

THE BIBLE A MIRACLE BOOK

by Gavin Hamilton

Hamilton's apologetic work arguing for the divine authorship and supernatural character of the Bible by examining its unique characteristics, unity across centuries of composition by diverse authors, and transcendence of human genius in presenting God's truth.

6 Chapters

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01- "The Book"

"THE BOOK"

CHAPTER ONE

Some time ago Robert L. Ripley, of "Believe It or Not" fame, declared that General Von Clausewitz "has caused more loss of life than any other man in history." He then proceeded to show that since the publication in 1810 of the General's book entitled, "Principles of War," the German militarists have used it as their textbook in the prosecution of their aggressive wars. This lays a tremendous indictment at this General's door. It means that he is largely responsible for the destruction of both men and materials by militant Germany since the book was written.

However, it is my desire to focus attention upon another book. It is the one which Sir Walter Scott, the noted historian, rightly called "The Book." For let it be said without fear of contradiction from any unbiased scholar, this is the king of literature; the sun from which all light emanates; the way, the truth, and the life of God Himself, revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ. And because of this, it stands out in marked contrast to the General's book, for it is the fountain and channel of blessing to all who believe it.

I believe that away down deep in the hearts of people who have heard the gospel message; there is the strong conviction that the Bible is the Word of God.

It seems just as natural to accept this fact as the fact that God is. The two go together. I frankly admit that some deny and dispute its authority, but for lack of evidence they have no case.

Often these criticize the Book because it criticizes them. They know not God and desire not the knowledge of His ways. Nevertheless, with all their denials and disputings, the Bible stands. At this we marvel not. Let me introduce you to the grand secret. It is God-spoken and God-breathed.

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" (Heb 1:1-2).

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2Ti 3:16-17).

GOD IN THE BOOK

It has always interested me to listen to men debate on how we received the Bible.

Some insist that the thoughts and words were inspired but not the men. Others contend that both the thoughts, words, and men were inspired. But one thing is most gratifying, and that is the general consensus that the written Word is God-breathed.

To me, at least, that is the main thing. God is in the Book regardless of how He entered.

- I am sure Moses did not quibble about how God got into the bush.
- Neither did Israel argue as to the manner in which God took His place in the Tabernacle.
- The three Hebrews quarreled not as to how God the Son joined them in the fiery furnace.
- Still less did the Apostles try to unravel the mystery that "God was in Christ."

Therefore, let us approach the Book with the utmost confidence and becoming reverence that we are in the presence of Deity. OUR LORD'S ENDORSEMENT

All Bible-lovers should be strengthened and stabilized, cheered and comforted, in the knowledge of Christ's endorsement and appraisal of the Book. He certainly accepted it as inspired and infallible, authentic and authoritative.

If I may so speak, He played the part of "Champion" in its defence. He knew the vile and vicious nature of ungodly men who would arise and challenge the very existence of many of its characters. So He champions them. They may leave the rest with Him.

For, if Christ be for them, who can be against them?

What caviler will accuse Him of ignorance or brand Him as a liar? He might as well shoot boiled peas at Gibraltar to blast it out of the Mediterranean as try to overthrow the authority of Christ.

One of the most precious ministries of Jesus was to put His stamp of approval upon the Old Testament. I delight to hear Him;

- Verify the Edenic marriage (Mat 19:4-6);
- Certify the death of Abel (Mat 23:35);
- Testify about the days of Noah (Mat 24:37-38);
- Clarify the existence of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Mat 22:32);
- Magnify the ministry of Moses (Matt. 5);
- Ratify the historicity of Daniel (Mat 24:15);
- Specify the exact time spent in the belly of the fish by Jonah (Mat 12:39-41);
- Amplify the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon (Mat 12:42);
- Qualify the cleansing of Naaman (Luk 4:27);
- Notify us about the Book written by Isaiah (John 12:37-41).

OTHER CONFIRMATIONS

Another fascinating feature about our Lord's ministry is His coverage of Old Testament events; somehow there savors the element of satire, especially in view of our knowledge of the Modernist's view toward them.

In His own masterfully fashion;

- He authenticated the story of the flood (Genesis 7; Mat 24:37-39);
- He asserted that fire fell upon the ungodly cities of the plain (Genesis 19; Luk 17:29).
- He acknowledged the food, or manna, Israel ate (Exodus 16; John 6).
- He advocated the truth about the feasts of the Lord (Leviticus 23; John 5:6-7).
- He affirmed that the famine took place in Elijah's day (1 Kings 17; Luke 4).
- He assured that Zechariah prophesied about His entry into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey (Zechariah 9; Matthew 21).
- He confirmed that the Sabbath was for man (Genesis 2; Matthew 12).
- He characterized the Serpent as a Liar and a Murderer (Genesis 3; John 8).
- He comprehended Sinai where Moses gave the Law (Exodus 20; Matthew 5).
- He compared the Serpent of Brass with Himself (Numbers 21; John 3).
- He condemned the Jews in their attitude toward the Sanctuary for worship (1 Kings 7; John 2).
- He consigned Judas for His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11; Matthew 26).
- He conversed freely about the fulfillment of the prophecies in regard to the "Tree" (Exodus 15; the "Throne" (Isaiah 32); the "Tribulation" (Jeremiah 30); and the "Triumph" (Psalm 72).

Finally (for I cannot go into any more detail here),

- He asserts that He is the "Lamb" for redemption (Exodus 12; John 1:29);
- He is the "Ladder" for reconciliation (Genesis 28; John 1:51);
- He is the "Light" for revelation (Genesis 1; John 1:5; John 1:9);
- He is the "Laver" for restoration (Exodus 30; John 13);
- He is the "Lord of the Harvest" for reaping (Ruth 2; Matthew 9);
- He is the "Lion of the Tribe of Juda" for rule (Genesis 49; Revelation 5). A VISIT

Some of these soul-thrilling truths were flooding my soul one afternoon when I was called upon to visit the chief detective's office in a certain Lancashire town in England.

After finishing our business, I began to preach the Gospel to him. He seemed quite restive. Then, in a tone which meant to convey surprise at my simplicity in accepting the Bible as the Word of God, he said:

"But surely you do not accept everything in the Bible as inspired. You must know that there are many mistakes and many contradictions there."

"Well, sir," I replied, "I do accept every word as inspired. I believe also that there is not one mistake or contradiction in it. Maybe you feel surprised at my credulity, but might I ask you one question?"

When he consented, I put this matter before him, "Do you believe, sir," I continued, "that I am greater than Jesus Christ?"

For a moment he was silent; then half-heartedly said, "No, sir; I do not. I believe that Jesus Christ is the greatest Person that ever lived."

That gave me the green-light. I then told him, "I always feel safe when I take sides with Christ. Since He endorsed the Bible, who am I that I shouldn't?" And that is the stand I take. Has it ever dawned upon you that when Christ's Deity was being contested, He appealed to the Scriptures as a witness, in the way that He appealed to John the Baptist, His own works, and His Heavenly Father. In other words He put the testimony of the Scriptures on a par with the others.

It stands to reason that He would not have considered them for one moment had they been like a broken reed, or like the ever-shifting, sinking sand. He knew, and the Jews knew too, that the Old Testament was the unerring Word of the Covenant-keeping God. So He brings into court this witness, saying:

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me" (John 5:39).

