this book after his Gospel (see Acts 1: 1) and whereas he was a companion of Paul in his journeys, as is clear from (Acts 16: 1 to 17; also from 20: 5 to the end of the book; Col 4: 14; Phil 24; 2 Tim 4: 11) he undoubtedly wrote this book either under Paul’s personal supervision and guidance, or through his complete knowledge and approval. Christian churches have accepted this book since the date of its authorship as a certain report about the church apostolic generation. Everything we said about the Gospel of Luke befits our purpose here so it can be referred to in due place.

This book includes a history of the apostles’ ministry and acts and what they bore and this is why it was so entitled. It is a good supplementary to the gospels and a necessary introduction to the epistles. The gospels are closed with signs and prophecies about many things and with the promise of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This book contains the report of the completion of these things (see Mark 16: 17; Luke 24: 47- 49; John 14: 12- 17). The epistles are charged with indications of the events mentioned in this historical book. Thus it is evident that Acts is very necessary to all who study the Gospels and Epistles. It is the greatest guide to the reader in studying them and understanding their meanings.

This book begins with the resurrection of Jesus down to the close of the second year of Paul’s imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28: 30) covering about 30 years. The most probable reason for the cessation of reports there is that he wrote and published the book in that same year.

Luke, the author of this book, tells us about the first planting of Christianity in the world, the forming of Christian

THE DIDACTIC BOOKS

These are the 21 epistles ascribed to Paul, John, Peter, James and Jude.

Epistles are letters written to an individual, group, or public audience. The paper on which such a message is written is usually called an epistle. In the New Testament this word is used to indicate the 21 books which contain the sermons and teachings written by the apostles to churches or Christian individuals. These epistles are divided into five sections: 14 of them were written by Paul, 3 by John, two by Peter, one by James and one by Jude.

As for the teachings contained in these epistles, they are detailed explanations first of God's characters, i.e. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Second of the nature of man, his condition and his duties. These epistles are charged with a particular kind of commandments, orders and teachings concerning our duties toward our human race and they include eloquent urging to fulfill them according to our relation to them as chiefs and citizens (Rom 13; 1 Pet 2: 13), shepherds and people (1, 2 Tim; Titus; 1 Thess 5: 12, 13; Heb 13: 7, 17), men and women (Eph 5: 22- 33; Col 3: 18; 1 Pet 3: 1), parents and children (Eph 6; 1 Tim 5; Titus 2: 4), masters and slaves (Eph 6: 5; Col 3: 22; 4: 1; Titus 2: 9; 1 Pet 2: 18). Third of the great work of salvation for man. The epistles include profound clarifications of the great things which the disciples could not bear before the Savior's death (John 16: 12), such as the teachings about the nature of His spiritual kingdom, about his death for our sins and His resurrection for our justification, and

about the abolition of the ritual law and calling the Gentiles to unite with the Jews that all may become on church. The most particular teaching in these epistles is about the person of the Son and His office as our intercessor and about the Holy Spirit as our Sanctifier. The purpose of this divine teaching is to urge us to fulfill our duties not only toward these two divine persons in bringing to them all respect, honor, love, trust, praise, gratitude and fear; but also toward our human race, each category according to their rank and position.

Since it is not possible for us to explain at length the contents of each epistle separately in this summary which is a key to the Holy Bible, we satisfy ourselves with stating two general notes as a preliminary step toward understanding the basic purposes in these epistles in general.

First note: concerning the quality of these writings, we say that God's infinite wisdom considered appropriate to teach humans in this part of His pure words, not in regular compositions about particular subjects, but in writings similar to those revealed by the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen. He often inspired them when the effectual conditions and need necessitated to these writings. Their contents and their divine meanings are entirely oriented to the needs of those to whom they were written according to their requirements. Therefore in order to recognize the real purpose of each epistle, we should know all those conditions that can be reached from the epistle itself in particular.

Second note: concerning some deceptions that had been spread at the time of the apostles and caused confusion to the church.

The first of these deceptions resulted from the fact that it is most difficult for a Jewish Christian to believe two things: First that the Mosaic ritual established by divine or-

ders and clear texts, particularly the tradition of circumcision which has been most exactly kept from the time of Abraham and was considered by the public as necessary for salvation, was dissolved and is no more necessary to keep for him who seeks admittance to God's kingdom. Second that the Gentiles obtained through the Gospel the same rights that were obtained by the Jews. There are so many citations in the Holy Bible which show us how necessary it is to heed this as one of the deceptions of those times. We read in (Acts 15: 1): "And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." i.e. salvation can only be obtained in the Jewish church. See also (2 Cor9: 3; Gal 2: 4; 5: 1, 10- 12; 6: 12; Phil 3: 2; Col 2: 4, 8, 16; Tim 1: 10, 11, 14). In fact Paul's epistles are charged with such indications.

The second deception is the Greek philosophy, from which many deceptions branched, and it became as their source. It was a chronic and deadly disease for the souls of men more destructive than the sword of persecution. The origin of this deception was when some self-conceited people, who were proud of the qualified human mind, strived to extort Christianity that it might match their various opinions and orders. This is referred to in (1 Tim 6: 20; Titus 3: 9; Col 2: 8). The most particular subjects discussed by those were the person of Jesus Christ and the origin of evil in the world. It is said that Simon the sorcerer was the father of this deception and the first one who mingled these opinions with the Christian system. His followers were called Gnostics. This name is derived from a Greek word meaning "knowledge" because they claimed to have known God completely. Those were divided into many sects as we will explain later in detail in Part 4 of this book since it is not our subject now.

Before mentioning these epistles in detail, we say that all these divine writings deserve to be read with perfect understanding because of their contained advises concerning our behavior such as the holy orders about piety and conduct particularly Paul's epistles that are considered as a bookshop containing all the evangelical teachings that are richly derived from them as is obvious to the reader who seeks benefit.

The Epistle to the Romans contains lengthy teaching about the original sin and clear explanation of the way of justification before God. The first Epistle to the Corinthians contains the most exact and perfect report about God's spiritual gifts to the church. The Epistle to the Galatians explains clearly the purpose of the Mosaic Law. The two epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians are characterized by their explanation in the most precious style of the greatness of Christian rights and their evident benefits to man. They decide the rights of the Gentiles to partake of all the blessings of the Gospel exactly as the Jews without being subjected to the Mosaic Law. The two epistles to the Thessalonians (in addition to chapter 15 of 1 Cor) contain many teachings about the coming judgment and resurrection from the dead. The epistles to Timothy and Titus are full of exact teachings about the characteristics of the Christian pastors and their duties. The Epistle to the Hebrews is a lengthy explanation of the meaning of Levitical Priesthood and its purpose, the characteristic of Christ's priesthood, His sacrifice and His intercession. All of these teachings contained in Paul's epistles are found in the other epistles, but are explained here more in a clearer and more exact way.

The Epistle to the Romans

Written in Corinth 58 or 60 A.D.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” (Rom 1: 16)

“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 8: 38- 39)

The greatest of Paul’s ministries is the epistle to the Romans in the beginning of his New Testament epistles. As the four Gospels present the teachings and ministry of Jesus, the Epistle to the Romans reveals the greatness and the meaning of His atoning death. Paul uses a “question and answer” method in the most detailed explanation of the theory of the Gospel. The epistle is not only a religious book, but also a manual for believers to act accordingly as the epistle makes it clear that the pleasant reports of Christ are not only facts we believe in, but also a way of life to live, a life of righteousness in each person. They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus *“being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”* (Rom 3: 24).

