

ON THE INSPIRATION AND DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

by H.H. Snell

A collection of articles and writings by H.H. Snell from On the Inspiration and Divine Authority of the Scriptures, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

42 Chapters

Table of Contents

0. On the Inspiration and Divine Authority of the Scriptures
1. Preface
2. Introduction
3. 1. Preliminary Remarks on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures
4. 2. What Is Inspiration?
5. 3. Sacred Writings
6. 4. the Old Testament
7. 5. the Testimony of the New Testament to the Old
8. 6. Examples of the Divine Authority of the Old Testament Scriptures
9. 7. Some Samples of Its Alleged Inaccuracies
10. Living Souls
11. The Deluge
12. Jacob's Going Into Egypt
13. The Quails
14. River, Not Flood
15. Sun, Stand Thou Still!
16. The Threshing Floor
17. The Census of Israel and of Judah
18. 8. the Silent Interval of Four Hundred Years
19. {Introduction}
20. The Gospels
21. The Acts and the Epistles
22. The Revelation
23. 10. Quotations From the Old Testament
24. 11.the Importance of Bowing to the Authority of Scripture
25. 12. Alleged Inaccuracies of the New Testament
26. Three Days and Three Nights
27. Our Lord's Temptations
28. Drink No Longer Water
29. Feeding the Multitudes
30. The Passover and Lord's Supper
31. The Call of Abraham
32. The Years of Moses
33. The Terror of Moses
34. Saul's Sight of the Lord Jesus
35. Holding Jesus by the Feet
36. Sin and Transgression
37. The Sixth Hour in John 19:14
38. 13. the Bible — Its Unity

- 39.** 14. the Bible — Its Perfection
- 40.** 15. the Bible—Its Blessedness
- 41.** Concluding Remarks

On the Inspiration and Divine Authority of the Scriptures

Preface

The following pages contain the Substance of Lectures which were lately delivered in Montgomery Hall, Sheffield, with the view to meeting the flood of infidelity as to the inspiration and divine authority of the holy scriptures, which has of late been overflowing Christendom.

It is hoped that the reader will not fail to turn to the various passages of Scripture to which reference is made.

The prayer of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, for God's blessing on this little service, are cordially invited.

H. H. S.

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Introduction

Our Lord, when speaking of the scriptures, said, "They are they which testify of me"; and when the Spirit of truth is come, "He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." It is clear then that those who are led by the Holy Spirit into the true teaching of scripture, will have the Lord Jesus Christ ministered to them. How can it be otherwise, for is He not emphatically "THE TRUTH"? Is it possible, then, to overrate the value of such divinely-given landmarks?

Atheists and Deists have long indulged in throwing their invectives against the sacred volume. Every now and then a Voltaire, a Tom Paine, or some other of that stamp, has been the avowed champion of infidelity, and has made no secret of his blasphemies; so that faithful men of God knew whom they had to encounter, and what they might expect from such. But now a far more effective class of instruments are actively employed in seeking to undermine the infinite worth and divine authority of the inspired word; and, we blush to add, not a few of them are the professed ministers of the gospel. The fatal mischief is wrought too, not as formerly by ignoring the Bible as a whole, as much as by various persons leveling their attacks on different portions of divine revelation; so that at this time there is scarcely a fundamental truth of scripture that is not being either questioned or denied in some part or other of Christendom. The days of evil have indeed come. The emissaries of Satan are active. Everything that can be shaken is on the move. Rationalists are busy. Distrust and incredulity abound; and many are fearful as to what may be coming next. And why all this? Is it not because they have not known "the truth"? Our Lord said,

I am . . . the truth.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

This only is true freedom (John 14:6; 8:32, 36).

The root-error of all this departure from the truth, is doubtless the refusal to accept the divine verdict that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God," and receiving instead the false notion of human competency to judge of the things of God; thus ignoring our fall through Adam's disobedience. For matters of this life, no doubt men have natural abilities; but we are plainly told in scripture that "the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11). Even the apostles, who were "able ministers of the New Testament," with marvelous gifts and qualifications, were wont to say,

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God (2 Cor. 3:5, 6).

If such mighty men of God declared their inability to think a right thought apart from the teaching of the Spirit, how appalling is it in these days to find so many relying on learning and natural ability, and expressing their opinions of the scriptures with such temerity and boldness, instead of humbly owning and relying on the gracious ministry of "the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that

obey him,” and thus

receiving in faith God’s testimony.

It is scarcely possible that Scripture could speak more plainly than it does on this momentous subject. We say nothing against learning and human talent for worldly things, but in reference to the things of God another Scripture says that believers have

received . . . the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God . . . But the natural man [observe it is the natural man] receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:12, 14).

How truly this is verified in these days! Let us not fail to notice further that one must be “spiritual” (under the guidance, teaching, and power, of the Holy Spirit, who occupies the soul with the Lord Jesus where He is), to discern the things of God.

He that is spiritual judgeth [or discerneth] all things (1 Cor. 2:15).

No doubt most of the confusion in Christendom as to the Scriptures can be traced to confidence in human wisdom, instead of honoring the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It would be impossible for those who are born of God to advance opinions, or value those of others, as to the plain testimony of the written word, much less would they confer with known sceptics and Deists, if they knew in their own souls the teaching and power of “the Spirit of truth.” To question the divine authenticity of the holy Scriptures (alas! how few think it), is to refuse God’s word, God’s Son, and therefore God’s salvation. We are told that our Lord,

beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself (Luke 24:27).

Men may boast of “modern thought,” and “intellectual progress,” and style themselves “an advanced school”; but we are persuaded that a solemn crisis is not far off. The question throughout Christendom, already beginning to be heard far and near, is, “Is the Bible God’s revelation of His mind and will? or, Is it merely a collection of the writings and opinions of good men?” Many of the adversaries of the truth lavish their praises on its being “the best of books,” but such compliments are unnecessary and unacceptable. Are the Scriptures the utterance of God’s mind, which came by His will, and not by the will of man, which holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost? If not, there can be no faith, no divine ground on which the soul can rest. But, having His own word, and knowing His perfect love and faithfulness in the accomplished work of the Lord Jesus, and having heard and received the gospel of His grace, the soul rests in perfect peace before Him, and can rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

The believer is not called on to define Inspiration. How the Scriptures were inspired has not been revealed. It is enough for him that by them God is made known, that holy men of God testified by “the Spirit of Christ which was in them,” and that they minister Christ to his soul. Our Lord, too when speaking of us to the Father said, “I have given them thy word.” After that, we read that the apostles and brethren prayed that they might “with all boldness speak thy word,” and were so answered, that “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word of God with boldness.” Believers knew that the ministry in old time, and also by our Lord and His apostles, was the

ministry of “the word of God.”

Neither are believers called on to solve all the mysteries and difficulties of the Scriptures. They may know but very little of the Bible; but they find it therein revealed, without a shadow of question, that Jesus the Son of God “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification”; and that “by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses,” and they are filled with “joy and peace in believing.”

How plainly we can “see the day approaching”! The cry of “peace and safety,” the prelude of sudden destruction, well-nigh encircles the habitable earth. “The times of the Gentiles” are rapidly being fulfilled. Not a few have departed from the faith. The cloud which has been so long hanging over Christendom, thickens and lowers with incredible rapidity. The disciples of modern infidelity are being multiplied. “The way of Cain,” or approach to God without blood, is becoming largely accepted. The name of Christ is unblushingly attached to unscriptural efforts, in order that they may be accredited; and “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,” from which the faithful are enjoined to “turn away,” is spreading itself far and near. The numberless confederacies of men on all sides may be casting their shadow, to intimate that the binding of the tares in bundles is not far off. Nor can we fail to see that the hostility between confessed infidels and formal professors of Christianity may possibly be the harbinger of that great collision ere long to have its solemn fulfilment. when they will

hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire (Heb. 10:25; 1 Thess. 5:3; Rev. 17:16).

It would be impossible at this time for the faithful not to “sound an alarm.” We are to “warn” as well as “comfort.” Neutrality is out of the question; for our Lord said, “He that is not with me, is against me.” With those who are true to Him, the supreme authority of Scripture will be maintained at all cost. Its intrinsic perfection and excellency have been tasted and enjoyed by them, and they know the Shepherd’s voice. Christ Himself, their life and righteousness, is their resource; His Father is their Father, who loves them as He loved His Son. The Holy Spirit is their Teacher, Guide and Strength. Their watchword is, “It is written,” and they find real delight in serving the living and true God, and waiting for His Son from heaven. They know that “the night is far spent” and “the day is at hand.”

That the Scriptures have been marvelously preserved for us to the present moment is an unquestionable fact; but what means God has employed for its accomplishment is another thing. Certain it is as to the Old Testament that to the Jews “were committed the oracles of God”; and it is most interesting to observe how scrupulously pious Jews have sometimes guarded the sacred treasure, and also that the books which they still accredit as divinely inspired correspond with what we call the Old Testament, though the books are not bound up together precisely in the same order.

The pretensions of Romish or Anglican churches to be the appointed custodians of the Scriptures, and that the decisions of their councils gives them their authority, is as gratuitous and unfounded as anything can be. Where is there a line of Scripture to warrant such a conclusion? We are well aware that our opponents would say, “Hear the church”; to which we reply, though that Scripture gives church or assembly authority in case of discipline, it gives not a shadow of warrant as to the

oracles of God being now committed to the church. The words, "Hear the church" are found only in Matt. 18, and refer to an offending brother, who having been told of his trespass by the offended one alone, and not having been gained, then, having his fault again brought before him in the presence of one or two more, and having neglected to hear them, the assembly or church must then be told of it, and

if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.

Now, honestly, whatever has this to do with the church being the custodians of the Scriptures, and to decide on their authority? Instead of the church giving authority to the Scriptures, it is really the Scripture which, in cases of discipline gives authority to the church.

Another word brought forward of late to bolster up this tradition of men is quoted from Luke 10:16, when our Lord on sending forth the seventy to preach the glad tidings of the kingdom (for the Messiah was there, and ready to set up His kingdom), said, "He that heareth you, heareth me." Now where is there any allusion to the church or its authority here? To receive or reject the servant being to receive or reject the Sender has always been true, as here it is the servant being heard because he came to them in Messiah's name. We know from Matt. 16:18 and other Scriptures that the church on earth was not then in existence, nor could it be till the Holy Spirit came down, as recorded in the second chapter of Acts.

Again, refuge is taken by the opponents of the truth in the words,

the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also (2 Tim. 2:2).

These words are found in Paul's last epistle to Timothy, when all Asia had turned away from him, and a prominent fellow-servant had forsaken him, and loved this present world. The Church had long gone on as God's corporate witness on earth, and had deeply failed, and nothing would have been easier than for the aged apostle in prospect of martyrdom to have commended Timothy to church authority; but instead of that, he calls upon Timothy to look out for individuals in the church on earth whom he can judge true to the Lord, and commit the truth which he had received from the apostle to such as he could call "faithful men," so that they might be able to teach others also. Timothy could not fail so to understand it. There is no thought of church authority in the passage. Nor is there such an idea here or elsewhere in Scripture as that "the church teaches." Instead of the church teaching, the church is taught by the "gifts" received from Christ in ascension; and in the prospect of ruin and difficulty in the church looked at as God's corporate witness on earth, we are directed to the Scriptures and their sufficiency as our resource in a time of evil in the last days (2 Tim. 3:15-17; see also Eph. 4:8-16). From first to last in the sacred writings their divine authority is set before us. Even when Paul preached, who had received his commission directly from the Lord Himself, as he says, "not of men neither by man," the Bereans were specially commended by the Holy Spirit, because they searched the Scriptures daily, "whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11, 12). How important it is at this time to see that instead of the church giving authority or adding any value to the written word, it is that word which is the only authority in the church, and is sufficient to guide, instruct, and correct every believer and furnish him unto every good work.