Think with me for a moment of the risen Christ as He approaches the two disciples on the Emmaus road. There is not the least suspicion or the slightest doubt in His mind in relation to the veracity of the Old Testament. On the contrary, He upbraids them for their unbelief, and immediately expounds the meaning of those many prophetic passages. Here are His actual words:

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luk 24:26-27).

I hardly think I could do better than to bring forward the thought of Dr. W.H. Thomas, that great exponent of the truth of God, who writes thus:

"What, then, was our Lord's general view of the Old Testament? That His Old Testament was practically, if not literally, the same as ours, and that He had a thorough knowledge of its contents, are admitted.

"Nor does any one seriously deny that Jesus Christ accepted the Old Testament as authoritative, inspired, and the final court for all questions connected with it. No one can go through the Gospels without being impressed by the profound reverence of our Lord for the Old Testament and with His constant use of it in all religious matters.

"Whether He referred to Bible names, or incidents, or to its deep teachings about God, it was always with the utmost reverence and with the evident conviction that it embodied a divine revelation. This general view is confirmed by His detailed references."

NEW TESTAMENT APPRAISED So much for the Christ's evaluation of the Old Testament. Enough has been advanced to prove that the person that turns down the Book also rejects the Christ that endorsed them. That means that he is left without a Saviour from sin and its consequences, and that he has no divine guide as he moves through the world. It is a sad

condition, yet nonetheless true. But what about Christ's attitude toward the New Testament? In the first place, we appreciate that no part of the Book was written till long after the ascension. And, more amazing still, He never contributed one line to it. This was left the chosen eight to do. But there is no doubt in my mind that the New Testament was before Him in that upper room as He scanned the future and spoke of the work of the Holy Spirit subsequent to His glorification. He said:

"When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (John 16:33). The eight writers employed in the writing of the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter and Jude, give abundant evidence that what they wrote was the product of the Holy Spirit. And the work is the climax to the Old Testament. The whole Bible has Jesus Christ as its center. J. Paterson Smyth in his book, "How God Inspired the Bible," says, "It cannot be dissociated from Him. It is closely, inseparably bound up with His life. THE INCARNATION

"The Incarnation does not appear as a separate solitary event unconnected with the history before and after. It appears as a climax in a long historical manifestation of God to man recorded in the New. The Old Testament tells of the preparation for Christ. The New Testament tells that when that preparation was completed in the fulness of time God sent forth His Son.

Jesus Christ, as it were, stands between them and lays His hand upon them both . . . The Old Testament is incomplete

looking forward to the New,

the New is incomplete

looking backward to the Old.

"Therefore to him that believes that Jesus Christ is God, the divine origin of the Bible stands safe for ever, no matter how his opinion may have to be modified."

CHRIST'S TESTIMONY FINAL And so I conclude on the note that Christ's evaluation of the Book is final. To me there is no other court of appeal. I am not unaware of what the archaeologists have brought to light. Neither do I set aside such a lucid testimony to the accuracy and authority of its revelations. But had no spade ever been employed, the testimony of Christ would have remained valid. In fact, I take this thing the full distance and declare that he who disputes the Bible disputes also the Person of Christ.

One thing I heartily commend to you. It is to place implicit trust in the Christ of God.

"Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." He will not lead you astray. He is all He claimed to be, and He will do all that He has promised. Surely we cannot doubt His love! His death proves it. Now that He is risen and upon God's Throne He requires our confidence. Shall we give it? THE NEW BIRTH The moment we believe in Christ, the Son of the living God, the One who died for our sins and was raised again for our justification, that moment we are born again.

“As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in His Name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13).

Again, when we believe in Him we are saved and have eternal life. Jesus said so,

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24).

Friend, believe the Word of God. Accept it as the divine revelation to you. Let it lead you to Jesus. Acknowledge Him as Lord.

“For if you shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED” (Rom 10:9).

- He will take away your sins.
- He will impart His perfect peace.
- He will fill your heart with joy.
- He will be everything to you both in time and throughout eternity.

Lift up your heart to Him now and say:

“THOU BLESSED CHRIST OF GOD, I WHOLEHEARTEDLY RECEIVE THEE AS MY PERSONAL SAVIOUR AND LORD.”

02-The Bible's Conception

THE BIBLE'S CONCEPTION

CHAPTER TWO The casual reader of the Bible must become suddenly aware that it is not the product of the human brain. It possesses that indefinable something which forbids such an irrational conclusion. As Percy Crawford, director of the Young People's Church of the Air Broadcast, says:

"If the Bible is the product of man's genius, with God left out altogether, then if there has been any evolution or growth of man's learning capacity, why doesn't some professor from some of our great schools of learning write an entirely new Bible instead of tearing out a few pages of our present Bible? But they can't do it. What man has made, man has improved . . . If man wrote the Bible, and man only, man could improve upon it."

It is quite obvious that man was but the instrument used to write the Book. David said, and every writer could employ the same language, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue" (2Sa 23:2).

Above 3,000 times we have the expression, "Thus saith the Lord," for "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2Ti 3:16). THE DIVINE LIBRARY The fact that God is the Author of the Book does not set aside either human personality or the style of the writer. Indeed, one who is familiar with the writer can immediately identify the Book from which he reads. Dr. W. Graham Scroggie puts it like this:

"The thought of God has been given a body in the language of men . . . And when God would give a revelation to men. He did not do violence to human personality and style, but rather made use of these." For this reason, no two writers are alike. And we are certain they did not collaborate to ascertain what should be written.

Each penman supplied his contribution to the Divine Library in absolute dependence upon God, and under the perfect control of the Holy Spirit.

This alone explains why most of the writers omitted many things well-known to them and related many things about which they knew nothing at all. Peter, referring to this very truth in connection with the Old Testament writers, who wrote about,

"The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow," says: "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (1Pe 1:11-12).

How interesting then to note the subject matter of the writers!

- Some, like Paul, travel back into the unfathomable ages and bring to light the secret counsels of God.

- Some, on the wings of lightning, hasten us forward to eternity future to dwell upon the ineffable blessedness of the saints and the unutterable anguish of the sinner.

- Some delight to dwell upon current history and trace the divine estimate in either grace or judgment.

- Some again specialize in unveiling prophetic events yet to be developed in world history.

FOUR GOSPELS The four Gospels provide a lucid example of what is before my mind. Here we have a fourfold presentation of Christ.

Each writer looks at Him from a different angle and in a distinct relationship.

- Matthew pictures Him as Messiah the King;

- Mark portrays Him as the Servant of the Lord;

- Luke presents Him as the Son of Man;

- John propounds Him as the Eternal Son of God in Manhood. In these records there are many similarities, yet there are many diversities. But when all the evidences are collected and pieced together, we have set before us the Man Christ Jesus in divine perfection.

PAULINE EPISTLES The same truth is heralded in the Pauline Epistles. Each book deals with a particular truth. For instance:

- Romans elaborates upon justification;

- Corinthians elucidates sanctification;

- Galatians evaluates liberation;

- Ephesians expounds union;

- Philippians expresses transformation;

- Colossians exemplifies anticipation;

- Thessalonians enunciates glorification.

All are necessary, however, to give a perfect revelation of Truth.

