

THE TIMES OF CHRIST

AN OUTLINE OF STUDY

BY

E. J. GRINDLEY & H. M. SLEE

LONDON

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE
NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE. W.C.

MOORE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE LIBRARY



3 2042 00038878 9

THE TIMES OF CHRIST

STUDY CIRCLE GUIDES

THE SECOND GOSPEL

A study outline by H. C. TOWNSEND, B.D. 3d.

THE FOURTH GOSPEL

A study outline by H. C. TOWNSEND, B.D. 3d.

THE RESURRECTION

A study outline by H. C. TOWNSEND, B.D. 3d.

THE GOSPEL OF THE HOLY GHOST

Based upon the Acts of the Apostles. By C. E. BLAKENAY, D.D., Archdeacon of Stafford. 3d.

THE TIMES OF CHRIST

By H. M. SLEE and E. J. GRINDLEY. 2d.

SALVATION BY GRACE

Considered in connection with the Study of the Epistle to the Romans. 2d.

CHURCH LIFE AND DISCIPLINE

In the First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians. 2d.

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

Arranged by MAUD C. SYNGE, S.Th. 2d. (Suggestions to Leaders, 4d.)

THE LAW OF LIBERTY

Based upon the Epistle to Philemon and other New Testament writings. By FRANCES ARNOLD-FORSTER, S.Th. 3d.

OUR LORD'S TEACHING CONCERNING PRAYER

A Study of. By F. ARNOLD-FORSTER, S.Th. 3d.

"SPIRIT" IN BIBLICAL LITERATURE

By A. H. MCNEILE, D.D., Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. 3d.

LIFE AND DEATH IN BIBLICAL LITERATURE

By A. H. MCNEILE, D.D. 3d.

THE MISSIONARY APPEAL OF THE BIBLE. 2d.

ST. PAUL THE IDEAL MISSIONARY

1d. net (Suggestions to Leaders, 1d. net).

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

Early Church History, based upon the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, with the apologies of Aristides and Justin. By H. C. TOWNSEND, B.D. 3d.

S.P.C.K., NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, LONDON, W.C.

THE TIMES OF CHRIST

AN OUTLINE OF STUDY OF THE
CONDITIONS IN WHICH THE DAYS OF
OUR LORD'S EARTHLY LIFE
WERE SPENT

BY

H. M. SLEE AND E. J. GRINDLEY

[PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF
THE CENTRAL CHURCH READING UNION]

LONDON:

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE,

NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, W.C.; 43, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, E.C.

BRIGHTON: 129, NORTH STREET

NEW YORK: E. S. GORHAM

1914

IN the following outline of study, attention is directed principally to conditions of life and thought in Palestine. The conditions in other countries have a very powerful influence on the later history of Christianity, but, so far as we know, our Lord Jesus Christ spent all the days of His earthly ministry in Syria. And He came seldom in contact with any but Jews, until that closing day when He was delivered into the hand of the Foreign Power. What that Foreign Power was, and how it came to be established, are things that must be understood if we are to understand what we read in the Gospels of Centurions and Governors, of tribute and armies. And we shall not understand the religious atmosphere in which our Lord grew up unless we know the significance of the quotation from Deuteronomy vi. 4, and what was in the minds of men who spoke of the Kingdom.

It is impossible to study the setting of the Gospels from the Bible only ; most of the assignments demand a certain amount of reading, but a great deal can be done with the first three books on the list. A translation of Josephus is included, because he supplies so much of the material from which accounts of the Times of Christ are drawn. But it is much easier and pleasanter to read extracts from his works in the other books recommended. A source of information that is of almost equal importance with Josephus is the Mishna, in which the *traditional* Jewish law is codified. Extracts from this will be found in most of the books on the list, especially in Edersheim and Schürer.

The Roman numerals placed before the books refer to the week of study for which they are especially useful. Books marked with a star are meant for Circle Leaders. If difficulties arise it would probably be possible to obtain the help of one of the lecturers for the Church Reading Union. It would not be necessary for even a Circle Leader to read *all* the books mentioned, but some first hand acquaintance

with the Apocalyptic Literature would be an advantage in the Fifth Week. In the Sixth Week a leader should have some idea of the number of quotations that might possibly be collected from the Gospels, and be aware of what is, or is not, a good selection for illustration of the special points.

No prayers are suggested for use before the weekly meeting; Leaders will find many that are appropriate in a book compiled expressly for students of the Bible by Miss G. M. Bevan, called *Unto the Perfect Day*, and published by Mowbray at 1s. 6d.