The truth is, that "the faith once delivered," instead of being deposited to the care and authority of a corporate association — the church — we are plainly told was once given "to the saints," so that every believer (for all such are "saints" by calling) has received this wondrous endowment from the

Lord, and is under obligation to Him to “contend earnestly” for it, and maintain it at all costs for His honor (Jude 3). When the word of eternal truth is not heeded in its divine character, as the daily resource and guide, men and books will be almost sure to be resorted to, and will usurp the place of “God, and the word of his grace,” in the heart and mind, with great loss and damage of soul. “To obey is better than sacrifice”; and to heed and keep the “words” of the Son of God is the proof of our loving Him; and an apostle was wont to exhort believers to “be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior” (John 14:23; 2 Pet. 3:2).

1. Preliminary Remarks on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures

If when Moses saw that the burning bush was not consumed, he was told to put his shoes from off his feet for the place whereon he stood was holy ground, with what humility of mind, and holy reverence, should we approach the consideration of the imperishable and unalterable word of God which has been written for our instruction; especially when we remember our entire dependence on the Holy Spirit to receive, reveal, or communicate the things of God!

God knows our total inability for searching His deep things apart from the operation of the Spirit of God; but the Spirit having been given to those who believe, we may now not only know the things that are freely given to us of God, but are enjoined to “contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” God’s own revelation of His mind has not then been given merely to gifted preachers or teachers, but is the common property of the saints — of all those who are called of God by the gospel of His Son Jesus Christ. To such it is God’s wondrous gift. It is the present heritage of all His children. To neglect “the faith once delivered” is therefore to dishonor Him, and plainly shows that the heart is on something else. To prize it beyond all else here should distinguish us. Not to find the deepest interest in the pages of holy Scripture argues that we ponder it but little. It is well to read it; but to meditate on it night and day with delight is what God gives to those who seek increased acquaintance with Himself through His word. Happy are they who can truly say, with one of old,

How sweet are thy words unto my taste yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth (Psa. 119:103).

With what lowliness of heart, then, should we approach the sacred volume, and with what gratitude to God for having given us such a treasure; with what godly fear, too, lest by an improper thought or utterance we tarnish the glory of its infinite perfection! When we consider that these “words of God” shall shine in all their unchanging brightness and eternal worth when heaven and earth shall have passed away, how can we but tremble lest by ignorance or weakness on our part we mar the testimony to the truth of God, or hinder its blessing to others?

If we think only of ourselves — our infirmities, our failures and unworthiness, how could we ever go forth to “fight the good fight of faith”? But when we consider that God has caused the Scriptures to be written for our comfort, that the apostle desired that “the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified,” that by it sinners are begotten of God, and His saints corrected and built up, we can then confidently cast ourselves on the loving care and upholding goodness of our gracious God, and reckon upon His tender mercy. Nor would we, by grace, forget that He has said, “To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word” (Isa. 61:2). May this be the state of heart in which we ponder the inspired volume! for

A glory gilds the sacred page

Majestic, like the sun;

It gives a light to every age —

It gives, but borrows none.

The hand that gave it still supplies

The gracious light and heat;

Its truths upon believing rise —

They rise, but never set.

2. What Is Inspiration?

By inspiration we mean that which is God-breathed. We are told “all [or every] Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” It might be rendered “every Scripture is God-breathed” (2Tim. 3:16). The Scriptures are therefore a revelation from God; and their force or authority to our hearts and consciences flows from that fact. If Scripture be not God’s word, it has no more value to us than the writings of good men; but it is His word, hence it comes to us with the authority, love, wisdom and holiness of God. Though its pages run over thousands of years, take us back before time was, and lead our thoughts on to the eternal state, and some of its books were written more than three thousand years ago, it is unlike any other book, for it is always new. Take up an ordinary volume of human composition, written two or three hundred years ago, or even go back to one of the Fathers, and you will find you have scarcely patience to read a few pages; but Scripture, as we have said, though old, is always new. It carries with it a freshness and power to the heart and conscience, as no other book does; and all the changes in the world and in mankind never seem to affect it. It warns us against “men” and their “philosophy,” ritualism and its imposing ordinances, and of putting “tradition” in the place of authority instead of Christ. While addressing itself to the heart and conscience, it has always a voice of instruction and blessing to those who believe and receive its words from the mouth of God. Those who do not believe, cannot understand it, for “by faith we understand.” Such only know its blessedness. “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him,” and we have “joy and peace in believing.” To the rationalist Scripture is inexplicable, to the ritualist it is confusion, to the infidel it abounds with mistakes, to the literary man there are inaccuracies and contradictions. Such, however, little know that God hath said that

the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:14).

The Bible is the only book that faithfully tells us what we are, and that even to the discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart. This shows it to be divine, for God only searches the heart. It also truly reveals God, so that when the word is received, it brings our souls into the consciousness of God having to do with us. This also shows its divinity, for “the world by wisdom knows not God.” The variety of aspects in which the Son who came forth from the Father to save sinners is presented to us — His personal glory, moral perfectness, finished work, walk, words, ways, life, death, resurrection, ascension, glorification, present offices, and future judgments and reign — as the leading truths of Scripture, give it also a divine character. Its unity, too, carries with it the stamp of divinity as nothing else could. The way in which the different parts are adapted to each other; types in the Old Testament having their antitypes in the New; a multitude of prophetic statements in the former having their accomplishment in the latter, and the immense number of quotations in the New from the Old Testament, to prove the soundness of the doctrines taught, combine to give it a divine character which is incontestable. It is not then surprising that an inspired writer should commend “the word” to us as if in its operations it possessed divine attributes.

The word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12).

A professing Christian lately said, "There are many opinions about the Scriptures"; to which we replied, "How can that be, if they are the utterances of God to us? for surely, then, we have only to hearken to His voice, and seek to do His will." How little did this man think that he was, in the vanity of his mind, imagining that he was competent, as a fallen creature in Adam, to sit in judgment on the things of God, and thus take ground with rationalists and infidels, instead of bowing to Scripture as God's word, and allowing it to judge him. Alas! such is the pride of man in these last and closing days, that many prefer their own opinions to Scripture, and, as of old, make void the word of God, that they may keep their own tradition. Hence, also, the word is being solemnly fulfilled in men's rejection of holy Scripture, that "seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13).

If we have not "the words of God," we have no basis for faith, and must therefore be tossed about with irremediable uncertainty; but having divinely-given communications, we have on their authority divinely-given certainty as to eternal salvation. By it we have present assurance, founded on the redemption-work of our Lord Jesus Christ, that our sins are forgiven, that we have eternal life, are the children of God, and shall not come into judgment (Acts 10:43; John 3:36; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:1). If such are asked why they believe on our Lord Jesus Christ? and why they have such certainty as to their present and eternal blessings? their reply will be "Because God in His word says so, and faith needs no other authority for confidence, and no other rest for the heart and conscience."

The days are indeed evil and perilous. Time was when heathen idolaters were those who chiefly scoffed and mocked at the Scriptures being God's own revelation of His mind; and later on, avowed infidels in Christendom treated the subject with scorn and ridicule; but in our day it is those who profess to be servants of Christ, and guides of the flock of God, who are so busily engaged in undermining the eternal verity of the holy Scriptures, and their divine authority. This, too, is seldom attempted as a whole by one person; but by different persons in various places, so that it may be, by Satan's artifice, the less manifest. At this moment there is scarcely a vital and fundamental doctrine of Scripture, that is not being assailed or corrupted within the length and breadth of Christendom.

What has especially stirred many hearts at this time, is the consciousness of the appalling state of souls in the neglect of the Scriptures, and the skeptical thoughts that are current among professors of Christianity as to their divine authority. Not that we imagine that we have power to lead any to see and act differently, for we are told that "no man knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God." The prayer, however, of not a few, has been that God will yet work by His word, and bless and help souls according to His own thoughts, and for His own glory.

3. Sacred Writings

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope (Rom. 15:4).

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come (1 Cor. 10:11).

These two verses plainly teach us that in the apostles' days there were sacred writings, which they could speak of as written for our comfort and instruction. It is well, then, first of all, to see if we can gather from other parts of Scripture with certainty what these sacred writings were. As to this, one thing is very striking. It is the way in which our Lord in the days of His flesh referred to "the Scriptures." Not only did He say, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, for they are they which testify of me"; but He was wont to appeal to His hearers, saying, "Have ye never read?" "Did you never read?" "What is written in the law?" "How readest thou?" "Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God?" — all evidently referring to sacred writings. Moreover, He not only said, "Moses wrote of me," but He was pleased to rank the "writings" of Moses with His own "words," when He added, "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" There were writings, then, which our Lord in His ministry frequently authenticated as divinely-given, which He honored and obeyed, and their authority was to Him final and conclusive. In point of fact, "It is written," when quoting the very words of Scripture, was with Him the sword of the Spirit to resist Satan in all his temptations.

There were writings, then, which our Lord used, honored, and obeyed, and commended to His hearers as testifying of Himself, Scripture which must be fulfilled, and, because divinely-given, infinite, and pure, and holy. Now these were the books of the Old Testament, for the New Testament was not then in existence.

The external evidence of the divine authenticity of Scripture is very weighty, especially when we consider that to the Jews were "committed the oracles of God," and from time immemorial to the present, it is well known that they have retained the different books of the Old Testament pretty much as we have them, and regard them as given to them by Jehovah. Our object now, however, is not to look so much at the external evidence, as to the internal testimony the Scriptures give of their being the word of God. It is interesting, however to know, that in the early centuries of what is called the Christian Era, there is abundance of proof from the writers of that time, that they quoted largely from the books of the New Testament. It is said also, that Lord Halles, a Scotchman, having searched the writings of the so-called Christian Fathers who lived during three hundred years after Christ, found, with all their blunders, nearly all the writings of the New Testament as we have them in different parts of their books.

The attempt to prove by human reasoning and external evidence that the Scripture is God's word, would be just as absurd as lighting a candle to look at the sun. Every one knows, except he be blind, that the sun gives light and heat. We know nothing of the sun without these effects. So every

honest mind that has ears to hear, and gets before God, finds Scripture so searching, that it commends itself to his conscience as being the word of God. He finds it quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.

4. the Old Testament

For ever, O Jehovah, thy word is settled in heaven

(Psa. 119:89).

Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name

(Psa. 138:2)

In turning to the earliest books of the Bible, we read on one occasion that “Moses wrote all the words of Jehovah”; that Jehovah said unto Moses, another time, “Write this law for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua.” Again, we read that Moses was commanded to write, and “Moses wrote this song according to the commandment of Jehovah, and taught it the children of Israel,” and that he also “wrote their goings out according to their journeyings, by the commandment of Jehovah” (Ex. 24:4; 27:4; Deut. 31:19-22; Num. 33:2).

Moreover, it is clear that Moses was conscious that the word he gave Israel had divine authority. He said, “It shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and do all the commandments which I command thee this day, that Jehovah thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth.” His writings, therefore, are called “the book of this law,” and “the covenant,” and “his statutes which are written in this book of the law.” “And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests” (Deut. 28:1, 61; 29:21; 30:10; 31:9).

We find in the books of Moses such words as “Jehovah said unto Moses,” over and over again. Sometimes it is added, “Speak unto Aaron thy brother,” or “to the children of Israel,” or to the priests; and afterward we read it was done, and it is frequently said, “as Jehovah commanded Moses.”

Joshua also having been assured by direct communication from Jehovah of the divine origin and authority of the writings of Moses, was also taught that his own success in the service of God would be connected with his observing to do all that Moses commanded. He was told to

turn not from it, to the right hand or to the left.

. . . The book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to that which is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success (Josh. 1:7-9).

Thus the writings of Moses were not only authenticated by Jehovah, but Joshua was held responsible by God to obey them “according to all that is written therein.” It was all the Scripture that he had, and yet how careful he was to carry out its directions.

Joshua also was a writer. “He wrote upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.” It is added that,

afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law (Deut. 22:2; Josh. 8:32-35).