I oftentimes liken the writers of the Bible to the members of the Body of Christ. They all have different gifts. The Holy Spirit, in His Sovereignty, divides to each man severally as He wills. So, in the body,

“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all” (1Co 12:4; 1Co 12:6).

This enables us to appreciate why one man writes about law, another about history, another about poetry, another about drama, another about prophecy, another about ethics, another about wisdom, and another about apocalypse. A DESCRIPTIVE GOD Who amongst men can write like God? Can you imagine any man using ten words to describe the original creation?

Take, for instance, the modern evolutionist's story, or theory, of creation's dawn. To say the least, and to speak in the kindest manner, it is pathetic.

The more you read, the less intelligent you become! It is one mass mess of irrationalism. But God!

Let Him introduce Himself and His story of creation. He says: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen 1:1). And, I let another speak here, "This is the most sublime statement in all literature." Yet, it is but characteristic of God. When He proposes to set before men His plan of salvation, He says: "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Then, too, when He would sound the warning note, His trumpeter peals forth: "Prepare to meet thy God!" (Amo 4:12).

What a descriptive God!

These are the very things, beloved, which designate the Bible as "The Word of God."

PARADES SINS OF HOLY MEN

I cannot afford to pass up, in absolute silence, the manner in which the Bible parades the sins of otherwise holy men. It is customary with men, when writing biography, to eulogize the good and eliminate the bad. Not so with God.

He is altogether impartial.

Nothing is hidden from His thrice-holy eyes, and nothing is withheld from the story.

- He will inform us that David is a man after His own heart, and yet He will take time out to expose his sins of adultery and murder.

- He will inscribe Peter's speech at Pentecost and count the number of converts, but He will insist likewise that he denied His Lord with oaths and curses.

- He will pronounce His condemnation upon Moses, the meekest man in all the earth, and forbid him entrance to the Promised Land for speaking inadvisedly with his lips.

- He will have Paul apologize for his mistaken zeal in calling the High Priest a whited wall, even though he ranks the highest of the Apostles. And so we could go on. But enough has been mentioned to prove that man, whose breath is in his nostrils and sin in his soul, did not write this Book. His fertile, imaginative brain is not sufficient for this work. THE BLUE-PRINT

I referred a moment ago to the unity of the Book. This is a sublime truth. But, it strengthens the conviction that back of the Bible is a Master-Mind. Here it was planned and the blue-print produced. Then followed the work we possess. The marvel of all this is that no writer ever saw the blue-print. He was simply putting on parchment what the Holy Spirit knew to be there. He guided the writer. Otherwise, how could some forty writers, chosen from different walks in life, and covering a period of some fifteen hundred years, arrange such a variety of subject so as to be in perfect agreement? With God, and God alone, this is possible. The blue-print for the universe is disclosed thus:

“In Him were all things created . . . All things were created by Him and for Him” (Col 1:16).

Again we have the blue-print for redemption discovered in these words,

“For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen” (Rom 11:36).

And have we not the blue-print for future world happenings in the “Book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals” in Revelation 5?

Then, as to the Bible, the blue-print is clearly announced by Christ who speaks prophetically, saying:

“Lo, I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of Me” (Psa 40:7).

Jesus knew what the Book contained. Indeed, in the truest meaning of the words, He Himself wrote it.

Yes, beloved, His fingers wrote the Book long before they wrote on the two tables of stone (Exo 32:16); or wrote on the Babylonian Palace walls (Dan 5:5); or wrote on the ground in the Jewish Temple (John 8:6). And the same fingers wrote our name in the Book of Life! So we rejoice.

Well might we sing:

“’Twas grace that wrote my name In Life’s eternal book, ’Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb Who all my sorrows took.” This leads me, in closing, to make a stupendous, an almost unbelievable statement.

I believe that we have in the Bible an exact replica of what the fingers of God wrote in the by-gone eternity. How we ought to handle it with reverence! How we ought to cherish it with adoring appreciation! How we ought to preach its message to our fellowmen!

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION And we have a wonderful message to preach!

It tells of the love of God revealed in the Person of Christ who “was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed” (Isa 53:5).

It tells us of salvation without human efforts of any kind. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph 2:8-9).

Indeed, the Lord says, “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Isa 55:1).

So, as a poor, sinful, bankrupt soul I come to God, through Jesus Christ, and on the merit of His Calvary work claim forgiveness and salvation. Then I may know the assurance of salvation from the precious Book which declares:

“I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them

out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one" (John 10:28-30).

03-The Bible's Continuity of Thought

THE BIBLE'S CONTINUITY OF THOUGHT

CHAPTER THREE

It is of immediate interest to the reader and student of the Bible to apprehend the continuity of thought running throughout its sixty-six Books. This is one of the hall-marks of inspiration. It proclaims the fact of a Master-mind back of it. How impossible otherwise! It would be replete with confusion and lack perfect cohesion. But, marvel of marvels, what is laid as a foundation in Genesis is built upon in the succeeding books and brought to a glorious finish in the book of the Revelation. THE SOWER The miracle of the Bible's continuity of thought presents the Author in a new role altogether. It is that of Sower.

Matthew introduces us to the God-Man, in the Person of Jesus, and after His rejection by the Jewish Nation as their Sovereign; he sets Him before us as the Sower. He sows seed that He might reap a harvest for God. Long beforehand, however, He sowed seeds of divine truth, in infinite variety, in the Old Testament Scriptures so that they might produce a full fruitage in the New.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer in his informative book entitled, "Major Bible Themes," in consideration of this theme says,

"The Bible appears in one volume in which there is a perfect continuity of historical sequence from the creation to the new heavens and the new earth; a perfect unfolding of doctrine from the blade to the full corn in the ear; from type to antitype; from prophecy to its fulfillment; and the anticipation, realization, and exaltation of the most perfect Person on earth, or in Heaven." THE SEED AND THE TREE At once we recognize the infinite range of truth awaiting research. However, before I confine myself to a few specific truths, let me call your attention to the vital connection between Genesis and Revelation, between the seed and the tree.

Genesis opens with a description of the heavens and the earth, and goes on to present man's home in Eden where the tree of life grows, and the river flows. It relates the union between man and woman and their universal dominancy. Revelation unfolds a new heaven and a new earth, the home of redeemed humanity, with the tree of life bearing fruit, and the pure river of water of life flowing. It elaborates upon the marriage of the Lamb and the final sovereignty of Christ and His Bride over all things.

Continuing in Genesis we have the record of the Serpent's deception and pronounced doom (Gen 3:15), also the entrance of sin with its accompanying sorrow, pain, and curse. But Revelation announces the final banishment and doom of the Serpent with the cheering statement:

"There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain . . . there shall be no more curse."

It is not without significance that Genesis should introduce the rainbow (Gen. 9); Babylon (Gen. 11); the confusion of tongues (Gen. 11); the call of Abraham, the depositary of the promises to both Jew and Gentile (Gen. 12); Melchizedec (Gen. 14); Isaac, the son of the free-woman (Gen. 21; Galatians 4); Jacob, the father of the twelve sons from whom came the twelve tribes (Gen. 25-50); and Joseph, the world deliverer (Gen. 37-50).