Paul did not establish a church in Rome. It is possible that some members of the churches, which Paul had established in Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece, immigrated to Rome, preached some of its people and established the church of Rome. The majority of believers there were of the Gentiles (Rom 1: 13; 11: 13). There were also believers of Jewish origin among them (Rom 2: 17- 3: 8).

The city of Rome was founded in 723 B.C. and was at the time of Paul the greatest city in the world. Its population, according to some historical reports, amounted to four millions. It was known for its beautiful buildings. Most of its people were slaves, so exorbitant riches neighbored extreme poverty in the capital of the empire.

The church of Rome was famous several years prior to the writing of the epistle to the Romans (Rom 1: 8; 15: 23). There were a great number of believers in Rome and there were several places for meeting (Rom 16: 1- 16). The good news of the Gospel filled the vacuum left by the extinct pagan Roman religions in spite of the Roman persecution of Christians. The Roman historian Tacitus indicates that large numbers of Christians were forced to face torture and martyrdom during the reign of Nero in 64 A.C.

Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans in 58- 60 shortly before his third missionary journey (Acts 18: 23- 21: 14 see also Rom 15: 19) during the three months he had spent in Corinth, Greece (Acts 20: 3- 6) with Gaius (Rom 16: 23). Erastus, the treasurer of the city, mentions that Paul received contributions for the believers in Jerusalem from Macedonia and Achaia (Rom 15: 26) and was prepared to deliver them (Rom 15: 25). But instead of sailing directly to Jerusalem, he traveled northbound to avoid an ambush the Jews had prepared for him. So Paul delivered the epistle to a lady called Phoebe, a servant in the church of Cenchrea, who in turn carried it to Rome.

From comparing some parts of this epistle with some of the reports about Paul in the books of the New Testament, we can certainly come to know the place and the date in which the epistle was written. The place was Corinth, because one of the Christians whom the apostle mentions in his greetings at the end of the epistle was Gaius his host (Rom 16: 23). Gaius was a Christian baptized by Paul (1

Cor 1: 14). Paul also commends to them Phoebe, a servant in the church of Cenchrea, the eastern port of Corinth (Rom 16: 1). He mentions the place of writing the epistle by mentioning the name of the city only as if it were well-known or as if its mentioning were connected with its own name. Since its mentioning was coupled with Cenchrea it is most probable that he meant the city of Corinth.

As for the time of writing, we read in (Rom 15: 25, 26) that he was intended to carry contributions to his brethren in Jerusalem from Macedonia and Achaia. And in (1 Cor 16: 1- 6) that he had urged the Corinthian church in Achaia to make these contributions which he was intended to take when he passed to them through Macedonia. It becomes clear from (2 Cor 8: 1- 4; 9: 1- 4) that he was also intended to bring with him contributions from the churches of Achaia. Comparing all that was indicated here above with (Acts 19: 21; 20: 1- 3; 24: 17) we find that this took place while he was passing to Jerusalem through Macedonia and Hellas at the last time as mentioned in Acts. Most of researchers date this event in 58 A.D., others in 60 A.D. under the reign of Nero and so the epistle to the Romans would have been written at that time.

We have no historical reference in the New Testament of who actually started the church at Rome, nor do we really know who first entered Christianity to Rome. Some old researchers claim that the Roman church was founded by Paul and Peter. It is clear that Paul was not there before he wrote this epistle (Rom 1: 1- 15; 15: 23, 24). At that time, Roman Christians were known far and wide for their faith (Rom 1: 8). And whereas Paul and other Corinthian brethren who were with him send greetings to many brothers in Rome but mention nothing about Peter, then it is clear that he was not there at that time. Moreover, there is no mention in any other place of the Bible that he went to Rome,

nor do we have any belief that he had been there or that he went there later. There is no proof that Paul had ever been at Rome previously to his writing this epistle. It is most likely that the flourishing Christian community there was founded by strangers from Rome, both Jews and proselytes who had accepted the Gospel in Jerusalem (Acts 2: 10).

We have certain knowledge about those of whom this church was formed. Rome was at that time the metropolis of the world and the center of the Gentile world. We learn from many ancient works that it had then a large number of Jews dwelling in it. Then this church was a mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles. This fact is supported by the teachings included in this epistle. The apostle explains the word clearly about the Gospel of Christ and mentions his greatest teachings and most important principles as the arrangement of salvation prepared for the whole world which was intended to make both the Jews and Gentiles one in one body whose head is Christ.

In this respect, he brings decisive proofs. First, he proves that both Jews and Gentiles are under sin and they both need salvation through grace, and that Abraham the father of Israel was justified by faith, not by works of the law or by the rites of religion and all his children, according to the flesh, should be so justified because the law cannot save the people, who fall into sin and corruption, from its judgment nor from the power of the sin that possesses them, whose fruit excites anger. The righteousness gifted by God through faith in Christ delivers man from the curse of the law and from the authority of sin and carries him to a blissful state, a state of justification, sanctification and pure fellowship with God and prepares him to receive His eternal promises in heaven.

In this context, the apostle takes advantage of the opportunity to show the Israelites that there mere relation,

according to the flesh, to Abraham would not qualify them to receive God's promises that were received by this righteous father. But the faith in Christ makes the Gentiles the true children of Abraham and his partners in the promised blessings (chapter 4). The teaching about the Gentiles joining of the Jews and their equality of the rights given by God, particularly the teaching about the rejection of non-believers of the children of Israel who formed the majority of them, was a great shock to this proud nation; therefore the apostle, inspired by the Holy Spirit, singled out three chapters to discuss this subject clearly (Rom 9- 11). Then based on all that he had decided, he made several advices concerning behavior and daily conduct according to the Christians situations in Rome and their specific needs.

A scholar wrote about this epistle, "It is a unique work among human works. The favor it bestows on the greatest Greek and Roman scholars is like the favor of sunshine on the starlight because of its noble subject, its powerful composition and its correct construction and what it includes of important discoveries explained in it. It is truly indescribable." He who wants to understand this epistle should take two things into consideration:

First, the situation of some Roman church members, who were originally Gentiles or Jews but accepted the Gospel while still holding to their own suspicions. When the Gentile Christians claimed rights similar to those of Jewish Christians, the Jews stipulated that they should be circumcised.

Second, the perverted opinions of the Jews with respect to justification, which they based first upon the piety of their ancestors, their great merit, and their convention with God. Second upon the knowledge they had from God through Moses Law and their careful perusal of that law. Third, upon the obligations of the Levitical Law, which were

regarded as atonement for sin, particularly sacrifice and circumcision.

This epistle contains 16 chapters that can be divided into four sections:

Section 1: contains the opening of the letter, 1: 1- 15.

Section 2: contains the teachings useful for salvation, 1: 16- 11.