It is scarcely possible to have a clearer testimony to the inspiration and divine authority of the books of Moses.

The prophet Samuel also was a writer. He “told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before Jehovah” (1 Sam. 10:25).

Isaiah, too, was a writer. We read that

“Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos, wrote the acts of Uzziah first and last” (2 Chron. 26:22).

“Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon.” “And Jeremiah said unto Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; then shalt thou say, O Jehovah, thou hast spoken against this place” (Jer. 51:60-62).

Daniel had wonderful things revealed to him by God in dreams, and visions, and by the angel Gabriel. We read that “He wrote the dream.” He also acknowledged the divine inspiration and authority of the ancient Scriptures, for he tells us that he “understood by books the number of years, whereof the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem”; and he also recognized the divine authority of what is “written in the law of Moses,” and “noted in the Scripture of truth” (Dan. 7:1; 9:2, 11; 10:21). Let us not fail to observe that Daniel speaks of the prophecies of Jeremiah as the words of Jehovah.

The sweet psalmist of Israel said, “The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was in my tongue” (2 Sam. 23:2). “My tongue is the pen of a ready writer” (Psa. 45:1). The wise man also exclaimed, “Have not I written to thee excellent things?” (Prov. 22:20). The prophet Hosea said, “I have written to him [Ephraim] the great things of thy law” (8:12); and Jehovah said unto Habakkuk, “Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it” (Hab. 2:2).

Enough of quotations from the Old Testament we judge have been given to show, that writing was a means ordained by God for communicating and treasuring up divinely-given truth, and that its authority was acknowledged by the faithful in all ages. The people, too, were taught by God’s servants to give diligent heed to these writings. When the children of Israel should have a king, Moses said, “He shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God, to keep all the words of this law, and their statutes to do them.” Joshua also taught the people to “take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of Jehovah charged you.” We read also that in Nehemiah’s day, Ezra the scribe, when the people were collected together, “read in the book of the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the meaning” (Deut. 17:19; Josh. 22:5; Neh. 8:5-8).

From all these various witnesses, we not only learn that God had ordered writing as a means of communicating His mind and will, but, as a fact, we also find preserved for us in a most marvelous way for nearly two thousand years a number of books written by various persons who had no communication with each other; written, too, at different times, and under different circumstances for a period extending over 1500 years, and all the books so agreeing together that a spiritual mind can trace all as being under the guidance of a master mind: books that were valued by other prophets, treasured up by faithful men, esteemed by many as of more value than thousands of

gold and silver, and ministering words which were found and eaten to the joy and rejoicing of the heart. In these many books we find the prophetic words of some afterwards registered by others as fulfilled, and warnings unheeded, too, meeting with the predicted judgments; the depravity and utter ruin and wickedness of man set forth, and alas, manifested, while the nature of God, as love and light, His attributes and words of holiness, grace and truth, stand out in all their uncompromising perfection, and eternal excellence. Because of these things, the written word of the Old Testament brings such conviction to the soul of its divinity and eternal truth, when opened up and brought home by the Spirit, that the heart no more looks to men's opinions, or other external evidence, than a child, when gazing with delight on a photograph of his living mother, would inquire who it is.

5. the Testimony of the New Testament to the Old

Let us now take a brief glance at the books of the New Testament, and ascertain what testimony there is to the inspiration of the Old Testament. We shall only take a few examples out of many.

In Matt. 1:22, we read, "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of Jehovah, by the prophet." Observe, it is not merely that the prophet's saying was "fulfilled," thus to show how divinely true it was, but that it was "spoken of Jehovah." Is it possible that anything can show more clearly that the prophet Isaiah uttered it by inspiration? In the next chapter we find the same expression (v. 15); "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of Jehovah by the prophet" — the prophet Hosea. In ch. 5, our Lord so authenticated the testimony of the Old Testament that He said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." "The law" is sometimes used to include all the ancient Scriptures.

Mark's gospel begins with quotations from the prophets Malachi and Isaiah, and in ch. 7, our Lord said to the Pharisees, "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me," and charges them with rejecting "the commandment of God," as in Exodus and Leviticus, and setting up instead, "commandments of men." "Thus," added our Lord, "making the word of God of none effect through your tradition." Here our Lord calls the writings of Moses the word of God (vv. 6-13). In Mark 12 our Lord declares that David wrote Psa. 110, "by the Holy Ghost" (v. 36). Again, we ask, is it possible to have clearer proofs of divine inspiration?

In Luke 1, we see a man full of the Holy Ghost; his testimony, therefore, must be very important; we find him saying that "He [the Lord God of Israel] spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began" (Luke 1:70). In Luke 3, we have the testimony of one who was full of the Holy Ghost from his birth, of whom our Lord said, "Among them that are born of women, there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist." Well, what about him? We read that at a certain time "the word of God came unto John." What word of God? "As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet," etc., (vv. 2, 4). In Luke 4, the Lord reads in the synagogue part of Isa. 61, and stops in the middle of a sentence, and closed the book and sat down, saying, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." What Scripture? "The acceptable year of the Lord." How? Because He came to call sinners to repentance (vv. 18-21).

In chapter 16, the Lord again most authoritatively enforces the authenticity of the writings of Moses and the prophets. He says, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them

. . . If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" (vv. 29-31).

Is it possible that such language could be applied to any writings that were not given by God?

In John's gospel it is recorded that Lord recognized certain writings which called "Scriptures," which testified of Himself. He also especially taught that Moses wrote of Him. But more than that;

He so recognized that Moses wrote them not by his own will, but by the Holy Ghost, that he ranked Moses' writings as of equal authority with His own words, when He said, "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" In John 10, our Lord declared that "the Scripture cannot be broken" (v. 35), as He also said elsewhere "the Scripture must be fulfilled."

In Acts 1, the apostles are in a different state as to the truth, because our Lord after His resurrection had "opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." Many men in our day think themselves quite competent to understand Scripture by natural ability aided by education; but it is a great mistake, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). Did people believe this, how anxious they would be that God would reveal His truth to them by the Holy Spirit's power!

Well, Peter, the apostle, in Acts 1, gathered from Psa. 41 and 109, that another should be chosen ('ordained' is not in the Greek) to take the place of Judas the betrayer. His words show that he regarded the Psalms as inspired. He said to the others,

This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas (v. 16).

It was Peter who after this wrote,

We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place . . . for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1:19-21).

In Acts 2, Peter and the others have very much advanced spiritually. Why is this? The Holy Spirit had come down and taken up His abode in them, so that they were "filled" with the Holy Spirit, and had a power in ministry, and received gifts which were never known before. Peter stands up to preach! Now, what is it about? He first quotes from the prophet Joel, to explain that it was the coming of the Holy Spirit which had produced all this joy and power in them. He then goes to Psa. 16, 132, and 110, to show that the death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of Christ was a fulfilment of what had been written concerning Him many hundreds of years before; and we know what vast blessing accompanied this ministry. Observe here, that these Old Testament writings were given by the Holy Spirit, and expounded by one full of the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 3, Peter declares to the Jews that even then if they repent, turn to God, and have forgiveness of sins, Jesus will be sent down from heaven, and bring in millennial blessing as their true Messiah — "the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Here, again, it is "God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets." What could more plainly show us that these men were inspired by God to write? (vv. 19-22).

In Acts 4:24, 25, "God" is said to utter the second Psalm by the mouth of His servant David.

In Peter's sermon at Caesarea, when speaking of the Lord coming to judge, he says, "To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Observe, here, he includes all the prophets. We would only add as to Peter's testimony that in his first epistle, he refers to the Scriptures of the Old Testament as final and

conclusive. With him, "it is written," was enough, and he quotes from, or refers to Exodus, Genesis, Isaiah, Psalms, Hosea, and other Old Testament writings. He enjoins his readers to be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets (2 Pet. 3:2).

Now let us hear Paul's testimony. In his first memorable sermon at Antioch, he begins by running through the ways of God with the people of Israel, from Egypt to that day, and thus authenticates the books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Samuel on to David, from whom he traces the Savior Jesus. He further refers to Old Testament Scriptures as to His death on the cross, in the brief statement, "when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a sepulcher: but God raised him from among the dead." He then goes to Psa. 2, which shows that God sent and gave His only begotten, whom men rejected, and he quotes Psa. 16. to show that He saw no corruption. Paul's ministry here was founded on the divine authority of Old Testament Scriptures. It is well to observe that in those days preaching was giving out, not human ideas and eloquence, but "the word of God." Hence, we read, "almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God." "And the word of the Lord was published," and in the next chapter, "God gave testimony to the word of his grace."

In Acts 17 we find Paul preaching at Thessalonica in a Jewish synagogue, and according to his manner, he "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures." What Scriptures? The Old Testament; from which he shows that "Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from among the dead; and that this Jesus which I preach unto you is Christ." The result was that many believed. Now if we turn to the 1st epistle to the Thessalonian believers, we find Paul by the Holy Spirit writing to them, that he

thanked God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh in them that believe (1 Thess. 2:13).

Can any testimony more fully prove the divine inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures? for the apostle began his ministry to them from those writings, and now as the Lord's servant commends them for receiving the testimony as "the word of God."

Paul then carries the gospel to Berea; and we are told that the Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica; and why? Because they held that the Scriptures (then the Old Testament) were the only balance God had given to test everything by; so "they searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so." Yes, and they were commended for testing even the ministry of an inspired apostle by the Scriptures. Oh that people would do the same in our day! We should not then hear such words of unbelief, alas! so common, as expressing opinions on this and that Scripture, and asking others what their opinions are. The fact is, the opinions of men are often useless, and savor strongly of infidelity, because God has given us His own word. This, faith rejoices in. Never, then, let us forget this divine commendation of the Berean believers. Passing over much of Paul's testimony, we find him at length before king Agrippa. There he declares that he said

none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come; that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from among the dead, and should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles (Acts 26:22, 23).

In the conclusion of the Acts, we find him at Rome “persuading [the Jews] concerning Jesus both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets from morning till evening”; and ended by giving another testimony to the Old Testament Scriptures having been divinely inspired. “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers” (Acts 28:23, 25).

Looking as briefly as possible into the epistles, we find the appeal to Scripture always final and decisive. In Rom. 3, man’s utter ruin, all having “sinned,” “all guilty,” and “all under sin,” proved by quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures. In chapter 4, when the question is raised as to whether a man is justified by works,” Scripture is at once appealed to — “What saith the Scripture?” And the writing of Moses, that “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness” decides it. But lest any should suppose there was a difference as to this, in those who lived under the law, David is referred to, to show that even such as lived under law had no righteousness before God, but that which is of faith.

Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin (Psa. 32).

In other parts of the epistle references are made to the prophet Habakkuk, Isaiah, and other prophets, besides the books of Moses and the Psalms, as bearing divine and unquestionable testimony.

In the epistles to the Corinthians we see the same appeal to Scripture. Who would have thought that when Jehovah wrote by Moses, “Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn,” it had any reference to the saints now in ministering to those who preach the gospel? But, saith the inspired apostle,

Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written that he that ploweth should plow in hope, and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? (1 Cor. 9:9-11)

In Galatians when false teachers had been seeking to undermine the gospel by mixing law with it, Genesis is again quoted to show that Abraham had righteousness only on the principle of faith; and to prove that now, those who “be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham,” it is most authoritatively added, that “the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” Habakkuk also is referred to, and tells us that “the just shall live by faith”; Deuteronomy, that Christ has been made a curse for us, “As it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,” and has thus redeemed us from the curse of the law; and the inspired apostle further sets the Old Testament before us in its divine and infinite authority, by saying, “The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe” (Rom. 3:6-22)

We cannot conclude our brief view of the apostle Paul’s testimony to the sacred writings of the Old Testament, without referring to the epistle to the Hebrews. There in the first verse, he disperses all question on the subject, if any yet existed. “God,” he tells us, has spoken “unto the fathers by the prophets.” Nothing can be more conclusive and incontestable, for it is “God” who “hath spoken.”