LIST OF BOOKS.

A. For the whole course of study—

The *Holy Bible* in the Revised Version.

The *Apocrypha* in the Revised Version (from 1s. 6d.)

*Whiston's *Josephus* (from 2s.).

1. *Between the Testaments*: C. M. GRANT. (A. & C. Black, 6d.) A remarkably full and interesting history from the time of the Maccabees to the beginning of the Christian Era, with a brief account of the Books of the Apocrypha.

2. *Religious Development between the Old and the New Testaments*: R. H. CHARLES. (Home University Library, Williams & Norgate, 1s.) Deals with nearly all the subjects touched upon in this course of study; gives an account of the Apocalyptic Books and their English translations; reproduces much found in longer works by this author. The above books furnish nearly all that is required for this course.

3. *A History of New Testament Times in Palestine*: SHAILER MATTHEWS. (Macmillan, 3s. 6d.) Contains information on all the main points to be studied.

4. *The Apocalyptic Hope in the Maccabean Age*: E. J. GRINDLEY. Circle Leaders may obtain a copy by sending a stamped wrapper to Miss Grindley, Wellwood, Parkstone, Dorset.

5. *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*: A. EDER-SHEIM. (Longmans, 7s. 6d.) Many chapters dealing with our subject: especially valuable for the number of quotations from the Mishna.

*6. *New Testament Times*: A. HAUSRATH. 2 vols. (Williams & Norgate, 9s.) Translated from the German. Learned and suggestive.

7. *The Books of the Apocrypha*: their origin, teaching and contents. W. O. E. OESTERLEY. (Robert Scott, 15s., to be ready October 1914.) Most valuable and interesting. The only English book giving results of recent scholarship connected with Sadducees and Pharisees.

*8. *History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*: E. SCHÜRER. (T. & T. Clark, 5 vols., 26s. 3d.) From the German; very learned; a book of reference.

There is an article on "The Times of Christ" in the *Church Reading Magazine* for July 1914, published separately as a study paper, price 1d. See also articles in *Hastings' Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, and *Dictionary of the Bible*.

B. For the several weeks—

I. 1. *Studies in Galilee*: E. W. G. MASTERMAN. By one who has spent the last twenty years in the Holy Land.

2. *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land*: G. A. SMITH. (Hodder, 15s.) Does not include Jerusalem.

3. *Jerusalem*: G. A. SMITH. 2 vols. (Hodder, 24s.) These two are the best books on the subject; invaluable maps and plans.

II. 1. *The Jews under the Roman Rule*: W. D. MORRISON. (Fisher Unwin, 5s.) Makes clear the relation of Herod to Rome.

*2. *The Background of the Gospels*: W. FAIRWEATHER. (A. & C. Black, 8s.) Historical and doctrinal, with valuable references to other writers.

3. *Jerusalem under the High Priests*: EDWYN BEVAN. (Arnold, 5s. 8d.) The most interesting account in English of the Hasmoneans. See also Nairne as below.

III & IV. 1. *The Temple and the Doctrine of Holiness*: E. W. HIPPLEY. (Mowbray, 6d.) Explains the idea of the Jewish Doctrine of Holiness by describing the actual design and structures of the Temple.

See also Schürer as above, Div. II, vols. i and ii; but his account of the Pharisees is one-sided, and should be balanced by

**Pharisaism*: R. TRAVERS HERFORD. (Williams & Norgate, 5s.) Strongly on the side of the Pharisees; to be read with caution.

V. The translations of the Apocalyptic Books are expensive. They, like the other highly priced books in this list, can usually be borrowed from a good library. The editions are given in Charles as above. Oesterley, as above, deals with these Books very attractively, and a brilliant account of some of them is found in a shorter book called

1. *Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*: F. C. BURKITT. (Milford, 3s.)

2. *The Faith of the Old Testament*: A. NAIRNE. (Longmans, 2s. 6d.) Gives a fascinating account of the times of the Maccabees, and of the Apocryphal Books.

3. *The Doctrine of the Last Things*: W. O. E. OESTERLEY. (Murray, 3s. 6d.) Gives an account of Eschatology in both Old and New Testament times.

VI. Shailer Matthews, A. Edersheim, E. W. G. Masterman, as above. There is an extraordinarily vivid and arresting account of the religious thought lying behind St. Mark's Gospel in

The Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus: F. C. BURKITT. (Constable, 1s.)

See also the last few chapters in vol. i of

**The People of God*: H. F. HAMILTON. (Frowde, 2 vols., 18s.)

FIRST WEEK.