The most important teachings detailed in it can be gathered by the following summary: First, All people, Jews and Gentiles, are guilty before God. Second, Man's works, whether ritual or moral, have no power to justify the sinner before God. Third, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, through the perfect purity of His human nature and His utmost obedience in His heart, His conduct and His atoning death, became Savior to whoever trusted Him. Fourth, True faith in Jesus Christ should be accompanied with sanctification of the soul. Good works show the existence of this faith. Fifth, the sending out of the Son of God to this world to redeem the sinners through His incarnation and to save them, and the gift of the Gospel blessings to His believers are the great fruit of God's love to human kind. Sixth, in the last days, all Jews and Gentiles shall be called to accept Christ's Gospel in truth and enter His church. All these divine rules are determined, confirmed, explained and affirmed most perfectly in this section. The apostle's order of the several steps by which the Gospel is explained is extremely wonderful.

The contents of this section are found in 11 chapters. First, the apostle's public declaration of the Gospel of Christ, 1: 16, 17. Second, the sin of mankind, which becomes clear from the corruption of the Gentiles and the Jews through their unbelief, 1: 18- 32; 2: 1: 3- 20. Third, more clarification that the religion of the Gospel originated by the divine

grace is necessary for the redemption and salvation of both Jews and Gentiles, 3: 21- 28. Fourth, the universality of the salvation by grace through faith. Even Abraham and David and the whole believers were only saved by grace through faith as their minds were converted to God's promises in Christ, 3: 29- 31; 4. Fifth, the believers' exalted gifts and their joyful experience in the divine grace, 5: 1- 11. Sixth, as humankind partakes of sin and death because of its association with Adam in nature, so all believers partake of the righteousness of the Redeemer and the blessings of eternal grace because of their association in Spirit with Christ, who is the guarantor of the New Testament, 5: 12- 21. Seventh, the return of sinners from a state of twisted conscience to a state of grace must produce pure conduct and must lead them without interruption to eternal life, 6. Eighth, the author, in spite of regretting his original nature, is still pleased with God's law according to the inward man because of the grace gifted to him. He wishes for complete salvation through his faith in Jesus Christ and he rejoices in the midst of hardships and sorrows because he is certain that those who love God will only receive what is good for themselves, 7; 9. Ninth, God's justice demonstrated in entering Gentiles into the Christian church in spite of the Jew's objection, 9: 1- 24. Tenth, the calling of the Gentiles was mentioned in an old prediction. The Jews were reproached for claiming righteousness and because of their little faith, 9: 25- 33; 10. Eleventh, more clarification about God's negligence of some non-believing Israelites and entering some Gentiles to the church to establish the spirit of faith, humility and gratitude in all believers, 11.

Section 3: contains advices to believers according to what was said in the previous didactic section, 12- 15: 1- 14. It contains chapters.

Chapter 1: advices to believers to commit themselves

as members of Christ in all things and keep pure for the sake of God's mercy to them, 12. Chapter 2: advices in obedience to rulers and governors for they were raised by God, 12. Chapter 3: advices to be patient with brothers who are weak in faith, 14; 15- 7. Chapter 4: advices and prayers that they might obtain and show continuous joyfulness in God their Savior because they were believers of the Gentiles, 15: 8- 14.

Section 4: the close of the apostle's epistle referring to several things about his efforts, his delay in visiting Rome and his greetings to known persons, 15: 15; 16.

Key Word:

The Righteousness of God.

The theme of the Epistle to the Romans is found in (Rom 1: 16, 17). God grants His righteousness to whoever believes in Christ. Paul wrote the epistle to clarify God's greatest plan of salvation (Rom 1- 8), to show that God wants to save both Jews and Gentiles (Rom 9- 11), and to urge them on agreeing righteous life (Rom 12- 16). Paul moves during his presentation of God's plan of salvation from condemnation to victory and greatness, from abstract truth to practical truth. Key words, such as righteousness, faith, commandments and sin, are found more than 60 times in this epistle.

Key Verses:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” (Rom 1: 16, 17).

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed” (3: 21- 25).

Key Chapters:

Chapters 6- 8: are the most foundational passages in scripture for the spiritual life. These great chapters answer the questions of how to experience God’s deliverance from sin? How to live wisely in God’s mercy? How to live a triumphant Christian life in the power of the Holy Spirit? Many people think that these passages of the epistle bring the Christian nearer to the Savior Jesus Christ and make him more grounded and established in Him.

Christ in the Epistle to the Romans

Paul presents Jesus Christ as the Second Adam, whose righteousness and substitutionary death have provided salvation for all who place their faith in Him. He offers His salvation as a gracious gift to all sinful men, having borne God’s condemnation and wrath for their sinfulness. His death and resurrection are the basis for the believer’s redemption, forgiveness, salvation, and glorification.

Comparison between Romans and the Old Testament

| <i>ROMANS</i> | <i>OLD TESTAMENT</i> | <i>ROMANS</i> | <i>OLD TESTAMENT</i> |
|---------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1: 17 | Heb 2: 4 | 9: 33 | Is 8: 14 |
| 3: 2 | Deut 4: 7, 8 | 10: 6, 7 | Deut 30: 12, 13 |
| 3: 10 | Ps 14, 53 | 10: 11 | Is 28: 16 |
| 3: 12 | Deut 32: 35 | 10: 15 | Is 52: 7 |
| 4: 3 | Gen 15: 6 | 10: 19 | Deut 31: 21 |
| 4: 7, 8 | Ps 32: 1, 2 | 10: 21 | Is 65: 2 |
| 4: 13, 17 | Gen 17: 4, 5 | 11: 3, 4 | Mal 19: 10- 18 |
| 5: 15 | Is 53: 11 | 11: 7, 8 | Is 29: 10 |
| 7: 15 | Gal 5: 17 | 11: 9, 10 | Ps 69: 22, 23 |
| 8: 15 | Is 56: 5 | 11: 26 | Is 59: 20 |
| 8: 26 | Zech 12: 10 | 14: 6 | 1 Cor 10: 31 |
| 8: 36 | Ps 44: 22 | 15: 9 | Ps 18: 49 |
| 9: 13 | Mal 1: 2, 3 | 15: 12 | Is 11: 1- 10 |
| 9: 15 | Ex 33: 19 | 16: 26 | 2 Pet 1: 20 |
| 9: 25 | Hos 2: 23 | | |
| 9: 29 | Is 1: 9 | | |

An introduction to the Catholic Epistles

Now we have spoken about the 14 Pauline epistles. The 7 remaining epistles attributed to other apostles have been called through ages the Catholic, or general epistles since most of them were written to Christian Jews who had been scattered in different countries in general and not to churches or persons in particular as the Pauline epistles.

Some evil ones had spread many corrupt opinions in the apostolic age, some of them were a result of misunderstanding Paul's teachings and proofs, and others were a result of twisting the contents of his epistles. So apostles Peter, John, James and Jude wrote their epistles with the intent of explaining Paul's teachings, defending him and clearing him from the false charges of the ignorant and those of bad intents (2 Pet 3: 15 etc.) and proving to the world that faith without works is dead. Yet, Paul did not speak lengthily and scrupulously except about that living, fruitful evangelical who was himself describing him as working through love (Gal 5: 6). The apostle also spoke against the faith that is void of good works, which those considered as sufficient for salvation. Peter refers to that faith as a twist of the true faith, which his brother Paul had described in his epistles (2 Pet 3: 16). Paul was agreeable in his opinion to all other apostles and was certain that eternal life could only be obtained through the true faith proved by pure living.