Revelation brings all to fruition. The rainbow around the Throne of God in heaven (Rev. 4) and around the Head of Jesus on earth (Rev. 10). Babylon is described as apostate Christendom with its indescribable confusion (Rev. 17, 18). The promises made to Abraham are literally fulfilled in the glorification of saints both heavenly and earthly (Rev. 5, 7). Melchisedec's priesthood is witnessed operating in blessing to all men everywhere (Rev. 21, 22). The son of the freewoman is Jerusalem which is above (see Rev. 21). The twelve tribes find their place in history before and after the great tribulation (Rev. 7, 14). And Jesus is that Joseph who brings in deliverance for creation and redeemed humanity (Rev. 20, 21).

ELEMENTS OF THE ROMANTIC

Beloved, this theme enralls. It sends waves of ecstatic delight over us. And why not? It has the element of the romantic about it. This always appeals. We love to explore; to discover a new world; to locate a new star; to invent a new machine; to introduce a new drug; and to advance a new means of travel, or communication, such as wireless or television, excites us tremendously. But here is something which far exceeds all these things. It is exploration in the realm of the divine, in the field of inspiration.

Now to be specific, I purpose to concentrate upon well-known, fundamental, vital truths. The truths are the Holy Trinity; redemption by blood; the Church of God; and the prophetic program marked out for the world. In the consideration of these truths I want to show the continuity of thought running, like the blood stream, throughout the whole body of revelation.

Here we face mystery. The understanding of this truth is beyond finite comprehension. But the fact remains. The Bible teaches that the One God subsists in a three-fold Personality.

The Old Testament intimates the Trinity in unity while the New reveals it perfectly.

God introduces Himself as the "Three in One and the One in Three" in the opening statement of the Book: "In the beginning God . . ." The word is ELOHIM.

Dr. C.I. Scofield, in his reference Bible says: "Elohim (sometimes EL or ELAH), English form 'God,' the first of three primary names of Deity, is a uni-plural noun formed from EL-strength, or the strong one, and ALAH, to swear, to bind oneself by an oath, so implying faithfulness. This uni-plurality implied in the name is directly asserted in Gen 1:26 (plurality), Gen 1:27 (unity) see also Gen 3:22. Thus the Trinity is latent in ELOHIM . . . Used about 2500 times." That this truth might be maintained and proclaimed God brought Israel to Himself. The fundamental tenet of their faith was, "The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deu 6:4). The New Testament is definite in its emphasis on the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

We observe the Trinity in unity at the baptism of Jesus, for the Father speaks, the Son is baptized, and the Holy Spirit anoints (Mat 3:16-17). It comes to light in the baptismal formula: "Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Mat 28:19). It finds its

place in the Apostolic benediction: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" (2Co 13:14).

While mystery and majesty surround the Holy Trinity I like to think of the words of the child who, when giving his testimony, protruded three fingers, and said:

"Three in one,

and one in three,

and the One in the middle

died for me."

REDEMPTION BY BLOOD The doctrine of redemption presupposes the presence of sin. And the Bible, as well as human experience, assures us that man is a sinner. It makes little difference what men say sin is, and they have all kinds of opinions to offer. God says: "Sin is lawlessness." And it is equally true that all sin is directly against God. As another has said: "Sin is any want of conformity to the character of God, whether it be in act, disposition, or state. Sin is sinful because it is different from what God is; and God is holy because holiness is infinitely desirable."

It was at sin's entrance into the world that the Lord God sped to the side of His fallen creature with the remedy. It was a blood-sacrifice (Gen 3:21). Thereafter, Abel was accepted; Noah sheltered; Israel redeemed; and the precedent established that every spiritual blessing is given on the ground of the blood of Christ. **THE WORK OF THE CROSS**

Let me draw attention to the outline given by Dr. W.H. Thomas as he traces the development of truth in connection with the wonderful work of the Cross. He says:

"In the Old Testament that Cross is promised in prophecy and pictured in sacrifice and personal types (Acts 8:34-35). In the Gospels it appears gradually in the teachings of Christ, and was at length provided in the event of Calvary (John 1:29). In the Acts the Cross is proclaimed in sermons and explanations (Acts 2:23; Acts 3:15; Acts 4:10; Acts 5:30; Acts 7:52; Acts 10:39-40; Acts 23:29-30). In the Epistles it is proved in various ways, and shown in its theological and practical bearings (Eph 1:7).

Then in the Revelation it is praised as theme of the glorified saints whose one song is "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (Rev 5:12; Rev 13:8). **THE CHURCH OF GOD** The Church is a New Testament revelation. This is evident from Paul's words: "By revelation He made known unto me the mystery . . . which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph 3:3; Eph 3:5). The revelation was first given when Peter confessed the Son of Man as "The Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Immediately Jesus said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it" (Mat 16:16; Mat 16:18).

However, it was not until Jesus was glorified and the Holy Spirit given that the truth of the Church, in all its blessedness and beauty, its greatness and glory, was communicated to Paul. He made known that it is like unto a body, a building, and a bride.

Perhaps the first seed in connection with the Church was sown in the soil of typology, in Genesis. We cannot fail to see the woman in the man, the Church in Christ, in the statement, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion" (Gen 1:26).

And, more plainly still is the Church seen in the creation of Eve. Paul actually quotes from Genesis 2 when referring to the great mystery. His words are: "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it . . . For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones . . . They two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and His Church" (Eph 5:25; Eph 5:30-32). This incident evokes this noteworthy remark: "We have the Church relationship to Christ as the Eve of the 'Last Adam,' and it is striking that we have to go to the beginning of the world, before, in an evil sense, there was any world at all, before sin had spoiled things, to find at the very outset imagined for us that special relationship which Christ has made His own. How wonderful it must be to His heart when it is the first thing we find typically presented to us in the history of man."

OLD TESTAMENT BRIDES The choice of Eve, to typify the Bride of Christ, begins a truth which finds development in other brides in Old Testament history. For example, - The Church, or Bride, is seen in her union with Christ in Eve (Genesis 2);

- Kinship relation with Christ in Rebekah (Genesis 24);

- Affection for Christ in Rachel (Genesis 29);

- Position in Christ in Asenath (Genesis 41);

- Rejection with Christ in Zipporah (Exodus 2);

- Redemption by Christ in Ruth (Ruth 4);

- Administration with Christ in the daughter of Pharaoh, wife of Solomon (II Chronicles 8). The Church set forth as a virgin in Corinthians, and a Bride in Ephesians, becomes a wife in Revelation. It is the complete realization of all the types; the perfect presentation of the seed sown. Listen as heaven speaks! "Rejoice . . . for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready" (Rev 19:7; Rev 19:9) **THE PROPHETIC PROGRAM** In the consideration of God's program for the nations it is of infinite importance to understand that Israel occupies the central place. All nations are set in relation to Israel. The Jews and Jerusalem are the center around which all the purposes of God are worked out in the world. This is by divine determination. Moses said:

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel" (Deu 32:8). **THE JEW AND PALESTINE**

Connected with the call of Abraham was the promise of Palestine (Genesis 12, 13), and the establishment of an everlasting throne (Genesis 17).