Palestine, its Geographical Position.

A good map is very necessary; the Circle should also be able to refer to a plan of Jerusalem, drawn on a fairly large scale, with some indication of the difference between Jerusalem in our own day and the Holy City in the Times of Christ. Excellent maps and plans will be found in Dr. G. A. Smith's great book, or good ones may be procured separately from S.P.C.K.

First, all the members should gain a general idea of the whole country (and how small it is), and then special studies should be made of the position and extent of each of the three following, with notes of the form of government and the inhabitants—

1. Judæa.
2. Galilee.
3. Samaria.
4. See where there were natural supplies of water, and explain their importance. Describe the effect of their absence, and say what artificial means of supply there were.
5. Dr. Nairne, in an article in *The Sign* for April 1914, says the Psalter is the book of Highlanders. He treats this idea more fully in *The Faith of the Old Testament*, where he writes of "the frequent imagery of light and shadow and covering wings . . . how the mountain path, with its hindrances and dangers, its stumbling-blocks, and the lantern to light the feet that travel along it, is variously applied to the course of man's life and the right way marked out for him by God." Try, in a similar way, to connect what you can learn of the seasons, the climate, the scenery of Palestine, with passages in the Gospels.

6. Describe Jerusalem as it was at the beginning of the First Century A.D. Show the relative position of the Temple and the Gates in the City walls.

SECOND WEEK.

The Rule of the Oppressor.

Judæa had suffered much under the Persian rule, and its overthrow by Alexander was an immense relief; but with the Greek rule came the danger of the Greek civilization, that pressed ever closer upon her. The wars of the Maccabees were a revolt against this, but their resistance was only successful for a time. The Jews themselves were broken into two parties—Church and State. Only the hatred of foreign domination united them, and Herod, who seemed at first their protector against Rome, became the servant of Cæsar.

1. Give a sketch of the political history of Palestine since the time of Judas Maccabeus.
2. When and how did the Roman government begin?
3. "Rome dealt with Judaism as far as possible in the terms of Judaism." Explain what is meant by these words and show how far Rome did actually find it possible to do this, giving examples of special consideration shown to Jews.
4. What associations would a Jew have with the term "The Idumean"? Trace the origin and the career of Herod the Great.
5. "Herod was a perfect travesty of the nation's hope." How far does he deserve this description?
6. Give an account of the other Herods in the New Testament.
7. "The actual resistance, active and passive, of the Jewish nation to the Hellenizing efforts of Antiochus revealed both to Jews and to Gentiles that in Judaism there was an element incompatible with the rest of the then civilized world." What was the Hellenism they so strongly resisted?

THIRD WEEK.

The Jews of Palestine. Their Social Life.

1. Though the Jews were impelled to resist, even to the death, the attempts to force Hellenism upon them, yet it had its daily and hourly effect wherever they were brought in contact with strangers. This was less in Palestine than in other lands, but even there new thought and new habits crept in, and allowance must be made for them in any attempt to form a picture of the kind of life a Jew would live in Palestine in this period. Try to see where the foreign rule might be an advantage to him, and where he would feel the oppression most. What degree of prosperity might he expect? What security could he feel?

2. Find out as much as possible as to the kind of houses, of clothing and food, of the means of travel and the opportunities of buying and selling.

3. Make a study of the conditions of family life, of education, and of slavery.

4. Consider the question of languages. What was the Septuagint? What influence did it have?

5. What would be the effect of the annual pilgrimages to the Feasts on the inhabitants of Jerusalem?

6. Collect all you can find about the knowledge of science, especially medicine, and of art, especially music and literature, among the Jews at this time.

FOURTH WEEK.

The Jews of Palestine. Their Religious Life.

1. Many changes had come about since the people of Judah were governed by a King of the House of David, and guided by the Prophets of the Lord. Yet they worshipped the same God. Make a study of what had altered in their religious life, and what remains the same.

2. Describe the worship at the Temple, and the duties and privileges of the Priests.

3. Say how the body of Scribes had arisen. In what sense did they sit in Moses' seat?

4. What was the importance of the Synagogue? What needs did it meet?

5. Give an account of the rise and progress of the party of the Sadducees.

6. To the Pharisees personal religion was a matter of the highest importance. Try to find out, in view of this fact, what it was in their belief or practice that earned such strong condemnation.

7. Put together all that is found in the New Testament concerning St. John Baptist. It has been said that "there are no traces of anything like a conflict between John and the Official religion," and that "it may be inferred, from the very excitement he created, that he had an audience in full sympathy with him." What conclusions can be drawn as to the way in which baptism was regarded by the Jews?