The General Epistle of James

Written in Jerusalem 61 A.D.

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. (James 1: 5- 6)

The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. (James 5: 16)

The reason for writing the epistle

James explains the Jewish Christians that true faith must be accompanied with good work. Faith without works is not considered as faith since it is dead and dead faith worse than unbelief. Therefore, faith must practice productive work so that everyone can see the good works resulting from faith and glorify God. Faith in words or in thought is insufficient. It should urge the believer on good work.

A believer bears the temptations he meets in his life and he faces them with his faith. He becomes stronger in bearing temptations and gets acquainted with Satan's seduction. He will not allow himself to submit to lust or fall in sin. He obeys the word of God, hears it and acts accordingly. He harbors no spite against anybody or favors anybody, but he treats everyone with the spirit of brotherhood.

Faith appears in works. It is not a mere word or knowledge, but obedience to God and responding to His covenants. Faith controls what the tongue utters. This small member has intense effect and must be bridled through faith which gives wisdom and divine prudence and refus-

es the false wisdom of the world, leading us to faith away from what is earthly and bringing us near to submission to God's will. It also provides us with the power to resist the evil on through patience during troubles and temptations and awaiting victory over them from God.

The writer of the epistle

The writer of the epistle calls himself a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. Scholars, researchers and examiners of the Bible agreed on the following about this person:

First, he was the Lord's brother, whom Paul mentions as one of the apostles, Gal 1: 19.

Second, he was the pastor of Jerusalem Church, whom Luke mentions in Acts 12: 17; 15: 13; 21: 18.

Third, he was the one mentioned among the Lord's brothers James, Simon and Judas as one of them, Matt 13: 55, Mark 6: 3). But was he the same James the son of Alphaeus, one of the twelve that are mentioned in Matt 10: 3; Mark 3: 18; Luke 6: 15; Acts 1: 13 or was he another person? This has caused long discussions and disagreement since there is no divine text, but in brief we say:

Traditions refer to James, Jesus' brother, as the author of this epistle since James the son of Alphaeus, Jesus' disciple, was not mentioned in any important thing after resurrection.; and It is unlikely that the son of Zebedee was the author, for he was martyred in A.D. 44 (Acts 12:2). According to Josephus, James was martyred in 62, while according to Hegesippus, James died in 66 A.D.

There is no need now to discuss the proofs of each party; therefore it is sufficient to mention that the author of this epistle was regarded as of high standing in the con-

gregation of apostles and elders in Jerusalem (Acts 15: 13- 21). Paul regarded him as one of the apostles (Gal 1: 19) in the same order of Peter and John who were considered as pillars, mentioning before them (Gal 2: 9). There are also other statements that are in conformity with the generally accepted testimony of early church, all of which are mentioned in a way that brings us to deduce that he was the remarkable person in the church of Jerusalem who was mentioned in (Acts 21: 18; Gal 2: 12). Accordingly, and supposing that he was not one of the twelve apostles, this would not disparage the canonicity of his epistle, which is worthy of the same consideration given to the apostles' writings.

As for the date of this epistle, there are also several opinions. Some believe that it was written at an early age of the church prior to the Jerusalem Council mentioned in Acts 15. Others believe that it was written shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, namely around 61 A.D. The last opinion is most probable. It is also more agreeable to the contents.

The subject matter is that the doctrine of justification by faith mentioned in this epistle, which had been prevalent among the addressees, was a deviation from Paul's public teaching. Those built their hope upon fruitless reasonable faith instead of the true living faith, which works by love and purifies life from sin. The apostle describes the people of this age in his epistle as self-seeking and disputers. We learn from the dates that the generation that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem was corrupt and full of evils, especially enmity and self-seeking. Therefore they were exactly as the apostle who wrote to them described them. The Lord had predicted that as a result of deviation from the true teaching as shown in church, love would grow cold in those who followed him namely, who they would return

from serving him. Accordingly, it is most probable that the addressees were the people of the generation referred to here. In fact, the prophecy of the Savior as in (Matt 24: 10-13) applies to those of Jewish origin who were not worthy of being members in the Christian church according to this epistle, 2 James and Jude.

As for the place of writing, it is clear that it was written in Jerusalem, where James was continuously resident. This epistle is called general because it was not written for a certain church but for all Christians of the different tribes of Israel, which were spread in Palestine and abroad (James 1: 1) since Jerusalem was the center of the nation. The epistle contains terms referring to Christians and others referring to unbelievers. Therefore the title of this epistle was different from those of other epistles. Also the term of its writing is more applicable to term of the prophets of the Old Testament than to that of some prophets of the New Testament. It is similar to Christ's Sermon on the Mount in many ways, especially in its spirit, its multiple subjects and in what concerns Christian behavior and living. The name of our Lord Jesus is only mentioned twice. It does not start with greetings nor does it end with apostolic blessings as other epistles. It is definitely one of the most perfect, most beautiful and simple compilations of the New Testament.

The purpose of this epistle:

- 1- To comfort the Christians in their several troubles.
- 2- To correct their opinions and enable their minds in the doctrine of justification by faith.
- 3- To warn them against the ugly and bad practices prevalent among the Jews.
- 4- To warn the evil ones against the forthcoming Day of Judgment.

This epistle contains 5 chapters, which include 18 sections:

- 1- Exhorts believers to rejoice in trials, 1: 1- 4.
- 2- Exhorts to seek wisdom from God and to trust His promise with no doubting, 1: 5- 8.
- 3- Exhorts the rich and the poor of believers to bear the trials and wait for an eternal life thereafter, 1: 9- 12.
- 4- Shows that sin is a fruit of man's desire and is not from God from whom every good gift and every perfect gift come, 1: 13- 18.
- 5- Wakes up men to accept the word of God and use it prudently, 1: 19- 27.
- 6- Warns against honoring the rich and despising the poor for this is against the law of love, 2: 1- 9.
- 7- Shows that breaking one commandment is considered as breaking the commandments of the whole law, 2: 10- 12.
- 8- Shows that our faith is dead without works and is unable to save the soul, 2: 13- 26.
- 9- Warns against haughtiness and the evils resulting from the stumbles of unbridled tongue, 3: 1- 12.
- 10-Compares the earthly wisdom with the heavenly one considering the nature and results, 3: 13- 18.
- 11-Shows the bad consequences of lusts and evil desires, 4: 1- 6.
- 12-Preaches men in submission to God and trusting themselves, 4: 11- 17.
- 13-Warns them against false accusation, slander and self-trust, 4: 11- 17.
- 14-Threatens the rich and the evil with horrible judgment, 5: 1- 6.
- 15-Exhorts believers to be patient in temptations and hoping to be saved from them, 5: 7- 11.
- 16-Warns them against swearing and exhorts them to pray

and give thanks, 5: 12, 13.

17-Advises them to visit the sick and to confess their trespasses to one another and shows them the efficacy of prayer, 5: 14- 18.

18-Urges them to turn back wandering brethren to the ways of the truth for that is the best of profits, 5: 19, 20.

Key Words:

Working Faith.

Through this epistle, James develops the idea of the characteristics of true faith and uses it as a series of experiences to help the reader to estimate the nature of their relationship with Christ. The epistle aims at urging believers to choose the nature of their everyday life through their tendencies and works. True faith changes a person's behavior into virtue, but those who do not change have dead faith.