Let not the reader fail to notice also, that in Heb. 3 and 10, the writer quotes from the book of Psalms and Jeremiah, and speaks of them as what the Holy Spirit saith. It need scarcely be added that a great deal of this epistle is a divine commentary on sacrifice, priesthood, approach to God, worship and communion as taught by types of the tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifices offered according to the law. Rom. 11 also authenticates a great deal of Scripture from Genesis to the book of Daniel.

James appeals to Scripture as conclusive. He also brings the prophets before us without one exception who have spoken in the name of Jehovah; and quotes from Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Joshua, and first book of Kings.

John, in his first epistle, gives us as a test to distinguish truth and error, the hearing of the apostles, "We are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth us: he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." He authenticates the books of Moses by quoting from them. Jude also, in referring to Enoch and other parts of Scripture, gives these writings unquestionable authority.

Thus we have looked briefly at a few of the testimonies which the New Testament writers and speakers give as to the validity and authenticity of the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures. It is well not to overlook the fact, that the disciples were unintelligent as to the resurrection of our Lord, because "they knew not the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead": that is, the Old Testament Scriptures which "were written for our learning." Our Lord also told His two loved disciples going to Emmaus that they were in error because they did not believe the Scripture, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

Before we turn back to examine the ancient writings as a whole, it will help us to remember how our Lord set them as such before His disciples after He was risen from among the dead. Not only, as before observed, did He open their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures; but we are told that "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." What a marvelous exposition it must have been! Is it surprising that they said one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Yes, when He applies Scripture to our hearts and consciences it brings its own evidence of its divinity. When our Lord spoke to the woman of Samaria, she felt at once it was in a divine way, so that her conscience being reached she said, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet"; and on learning that He was the Messiah, she left all to go into the city and say, "Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?" {John 4}. Our Lord in life said the Scripture cannot be broken; in death He consciously fulfilled Scripture and spoke of it; in resurrection, as we have seen, He brought Scripture to His disciples. Again, having eaten before them to show He was not a spirit but a body of flesh and bones, He said, "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me." "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." Our Lord not only testified to His having fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures in His death and resurrection, but He authenticated the entire body of writings in all their divisions of books of Moses, prophets, and Psalms; much as we still, through God's great mercy

and guardian care, have them.

In looking into the books of Moses, we find that our Lord recognized their divine authority, and referred to each of them as such. We hear Him saying on one occasion, "Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female?" (Gen. 1:27). And again He quotes from Gen. 2:24, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." He was Himself, as the woman's Seed, to be the fulfiller of the bruising of Satan's head, after He Himself had suffered from him. This we find in Gen. 3; as also in the typical clothing of man's nakedness through the death of Another; the result of the death of the cross. Our Lord also spoke of the death of "righteous Abel," as recorded in Gen. 4; endorsed the doctrine of man's utter ruin of Gen. 6, when He said, "the flesh profiteth nothing," and "out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts," etc.; and largely dwelt on the details of the days of Noah and the flood as typical of the sad state He will find the world in when He comes from heaven to judge (Matt. 24:37-41). Our Lord also referred to Abraham, saying, he "rejoiced to see my day . . . and was glad," but asserted the divine glory of His Person, when He said, "Before Abraham was, I AM."

Our Savior also quoted the words of Jehovah,

I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,

to show they were still spiritually alive and to prove the reality of the resurrection of the body, and thus refute the false doctrine of the Sadducees; and this Scripture also authenticated their patriarchal history as detailed in Genesis (Matt. 22:32). The tabernacle, with its priesthood and sacrifices, gave much typical instruction as to our Lord's death and High Priestly office for us.

The Lord's death was the fulfilment of the typical sacrifices of Leviticus, and He often quoted from it; and from Numbers also, for most will remember that He used the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness as a simple illustration of faith, and the effectual and everlasting blessing those have who in their need and danger look simply to Him as the Object of faith. From Deuteronomy our Lord took words, and used them with "It is written," to overcome the devil in his temptations. Thus the Lord practically authenticated all the books of Moses as God's words, and repeated that we should live "by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

We have lingered over the writings of Moses because of the bold attacks that have been made on them by learned sceptics. It is asserted by some of them, that it is only the first five books of Scripture to which they object; but as the writings of Moses are quoted as having divine authority throughout the Old and New Testament, to disallow them as not divinely inspired, is not merely to lose them, but to deprive us of all the Scriptures. This, no doubt, was anticipated by our Lord who knew all things, so that He said, "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" It is most interesting, however, to know that Joshua is not only told to obey Moses's writings, but at the end of his course as Jehovah's servant, he records the history of the children of Israel from the call of Abraham to that time (Gen. 24). About a thousand years after that, Nehemiah also recorded their history from the call of Abraham, traces them out of Egypt across the Red Sea, through the wilderness under God's care and goodness for forty years, their ways of disobedience in the land, and God's deliverances; and adds that, "God testified against them by his Spirit in the prophets."

Thus He authenticated not only all the books of Moses and Joshua, but all the prophets before His time (Neh. 9). Nor should it be forgotten, that the facts in the history of the children of Israel, recorded in the books of Moses, right on to their captivity, are taken up in detail in the Psa. 78, 105, and 106, thus endorsing many of the books of the Old Testament as divinely authenticated. In the divisional part of the Old Testament called "the Psalms" are included the book of Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations of Jeremiah, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 & 2 Chronicles.

In reference to the book of Psalms, our Lord quoted from Psa. 110, and said David wrote it by the Holy Ghost (Mark 12:26). He said to His hearers who refused Him, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?" (Psa. 118:22). And when under, as it were, the shadow of the cross, He said,

Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be? (Matt. 26:53, 54).

What Scriptures? No doubt largely Moses and the prophets, but also the Psalms, which not only spoke of His death and sufferings as crucified, but also of His resurrection, glorification, and sitting at God's right hand, and coming reign.

It would be interesting in looking into the prophets, to trace the variety of instruments God was pleased to use in this blessed service, but that would far exceed our proposed limits. It is well, however, to observe how careful each was to impress those they addressed with the fact, that they came forth on their service with divine authority. They also knew little of each other; and their ministry, from Moses to Christ, occupied about 1500 years. A brief quotation or two from each may suffice for our present purpose.

Isaiah begins by asserting that what he saw was concerning Judah and Jerusalem. He says, "Hear . . . for Jehovah hath spoken." "The word which Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem" (Isa. 1:1, 2; 2:1). Jeremiah has, "The word of Jehovah came unto me," or, "The word which came to Jeremiah from Jehovah." In Ezekiel it says, "The word of Jehovah came expressly unto Ezekiel," or, "He said unto me"; or, "Again the word of Jehovah came unto me," and such like expressions occur many times. He also was commanded to write. Jehovah said unto him, "Thou shalt speak my words unto them"; and in a vision he saw "a roll . . . written within and without." So assured was he that what he declared was the word of God, that he said, "The word that I speak shall come to pass, and the word that I have spoken shall be done . . . Thus saith the Lord God" (Ezek. 1:3; 2:7-10; 7:1; 12:25, 28; 16:1).

No one can have carefully considered The Book of Psalms without seeing the value and authority of the written word frequently set forth. It opens by marking one point in the righteous man, being that he meditates in the law of Jehovah day and night; and in Psa. 119, almost every verse speaks of the word, statutes, commandments, or law of Jehovah. Not only does this book extol the purity of the word itself, like silver purified seven times, but also of its cleansing virtue. The authenticity, too, of the Scriptures is so regarded that the writer says, "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver"; and "I love thy commandments above gold, yea above fine gold" (Psa. 1:2; 119:9, 72, 127). David was one of those holy men of old of whom Peter speaks,

who was “moved by the Holy Spirit” to give unto us the “sure word of prophecy” (2 Pet. 1:19-21).

In Proverbs also we are told that “every word of God is pure . . . add thou not unto his words” (Prov. 30:5, 6). And again, “Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge; that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth, that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?” (Prov. 22:20, 21).

Daniel, though he prophesied by the same Spirit, is somewhat different, for his line was “the times of the Gentiles,” as also his own people. He gives us, in the second chapter, the whole history of the Gentile nations, and their concluding judgment; he also spoke of the abomination yet to be set up in the temple, which our Lord referred to in Matt. 24:15, and is so soon to have its very solemn fulfilment. In Hosea it is, “The word of Jehovah that came to Hosea” (Hos. 1:1). In Joel, “The word of Jehovah that came to Joel” (Joel. 1:1). Amos said, “Thus saith Jehovah” (Amos. 1:3). Obadiah begins, “Thus saith Jehovah concerning Edom” (v.1). In Jonah we are twice told that “The word of Jehovah came to Jonah” (Jonah. 1:1; 3:1). Micah begins with, “The word of Jehovah that came to Micah.” Nahum says, “Thus saith Jehovah” (Nahum. 1:12). Habakkuk tells us, “Jehovah answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it” (Hab. 2:2). Zephaniah begins with, “The word of Jehovah which came unto Zephaniah” (Zeph. 1:1).

The testimony of the prophets was nearly completed when the Jews were carried away into Babylon. We have only three post-captivity prophets — Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, though some of the prophecies of Jeremiah (see chap. 52:30) and Daniel were given after the great captivity. Haggai distinctly affirms that his word was “the word of Jehovah,” and that it came to him at different times. He announced his messages authoritatively, with, “Thus saith Jehovah” (Hag. 1:1, 7; 2:1, 7, 20) Zechariah also asserts the divine source of his most solemn and beautiful utterances, when he says, “The word of Jehovah came unto Zechariah.” This he repeatedly asserted (Zech. 1:1, 7; 7:1; 8:1). Malachi also introduces his mournful testimony with, “The burden of the word of Jehovah to Israel by Malachi.” It is well not to overlook how this prophet, like others, looks on to the Lord coming in glory to the faithful in Israel, His “jewels,” as the Sun of Righteousness with healing to them and judgment on the wicked. This prophet also presses, in Jehovah’s name, the divine authority of the writings of Moses, saying, “Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments” (Mal.1:1; 4:2, 4).

It is scarcely possible that we could have more conclusive internal evidence of the writers of the Old Testament Scriptures having been inspired by God for their service. Well then has the Lord informed us by His Holy Spirit that,

Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope (Rom. 15:4).

6. Examples of the Divine Authority of the Old Testament Scriptures

With regard to the divine authority of the ancient Scriptures, nothing is more plainly marked than God's displeasure at dishonor to His word, and the blessing that has accompanied obedience. The notice of a few instances will suffice to confirm this.

It was by one man's disobedience that sin entered into the world, with all its consequences of sorrow, death, and judgment. Later on, when God's judgment of fire and brimstone was about to overtake the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Lot with his wife and daughters were rescued from it, they were commanded to "look not behind"; but one of the party thought it wiser to follow her own reasoning than the word of the messenger of God from heaven, and disobeyed. We are told that then God's hand overtook her in judgment; for Lot's wife "looked back . . . and she became a pillar of salt" — a standing monument of God's displeasure (Gen. 19:17, 26). How awful it is to go contrary to God's word!

The children of Israel who came out of Egypt to the number of six hundred thousand men, never entered the land, except Caleb and Joshua, because they did not believe God; and long after they had had the benefit of God's ordinances and prophets for a series of years, they rebelled against Him, refused His word, despised His prophets, and became worse than the heathen; so that both Israel and Judah were given into captivity. How true it is that God cannot look on disobedience to His word with any allowance!

Again, at the famine of Samaria, Jehovah's servant, Elisha, prophesied. His testimony was, "Thus saith Jehovah, To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gate of Samaria." But a man of high standing there unbelievably replied, "If Jehovah would make windows in heaven might this thing be?" This was despising Jehovah's word. So the prophet said unto him, "Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof." And so the words of Jehovah were fulfilled; for the next day there was plenty in the famished city, and this great, but unbelieving man, who despised God's word, saw the plentiful supply of food, but instead of tasting it, "the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died." Another appalling instance of the terribleness of refusing, through unbelief, God's word!

