STUDY XXXIII.—THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.

I. Introductory.

1. This is the first of a series of "Studies" which aim to gather up the material already collected in previous work and to present it in topical form.

2. The material presented and the topics suggested for study will, no doubt, seem to be more than may be mastered in the time which can be given to it by the average student. Hence the more important subjects are printed in larger type that they may be first studied and the others omitted, if there is not sufficient time to enter upon them.

3. If a class is engaged upon this work, the less important topics may be assigned to different members of it, if desired, and thus the entire ground be covered.

4. The chief original sources for the study of this topic are, of course, the Gospels. Other valuable material may be found in Josephus and the Talmuds. The modern materials for further investigation will be noted in the course of the work under each point considered. For the most part, only such will be given as are accessible and profitable to the average intelligent student.

II. The Land.

It is important for the student to form a somewhat definite idea of the land of Palestine, and its condition in the time when Jesus lived. The following points may be carefully considered:

1. The Extent of the Land.¹ 1) The length and breadth; 2) comparison as to size with other countries; 3) its insignificant extent as compared with the events that occurred upon its soil; meaning of this.²

2. The Natural Features of the Land.³ 1) Compare the following passages which contain references to this point: Lk. 1:39; 4:31; 6:12; Mk. 3:22; 10:32; 13:14; Lk. 1:50; Mt. 3:1; Mk. 6:46; Mt. 7:24–27; John 11:54; 2) Note (a) that the land may in general be characterized as mountainous; (b) that this characteristic determines the position and extent of the valleys; (c) that it also explains the nature of the streams, even the peculiar characteristics of

² Stanley, Sinai and Palestine, p. 114.
the Jordan; (d) that the fertility of the soil is conditioned upon the nature of these streams; (e) that the land by its position and natural features was isolated and its people therefore less affected by external influences; 3) determine in a general way the boundaries of the land.

3. The Main Divisions of the Land. 1) Compare John 4:3,4; observe the three divisions of the land and their relative position; 2) learn something of the physical characteristics of each division, (a) Judea; (b) Samaria; (c) Galilee, in respect to (1) mountains and valleys, (2) lakes and streams, (3) fertility of soil and variety of natural products; 3) note especially that Galilee was densely populated and exceedingly prosperous; 4) name and locate some of the principal cities of each division, cf. John 2:12; Mk. 8:27; Lk. 1:26; Mt. 11:21; Lk. 18:35; 19:28; John 4:5; 5) compare Mk. 10:1; 7:31; Lk. 3:1 for other and outlying districts.

4. Plants and Animals. 1) Gather from the following passages some idea of the natural products of the land; Mt. 6:28; 7:16; Mk. 6:39; 11:13; John 8:1; 12:13; Lk. 17:6; John 12:34; Mt. 12:1. 2) Observe the animal life as shown in Mt. 7:6; 10:16,29; 8:20; Lk. 10:19; 12:24; 13:15,34; 17:37; Mk. 10:25; 3) noting the variety of animal and vegetable life, consider how this land is adapted thus to be the scene of the life of the universal Christ.

III. The People.

1. Their History. Some consideration may profitably be given by the student to the history of the period after the Jewish captivity.

1) Note the following divisions:
(a) The Persian Period, B.C. 538-333, in the beginning of which the people returned to Jerusalem and were ruled by a Persian governor. Ezra in B.C. 444 established the Law over the people and the era of Judaism begins. (b) The Greek Period, B.C. 333-65. The land having been conquered by Alexander is ruled by his generals who are kings of Egypt or Syria. An important event is the revolt under the Maccabees; (c) The Roman Period, B.C. 65-A. D. 70; from the time when Pompey besieged Jerusalem to the time when Titus destroyed the city.

2) Consider carefully the following points: (a) the subjection of the nation to a succession of foreign rulers; (b) they preserve throughout an unconquerable spirit of independence, fostered by their religious consciousness and hope.