Key Verses:

“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (1: 19- 22).

“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.” (2: 14- 17).

Key Chapter:

Chapter 1: Temptations and experiences are the hardest things in Christian life. James clarifies the necessary response in each case: Consider experiences as a way to full joy. God does not tempt anyone to sin.

Christ in the Epistle of James, the Apostle

James refers to the Lord Jesus Christ in (1: 1; 2: 1) and then anticipates His second coming “Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.” (5: 7, 8). His speech was saturated with the teachings of the Lord Jesus, particularly the Sermon on the Mount. For example (1: 2) “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials”, which is compared with (Matt 5: 10- 12) “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Also cf 2: 13 and Matt 6: 14, 15; 4: 11 and Matt 7: 1, 2; 5: 2 and Matt 6: 19.

Comparison between James and the Old Testament

| James | Old Testament | James | Old Testament |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1: 5 | 1 Kings 3: 9, 11, 12 | 5: 11 | Ps 94: 12 |
| 1: 5 | Jer 29: 12, 13 | 5: 11 | Job 1: 21, 22 |
| 1: 17 | Mal 3: 6 | 5: 11 | Job 42: 10 |
| 2: 21- 23 | Gen 15: 6 | 5: 16 | Gen 20: 17 |
| 2: 21- 23 | Gen 22: 9- 12 | 5: 16 | Deut 9: 18- 20 |
| 2: 21 | Is 41: 8 | 5: 17, 18 | 1 Kings 17: 1 |
| 2: 25 | Josh 2: 1 | 5: 17, 18 | 1 Kings 18: 42- 45 |
| 3: 2 | 1 Kings 8: 46 | | |

SAMPLE 72 P. 181

CHAPTER 5

THE REVELATION OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE

Written in Patmos or Ephesus between 90 and 100 A.D.

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.” (Rev 1: 3)

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea... And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’” (Rev 21: 1, 3- 4)

As Genesis is the book of beginnings, Revelation is the book of consummation, in which the divine steps of salvation are completed and the name of God is blessed before all creation. Though there are many prophecies in the gospels and epistles, Revelation is the only book in the New Testament which concentrates on prophetic events. The word “revelation” means disclosure or unveiling; therefore the book of Revelation is an unveiling of the character and program of God.

John wrote Revelation during his exile on the island of Patmos. The book contains visions and a symbol of the resurrected Christ, who will judge the earth and change it into a new earth, which He rules in truth and righteousness. The title of the book in Greek is “The Revelation of John”.

The book clarifies or unveils that which was ambiguous and unknown, but the preferable title is the one quoted from the first verse, namely, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants --- things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John”.

It becomes clear from the book’s style, plan and harmony that the author is one, namely John. His name is found four times (Rev 1: 1, 4, 9; 22: 8). The book was spread very quickly because of its extraordinary content. It was addressed to the seven churches in the Roman province of Asia Minor. All early churches acknowledged it and many of the first, second and third centuries referred to it and mentioned it. It was accepted as one of the books of the New Testament written by John the Apostle and was testified to by Justin Martyr, Hermas, Milto, Irenaeus, Muratorian Canon, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and others.

The book contains many letters to the chosen churches in the Roman province of Asia Minor (1: 3, 4). The first and most important letter is the one addressed to the Ephesian church, then other letters continue up to the one addressed to the church of Laodicea. Each letter has a particular content for each one of these churches. The whole book brings important reports for all churches “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.” (Rev 1: 3)

John’s missionary and his witness for Christ resulted in banishing him by the Roman authorities to the isolated Isle of Patmos (1: 9), which was a lonely volcanic island to the east of the Mediterranean Sea, to which Romans were used to banish criminals and political opposition.

The aforementioned books of the New Testament

The conclusion of the two testaments

The last part of Revelation shows us the characteristics of the Gospel and its superiority over the law (cf. 22:21, Mal 4:6 and John 1:17). It expresses the design of the whole Bible, whose great end is to guide us to Christ, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last (22:13) and to call humans in general to take through Him the water of life freely namely the blessed life whose guarantee is the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who seek it (22:17; John 7:37-39) for only those that are pure in heart shall see God.

How great is the difference between the conclusion of the Old Testament and that of the New Testament. The last part of Malachi makes one feel that the work has not yet been finished. It prompts the Jews to hold to the Mosaic Law until Christ, the sun of righteousness shines and raises His kingdom in this world. It moves their waiting for other proclamations after any new words also spoken from heaven. The last of John, contrarily, indicates frankly that the book of God, the root of our faith, has been finished. It closes the door against the expectation of new proclamations from God. It also decides that all the means of obtaining salvation with all of their concerns have been duly arranged and that Christ will also come and finish all his purposes concerning this world, passing the last judgment on each human being. Now, more than two thousand years have passed and the world has had no word added to this book by Christ. He only speaks in his book which is so clear that whoever walks His road; although a fool, shall not go astray (Is 35: 8). "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city." (Rev 22: 14).

Thus, we should let these books of the New and Old Testament be before our eyes and in our hands and ears and mouths and hearts at all times since the book of God is our spiritual food and heavenly nourishment. Through listening to it and keeping it we become blessed by God, cleansed of our sins and sanctified. It is the instrument of true salvation for perishing souls and a light for those who walk in the darkness. It alone guarantees to bring perished souls to God, to bring those that are lowly in heart to salvation, to comfort the broken hearts and refresh and rejoice them. It is indeed a precious jewel and a food sweeter than honey. It is well said that Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her because she sat at Jesus' feet to hear from him the words of eternal life.

We ask God, our generous God and merciful Father, who has blessed us with His Holy Bible, which is more precious than all jewels, to help us to study it through His Holy Spirit and impress it deeply in our minds to comfort us, purify us, and renew us according to His glorious image and to edify us and perfect us in Christ building in our hearts all the Christian virtues in the name of His beloved Son, our Savior. Amen.

A table of the Harmony of the Epistles With the time of events they mentioned And their place of happening

The Harmony of the Epistles “*Kitab Ittifaq al-Bashirin*” is a large volume of 600 pages that was written by Dr. Rev. Simeon H. Calhoun, printed in Beirut 1870 A.D. and reprinted and published by Rev. Manis Abdul Nour after revising and modernizing it in the beginning of the nineties of the last century. The book was issued by the Kasr El-Dobara Church in Egypt. This addendum is a summing table of the book “*Kitab Ittifaq al-Bashirin*” by the orientalist *Simeon Howard Calhoun*.

Scholars spent a long time and engaged in hard and continuous work preparing what they call concordance and chronological order of the events mentioned in the four gospels to prove that the difference between them is but external. It goes without saying that good knowledge of the circumstances and conditions of these events shows us their agreement to each other and our inability to define their agreement must be a result of ignorance. Such ignorance will not be harmful to those who read these gospels impartially, since these external differences only concern unavailing accidental conditions. Big events and essential doctrines all shine in one form.

On this subject, we have chosen the opinion of the most famous and reliable examiners. It is obvious that our Savior, to Him be the glory, only started his ministry publicly when he was thirty years old. It is mostly believed that he practiced it for about three and a half years. We have divided all of his history into 9 divisions:

1- From the appearance of the angel to Zechariah to

Christ’s ascension to Jerusalem as a 12 years old child – 13 years and 6 months.