Take another case, not that of an unbeliever, but of the failure of a man of faith — David, a man after God's own heart. He attempted to bring up the ark from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem; but in so doing, God struck Uzzah dead on his touching the ark when the oxen stumbled, and David was deeply distressed. And why was this marked displeasure of the Lord? He afterward found out it was because he had acted according to his own reasonings, and that of others, instead of referring to the written word and acting on it in faith. Oxen, cart, and all were the mere inventions of David and his captains; so that when he knew this he was not surprised at the "breach." From the book of Numbers he learnt that, None ought to carry the ark but the Levites. He now takes the written word as his guide, acts on it, and we know with what blessed result. O that all God's people would search the Scriptures to know His mind, and seek grace and strength from Him to carry it out!

Before closing this part of our subject, let us briefly glance at king Jehoiakim in Jer. 36. The prophet had written in a roll what Jehovah had told him about the king and people, and it was read to the king, when he took a knife, cut the roll into pieces, and burnt it in the fire. What followed? We are told that the prophet wrote "another roll," and added to it; and, as a mark of God's displeasure, said, "Thus saith Jehovah 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" (vv. 21-32). How true are the words of Jehovah, "They that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

Let us now briefly turn to a few examples of such as honored God in receiving His written word, and acting on it, in days too, much like the present, when the traditions and opinions of men have set aside, or corrupted almost everything that God has made known for present guidance and blessing.

Passing by some who had evidently prospered in keeping God's statutes and commandments, "as it is written in the law of Moses," we find it recorded that king Jehoshaphat sought to the Lord God of his fathers, and walked in His commandments. He sent also teachers who taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of Jehovah with them. Present blessing was with him so connected with obedience to the written word, that in the battle field he said, "Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, believe in Jehovah your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." We know how remarkably God's blessing was with him (2 Chron. 17:4, 9; 20:20, 30).

After this, in a time of abounding evil, we find that Jehoiada, after breaking down the house of Baal with its altars and images, appointed the offices of the house of Jehovah, etc., as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and singing, as it was ordained by David (2 Chron. 23:17, 18).

In Hezekiah's reign, there was remarkable blessing on their turning to the authority of the sacred writings. They soon discovered that they had not kept the solemn and important feast of the passover, "for a long time in such sort as it is written." We are told, therefore, that the men of Judah had given them by God one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes by the word of Jehovah. Moreover, Hezekiah appointed morning and evening burnt-offerings, and the burnt-offerings for the sabbaths and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in the law of Moses. They kept the passover and the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness, and then "kept other seven days with gladness," and offered sacrifices; "so there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel [nearly 300 years], there was not the like in Jerusalem" (2 Chron. 30:2, 5, 15-26).

The wonderful revival in the reign of Josiah, king of Judah, may also be traced to the practical acknowledgment of the divine authority of the holy Scriptures. It was brought about by Hilkiah, the priest, finding in the house of Jehovah

a book of the law of Jehovah given by Moses. And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of Jehovah . . . And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass when the king heard the words of the law that he rent his clothes.

The reason was that he learnt from these writings that they were justly exposed to divine wrath, and the curses written in the book, because of their sins in having forsaken Jehovah their God, and having burnt incense to other gods. They, therefore, bowed at once to the authority of the

sacred writings, and kept the passover according to the ordinance, “as it is written in the book of Moses,” and it was accompanied with God’s abundant blessing. They were so exercised by the authority of Scripture about it, that we read that the king’s commandment was, “kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the word of Jehovah by the hand of Moses.” We are further told that the evil, and

abominations that were spied in the land of Judah, and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of Jehovah. And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to Jehovah with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses, neither after him arose there any like him.

We are told also,

“there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet” (2 Chron. 34:14-19, 24; 35:6, 12, 18; 2 Kings 23:24, 25).

The return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon was also strikingly marked by their submission to the authority of the written law of Jehovah. So truly did Ezra recognize the divine authenticity of the Scriptures, that we are told that “Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of Jehovah, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.” We read also, that when they were gathered together as one man in Jerusalem, they “builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God . . . they kept also the feast of tabernacles as it is written.” Again, when the temple was finished, they dedicated the house of God with joy, they offered a sin-offering according to the twelve tribes of Israel, “and they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God which is at Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.” They also found it written in the law, that the feast of tabernacles should be kept. “And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths; for since the days of Jeshua, the son of Nun, unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness” (Ezra 3:2; 6:15-18; 7:6, 10; Neh. 8).

Do not all these examples warn us most solemnly against disobedience to the written word, as well as encourage us to bow to its divine authority? Surely,

to obey is better than sacrifice,

and to honor God is always the path of blessing. It is well also to notice, that in Israel’s history, reviving and restoration began in individual exercise before God, and personal cleaving to His word as demanding willing subjection; and, from individual turning to God in this way collective blessing followed. No doubt it is the same now. Wherever souls turn to God in earnest prayer and supplication, and therefore bow to His word with the hearty desire to carry it out, there will always be found the marked blessing of God. Nothing less is the path of faith. Every other way is the fruit of unbelief, and cannot please God. Wherever true faith in God is in exercise, there will be constant appeal to what is written for our instruction, and its authority will be always final and conclusive. Surely to such the Scriptures are “the oracles of God.”

I love the sacred book of God,

No other can its place supply;
It points me to the saints' abode,
It gives me wings, and bids me fly.
Sweet book! in thee my eyes discern
The image of my absent Lord;
From thine illumined page I learn
The joys His presence will afford.
In thee I read my title clear
To mansions never to decay:
My Lord! O when wilt Thou appear,
And take Thy prisoner far away?"
Before closing our remarks on "the Old Testament," it may be well to look at

7. Some Samples of Its Alleged Inaccuracies

“We say alleged inaccuracies, because to upright souls who wait on God to be taught by His Spirit, what many of the learned of this world think to be contradictory or incorrect, they find to be full of blessing when rightly understood. No doubt errors in copying with the pen accidentally crept in; verbal errors, too, in translation from one language into another; but the preservation of the Scriptures as they are is of itself a standing miracle, and distinctly marks the guardian care of God. But supposing in our present version there are some few verbal inaccuracies, they by no means touch the great lines of truth as to creation, redemption, and glory in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, which are so prominently and fully set forth. Let us look at some of the supposed discrepancies.

Living Souls

One of the commonest statements made by the opposers of the truth is, that as all other living and moving creatures are said to have living souls as well as man, there is therefore no more proof of a man having an immortal existence than brutes. Now the answer is plain and unquestionable. Brutes have living souls as a part of their creation, concerning which God said, "Let the waters bring forth," or, "Let the earth bring forth"; whereas God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (Gen. 1:20, 24, 30; margin; 2:7).

Thus man was not only unlike every other creature in that he was created in the image of God, but he "became a living soul" by God's in-breathing. Hence his immortality hence his existence after death. If he dies in his sins, after death is judgment. His body only is spoken of as mortal.

We must not, however, confound immortality with eternal life. Eternal life is by our being associated with Christ the Savior by faith; and thus receiving the gift of eternal life.

God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life (1 John 5:11, 12).

First and Second Chapters of Genesis

A very old attack of rationalists as to these chapters giving two accounts of the creation, and contradicting each other, has lately been revived, and largely published. The perfection of the two chapters are wholly unperceived by them; so true is it, that "the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11). The truth is, that in the first section of the book of Genesis, which extends to the end of the third verse of the second chapter, we have God's work and His rest. God only (Elohim) is spoken of all through. It is not God giving us an account of everything He created, for angels and other heavenly beings are not there included; but it is God giving us so much as He judged best for our profit and blessing. After the general statement in the first verse, the second verse shows us the chaotic state the earth was in when God began to form the present heaven and earth. for man. Between the first and second verses, a considerable time may have elapsed, and vast changes have taken place, so as to account for geological discoveries; for the earth, not the heaven, was without form, and void. The earth, no doubt, when created, must have been perfect. "As for God, his way is perfect."

In the first chapter it is God making everything for man's comfort and blessing day after day, on the sixth day forming man, and on the seventh day resting because all was finished. God is mentioned in this section about thirty times; but in the second chapter we have not simply God (Elohim), but all through it is the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim). Why is this? Because it treats of man's relationship with God. Now relationship is formed, God reveals Him self as Jehovah God. Unlike the first chapter, it is not here God giving a consecutive account of what He made in six days, and then rested; but this chapter enters into details more in moral order than in a consecutive style,

and very especially occupies us with Jehovah Elohim's thoughts and ways with "the first man." He is long afterward spoken of in Scripture as "the first man," and this chapter is authenticated by being quoted from in that he "was made a living soul" (1 Cor. 15:45). Gen. 2 informs us, that "Jehovah God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." He was to till the ground. He might eat of every tree except "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," and if he did eat of it, death would be the result. As he was created to have dominion over every living creature on earth, Jehovah Elohim brought them to him to name them; and whatever he called them, that was the name thereof. The account also recorded of the formation of Eve, gives us one of the most striking types of Christ and the church found within the whole compass of Scripture. There is also the intimation, that redemption was not brought in merely to repair what man had spoiled; but that, before sin entered, God's eternal counsel and purpose as to Christ and the church were before His mind, and, as we are afterwards told, we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. The earth, however, would be the platform on which man must be tested; man innocent, and man guilty; man without law and man under law; man in Christ's presence on earth, and now during the presence and power of the Holy Spirit come down; and man will be tested also under Christ's reign in righteousness, and as judge of all. And in the eternal state while the earthly people occupy the sin-cleansed earth in unchanging blessedness, the church — the bride and body of Christ — shall share the inheritance with the Heir of all things, and shine in heavenly glory throughout all ages (Eph. 3:21). Thus in the type Adam could say, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" — "one flesh," and all the result of the man's "deep sleep," so that she shares with him his dominion and glory. Few chapters have been more thoroughly authenticated by our Lord and His apostles than Gen. 2. On one occasion, when an inspired writer referred to Adam and Eve, he says, "Adam was first formed, then Eve" (1 Tim. 2:13). This chapter unfolds this to us, and gives most important information as to man's accountability, privileges, and blessings, as well as enters into detail as to what took place on the sixth day. It also gives us the divine institution of marriage, and that man and wife should now typically set forth Christ and the church (Eph. 5). Had we not all this instruction, in what darkness and uncertainty as to these things should we be; and if men were hearkening to God, and seeking to learn of Him in reading and pondering His holy word, instead of expressing themselves with such temerity and mistaken zeal, the alleged inaccuracies would never have been heard of.

It does not say in the first chapter that Adam and Eve were made at the same time; nor does it say in the second chapter that man was formed before the animals. Each chapter is perfect after its kind. In the first, we have the consecutive account of God having made all in six days, and then rested. In the second chapter we have the moral order of Jehovah Elohim's relationship with man; hence the statement that, man having been formed of the dust of the earth, God breathed into him "the breath of life, and man became a living soul"; his responsibility as to the trees, his dominion, and the blessing of an help-meet, have a more fitting place here than in the first chapter.

The oft-repeated and irreverent statement, that in writing the first two chapters of Genesis, Moses copied from two different "theories of creation" which contradict each other, is a mere fable, and carries with it its own refutation. A moment's reflection is enough to convince any fair mind, that no one could give a true account of creation unless God had revealed it. Besides, as we have seen, the second chapter, in divine perfection, follows the first in giving us further information as to Adam

and Eve, which could not properly be introduced into the first, which chiefly sets forth God's creatorial ways. We do well to remember that Moses was commanded to write, that he often gave his authority with, "Jehovah said unto Moses," that he abode in the mount with God forty days and forty nights at a time, and is spoken of as "faithful in all his house as a servant." Moreover we ask, Where in Scripture is there a shred of authority for such charges against the book of Genesis?