3) The Roman domination; (a) the development of it (1) at first, according to the Roman custom, government through native princes, the rise of Herod, Mt. 2:1,22, and the history of his family; (2) Judea governed by a Roman procurator and Galilee by a native prince of Herod's family (Lk. 3:1); (b) the feeling of Romans toward Jews and of Jews toward Romans, Mk. 15:15; Mt. 27:24; John 11:48, etc.; (c) signs of this domination in the Gospels, Mt. 27:11; Mk. 15:16; Lk. 7:2; Mk. 12:14,15; John 19:12; 18:3.
2. The Home Life. Compare the following passages and make as clear and vivid a statement as possible covering the home life of the people: 1) Mk. 1:29,33; 2:4; Lk. 15:8; 12:3; Mt. 24:17—the house; 2) Mt. 5:15; Mk. 2:22; Mt. 24:41; Lk. 11:7; Mk. 2:4—domestic utensils and arrangements; 3) John 6:9; Lk. 24:42; John 2:10; Mt. 13:33; Mk. 9:30; Lk. 11:12—food; 4) John 19:23; Lk. 16:19; Mk. 2:21; 14:51; Mt. 9:20; 5:40—clothing; 5) John 2:1,2; Mk. 2:10; Mt. 25:5,10; Lk. 15:11,12; 10:40; Lk. 7:12; Mt. 9:29-25; John 11:38,39,44; 19:39-41—family relations.

3. City and Country Life. In a similar way note the facts in the following passages and form from them a somewhat distinct idea of 1) city life; (a) John 4:46; Lk. 3:12,14; Mt. 9:30; John 9:8; Mk. 3:6; 12:35—social classes; (b) Mt. 13:45,55; Lk. 10:35; Mt. 25:16,27; Lk. 16:1,3—occupations; (c) Lk. 5:29; 7:44-46; Mk. 6:21; 12:20; John 13:4,5; Mk. 15:22-23—social customs; 2) country life: (a) Lk. 2:8; 5:2; 9:62; Mk. 4:3; 12:1; Lk. 10:30; Mt. 3:12; John 10:3—occupations; (b) Lk. 15:6; Mt. 16:2,3; Mt. 15:14—country customs; (c) Mk. 8:3; Lk. 6:1; 10:4,5,30; 12:35—travel; 3) other classes and customs; Mk. 1:23,40; Lk. 10:34.

4. Education. The following points are to be noted: 1) the child usually received his education at home; 2) the public school, if it existed, was in connection with the synagogue; 3) the text-book was the Law of Moses; 4) reading, writing and memorizing passages of the Law were the objects aimed at; 5) higher education was for those who intended to be teachers of the Law, and was carried on by the scribes in their schools; it aimed at skill in interpreting and applying the Law; 6) in view of John 7:15, note the possibly meagre education of Jesus.

5. The Language Spoken. 1) Hebrew had ceased to be spoken by all classes; 2) two views as to the language spoken in Jesus' day, (a) the Greek was the common dialect; in favor of this (1) the Greek influence in the land during the previous three centuries; (2) the O. T. quotations in the Gospels from the Greek versions; (3) other passages, Lk. 23:38; Mk. 7:26,27; John 7:35; (b) the most generally accepted view is that a dialect of Hebrew called Aramaic was the language of the people, in favor of this (1) the fact that in the synagogue the Hebrew Scriptures were interpreted in this dialect to the people, (2) the Aramaic words and phrases in the N. T., cf. Mk. 5:17; 5:41; 7:34; 15:34; John 20:16; Lk. 16:9, etc. Cf. also Acts 26:14.

6. The Religious Life. Trace out with more or less fullness the references to the religious life of the people in the following passages: 1) Jerusalem the great centre of religious worship, Lk. 2:41; Mk. 1:44; John 4:20; 2) the centre of worship in Jerusalem is the temple (a) its worship and officers, Lk. 1:8-10; Mk. 12:33; John 11:49; (b) religious customs connected with it, Lk. 18:10; Mk. 1:44; Lk. 2:22-27; John 7:14; 8:20; Mt. 17:24 (temple tax); (c) its appearance and plan, Lk. 21:5; John 10:23; Mt. 27:5; Lk. 1:11; Mt. 23:35; Mk. 15:38; 3) the local worship is conducted in the synagogue, Lk. 4:16,17,21; 4) religious forms and ceremonies in general, Mk. 7:2-4,11; Mt. 2:25,38; 7:2 (exorcism); Lk. 11:38,42; 5) the feasts, John 2:13; 7:2; 10:22; 6) religious people, Pharisees, Sadducees, other pious persons, Lk. 2:25,38; 7) the Scriptures, their names, etc., Lk. 24:44; Mt. 22:36,40; John 5:39; 8) religious bodies, Mk. 14:55; Lk. 22:66; Mt. 5:22; Mk. 5:22.