At this moment of writing the Promised Land has never been fully possessed, or the throne of Israel occupied by the true Son of Abraham. But events today herald the eventful fulfillment of this promise. The world has witnessed since May 1948 an Independent Palestine with autonomous

rule for the Jews. And beyond waits the realization of Israel's hope. Their Messiah shall divide to them their land, deliver them from the Gentile overlords, and make them the head of the nations.

"In that day shall the Branch of the Lord (the Lord Jesus) be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel" (Isa 4:2).

ORIGIN AND CONFEDERATION OF NATIONS A full chapter is devoted to a detailed account of the origin of the nations (Gen 9:18-29; Gen 10:1-32). Dr. William Evans in his book entitled "Genesis" says:

"These tables may be looked upon, also, as God's farewell to the nations, ere He chooses Abraham and yet they are a loving reminder that the nations are His, even as Israel, and He is their Creator. This list of names is used almost unchanged in First Chronicles, showing that its correctness was recognized up to that time." As the end time hastens, we shall witness great confederations of nations. The smaller nations will be submerged into the larger, and to all practical purposes, lose their national identify. How marvelously this is taking place today! In the main we may look for Russia dominating all Northeastern and Northwestern Europe. Ezekiel makes this clear. It is plain from the Apocalypse that Asia shall be confederated with Japan playing the leading role. Daniel and John lay tremendous stress upon the revival of the Roman Empire in its ten-kingdom form; while both Isaiah and Ezekiel strongly suggest that Britain, her Colonies, and the United States of America, shall come together. As you look at the map it will be observed that Palestine holds the spotlight as the center.

BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON And it is to this center that all the nations shall come to the battle of Armageddon.

"For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle," says Zechariah's prophecy.

"And He (God) gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (Rev 16:16).

About this gathering the Psalmist speaks:

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, 'Let us break Their bands asunder, and cast away Their cords from us'" (Psalm 2).

Then shall Christ break the nations with the rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Daniel graphically described the action by picturing Christ the Stone falling upon the Gentile nations and crushing them to powder, and upon the scene of judgment raise up His own kingdom which shall stand for ever (Ps. 2).

From this moment onward throughout the millennial reign of earth's rightful King shall men be blessed in Him, and "All nations shall call Him blessed." So we could continue. However, enough has been said to make manifest the perfect harmony and the continuity of thought throughout the precious Book. And surely, enough has been said to encourage trust in Christ for the remission of sins, a life of absolute soul-calm, and a future home in glory; and to warn everyone to flee from the impending doom of unregenerate humanity. For, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:36).

04-The Bible's Centrality

THE BIBLE'S CENTRALITY

CHAPTER FOUR The unique feature about the Bible is its uniform, consistent presentation of Jesus Christ the Lord. Everywhere His voice is heard, His glory is revealed, and His portrait is set forth. In all deference to Him it has to be acknowledged, even by His critics, that He is the center and circumference, the Alpha and Omega, the all in all, of the divine revelation. The fact presents no surprise. In the immutable purpose of God the Lord Jesus Christ is the pivot around whom that purpose revolves. He is the central figure in the Holy Trinity for the revelation of the Deity. It was the Son that became Man to reveal God to men. For this reason we read of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Then, He is the central figure at the Cross for the expiation of human guilt.

Jesus alone is the sin-bearer. Once more we see Him the central figure in the midst of His own for the impartation of peace. Quickly their fears were removed and His peace enjoyed. "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."

Finally, we follow Him to that heavenly scene where He is the central figure, the Worthy One, to take over the administration of God's government upon earth.

PHOTOGRAPH OF A MAN The miracle of the Bible's centrality reminds us of that well-known, illuminating incident related by Dr. W.H. Gordon. He came into a room where his children were playing and casually placed before them some wooden blocks, all different sizes, and asked them to solve the puzzle. To their father's great surprise it was not long before they had mastered their assigned task. He enquired how they managed to do it so quickly. One of the children spoke up saying, "Why, father, it was easy. We discovered the photograph of a man on the back of the blocks, and when we pieced him together, and turned the blocks around, there was the solution of this puzzle." So with the Bible. Though it has sixty-six books, each one complete in itself, yet all are required to give a perfect picture of the Man Christ Jesus.

Obviously, this truth was before the Lord when He told His hearers: "Search the Scriptures . . . they are they which testify of Me" (John 5:39). And surely it became transparent when He "expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself." At that time He said: "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me" (Luk 24:44).

PROGRESS OF DOCTRINE

Reviewing the Book of Genesis to Revelation, it is impossible to escape the progress of doctrine unfolded in connection with the Christ of God.

Dr. C.I. Scofield, in an abstract, elementary manner marks the progress thus:

“The Old Testament, Preparation: The Gospels, Manifestation: The Acts, Propagation: The Epistles, Explanation: and The Revelation, Consummation.”

However, let us pass from the abstract to the concrete. Here I borrow the figures of speech employed by Dr. R.G. Lee, in his description of the Bible, in reference to the Christ. He is a Person above and beyond all persons “as a river is beyond a rill in reach, as the sun is beyond the tallow-tip in brightness, as a tree is beyond a twig in fruit-bearing, as the wings of an eagle are beyond the wings of a sparrow in strength, as Niagara is beyond a mud-puddle in power and glory.” THE CHIEF ACTOR

Every reader of the Old Testament is deeply conscious of the Theophanies, the personal manifestations of the Deity. By such manifestation Christ kept Himself in the forefront of the revelation. But it could not be otherwise. Let it be understood, once for all, that God is unfolding a great drama in the world with Christ the Chief Actor. And, for this very reason, Christ is presented in a variety of ways, playing the leading role in every act.

Let us detail this truth.

- He came into the Garden to recover fallen man from the wreck and ruin of sin (Genesis 3).
- He entered into consultation with Cain to show him that acceptance with God is on the ground of a blood-sacrifice (Genesis 4).
- He visited Abraham and Sarah and partook of their hospitality to reveal His passionate desire to fellowship with men (Genesis 18).
- He wrestled with Jacob till the break of day to break Jacob's will, and to bring him into the place of dependence upon Himself (Genesis 32).
- He communed with Moses face to face, as friend with friend, to announce how intimately He wishes to commune with man (Exodus 33).
- He presented Himself before Joshua as Captain of the Lord's host to predict the utter defeat of every foe and the ultimate triumph of His people (Joshua 5).
- He walked with the three Hebrews in the furnace of fire to indicate that He is with His own in all their afflictions (Daniel 3). The story is told. Since “The New Testament is in the Old contained, and the Old is in the New explained,” we have antedated in the Theophanies all that Christ is to His own today. THE VIRGIN BIRTH

Let us now piece together the fragmentary prophetic revelation of Christ as made known in the thirty-nine Old Testament Books. We shall see that the Old Testament is Christocentric.

Moses begins. He declares that Christ shall be “The Seed of the Woman” (Gen 3:15).

- Isaiah insists that “A virgin shall be with Child” (Isa 7:14).
- Jeremiah predicts a “New Thing” in the earth -“A woman shall compass a man” (Jer 31:22). The writers herald the Virgin Birth and the Virgin Son.

- The birthplace of Christ is foretold by Micah. He was to be born in "Bethlehem Ephratah" (Mic 5:2).