No human being, however much spiritually instructed, pretends to understand all Scripture, or to be able to clear up all the difficulties that may be presented. On the contrary, even the most gifted apostle, when contemplating God in His dispensational actings, says, in a worshiping spirit,

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33).

For any of us to suppose, that we can comprehend all the mysteries of divine truth, would only be the clearest proof of our ignorance.

If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know (1 Cor. 8:2).

If apostles were wont to say, "We know in part," how small must be the measure of any of us now! It is not by argument we advance spiritually; but humble souls God will bless. We have never yet known a child of God, who has quietly waited on God for the teaching of the Spirit as to difficulties in Scripture, but could say that some things which seemed to be inexplicable, have not only been cleared up, but have brought blessing to his soul. Jeremiah felt the need of this in his day. He said, "Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud; for Jehovah hath spoken"; for it was as true then as it is now, that, "the proud he knoweth afar off." Logic is not faith. Happy are they who bow before God, and say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Happy are those who are obedient to His word.

The Deluge

Nor has the inspired account of the Deluge escaped the rude hand of mistaken men. Very lately there has emanated from the press, by a professed protestant teacher, charges of “historical inaccuracies in the Bible,” and “contradictory statements,” which, he says, “cannot be true.” “As an example,” says he, cp. Gen. 6:20 with Gen. 7:3. ‘Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind . . . two of every sort shall come unto thee to keep them alive.’ ‘Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female, to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.’” The charge of inaccuracy and contradiction is, that the direction in one chapter is that Noah is to take two of every kind, and in another chapter seven. Let us see how far it be an inaccuracy, or whether it be not a ministry of Christ, and an example of the divine perfection of the word.

If the reader turns to a paragraph Bible, he will find these statements in two separate paragraphs, the first extending from Gen. 6:13 to the end of the chapter, and in it God is commanding, and God is obeyed by Noah. Observe, it is God here. The other expression referred to begins with ch. 7, and ends with the fifth verse, and here it is Jehovah commanding, and it concludes with, “thus Noah did, according to all that Jehovah commanded him.” The first allusion to “two of every sort shall come unto thee [Noah] to keep them alive,” is God’s (Elohim’s) care of His creatures to preserve every kind alive in the earth. But when we read of His taking “of every clean beast by sevens, his male and his female,” it is God as Jehovah who speaks. And why? Because He is now arranging as in relationship with man for sacrifices — types of Christ. The paragraph, therefore, begins with, “Jehovah said unto Noah, Come, thou and all thy house, into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation” (ch. 7:1). How striking this is! It is God as Jehovah owning relationship on the ground of redemption with Noah, the man of faith, as we know he was (See Heb. 11:7). We are therefore told, in the next place, that he was to take clean beasts, by sevens, and also the fowl of the heaven by sevens, and it is then added, “to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth,” for the judgment of the deluge was at hand. Now, the reason of this addition to the general command of two of every sort is very manifest to souls who have to do with Christ, as taught and led by His Holy Spirit. It was Jehovah’s mind that the accomplished work of Jesus, on which all our blessings are founded, should be frequently before Him in figure by the offering up of sacrifices. For this “clean beasts,” and “fowls of the heaven “were indispensable, for surely nothing unclean could typify the Holy Savior. Had there been only “two of every sort,” the offering of some in sacrifice would have put an end to those particular kinds of created beings. So the “sevens” left ample room both for sacrifices, and “to keep seed alive on the face of all the earth.” Thus Jehovah, who counted His people “righteous” on the principle of faith in a coming Redeemer, shadowed forth Christ in the “clean beasts “and “fowls “for sacrifices, as Adam and Noah in their measure also were figures of Him, as “the last Adam,” in having dominion over the created things around them. We find that, no sooner did Noah emerge from the ark, and set foot on the purged earth, than he “builded an altar unto Jehovah, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar,” which most blessedly typified Christ’s sacrifice of Himself. “And Jehovah smelled a sweet savor; and Jehovah said in His heart, I will not

again curse the ground any more for man's sake," etc. Now, where is the "inaccuracy"? Is it not clear that the "sevens" were actually needed for the sacrifice of "burnt-offerings"; and, if not provided for, would have at once exterminated some, at least, of the "two of every sort"? Where is the "contradiction"? If two applied to all unclean animals, and seven to clean ones, because of the requirements of sacrifices, where is the difficulty? The child of God, to whom the Scriptures are "profitable," and for whose "comfort" they are written, finds a real delight in the contemplation of such passages of holy Scripture, as opened up to him by the Holy Spirit; while the philosopher, and all other of the wise and prudent of this world, see nothing to interest, and try to see much to find fault with. Now we trust it is clear to our readers, why it is said of Noah, that "Jehovah shut him in," while in the same verse it is said, they "went in male and female of all flesh, as God commanded him" (Gen. 7:16). The Scriptures abound with such marks of their divinity. How true are our Savior's words to the Father,

Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight (Matt. 11:25, 26).

Jacob's Going Into Egypt

It has been stated, that because we read in Scripture of those who went down into Egypt being sixty-six in one place, in another seventy, and in a third seventy-five, there must necessarily be contradiction in the statements; but those who make such statements have not read the passages with sufficient care to perceive that they are three different calculations.

1. If we turn to Gen. 46, we find a complete list of those who composed the sixty-six, and accompanied Jacob into Egypt. Such accuracy is manifested in the account, that two who had died were named only to show they were not in the list. "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, all the souls were threescore and six." This is the first list.

2. The next verse tells us that "all the souls of the house of Jacob which came into Egypt were threescore and ten." This is the second list. How is it so calculated? Because Joseph and his two sons which were born him in Egypt were there already. Hence these with Jacob, as stated, made up the number of seventy souls. Now where is the contradiction? Nay more. Is it possible to read this chapter attentively, without being struck with the care that is taken to avoid the appearance of any discrepancy? But further. If we look into the beginning of Ex 1, we again find the list spoken of as seventy, and including not only Jacob's eleven sons by name, who came out of his loins, and went with him into Egypt, but, in strict agreement with Gen. 46:27, it is added, "for Joseph was in Egypt already." Now where is there any contradiction?

3. When Stephen, in his famous speech, refers to this, he says, "Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls" (Acts 7:14). This is the third list, and here, even to upright souls, a difficulty may present itself. Observe, however, in this calculation, that Joseph and his sons may not be included, and if so, it leaves room for nine more of the Patriarch's "kindred"; and kindred is certainly not the same thought as those who "came out of his loins." We do not offer any positive solution of the difficulty, nor is it needful to prove how exactly the list of seventy-five was made up. If we had been told that two of his sons' wives had died, it would be made clear, but we are not told, and must be silent. It is enough to know that Stephen, in this statement, quoted from the Septuagint, the authority of which was generally allowed. The fact, too, that Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit, and speaking before an assembly of masters in Israel, who were well instructed as to every detail of the history of Jacob, these and other considerations leave no opening for question as to the veracity of the martyr's statement.

The Quails

In Num. 11, the account of the quails has certainly puzzled many; but like some other apparently insurmountable difficulties, they vanish before those who cast themselves on God, and wait on Him to instruct them. As it stands, infidels have made a great deal of it, from the statement in our version that the quails were “two cubits high,” or, about three feet high, “upon the face of the earth,” whereas it should be above the face of the earth; that is, they would be made to fly about three feet high, so that a man would be able to take as many as he chose. We have looked into the best translations of the Hebrew that we know, and also in the Revised Version, and in all it is rendered, “above the face of the earth”; and not as infidels have said, packed from the ground for three feet high, over a distance of forty miles across.

River, Not Flood

There is a somewhat similar error of translation in Josh. 24, when Abraham is said to have been taken from the other side of the flood, as if this account made him to be living in Noah's day, instead of long after, as Gen. 11 tells us. But the mistake is obvious to any fair mind, for "flood" is a word that is translated in many other Scriptures, "river," and means that Abraham was taken by Jehovah from the other side of the river Euphrates. This, too, is corrected in the Revised Version, and in three other of the best translations.

Sun, Stand Thou Still!

As to the sun standing still (Josh. 10), a lady said to us lately, "Of course, that cannot be true, because it is entirely contrary to the laws of nature." To which we replied, "Let us read it:

Then spake Joshua to Jehovah, in the day when Jehovah delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said, in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies . . . and there was no day like that before it, or after it, that Jehovah hearkened unto the voice of a man; for Jehovah fought for Israel (Josh. 10:12-14).

"That would be an impossibility," repeated the lady, "because it would be entirely opposed to the laws of nature." How sad to find people speaking of God as if He must be subject to any of these laws, for "with Him," we are told, "nothing shall be impossible." Again, we asked, "Was not the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ entirely contrary to that law of nature termed attraction of gravitation? And will not the resurrection and rapture of the saints, when the Lord comes, be also entirely contrary to all the laws of natural philosophy?" The fact is if, in our calculations, we leave out God who is omnipotent as well as omniscient and omnipresent, there is no knowing to what length of scepticism and infidelity we may go. Well did our Lord say of some, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

When we remember that, for many hundreds of years after the days of our Lord, the sacred Scriptures were only made known by written copies, and how difficult it is to copy anything with perfect accuracy, and then, as before noticed, add to this the possibility of errors in translation, and also the mistaken zeal of the most upright adding or erasing what they could not but think desirable from their meager or incorrect view of a passage, it is marvelous that we have the Bible so kept and preserved from the tampering of infidelity as it has been. Difficulties we all experience as to portions of the Scriptures here and there, but to upright souls God still fulfils His own word, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Psa. 32:8).

The Threshing Floor

Take another case. Rationalists tell us there is a serious contradiction between the account given in 2 Sam. 24:24, and 1 Chron. 21:25, as to David's purchase of the threshing floor from Araunah. This allegation is now again being widely circulated. It says in Samuel that David bought it for fifty shekels of silver, and in 1 Chronicles the price is six hundred shekels of gold by weight; so our opponents tell us both cannot be true. The fact is, however, that both are perfectly correct. In 2 Samuel we learn that he bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver, and in 1 Chron. 21:22, 25, we are told that he bought "the place" for six hundred shekels of gold by weight. It is obvious that "the place" might have extended over a large area beyond "the threshing floor."

The Census of Israel and of Judah

In the same chapters, another question has been raised; because in 2 Sam. 24:9, when the census was taken, we are told there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men; whereas, in 1 Chron. 21:5, "All they of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword, and Judah was four hundred, three score and ten thousand men that drew sword." It is alleged that there is a contradiction as to the numbers given; but let us consider, that in Samuel it is the valiant men that are enumerated, and in 1 Chron. all that drew sword, making it possible there were then among them those who, though they drew sword, would not be ranked among David's valiant men; and of Judah we find in Samuel there were five hundred thousand men, and in 1 Chronicles only four hundred and seventy thousand of them drew sword, whether from old age or any other reason we are not told.

Now all thought of inaccuracy as to these sacred Scriptures vanishes, and we find, that the more we prayerfully ponder the word, in humble dependence on the Holy Spirit, the more divinely perfect the written word appears; so perfect that we are struck sometimes with the importance of the addition or omission of a single letter. For instance, when reference is made to Christ as the seed of Abraham, the Holy Spirit by Paul says, "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). Again, we read of Christ being "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin [not sins but sin] of the world." It is obvious that if Christ had taken away the sins of the world, the world would have been saved; but the new heaven and the new earth will then show that He has taken "sin" completely out of the world, and that there righteousness dwells. Again, we find the written word saying sometimes "that the Scripture might be fulfilled," but when our Lord in Gethsemane spoke of His competency to have from His Father, if desired, twelve legions of angels, He added, "But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled?" and again, "that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." And why Scriptures and not Scripture? Because all the prophetic writings as to His humiliation, rejection, sufferings, pain, forsaking, must all have their accomplishment in His death as a sacrifice and offering to God on the cross.