- 2- From our Savior’s beginning to practice His ministry in public to the expiry of 12 months – one year.
- 3- From the first Passover after the Savior’s beginning his ministry to the second Passover – one year.
- 4- From the second Passover to the third Passover – one year.
- 5- From the third Passover to the Feast of Tabernacles – 6 months.
- 6- From the Feast of Tabernacles to the arrival of our Savior at Bethany 6 days before the fourth Passover – 6 months excluding 6 days.
- 7- From the Savior’s entry into Jerusalem publicly to the fourth Passover – 4 days.
- 8- From the fourth Passover to the end of the following Sabbath – 2 days.
- 9- From the resurrection of our Savior to His ascension – 40 days.

We warmly invite the readers to study the gospels according to the above-mentioned order, which will give them great spiritual benefit and more trust in the authenticity of the gospel history.

**1-Our Savior’s birth and childhood,
a coverage of thirteen and a half years**

| | <i>Matt</i> | <i>Mark</i> | <i>Luke</i> | <i>John</i> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1- Introduction to the Gospel of Luke | | | 1:1-4 | |
| 2- The appearance of the angel to Zechariah *Jerusalem | | | 1:5-25 | |
| 3- The appearance Of the angel to Mary *Nazareth | | | 1:26-38 | |

| | <i>Matt</i> | <i>Mark</i> | <i>Luke</i> | <i>John</i> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| 4- Mary visits Elizabeth * Juttah | | | 1:39-56 | J o s h 15:55 |
| 5- The birth of John The Baptist*Juttah. March | | | 1:57-80 | |
| 6- The appearance of The angel of Joseph * Nazareth | 1:18-25 | | | |
| 7- The birth of Jesus *Bethlehem. November | | | 2:1-7 | |
| 8- Angels appear to Shepherds * at Bethle- hem | | | 2:8-20 | |
| 9- Circumcision of Jesus and bringing Him to the temple *Bethlehem. Je- rusalem | | | 2:21-38 | |
| 10- The visit of the Magi. * Jerusalem Bethlehem. | 2:1-12 | | | |
| 11- Jesus flees to Egypt, Herod's cruelty and Je- sus' return*Bethlehem. Nazareth | 2:13-23 | | 2:39, 40 | |
| 12- Jesus goes to the Passover as a 12 years old child *Jerusalem | | | 2:41-52 | |
| 13-Genealogy of Jesus | 1:1-17 | | 3:23-38 | |
| 2- John's call to the ministry and his commencement to practice it publicly. A coverage of one year | | | | |
| 14- The ministry of John the Baptist * The wilder- ness. Jordan. | 3:1-12 | 1:1-8 | 3:1-18 | |
| 15- The baptism of Jesus *Jordan | 3:13-17 | 1:9-11 | 3:21-23 | |

| | <i>Matt</i> | <i>Mark</i> | <i>Luke</i> | <i>John</i> |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 16- The temptation of Jesus *Judean Wilderness | 4:1-11 | 1:12, 13 | 14:1-13 | |
| 17- Introduction to the Gospel of John | | | | 1:1-18 |
| 18- John the Baptist's Testimony to Jesus *Bethabara Jordan | | | | 1:19-34 |
| 19- Jesus takes disciples *Jordan. Galilee. | | | | 1:35-51 |
| 20- The wedding in Cana of Galilee | | | | 2:1-12 |
| 3- The events of one year from the first Passover After the beginning of Jesus' ministry to the second Passover | | | | |
| | <i>Matt</i> | <i>Mark</i> | <i>Luke</i> | <i>John</i> |
| 21-Jesus drives the salesmen out of the temple at Passover *Jerusalem | | | | 2:13-25 |
| 22-Our Savior's discourse with Nicodemus *Jerusalem | | | | 3:1-21 |
| 23- Jesus remains in Judea, His baptism and John the Baptist's testimony to Him | | | | 3:22-36 |
| 24- Jesus moves to Galilee | 4:12; 14:3-5 | 1:14 6:17-20 | 4:14 3:19-20 | 4:1-3 |
| 25- Our Savior's discourse with the Samaritan woman. Many Samaritans believe In Him *Shechem or Nablus | | | | 4:4-42 |
| 26- Jesus teaches publicly in Galilee | 4:17 | 1:14-15 | 4:14-15 | 4:43-45 |

| | <i>Matt</i> | <i>Mark</i> | <i>Luke</i> | <i>John</i> |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 172- Christ's ascension *Bethany (Acts 1:9-12) | | 16:19-20 | 24:50-53 | |
| 173- The end of the Gos- pel of John | | | | 20 : 30- 31, 21:25 |

SAMPLE 72 pages

The Parables of Christ

Including the place of telling them and their reference in the Bible

| <i>PARABLE</i> | <i>PLACE</i> | <i>REFERENCE</i> |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Sower | Capernaum | Matt 13:1-23 |
| Tares | Capernaum | Matt 13:24-30, 36-43 |
| Growing seed | Capernaum | Mark 4:26-29 |
| Mustard seed | Capernaum | Matt 13:31-32 |
| Leaven | Capernaum | Matt 13:33 |
| Hidden treasure | Capernaum | Matt 13:44 |
| Pearl of great price | Capernaum | Matt 13:45-46 |
| Dragnet cast into the sea | Capernaum | Matt 13:47-50 |
| Debtors | Capernaum | Luke 7:36-50 |
| Unforgiving servant | Capernaum | Matt 18:23-25 |
| Good Samaritan | Jericho | Luke 10:25-37 |
| Rich fool | Galilee | Luke 12:13-21 |
| Servants | Galilee | Luke 12:35-48 |
| Barren fig tree | Galilee | Luke 13:6-9 |
| Lost sheep | Galilee | Luke 15:3-7 |
| Lost coin | Galilee | Luke 15:8-10 |
| Lost son | Galilee | Luke 15:11-32 |
| Unjust steward | Galilee | Luke 16:1-12 |
| Rich man and Lazarus | Galilee | Luke 16:19-31 |
| Persistent widow | Judea | Luke 18:1-8 |

A table of the conversations of Jesus

| <i>CONVERSATION</i> | <i>PLACE</i> | <i>REFERENCE</i> |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| The Pharisee and the tax collector | Judea | Luke 18:9-14 |
| The workers in the vineyard | Judea | Matt 20:1-16 |
| The Minas | Jericho | Luke 19:11-27 |
| The two sons | Jerusalem | Matt 21:28-32 |
| The vineyard | Jerusalem | Matt 21:33-46 |
| The wedding | Jerusalem | Matt 22:1-14 |
| The ten virgins | Jerusalem | Matt 25:1-13 |
| The talents | Jerusalem | Matt 25:14-30 |
| With Nicodemus | Jerusalem | John 3:1-21 |
| With the Samaritan woman | Sychar | John 4:1-42 |
| In the synagogue | Nazareth | Luke 4:16-32 |
| The Sermon on the Mount | Galilee | Matt ch. 5- ch. 7 |
| His commandments to His Apostles | Galilee | Matt ch. 10 |
| The rebuke to Chorazin and Bethsaida | Galilee | Matt 11:20-24 |
| On the healing of a man | Jerusalem | John ch. 5 |
| On plucking heads of grain | Judea | Matt 12:1-8 |
| On the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit | Capernaum | Matt 12:23-37 |
| On the bread of life | Capernaum | John ch. 6 |
| On inner purity | Capernaum | Ps 7:1-23 |
| On forgiveness and humility | Capernaum | Matt ch. 18 |
| On the Feast of Tabernacles | Jerusalem | John ch. 7 |
| On the prostitute | Jerusalem | John 8:1-11 |
| On the sheep | Jerusalem | John 10 |
| With the Scribes and Pharisees | Galilee | Luke 11:37-54 |
| On humility | Galilee | Luke 14:7-14 |
| With the rich young ruler | Beyond the Jordan | Matt 19:16-30 |
| His woes to the Pharisees | Jerusalem | Matt ch. 23 |
| Predictions about Jerusalem | Jerusalem | Matt ch. 24 |