Jeremiah foretells the massacre of the innocents when the life of Jesus was sought - though the Apocalyptic Seer lifts the veil to show the great red Dragon inciting Herod to commit the dastardly act (Jer 31:15; Revelation 12). Information about the visit to, and departure from, Egypt is given by Hosea (Hos 11:1). Then His early life, development, and the silent years in Nazareth are the subject of the prophets to fulfil the word, "His shall be called a Nazarene" (Mat 2:23).

PANORAMA OF EVENTS

Both Isaiah and Malachi write about the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ (Isaiah 40; Malachi 3). Many prophets portray the lovely life and public ministry of Christ, but Isaiah's description excels in beauty and brevity. "The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing" (Isa 35:5-6).

- The betrayal for thirty pieces of silver is described by Zechariah (Zec 11:12).

- The panorama of events at the Cross are detailed by the Psalmist (Psalm 22).

- The two malefactors are mentioned by Isaiah as well as being buried in, and coming forth from, a rich man's tomb (Is. 53).

"Sit Thou at My right Hand" described the present glory of Christ advanced by David (Psalm 110).

Then comes the kingdom glorious. Where shall we begin? All the prophets seem to anticipate it.

Listen to Daniel: "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed" (Dan 2:44).

Hear Obadiah: "Upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness . . . and the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (Obadiah 1:17; Obadiah 1:21).

Let Micah speak: "He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Mic 4:3).

EMMANUEL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

We turn to the New Testament. At once the words of David Livingstone come to mind:

"The Old Testament opens with man in the image of God, and the New Testament opens with God in the image of man."

How true! As we have said before, the four Gospels each set forth a particular phase of his life as Man on earth, though ever God, and all make clear that He died and rose again.

Dr. William Evans says:

"The New Testament is the effect of Christ's resurrection. It was the resurrection that put heart into the disciples to go forth and tell its story."

Skeptics would have us believe that the resurrection of Christ was an afterthought of the disciples to give the story of Christ's life a thrilling climax, a dorative incident which satisfies the dramatic feeling in man, a brilliant picture at the end of a heroic life.

We reply: There would have been no beautiful story to put a climax to if there had been no resurrection of the Christ of the story. The resurrection does not grow out of the beautiful story of His life, but the beautiful story of Christ's life grew out of the fact of the resurrection. The New Testament is the book of the resurrection. The Acts confirms the resurrection. It presents a Man on high and the Holy Spirit descending from Him to take possession of the disciples to bear Him witness. This witness persists. For the Book of the Acts of the Holy Spirit is unfinished. Then follow the Pauline Epistles which introduce the exalted Man Christ Jesus as the Head of the Body, the Church; the Great High Priest of the priestly family: and the Forerunner for us entered within the veil. John, in his three Epistles, brings Christ before us as the Advocate of the erring children of God, and in his Book of the Revelation he makes clear that He is "The End" of all the vast purposes of God. In the final analysis, the Book reveals Christ. He cannot be hid. Everywhere we hear the Father's voice saying, "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." THE RIVER OF BLOOD

One thing more. Just as it is impossible not to discover Christ in the Holy Scriptures, so we cannot fail to see the blood of atonement. Like a mighty river it rises in Eden, flows down the valley of time, and empties itself into this great eternity ahead.

It flows typically from birds and beasts in the Old Testament. Its presence is the solemn acknowledgment that "It is the Blood which maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev 17:11). But the divine comment is highly interesting. "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb 10:4). Evidently no lasting satisfaction in the blessedness of "no more conscience of sins" was given the offerers.

HE PAUPERIZED HIMSELF The Blood flows literally from Emmanuel's veins in the four Gospels.

"One of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34).

This was the purchase price of our blessing. It is beyond our computation. As another has said, "He pauperized HIMSELF." How can we estimate it? Paul declares, "Who, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich" (2Co 8:9).

Do these lines, from the immortal hymn, "The Ninety and Nine," help?

"None of the ransomed ever knew How deep were the waters crossed; Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through Ere He found the sheep that was lost."

Note how the Blood flows doctrinally in the Acts and in the Epistles! Precious truths are before us.

- The Church of God is purchased by it (Acts 20:28).
- We are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom 3:24).
- We are "made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph 2:13).

- John says we are cleansed from our sin. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1Jn 1:7).

Meantime, while passing through this wilderness, waste and wild, we have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," and there commune with God.

REDEEMED BY BLOOD The Book of the Revelation affords us the privilege and pleasure of listening to heaven's admiring and adoring redeemed hosts raise their paeon of praise, thus:

"Thou art worthy . . . for Thou was slain, and has redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev 5:9-10). In the light of these things we conclude that the divine intention is to focus our gaze upon Christ. True, the Bible narrates the biographies of men, and relates the beginning, history and destiny of nations, but in all Christ is seen either by comparison or contrast.

Then, too, the seven dispensations are clearly distinguished in Scripture, viz, innocence, conscience, government, promise, law, grace, and glory, but here again we discover that Christ is their perfect answer. He is the image of the invisible God. **THE IMAGE OF THE CHRIST**

God desires our confidence. In this way He is able to transform us into the image of His Son. And who amongst us would not love to be like Him? Like Him in love, in purity, in faith, in patience, in self-sacrifice, in humility, in obedience. What an achievement! Yet it is possible. It is the Christ-life. And here is the secret.

"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal 2:20). The second coming of Christ will bring the saints into moral and physical perfection. We shall then be transformed into His image, and translated into His presence. As John puts it:

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as He is" (1Jn 3:2).

Beyond our glorification and the millennial age is "the generation of the age of the ages." This is eternity. It envisages a new heaven and a new earth. Here righteousness dwells, and God is all in all. Here is a scene of infinite perfection. Everything and everybody reflects the glory of God. Thus, at long last, the universe will bear the image of the Christ whose divine presence fills the Bible.

05-The Bible's Communication

THE BIBLE'S COMMUNICATION

CHAPTER FIVE

I must confess that when I come to consider the manner in which God communicated His Word to men, and through men to the parchment, I bring you to a battleground. Here the theologians have fought! Here they still fight! And here no finality is reached! But we are not going to have even the semblance of a fight; so, if you are one of the fighting type, you might as well quit immediately -let alone trade blows on the subject.

It is my purpose, in the main, to get across to our hearts the tremendous fact that God has definitely, once for all, communicated His Word to us through human instrumentality. I am perfectly satisfied that it is the Word of God.

VARIETY OF OPINION For the sake of some who may have no idea as to the variety of opinion entertained in connection with inspiration let me cite a few instances.

Dr. William Evans, in his book entitled "The Doctrines of the Bible" (which should be in every Christian's library) {eS module note: this excellent book is available as an eSword module from www.DoctorDaveT.com}, discusses very fully and ably the subject of "The Doctrine of the Scriptures." He points out the terms "Natural Inspiration" which "identifies inspiration with genius of a high order," and "Universal Christian," which means that "The ordinary Christian of today is inspired as much as was the apostle Paul."

He discusses also "Mechanical, or Dynamic Inspiration," which "ignores the human instrumentality in the writing of the Scriptures altogether, and claims that the writers were passive instruments, were machines . . ." And "Concept, or Thought Inspiration," a theory which "claims that only the concepts, or thoughts of men, were given by inspiration."

