

Major Bible Themes

BY

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1871-1952

In the Public Domain

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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

Much of the material in this book was published in the Sunday School Times (April to December, 1925) as the author's notes on the Whole Bible Lessons. Since the original series was incomplete as a representation of the more important doctrines of the Scriptures, several chapters have been added.

Those chapters which were originally written as Bible class lessons are outlined and named according to the direction given by the lesson committee and are based on the Scripture selections suggested by them.

This book is in no sense intended to be a treatise on systematic theology. In its preparation, a limited number of the most vital and practical themes have been chosen, and an attempt has been made to adapt these brief discussions to the needs of the untrained Christian.

To each chapter a list of questions has been added which, it is hoped, may make the studies more useful both to individuals and to groups. The student who would be versed on these subjects should look up every passage cited and continue the study of each theme until all the questions can be answered from memory.

Although the writer presumably has made a careful study of the various subjects treated, it is not his prerogative to dictate what another shall believe; but rather to point out what the Bible teaches. Faith should always rest on a personal understanding of the Scriptures, rather than on the teaching of men.

Bible doctrines are the bones of revelation and the attentive Bible student must be impressed with the New Testament emphasis on "sound doctrine" (Matt. 7:28; John 7:16, 17; Acts 2:42; Rom. 6:17; Eph. 4:14; 1 Tim. 1:3; 4:6, 16; 6:1; 2 Tim. 3:10, 16; 4:2, 3; 2 John 1:9, 10). Not knowing the doctrines of the Bible, the child of God will be, even when sincere, "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive"; the many well-meaning believers who are drawn into modern cults and heresies being sufficient proof. On the other hand, the divine purpose is that the servant of Christ shall be fully equipped to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

These chapters are released with the prayer that they may honor Him whose glory and grace are supreme, and that some among the children of God may be helped more accurately "to speak the things which become sound doctrine."

--Lewis Sperry Chafer