8. Compare the Zealots with the Essenes. Was St. John Baptist like either?

FIFTH WEEK.

To what extent and in what ways did Apocalyptic Thought prepare for Christ?

Passages for study and reference : *Dan.* ii. 25-45, vii., xii. ; *Malachi* iv. ; *Mark* xiii. ; *Rev.* xx., xxii. ; *2 Esdras* ix.-xiii.

1. Explain the word "Apocalyptic," and describe the type of book called Apocalypse. A book of this type is included in the Old Testament, and a Christian example of the same in the New Testament, also a late post-Christian example in the Apocrypha. Which are they? Show that these books answer to your description.

2. From the Jewish Apocalyptic writings (of which some of the chief, outside the Bible, are the Book of Enoch, about 180-64 B.C., the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 137-105 B.C., the Psalms of Solomon, 70-40 B.C., the Assumption of Moses, A.D. 7-30) are derived many ideas and expressions occurring in the New Testament, *e.g.* : (1) The New Jerusalem, first mentioned in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs ; (2) eating from the tree of life in the future bliss (Test. of the Twelve Patriarchs) ; (3) the day of redemption drawing nigh (this very expression is found in Enoch) ; (4) the Righteous One (Enoch) ; (5) the prophesying of Enoch ; (6) the abomination of desolation ; (7) the Son of Man coming in clouds.

Trace these ideas and expressions in the New Testament, and find the source of (5), (6), and (7).

3. Apocalyptic thought was much occupied with Eschatology. "Christ accepted, as a basis of His Teaching, the Eschatology of the Apocalyptic Literature as a whole, whatever more exalted and spiritualised direction it may have taken in His hands" (Oesterley). Explain the word Eschatology. Where in the Gospels occurs the great eschatological Discourse of our Lord, and under what circumstances was it uttered?

4. The Apocalyptic writers sought to estimate events, "as they appear, not from the human, but from the Divine standpoint" (Charles).

Illustrate this from Daniel, from *2 Esdras*, and also from other Apocalyptic writers if you are able, showing that they held all domination of World-Empires to be transitory, and the triumph of good certain.

5. Trace how Apocalyptic writings prepared the way for Christ by leading men to expect (1) a Kingdom of God (*Dan.*) (2) preceded by a National Repentance (*Malachi*, as also in the Assumption of Moses) ; (3) a Resurrection (*Dan.* xii. and frequently in other apocalypses), and give examples from the Gospels of the existence of such expectations in the time of Christ.

6. In Apocalyptic writings the Messiah is regarded as a Priest-King (Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs), as a Prince of the House of David (Psalms of Solomon), and, the conception rising yet higher, as a Super-human Being, the Son of Man, to Whom Judgement has been committed (Enoch). Think out how Jesus Christ, in claiming to be the fulfilment of this last conception, as He does in *John* v. 22, 23, *Matt.* xix. 28 and xxv. 31, etc., claims to be more than Man.

7. Our Lord combined the conception of the Son of Man, He who in the Book of Enoch is to sit on the throne of His glory and pronounce judgement, and of the King, "the Lord Christ" of the Psalms of Solomon, with the conception of the Suffering Servant of the Lord in Isaiah (lii. 13 and liii.), a combination of ideals which perplexed and baffled his contemporaries.

Trace this out in the Gospels.

SIXTH WEEK.

The Times of Christ as they are seen in the Gospels.

1. "In a Northern land we, who spend our life mainly within the walls of houses, often fail to appreciate the peculiar tone given to the everyday life and thought of those nations whom we study so much—Greeks, Romans, and Jews—by the fact that they lived in the open air" (Ramsay). Find passages in the Gospels where this peculiar tone may be discerned.

2. The title Pharisee, we are now told, is derived, not from a word meaning "Separate," but from a word meaning "Interpret." See where you can find in the Gospels anything said of the Pharisees that has light thrown on it by this meaning.

3. Illustrate each of the following from the Gospels—

(a) "The people at large did not share in the punctilious religious life of the Pharisees."

(b) "In the Gospels we find no such stern denunciations of the Sadducees as of the Pharisees."

(c) "The Jewish popular mind dwelt much on Old Testament passages."

(d) "With the rise of Herod to power, and the outward triumph of mere statecraft and worldly diplomacy, the hopes and aspirations of religious Jews became more and more centred on a wholly miraculous intervention of God for the Redemption of Israel."

4. Set down briefly the chief points upon which this course of study has helped you to gain a clearer understanding of the Times of Christ.