Finally, he gives what is called "Verbal Inspiration" which claims that "the very words of Scripture were given by the Holy Ghost, that the writers were not left absolutely to themselves in the choice of words they should use"; and "Partial Inspiration," which says that "The Bible contains the Word of God" but that it is not all inspired; and "Plenary, or Full Inspiration," which vouches for all Scriptures as the Inspired Word of God.

Now you may appreciate why theologians, like military men, enter the field of battle!

Most Christians know nothing about Greek, Hebrew, or Latin, so never enter the ring of controversy. What we do know, however, is that the Book has been written regardless of the persons empowered, or the means employed. We know also that every jot and tittle of it is there because of the inbreathing of the Holy Spirit.

IT INSPIRES ME The dear old Scotch lady very quaintly remarked, in response to a question as to how she was so sure the Bible was inspired, "I ken fine that the Book is inspired, for it inspires

me!”

Somehow this remark finds an echo in the soul of every born-again one. By believing the message of the Book about the Lord Jesus Christ we were “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever” (1Pe 1:23). And that was our first soul-thrilling experience enjoyed in the things eternal. **THE UNSEARCHABLE GOD** This is a precious portion. It advances, first and foremost, that God is unsearchable. The question is asked, “Who hath known the mind of the Lord?” and again, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” How impossible for mortal man, with finite limitations, to discover or comprehend the mind of the Eternal!

Ponder this truth for a moment. To Moses God said, “Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live” (Exo 33:20). John declares, “No man hath seen God at any time” (John 1:18). And Paul writing to Timothy says, “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen” (1Ti 6:16).

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF And once we conclude that if God is ever to be known He must reveal Himself. And that is exactly what He has done. Here is an emphatic statement: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son” (Heb 1:1-2).

The things man cannot comprehend, God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit.

Speaking after the manner of men, it seems perfectly reasonable to expect God to reveal Himself.

In the final analysis, He is responsible for our creation. “We are the offspring of God.” and “In Him we live, and move, and have our being.” Has He not given man a voice to speak and words to convey his thoughts to others? Surely, then, it must not be deemed something incredible for God to speak and to use words to convey His thoughts to men. The Bible furnishes many instances of God both speaking and writing to men. He spoke face to face with Moses. He wrote on the tables of stone, on the Babylonian Palace walls. Then, in New Testament times. He appeared in this world in the Person of Jesus Christ. So God has really revealed Himself to men.

REVELATION AND INSPIRATION But there is a difference between revelation and Inspiration.

“Revelation is that act of God by which He directly communicates truth not known before to the human mind; inspiration superintends the communication of that truth.”

It is in both instances that we witness the Holy Spirit at work. He alone could choose the instruments to receive the truth, and to pen the exact data revealed. He alone could select the very words from the writer’s vocabulary and produce a perfect work.

Again, I quote Dr. William Evans:

“We may therefore safely say that in a very real sense the words as well as the thought you have been given, whether mediately or immediately, under the influence of the Holy Spirit. We claim that the Bible is in deed and in truth the very word of God in the language of men; truly divine, and at

the same time truly human; that is the revelation of God to His creatures; that infallible guidance was given to those that wrote it, so as to preserve them from error in the statement of facts; that what the writers of the Scriptures say or write under this guidance is as truly said and written by God as if their instrumentality were not used at all; that the ideas expressed therein are the very ideas the Holy Ghost intended to convey; that God is, in the fullest sense, responsible for every word. This is what the Bible claims for itself."

WHAT THE SINNER UNDERSTANDS

How many people come to us and confess that they do not understand the Bible!

They say that some things are clear, while other things are very vague. Well, for this we are prepared. The Book says: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Really, the simplest and youngest child of God, however illiterate, understands the things of God better than the greatest intellectual philosopher who is not born again.

However, there is a side of truth that any person may understand. I refer to the elementary truths of salvation's plan. Here, the wayfaring man, though a fool, may not err. Here, he understands that "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23); and that "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). Here, he understands that "God is love," and "He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1Jn 4:8; 1Jn 4:10). Here, he understands that "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

Jesus Himself testified that "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:17).

So, if the sinner will believe in Christ there is the promise. In the first place he will receive everlasting life, and then God will give unto him His Holy Spirit.

Then the Bible will become a new Book to him. Immediately he will begin to understand its message. Of course, the growth in knowledge will be gradual, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. But the fact abides; he will "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2Pe 3:18).

SIN IN THE LIFE How is it with you, dear child of God? Has the Book become dry and uninteresting? Perhaps you have laid it aside. That means that God no longer reveals His truth to you. What a tragedy!

Now this condition need not persist. Beloved, there is sin somewhere in your life. You know it, and if you will bring it to God, He will forgive.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." For "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1Jn 1:9; 1Jn 2:1-2).

Remember, "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant" (Psa 25:14).

06-The Bible's Completeness

THE BIBLE'S COMPLETENESS

CHAPTER SIX

Dr. R.A. Torrey, in an article entitled, "Ten Reasons Why I Believe the Bible is the Word of God," refers to a brilliant Unitarian who said, "How irreligious to charge an infinite God with having written His whole Word in so small a book." He gave this well-chosen reply: "He does not see how his argument can be turned against himself. What a testimony it is to the divinity of this Book that such infinite wisdom is stored away in so small a compass."

Really, when we sit down to quietly consider that the sixty-six Books present a perfect revelation of the Eternal God to man, it fills the soul with wonderment and worship. It seems almost impossible, but with God all things are possible. **THE APOCRYPHA REJECTED** The Apocrypha has been included in the Douay Version by the Roman Catholic Church. This portion gives the history of the interval of time between the books written by Malachi and Matthew. It covers some four hundred years.

However, the Apocrypha does not claim inspiration; indeed, some writers unequivocally disclaim this. And the fact that some doctrines propagated in it are contrary to the plainly revealed doctrines of other portions of God-given Scripture is sufficient to disprove any semblance of inspiration.

Consider a few important factors. The Old Testament we have today is identical with that used by Jesus our Lord. It is not without significance that He never once referred to the Apocrypha. Always did He quote from the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets.

Josephus, the noted historian, has something informative to relate. He says, about the Old Testament Scriptures, "No one has dared either to add anything to them, or to take anything from them, or to alter anything. All Jews regard them as the teachings of God, and abide by them, and would gladly die for them." No orthodox Jew accepts the Apocrypha as inspired.

Finally, we search in vain for any mention made by the Apostles or members of the early church as to the incorporation of the Apocrypha in the Sacred Writings. It was the Church of Rome which considered it inspired and gave it a place in the Bible at the Council of Trent.

All orthodox scholarship rejects the Apocrypha as part of God's Word. At the same time, it accepts without reservation the entire sixty-six books as making complete the Holy Book.

GOD'S PROPERTY In a very realistic sense the Bible is the property of the Eternal God. On this account He guards it jealously. He will not allow anyone to tamper with it in any shape or form. Woe betide the one who does so! Better for that one had he never been born. Said the Lord to both Moses and John:

"Ye shall not add unto the Word that I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandment of the Lord your God which I command you" (Deu 4:2)

“If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev 22:18-19).

Eve was the first transgressor. She added to, and took from, the spoken Word of God. To the Tempter, Satan, she said: “We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die” (Gen 3:2-3).