Before leaving our consideration of the Old Testament, it is interesting to notice that, early in the book, we find man's utter ruin and total unfitness for God's holy presence; then we have largely and repeatedly set forth in types that it is only by the shedding of blood there can be remission of sins or approach to God; and toward the end it is plainly written that the "just shall live by faith." Thus, sinner as man is, in virtue of the blood of Jesus, he is cleansed and justified before God on the principle of faith. Peter put it simply when he said, "To him give all the prophets witness that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). Such is God's unutterable goodness and grace, long ago declared by the Holy Spirit through His ancient prophets; and such grace abounds still to every one who takes his true place before God as utterly unclean, lost, and unmendably bad, and who has to do with the precious blood of Christ, as his only ground of peace and title to glory. How truly the believer can say of the holy Scriptures:

Here the Redeemer's welcome voice
Spreads heavenly peace around;
And life and everlasting joys
Attend the blissful sound.
O may these heavenly pages be
My ever dear delight;
And still new beauties may I see,
And still increasing light.

8. the Silent Interval of Four Hundred Years

The silence of the prophetic testimony between the close of the Old Testament and the commencement of the New, which continued over four hundred years, is very significant. Before that, all through the course of God's ancient people, notwithstanding their many sins and departures from Jehovah, sacred history faithfully gave its inspired record of them, until Malachi closed it with the saddest denunciations of their ways. And what makes this long and silent gap so remarkable, is, that the final testimony of the prophet links itself with the beginning of Luke's gospel in foretelling the coming of John the forerunner of our Lord. He said, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me" (Mal. 3:1; Luke 1:13-17; Mark 1:2, 3). Our Lord also associated the prophets with the Baptist — "The law and the prophets were until John." These links certainly unite the Old and New Testaments in a very remarkable way. May we learn the lessons they are intended to teach us!

Very solemn indeed is Jehovah's silence for four centuries in the history of His favored people; especially when we consider the abounding evil which they so long pursued, as recorded by their inspired writers, notwithstanding the goodness and patience God had exercised toward them. Their sad state weighed heavily on the spirit of the prophet Malachi. He began his message to them by saying, "The burden of the word of Jehovah to Israel by Malachi," and ended it by alluding to "the great and dreadful day of Jehovah." True, he added, that Elijah would be sent before that, to "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (ch.1:1; 4:5, 6). In this solemn way the Old Testament writings were closed; and we have no divinely-given annals of the Hebrew people during the following four hundred years. May we ponder its grave significance! Was it because of their many sins, that divine communications and miraculous intervention ceased? Was it on this account that prophetic inspiration was discontinued, and they were left to their own devices? Of one thing we may be well assured, that, under the circumstances, inspiration was suspended in God's wisdom and faithfulness.

On looking into Luke's gospel, which is so blessedly linked, as we have seen, with the last of Israel's prophets, we find toward the close of this gap, some turning to Jehovah and His word. Zacharias and Elizabeth were spoken of as "both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." Others, too, were, through grace, acted on by the Holy Spirit, and therefore turned to the word of Jehovah; and were so bowed by it, that they "looked for redemption in Jerusalem," and served Him day and night with fastings and prayers.

In the Jewish people, and Zacharias, who was a true descendant of Aaron, and whose lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord, we find a further recognition of Jehovah in turning to Him according to His word. We are told, that "the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense" (Luke 1:9, 10). And there appeared unto Zacharias an angel of the Lord with cheering and encouraging words as to John, as afterwards he came to Mary

concerning the Messiah. These facts are very significant, and accordingly the forerunner was, ere long, to be born into the world — the prophet of the Highest, and to be soon followed by the birth of Messiah, the Son of the Highest. Jesus was the true Shepherd of the sheep, and to Him the porter opened; for holy men and women, taught by the Holy Spirit, and taken up with Jehovah and His interests, were, by their rejoicing and cordial welcome, like the porter opening the door. If angels heralded His coming into the world with, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men,” Simeon could take the babe into his arms, and with a grateful and worshiping heart say, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.” Anna also found her way into the temple at that moment, and “gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.”

Divine communications which had been suspended for such a lengthened period as four hundred years, could now be resumed according to the wisdom, and power, and goodness of God; but, as we afterward find in the New Testament Scriptures, not according to the kind of ministry of olden prophets, though by the same Spirit, but according to the grace, and gifts, and qualifications they received of the Lord, who fitted and furnished them for the service to which they were called as His friends and servants.

{Introduction}

In approaching our consideration of the New Testament, it is well to premise that there are two common errors in the present day, and found almost everywhere in Christendom:

1, That the use of the Bible is only to teach persons the way of salvation; and 2, That the Book of Revelation is too difficult for any one to understand. As to the first point, it is plainly said that the Scriptures are not only able to make “wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus,” but that every Scripture is God-breathed, or

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, throughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:15-17).

Thus we see that the Scriptures are the complete and all-sufficient guide of man after he has been born of God and saved from coming wrath. There is another point of all importance here. When the inspired apostle says that “evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived,” he turns to Scripture as the only resource in an evil day; and would have Timothy know of whom he had learned the things he had been assured of. If many were asked in the present day from whom they had learned this doctrine and that, they would find it difficult to reply; some would say, “Our church teaches it.” Now, true Spirit-taught and Spirit-led souls would say they learnt it from the Scriptures, and therefore they can assert its divine authority. This is the exercise of faith, and nothing short of it can be pleasing to God. And as to the expression, “Our church teaches,” it is not only unauthorized by the Scriptures, but exactly opposite to Scripture, for there we learn that, instead of the church teaching, the church is taught, and built up by various gifts from an ascended Savior (Eph. 4:11, 12). If any take refuge in another snare, that such and such doctrines must be true because the clergy have accepted them, we do well to remember that “the faith was once delivered to the saints,” and is therefore the common possession of all true believers. The Scriptures, not clever men, or preachers, or traditions, are our resource in these evil days; but we are enjoined to have that abiding in us which we have heard from the beginning; that is, the beginning of Christianity (1 John 2:24).

It has been truly said, that the church has no power to give authority to the written word, because it is the word of God; but, on the contrary, the word speaks to us of the authority of the Lord in the church, for He is Lord of all. The Scriptures call for submission, because they are God’s word; by their own moral evidence and intrinsic authority they commend themselves to the conscience. Confidence in them, as the word of God is to us of infinite value.

As to the Book of Revelation being too difficult to be understood, it is only another instance of man’s perversion of what is of God; for “Revelation” means revealing, or making known, which is surely something exactly opposite to difficult and inexplicable. Those who approach that book in unfeigned dependence on God’s teaching by His Spirit, not only will certainly have the blessing promised in the third verse, but will have an intelligence as to things around, and their hearts

drawn into the path of devotedness in a way that they could not otherwise have known.

With regard to “every Scripture being God-breathed,” if they were merely the expression of the judgment of even good men, we should then have only human instead of divine authority, and have no basis for faith, no authority of God on which to rest. Those, therefore, who deny inspiration are always restless, and have nothing but uncertainty as to the eternal future.

We shall be told by some that the human element is easily perceived in the sacred writings; to which we reply, Of this there is no doubt. No one can be familiar with the writings of Paul, or John, or Peter, or James, without being struck with the style with which each sets forth his particular line of truth. The same thing is seen in the Old Testament. How different was the manner in which Moses, Isaiah, David, Jeremiah and others, communicated the instruction for which the Spirit of God employed them. No doubt God not only selected His workmen, but each at the very time, and in the state and circumstances He was pleased to appoint, as best suited to carry out His mind and will. He called into the service of inspiration a king or a fisherman, a man of wealth or of poverty, a learned man brought up at Gamaliel's feet, or an unlearned, a mighty man or a feeble woman, just as it pleased Him. He used their tongues, tears, affections, memories, or pens. He instructed them by direct intercourse with Himself, by visions, dreams, what others had written, or by the Spirit's teaching and revelation. He used them in a palace or a dungeon; in a shipwreck or before magistrates; in poverty, or in abundance; in distress, or in joy, or other circumstances; as well as concerning what they saw, and heard, and felt. He who had used all kinds of instruments in the history of His people to accomplish His purposes, could use any means He was pleased to select in giving us His own revelation of His will. All are His servants.

The various writers were not only enlightened, but they were inspired. In giving us their writings, they acted not according to their own will, but in so doing, carried out God's will; so that what they communicated is over and over again called “the word of God.” For example, in the Old Testament we read, “The Spirit of God came upon Azariah,” and, “The word of God came unto Nathan saying,” etc.; and in the New Testament we read of one who had “abundance of revelations,” and of his communicating to believers what he had received, as “the word of the Lord.”

No doubt God could do without men in communicating His mind if He saw fit. An unseen hand has written it on the plaster of the wall. He also opened the mouth of an ass to speak with man's voice. He can use any instrument He pleases. He has also put words by His Spirit into the mouth of a wicked , and allowed the foul Betrayer to work miracles as the other apostles. But He is usually pleased, in His loving kindness and tender mercy, to take up such in His service as walk in His fear. He has also caused the words and ways of Satan and wicked men to be recorded, but the writer was inspired to write so much or so little of them as suited the will of God, in exposing their wickedness, and in ministering for our warning and blessing. Faith rejoices in the perfect love and almighty power of our Savior God.

We have had the most incontestable proofs of the Old Testament Scriptures being inspired, and authenticated by our Lord and His apostles. Our Lord honored, obeyed, and used the very words of the Old Testament; and with the apostles an appeal to their authority was final. As to the inspiration of the New Testament, we are told by an inspired apostle,

which things [the things of God] also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth;

and at the same time he emphatically disallows all ability in the natural man, either to know, receive, or to communicate the things of God. So completely does the Spirit of God teach, that He alone is the source of the Scriptures of truth, that though Paul had been caught up into the third heaven, yet we never find him on this account asserting any competency for divine things apart from the Holy Spirit.

Although the New Testament Scriptures are equally inspired as the Old, and are interwoven with many hundreds of quotations from it, yet the instruments employed in giving us the sacred writings were somewhat different. Thus we find that the Old Testament prophets did not understand their own prophecies, and searched as to what they signified; yet they knew they were ministering to others rather than to themselves, even unto us who now have the ministry of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven. Their prophecies testified also to "the sufferings of Christ and the glories which should follow," so that the church on earth formed no part of their ministry. We know from other Scriptures that the church was not revealed in the Old Testament, although now we can go back to it and find typical instruction concerning the church. We are emphatically taught, that the revelation of the church or assembly was "hid in God," "kept secret since the world began," and "not made known" till Saul of Tarsus was called by divine grace. We have, therefore, in the Old Testament, after the call of Abraham, Israel and the heathen or Gentile nations; but in the New Testament we have Jews, Gentiles, and the church of God (1 Cor. 10:32. See also 1 Pet. 1:10-14; Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3, 5, 9).

There is an important text in 2 Tim. 2:15,

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Now this rightly dividing the word of truth does not simply mean, as many say, giving to the saint and sinner each their portion, but it is cutting in a straight line the word of truth. In consequence of the accomplishment of eternal redemption, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost because of Christ being glorified, believers are brought into a totally different position and state to what could possibly have been known before. From the second chapter of Acts then, when the Holy Spirit came down to indwell believers, and abide with us forever, we have the truth flowing out by the inspired apostles, and made known as could not have been known before (1 Cor. 2:9, 10). We judge, therefore, that we rightly divide, or cut in a straight line the word of truth, when we accept, as in contrast with God's earthly people, our standing in Christ in the heavenlies, and know our union with Him by the Holy Spirit sent down by Him in ascension as Lord and Christ, and given to be the Head over all things to His assembly which is His body, the fullness of Him which filleth all in all (Eph. 1:19-23).

No doubt what is known as dispensational truth is also included in "rightly dividing [or cutting in a straight line] the word of truth." Hence we find some Scriptures which apply to God's earthly people, the Jews; and others which especially belong to His heavenly people, the church — the body and bride of Christ. We have also instruction concerning millennial saints, and other Old Testament saints, the reign of Christ, etc.