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Comforting his disciples | Jerusalem | John 14-16 |
| Near Gethsemane | Jerusalem | Matt 26:21-26 |
| Before His ascension | Galilee | Matt 28:16-20 |

SAMPLE 72 pages

A chronological table of the life of Paul the Apostle

| Year | Bible Events | Contemporary Events |
|------|--|--|
| 35 | Paul was first mentioned upon Stephen's death. He was then young (Acts 7:58). | |
| 36 | Paul's conversion (Acts 9). That was in the twenty first year of Tiberius' reign. | |
| 37 | Was in Damascus and Arabia (Gal 1:17). | On March 16, Tiberius the king of Rome died and Caligula Became Emperor after him. |
| 38 | Flight from Damascus to Jerusalem, then to Tarsus (Acts 9:23-30). | |
| 39 | During these years, Paul ministered in Syria and Cilicia (Gal 1:21). It is most probably that during this time, he suffered the disasters mentioned in (2 Cor 11:24-26). | On January 25 Claudius becomes emperor after the death of Caligula. Judea and Samaria are given to Herod Agrippa 1 mentioned in (Acts 12). |
| 40 | | |
| 41 | | |
| 43 | | |
| 44 | Paul is brought by Barnabas from Tarsus to Antioch. He stays there one year before the Famine (Acts 11:25, 26). | Death of Agrippa 1 Mentioned in (Acts 12). |
| 45 | Paul is sent to Jerusalem with Barnabas to relieve the famine (Acts 11:30). This is his second visit to Jerusalem. | |
| 46 | At Antioch | |
| 47 | At Antioch | |
| 48 | Paul's first missionary journey with Barnabas from Antioch to Cyprus then to Perga in Pamphylia, then to Antioch of Pisidia, then to Lystra and Derbe. | Agrippa II mentioned in Acts 25 is made king of Chalcis, known today as Anjar located in Al Beca, Damascus. |

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| 49 | Back going by the same places to Antioch (Acts 13, 14). (All within two years). | |
| 50 | Paul and Barnabas attend the council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:2-30). This is Paul's third journey to Jerusalem. | |
| 51 | Paul's second missionary journey from Antioch to Cilicia, Derbe, Lystra, Phrygia, Galatia. | |
| 52 | Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth, where he writes 1 Thessalonians (Acts 15:35-18:1). | |
| 53 | At Corinth; writes 2 Thessalonians and stays there for one year and six months (Acts 18:11). | Felix Procurator in Judea. |
| 54 | Spring * Leaves Corinth and reaches Jerusalem going by Cenchrea, Ephesus and Caesarea. Summer * he reaches Jerusalem (his fourth voyage to Jerusalem) then returns to Antioch. Autumn * Paul's third missionary journey to Ephesus going by Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:18-19:1). | Nero becomes emperor in October Upon the death of Claudius. |
| 55 | Paul at Ephesus | |
| 56 | Paul at Ephesus | |
| 57 | Spring * writes 1 Corinth. Summer * leaves Ephesus for Macedonia (Acts 20:1). Autumn * at Macedonia writes 2 Corinth. Winter * goes to Corinth. | |

| | | | |
|----|--|---|--|
| 58 | Spring * at Corinth writes Galatians and Romans then leaves Corinth going by Philippi, Miletus, Tyre and Caesarea. Summer * at Pentecost, he is arrested and sent To Caesarea (Acts 20:3-21:15). | Acts 21:17 -28:16 | |
| 59 | At Caesarea. | | |
| 60 | August * sent to Rome by Festus when he had been imprisoned for about two years in Jerusalem and Caesarea (Acts 20:3-21:15). Winter *shipwrecked at Malta | | Felix is recalled and is succeeded by Festus (Acts 24:27). |
| 61 | Spring * Arrives at Rome | | |
| 62 | Spring * Writes Philemon, Colossians, Ephesus. Autumn * Writes Philippians. Some believe it was most probably written in Spring 63. | Albinus succeeds Festus as procurator of Judea. | |
| 63 | Spring * Paul acquitted at Rome after two years (Acts 28:30), wrote Hebrews and goes to Macedonia (Philippians 2:24) and Asia Minor (Philemon 22). | The July 19th Great Fire at Rome. Roman Christians blamed and persecuted. | |
| 64 | Paul goes to Spain as believed. | | |
| 65 | In Spain as believed | Florus made procurator of Judea after Albinus. Jewish war begins, and was ended in 70 A.D. with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and the dispersal of the Jewish nation. | |
| 66 | Summer * returns from Spain to Asia Minor as believed (1 Tim 1:3). | | |

| | | |
|----|--|----------------------------------|
| 67 | Summer * writes 1 Timothy from Macedonia (1 Tim 1:3). Autumn * writes Titus from Ephesus. Winter * at Nicopolis (Titus 3:12). | |
| 68 | Spring * in prison at Rome, where he writes 2 Timothy. He was then looking forward joyfully to the time of his departure (2 Tim: 2:9, 4:6-18). Summer*suffered martyrdom in May or June. | Death of Nero in middle of June. |

SAMPLE 72 pages

Supplementary to the New Testament

A table showing when each book of the New Testament was written, where and by whom

| Book | Writer | Place of writing | Date (A.D.) |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Matthew | Matthew | Palestine | 39 |
| 1 Thessalonians | Paul | Corinth | 52 |
| 2 Thessalonians | Paul | Corinth | 53 |
| 1 Corinthians | Paul | Ephesus | 57 |
| 2 Corinthians | Paul | Macedonia | 57 |
| Galatians | Paul | Corinth | 58 |
| Romans | Paul | Corinth | 58 or 60 |
| James | James | Jerusalem | 61 |
| Mark | Mark | Unknown | 61 |
| Ephesians | Paul | Rome | 62 |
| Colossians | Paul | Rome | 62 |
| Philemon | Paul | Rome | 62 |
| Philippians | Paul | Rome | 63 |
| Hebrews | Paul | Italy | 63 |
| Luke | Luke | Caesarea | 63 |
| Acts | Luke | Caesarea | 64 |
| Jude | Jude | Unknown | between 64 and 66 |
| 1 Peter | Peter | Babylon | between 63 and 67 |
| 2 Peter | Peter | Babylon | between 64 and 68 |
| 1 Timothy | Paul | Macedonia | 67 |
| Titus | Paul | Ephesus | 67 |
| 2 Timothy | Paul | Rome | 68 |
| 2 John | John | Ephesus | after 70 |
| 3 John | John | Ephesus | after 70 |
| John | John | Ephesus | between 90 - 100 |
| 1 John | John | Ephesus | between 90 -100 |
| Revelation | John | Patmos or Ephe- sus | between 90 - 100 |

A supplementary of the cities of the New Testament

All countries mentioned in the New Testament are bordering on the Mediterranean Sea. Some of them are beyond, but all of them were under the Roman Empire in the days of our Savior. The seas mentioned therein are the Sea of Galilee, or the Lake of Tiberius, also known as the Lake of Gennesaret; the Red Sea and parts of the Mediterranean Sea. Our Lord's journeys were within the land of Israel to the west of the Jordan, which was divided into three provinces: Judea being the southern, Galilee the northern and Samaria the central province. The land to the east of the Jordan was called Perea, where the ten cities are located.