Actually, God had said nothing about touching the tree. That was Eve’s addition. Furthermore, He said not, “Lest ye die,” but, “Ye shall surely die.” That was her subtraction. The divine sentence was carried out. THE PEN-KNIFE INCIDENT

Jeremiah recounts a very revealing incident. He tells of Jehoiakim, King of Judah, sitting in his winter house, before a fire, and having read to him by Jehudi the words of God.

When he heard them he was displeased, and with his pen-knife cut out the leaves, and burned the portion in the fire. The act was committed in the face of vehement protest.

Then spake the Lord God unto Jeremiah saying:

“Thou shalt say to Jehoiakim, king of Judah, thus saith the Lord: Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, the king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence both man and beast? Therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim, king of Judah: He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost” (Jer 36:30-31).

And it was so!

How grave though grand are the words of Sir Walter Scott!

“Within this sacred volume lies The mystery of mysteries.

Happiest they of human race, To whom God has granted grace, To read, to fear, to hope, to pray, To lift the latch, and force the way. And better had they ne’er been born Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.” THE PERFECTION OF THE BOOK To give some idea as to the perfection, or completeness, of the Book allow me the pleasure and privilege of quoting five well-known verses, and then of turning them over to that able Bible expositor, Dr. A.T. Pierson, for his unexcelled comment. I will give them in the order treated.

(1) “And this word, ‘Yet once more’ signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain” (Heb 12:27).

(2) “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you” (Gal 4:19).

(3) “Jesus said unto them, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am’” (John 8:58).

(4) “Jesus answered them, ‘Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods? If He called them gods, unto whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of

God?" (John 10:34-36).

(5) "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, 'And to seeds,' as of many; but as of one, 'And to thy seed,' which is Christ" (Gal 3:16).

Dr. A.T. Pierson states:

"If these passages are examined it will be seen that:

"In the first instance the argument turns on one phrase 'yet once more.'

"In the second, on the passive voice rather than on the active voice of the verb.

"In the third, on the present rather than on the past tense.

"In the fourth, on the inviolability of a single word;

"In the fifth, on the retention of a singular number of a noun, rather than the plural.

"Taking the five passages together, they teach us that, to alter or omit a phrase, change the voice or mood or tense, change a single word or even the number of a noun, is to break the Scriptures."

Beloved, the miracle of this Books' completeness is definite. We cannot escape it. It meets us everywhere. Listen to the Psalmist as he defines it in his own sublime language.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes, The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether" (Psa 19:7-9).

VARIETY OF CONTENTS

Such completeness is here that it would be difficult to name the subject omitted within its pages. As Dr. Joseph Parker writes:

"What a Book is the Bible in the mere matter of variety of contents! Everything seems to be in it . . . poem, narrative, intelligence, judgment, battle, prayer, song, anathema, and benediction."

"It might be added that it deals with themes moral, philosophical, astronomical, biological, ethical, legal, dramatic, prophetic, historic, poetic, and romantic.

"Continuing this line of thought I am reminded of an unknown writer's contribution which is very comprehensive. He says, in the Bible we read of the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, and the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.

"Its doctrine is holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable.

"Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy.

"It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.

"It is the traveler's map; the pilgrim's staff; the pilot's compass; the soldier's sword; and the Christian's charter.

“Here heaven is opened and the gates of Hell disclosed.

“Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end.

“It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.

“Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully.

“It is a mine of wealth, health to the soul, and a river of pleasure.

“It is given to you here in this life, will be opened at the judgment, and will be established forever.

“It involves the highest responsibility, and will reward the greatest labor, and condemn all who trifle with its contents.”

UP-TO-THE-MINUTE BOOK

These things considered enable us to appreciate that the Bible is an up-to-the-minute Book. It covers, not only the past history of God’s dealings with men, or the future scheme for the nations, but also the present.

As Dr. W. Graham Scroggie puts it in his own inimitable way:

“The Bible is a very ancient Book. Its last chapters were written over eighteen hundred years ago, and its first chapters were written over thirty-five hundred years ago! But it is difficult to believe it because the Bible is so modern. The ink might scarcely be dry on the page. There are millions of books of recent data which are already out of date, but this old Book is the most modern of all.”

Despite these incontrovertible truths, many so-called religious gurus deny the Book. They have taken the inspiration out of the Bible, the fire out of Hell, the gold out of Heaven, the blood out of the atonement, and God out of Christ. They have laboured hard to rob us of our priceless heritage. Every nerve has been strained, every opportunity has been seized, and every new theory, such as evolution, has been propagated, with one well-defined purpose before them of undermining the faith once for all delivered to the saints. But we can assure them that they have greatly erred, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. They have very definitely under-rated the devotion saints have to Christ, and their grim determination to die rather than deny the Book. THE MODERNIST

I heard of a modern minister who paid a visit to one of the sick members of his Church. After discussing some general topics, the minister asked for the Bible. When it was handed to him, he noticed that it was badly torn, and when he tried to find the portion to read, discovered it was not there. Looking over the pages casually he perceived also that it was all scored and pencil-marked. His curiosity got the better of him. He asked if there was some reason for the Bible’s being in this condition. The sick member gave the reply, “Yes, Reverend,” said he; “it is quite a story. Ever since you became our Pastor I have cut out, or put a question-mark back of, or actually put the pencil-mark through, every part in the Bible you said was not inspired, or that was a questionable, or that should not be there. That is the result you have in your hands. And it strikes me, Pastor, that if I had not taken ill, or if you continue here much longer, I will not have any Bible left at all.” The noted Evangelist, Dr. R.A. Torrey, once said,

“Robert Ingersoll was not the most dangerous enemy of the Bible. There were more dangerous enemies of the Bible even during his lifetime than he himself was, and there are far more dangerous enemies of the Bible than he today.

“They claim, in some sense, to believe in the Bible, but all the while they claim to believe in it they are seeking, consciously or unconsciously, to undermine the faith of others in the absolute inerrancy and authority of the Bible.

“The most dangerous enemies of the Bible today are those college professors and principals of high schools, and even theological professors, who, while they claim to establish faith upon a broader and therefore better basis, are all the time attempting to show that the bible is full of errors and not in accord with the assured results of modern science and history. These enemies are legion; they are found practically everywhere, many of them able men, and they have formed a skillfully planned campaign against the Bible. Nevertheless, the Bible stands in no danger.” THE BIBLE SPEAKS

How could the Bible stand in any danger? Have you heard what the Bible says about itself?

“I am the recorder of the gate. I speak every language under the sun, and enter every corner of the earth. I bring information, inspiration, and recreation to all mankind. I am an enemy of ignorance and slavery, the ally of enlightenment and liberty. I treat all persons alike, regardless of race, colour, creed or condition. I have power to stretch man’s vision, to deepen his feelings, and enrich his life. I am a true friend, a wise counsellor, a faithful guide. I am as silent as gravitation, pliant and powerful as the electric currents, and enduring as the everlasting hills. I am the Bible.”

Enough! The completeness of the Book is assured.

It contains what we need.

- It points us, as sinner, to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.
- It makes plain that “The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.”
- It emphasizes that faith in Him is the one thing needful:

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.”

Therefore, exercising simple faith in the Son, we experience sin put away and ourselves made suitable for the presence of uncreated Deity.

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