1 Stapfer, Bk. I., chs. 7-10; Geikie, pp. 156-170. 2 Stapfer, Bk. I., Chs. 11, 12. 3 Stapfer, pp. 141-146; Farrar, Life of Christ, ch. 7; Geikie, pp. 170-174; Vallings, Jesus Christ, the Divine Man, pp. 46-49; Edersheim, Jesus the Messiah, I., pp. 226-239. 4 It need not be said that this is a difficult question which requires special study to solve. The student may be referred to Neubauer's article "On the Dialects Spoken in Palestine in the Time of Christ" in Studia Biblica for an exhaustive and learned treatment. 5 For a list of these cf. Hebratlas, Vol. I., pp. 102-106, 188. 6 Stapfer, Bk. II., chs. 11,12. 7 Stapfer, Bk. II., ch. 6. 8 Stapfer, pp. 353-365. 9 Stapfer, Bk. II., ch. 13. 10 Stapfer, Bk. I., ch. 4.
IV. Summary.

Describe an imaginary journey from Capernaum to Jerusalem in the time of Jesus, indicating 1) the physical features of the land; 2) the persons met with; 3) the habits and customs which might be observed; 4) the chief points of interest in Jerusalem.

STUDY XXXIV.—THE CHRIST.

I. The Old Testament Ideas of the Christ.

1. The Name. 1) Ascertain the Hebrew equivalent for "the Christ" (cf. John 1:41) and the original meaning of the word; 2) from Lev. 4:3; 1 Kgs. 19:16; 1 Sam. 26:9; 16:13 learn who were thus called and the significance of this name as applied to them; 3) Note the adjective messianic as used to signify things relating to the Messiah (Christ). Distinguish between a broad sense of the word referring in general to the hopes for the future, and a narrow sense, relating to the personal Messiah.

2. Some Important Principles. 1) Distinguish between the Messianic purpose, i.e., that the Christ should come, as revealed in the O. T. and the historic realization of it at any given epoch in O. T. life: e.g., the purpose in Gen. 17:7 in relation to the Christ (Gal. 3:16), and Abraham’s idea of the Christ. 2) Distinguish between the N. T. interpretation of O. T. conceptions and the historic apprehension of them at any given epoch in O. T. times: e.g., cf. Hos. 11:1 and Mt. 2:15; cf. also Dan. 12:8; 1 Pet. 1:10,11.

3. General Messianic Ideas. Read thoughtfully the following passages and compare them with the accompanying statements. Make other statements if these are not satisfactory. Note the following general Messianic ideas:

1) The Kingdom of God (a) Ex. 19:3-6—established by a covenant at Sinai in which (1) God was sole ruler (cf. Num. 23:21), (2) and the people holy unto Him; (b) 1 Sam. 8:4-9; 10:30, etc.—modified by (1) the choice of a human king and (2) the rise of the prophetic order; (c) Amos 9:11; Isa. 2:3,4; 60:9-11—when divided and gradually declining in power and uprightness under the kings of Israel and Judah and attacked by enemies, it is idealized by prophets as a future transformed kingdom.

2) Joel 2:1; Mal. 3:2—the day of Jehovah, (a) Zech. 12:8—ushering in the future kingdom when (b) Isa. 1:24-28—Israel will be sifted, a righteous remnant be saved, (c) the wicked will be destroyed; and (d) Ps. 50—all being accomplished through the personal advent of Jehovah.

3) Isa. 2:2-4; Amos 9:8-15—the glorious future when (a) the repentant people shall be restored, (b) Isa. 56:6,7—the heathen shall be admitted, (c) righteousness and peace shall prevail.

4. Special Messianic Ideas. In a similar way compare the following passages from the O. T. with the accompanying statements concerning the Christ (Messiah):

1) Ezek. 34:23,24; Ps. 2—the Kingdom of God and the glorious future is to be consummated in the advent of a representative of Jehovah besides the advent of Jehovah himself.

2) This representative is to be found (a) Gen. 3:14,15—among the sons of men, (b) Gen. 9:26,27; 12:1-3; 49:8-10—in the family of Shem, of Abraham, of Messiah.

1 Stanley, S. and Pal., ch. 13.
2 Stapfer, pp. 46-60; Edersheim, I., pp. 111-120.
3 A very excellent discussion of the whole subject is Stanton’s The Jewish and the Christian Messiah. See also Westcott, Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, ch. 2.
4 The best works treating of this section are Briggs’ Messianic Prophecy and Orelli’s Old Testament Prophecy.