The journeys of Paul the Apostle were in the land of Israel, Syria, Asia Minor (Anatolia), Greece and Italy. However many say that he also traveled to Spain. The countries of Asia Minor mentioned in the New Testament are Cilicia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Galatia, Phrygia, Pisidia, Lycia, Asia, Mysia, Bithynia, Troas, Lycaonia and Pamphylia. The western part of Asia Minor includes the provinces of Mysia, Lydia and Asia. The seven churches mentioned in Revelation 2, 3 were Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, the greatest of which was Ephesus.

Names of cities, seas and villages mentioned in the New Testament in alphabetical order

A

Abilene: a province in Syria (Luke 3:1).

Achaia: the northern part of Mora Peninsula whose capital was Corinth (Acts 18:12).

Adria: the gulf of Venice lying between Greece and Italy (Acts 27:27).

Aenon: a city in Judea near Jordan (John 3:23).

Alexandria: the great port of Egypt. In old times, it was a noted city of trade and an origin of knowledge (Acts 6:9).

Amphipolis: a city in Macedonia now called Empoli (Acts 17:1).

Antioch: was one of the biggest cities in Syria, in which the distinctive name of “Christians” was first applied to the followers of Jesus. There was also another city bearing this name in Pisidia, Anatolia.

Antipatris: a city in Samaria located between Jerusalem and Caesarea (Acts 23:31).

Apollonia: a city in Macedonia (Acts 17:1).

Appii Forum: a town in Italy 40 miles west of Rome (Acts 28:15).

Arabia: a province in Asia located on the east of the Red Sea, divided into 6 divisions: Yemen, Al Hejaz, Tehama, Nejd, Al Yamama and Al Bahrain (1 Kings 10:15).

Arabia: a district known today as Houran. It was given this name by the Romans (Gal 1:17).

Areopagus: The hill of Mars, the seat of the ancient and venerable supreme court of Athens (Acts 17:19).

Armageddon: a wide plain in Galilee now called Marj Ibn Amer (Rev 16:16).

Arvad: an ancient Phoenician island city 22 miles north of Tripolis. It is now a ruin known as Ruad. The Arvadites also occupied the adjacent coast. They were descendants of Canaan (Gen 10:18; 1 Chron 1:16) and were noted mariners (Ezek 27:8, 11).

Ashdod: a city in Palestine called now Eshdud (1 Sam 5:1).

Assos: A seaport in Mysia, opposite to the island of Mitylene (Acts 20:13, 14).

Athens: the most famous city in Greece (Acts 17:5).

Attalia: a city in Pamphylia, which was visited by Paul and Barnabas on their way back from Perge to Antioch (Acts 14:25). There is still a village there called Adalia where wide

ruins are near to.

B

Babylon: the capital of Chaldea lying on the river Euphrates.

Berea: now called Verria. A city in Macedonia (Acts 17:10).

Beriah: it means beyond the Jordan, the south eastern part of East Jordan, which was ruled by Herod, the tetrach of Galilee. It has a fortress in which John the Baptist was imprisoned and killed and was composed of 6 regions namely Iturea, Trachonitis, Abilene, Golan, Batanea and Berea.

Bethany: a village in Judea 2 miles of Jerusalem.

Bethlehem: a town in Judea, where our glorious Savior was born. It is 6 miles south of Jerusalem.

Bethphage: a village in Judea 2 miles of Jerusalem.

Bethsaida: a town in Galilee on the sea of Tiberius.

Bithynia: a province in Anatolia.

C

Caesara Philippi: a city on el-Huleh on the borders of Galilee, now called Banias.

Caesarea: a city and harbor in Palestine south of Akka, now desolate.

Cana: a name of two towns, one is Cana of Galilee and the other is Cana of Asher, near Tyre.

Capernaum: a Galilean city on the Sea of Galilee.

Cappadocia: a province in Anatolia (Acts 2:9).

Cenchrea: the western harbor of Corinth (Acts 18:18).

Chios: a big island in the south of Mitylene (Acts 20:15).

Chorazin: a Galilean city on the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum.

Cilicia: a province in the south of Anatolia. Its capital was Tarsus (Acts 21:39).

Clauda: a small island in the Mediterranean (Acts 27:16).

Cnidus: a city in Anatolia now called Cape Crio (Acts 27:7).

S

Salamis: a city on the east of Cyprus (Acts 13:5).

Salim: a city in Samaria.

Samaria: the center of the Holy Land.

Samaria: now called Sebustieh,, was the capital of Samaria.

Samos: a big island next to Ephesus (Acts 20:15).

Samothracia: a small island on the Aegean Sea, now called Samothraki.

Sardis: a city in Anatolia, now called Sert (Rev 1:11).

Sea of Lot: also called the Dead Sea is a salt lake in Palestine 50 miles long and 10 miles wide, lying some 1250 feet below sea level and is located at the same place of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim.

Seleucia: the sea-port of Syria, now called El Souedieh (Acts 13:4).

Sharon: a city in Samaria (Is 35:2).

Sidon: a Phoenician harbor now called

Siloam: a pool and tower near Jerusalem (Luke 13:4; John 9:7).

Siani: a mountain near the Dead Sea where God gave the Commandments to Moses.

Sodom: one of the four cities which God burned with fire and sulphur.

Spain: a great kingdom in the west of Europe (Rev 15:24).

Syracuse: a city on the isle of Sicily, (Acts 28:12).

Syria: a district on the Aegean Sea bearing the same name today.

T

Tarsus: capital of Cilicia in Anatolia, now called Mersin.

Thessalonica: now called Saloniki. A city and harbor in Macedonia.

Three Inns: a place 30 miles far from Rome (Acts 28:15).

Thyatira: a city in Anatolia now called Ak-hissar (Acts 16:14).

Tiberias: capital of Galilee, located on the Sea of Tiberius.

Trachonitis: a province between Galilee and Damascus, now

called the Lejah (Luke 3:1).

Troas: the ancient Troy. A district in the west of Anatolia (Acts 16:11).

Trogyllium: a town on the coast of Asia Minor next to the Island of Samos (Acts 20:15).

Tyre: a Phoenician harbor.

Z

Zarephath: between Tyre and Sidon, now called Surafend (1 Kings 17:9; Luke 4:26).

Zebulun: the lot of a tribe of Israel on the west of Sea of Tiberius.

Zion: a mountain in Jerusalem; used to denote the Christian church.