The New Testament was written after the coming of the Holy Spirit, hence the intelligence of these inspired writers compared with the Old Testament prophets. Again, we do not find apostles saying, "Thus saith Jehovah," because their relationship was not with God as Jehovah, but with the Father and the Son. Hence they wrote, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and the like.

When Paul wrote to the Galatians, he reminded them that he had received the gospel, which he preached from the Lord Himself, and not of man, nor by man; and so divinely-given did he know his ministry to be, that he could solemnly declare, "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." How could he possibly use such language unless he had known it to be given him by the Lord? We may remember, perhaps, that when he was converted by a sight of the Lord Jesus in heaven, he was then told,

I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee (Acts 26:16);

so there is the plainest possible evidence that the apostle Paul received his commission for the ministry of the word immediately from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

The New Testament, like the Old, is also presented to us in three parts.

1. We have first the gospels, and Acts 1, giving us the coming into the world of the Only-begotten, His birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, and His bidding His disciples to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit, and assuring them, by angelic ministry, that He shall so come in like manner as His disciples saw Him go into heaven.
2. From Acts 2 to the coming of our Lord for us, we have another portion of the New Testament chiefly occupied with the church of God on earth — its calling, endowments, ministry, and hope.
3. The Book of Revelation, and other prophetic writings in the epistles and gospels, which give us the divine estimate of everything here, and God's judgment of evil, and the translation and reign of saints with Christ, concluding with the new heaven and new earth, in which righteousness will dwell.

With regard to the four gospels, they are almost entirely occupied with our Lord's own ways, ministry, and works. We are told that the "words" He spake, He received from the Father; so perfect was He as Man in dependence on the Father, that He said, "The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak." Again, we read, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God," so that nothing could be more truly of, and from God, than the words which He spake. It is no marvel, then, that He should say, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

In reference to the inspiration of the New Testament, we must keep in mind that the Holy Spirit had come and indwelt believers before any part of it was written. Those whom He employed to write it, no longer, as in olden time, wrote what they did not understand, and greatly desired to know; but those who wrote the New Testament, though by the same Spirit, had intelligence of accomplished redemption; they enjoyed communion with the Father and the Son, and new relationships as to what they wrote, for they were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. We, therefore, as we have

before observed, never find them saying, "Thus saith Jehovah"; but they speak of the Father and the Son, especially in the epistles, as addressing the children of God.

There are, however, certain true marks of the distinguishing activities of the Holy Spirit. He is the Glorifier and Testifier of the Son of God, and takes of the Father and the Son, and shows unto us. He always leads into the path of obedience to the Father's will, and subjection to Christ as Lord of all. Now, without going farther as to the operations of the Holy Spirit, by whose power, as come down from heaven, the gospel is preached, it is clear, that every part of the New Testament abounds with proofs of His ministrations by the writers. Moreover, the Scriptures speak to us continually of holiness, truth, righteousness, the grace of God, and of His faithfulness to His own word; and all taught of Him learn that "the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God"; that He is "given unto us," that "we might know the things that are freely given to us of God," for "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God" (John 14-16; 1 Cor. 2:10, 12). God hath then not given unto us "the spirit of the world," or "the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Thus while we find it is said that, as to the Old Testament Scriptures, holy men of God were "moved by the Holy Spirit" to give them to us, the New Testament Scriptures were written by the same Spirit through those instruments who knew the Lord Jesus as the Accomplisher of their eternal redemption, and were intelligent by the indwelling Spirit concerning what they wrote.

With regard to the apostle Paul's ministry, he was especially a minister of the church or assembly; to him was revealed "the mystery," as we have seen, and only his writings give us the revelation of the assembly, or "one body" and its administration. He taught also its practical power on the life and walk of saints now, both individually and collectively, by the same Spirit, as well as the ministration of the affections of Christ in nourishing and cherishing every member of His body. Besides this, and the instructions he received of the Lord from heaven at his conversion, he received also an "abundance of revelations." For example, as to the Lord's Supper, when it was instituted by our Lord, the nation of Israel had not been judicially set aside, and the assembly set up, we therefore find it was taken in hope of the kingdom; hence our Lord added,

I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom (Matt. 26:29).

It is quite true, looking at drinking wine as a type of earthly joy, He has not since had joy in, or with, His earthly people; nor will He till He comes in great power and glory, and brings them into their promised blessing in the land as a repentant people. When, therefore, Israel was actually given up for a time, and this marvelous mystery of the church or assembly began to be built according to God's eternal purpose, as a people on earth united by one indwelling Spirit to Christ in heaven, as the limbs of our natural bodies are united to our head, then the Lord's Supper needed a special revelation. And what was it? Hear what the Apostle says,

I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks,

he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also, he took the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as oft as ye eat

this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

Now this was a most important revelation, and the Apostle declares that he had it from the glorified Lord, and for us; so that we have His own mind about it now, that instead of watching for events, and waiting for the kingdom in earth, we are to be doing it as looking up, not knowing whether the next moment we may hear the shout, and in the twinkling of an eye be taken away from the earth-changed, translated, meet the Lord in the air, and enter with Him on our heavenly and eternal inheritance.

It is also since the glorification of Jesus and His having sent the Holy Spirit, that we read in Scripture of "the Lord's table." Hence it is only after the formation of "one body" by "one Spirit," that we are taught that, in breaking and eating of the "one bread" (one loaf) we express "one body," "for we are all partakers of that one bread" (or loaf). We are also enjoined to be using diligence to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." These truths were specially committed to Paul as a minister of the church, or assembly (See 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, 21; 12:13. Col. 1:24-26).

Again, we find as to His coming another special revelation, not given before; for while Old Testament Scriptures speak of the Lord coming to reign with His saints, His coming for us at the rapture was not known till the Apostle wrote to the Thessalonian saints. He said, "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord." What was it? That the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, the dead saints be raised, the living changed, and all caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so be for ever with the Lord. It is clear, then, that the Apostle had revealed to him, by the Lord Himself, many things to communicate to us for our instruction and blessing. Peter, in his second epistle, most touchingly refers to Paul's writings being inspired, and therefore Scripture. He says,

Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned, and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction (2 Pet. 3:15, 16).

So careful was the apostle Paul in his writings to minister what he was commanded of the Lord, that when, on one or two occasions, he gave his own judgment merely, as a servant of the Lord who had the Spirit of God, he would say,

I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful (1 Cor. 7:25, 40).

But in the same letter he says, in another part, "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant." So absolutely was his ministration to them the word of God, that he says, "What! came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?" (1 Cor. 14:36-38).

The Gospels

In turning to the Gospels, we find them written by four servants of the Lord, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. But we must dismiss from our minds at once the thought, that they were written by men who recorded what they had known as facts, each one according as his memory served him. This is how men generally write biographies; but it is quite certain that the writers of the gospels often omitted to mention facts with which they were most conversant, and recorded at length other circumstances of which they had no personal knowledge. Let us turn to a few examples. In the raising of the daughter of Jairus from the dead, we are distinctly told that no one was present with the Lord but Peter, James, and John; and yet, most striking as the fact is, and most important too in the history of our Lord's ways, neither of them refer to it; but Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who were not present, all name it, and enter into particulars of it.

Again, at the time when the Lord's compassion was so drawn out toward the widow of Nain, who was attending the funeral of her only son, that He then and there raised him from the dead in the presence of crowds of people, and as we might expect, would be talked of far and near, yet neither of the Apostles refer to it, and Luke only has recorded it. Whether he was present or not we are not told; but such a marvelous miracle, and so full of tenderness to a bereaved widow in raising her son to life and delivering him to his mother, if the writers were merely recording facts from memory, as people naturally would do, it would certainly not have been omitted.

In the transfiguration also, we find that only Peter, James, and John were favored to be present, to behold the pattern of the coming kingdom. But neither of them have recorded in their writings the particulars of it. Peter alludes to it in his second epistle, and says, "We were eye-witnesses of his majesty"; but neither John nor James tell us anything about it, important beyond all expression as the event was.

Then again, look at our Lord in Gethsemane. One would have thought that every one there present with the Lord in that time of bitter agony and exercise, as anticipating the sorrows of the cross, then immediately before Him, would have fully described the scene. But it is not so. Perhaps no one entered into it more feelingly than that disciple whom Jesus loved, and who leaned on His bosom at the supper; but he gives us no details of it, and only makes the briefest allusion to it. Peter, so heavy with sleep there, tells us nothing about it. James, also, is entirely silent; but Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who might not have been near enough to have seen the Lord in such sorrow bowed down to the ground in earnest prayer, each give us a detailed report of it; and yet more remarkable still, after leaving the garden, and going over Cedron with His disciples, when they met Judas and his band of men, and, as the effect of the Lord's words, "they went backward and fell to the ground," John only mentions this.

Now these examples are surely enough to convince us, that the gospels were not written as men write a biography, by merely gathering all the well-attested facts they could, and putting them together, for it must be clear to every fair mind this was not the case, but that each wrote according to the direction and guidance of the Spirit who inspired him.

Instead, therefore, of regarding the four gospels as the writings merely of four biographers however true, and trying, as people say, to study “the harmonies of the gospel,” we find that each writer had a distinct and definite line of truth to convey, in no wise contradictory of each other, but each gospel written with a definite object. This, when seen, enhances each of the four gospels immensely, and our interest in them becomes largely intensified. It is intelligible enough that four architects might give us the plans of a square building, each taking a separate side; and although they were all of them different in some particulars, so that no one could understand them till he knew that each represented a different side of the same building, yet then, and not till then, would he get the true idea of what the building really was. So with the Gospels. Matthew clearly sets forth the Messiah in relation to God’s ancient people, the Jews; Mark, the Son of God as a perfect Servant; Luke, Son of God born of Mary, yet Son of Man; and John, the Son who came forth from the Father, came into the world, and went back to the Father.

Because Matthew presents Him to us as the Messiah promised to Israel, to set up His kingdom on earth, as predicted by prophets, He is at once introduced as “the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.” His genealogy is traced, not on Mary’s side, but in connection with Joseph, as legal Heir to the throne. In the first chapter He is called Jesus, meaning Jehovah our Savior; and though born of Mary, is really surnamed — God with us. In the second chapter He is said to be “born King of the Jews,” and the prophet Micah is referred to as to Bethlehem being the place of His birth into this world; and there it is added, to show the infinite glory of His Person, “whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” In the third chapter, John, His forerunner according to Isaiah and Malachi, called on the nation to “repent,” because the King was there, and ready to set up the kingdom of heaven. It was therefore “at hand.” In Matthew only we have the expression, “kingdom of heaven,” for this the Jewish people were taught to expect by the prophets; and Moses especially spoke of “the days of heaven upon earth” (Deut. 11:21). The expression, “kingdom of heaven,” occurs about twenty-eight times in this Gospel. John the Baptist had to seal his testimony of “the gospel of the kingdom,” first by imprisonment, and then by death. Jesus, however, takes up the same testimony, and adds to it the signs of His being the Messiah, by miraculous power, and gives in the sermon on the mount, the principles on which the kingdom must be set up, then touches a leper and by His word heals him, and also a palsied man. The healing of the one showed, that however degraded and unclean the nation might be, there was grace and power in Him beyond all ordinances, however good, for healing; and on the other hand, however helpless the people, He could not only heal the body but forgive sins. In the tenth chapter, He gives power to His apostles also to work miracles, and preach the glad tidings of the kingdom, which was a further testimony of His Messiahship. Afterward we find Him feeding thousands once and again on a few loaves and fishes, and baskets of fragments remaining after every one was filled. Now why was this? It was a further testimony to His being the Messiah, because it had been written in Psa. 132, “I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread.” So we might go through the Gospel if our space permitted, only we cannot fail to see that it sets before us a line of instruction found nowhere else in Scripture, and yet in perfect keeping with all that had gone before or came after. It is well to notice, that in the twelfth chapter the Messiah is so entirely rejected by the Jews, that they take counsel to destroy Him (v. 14); in the last chapter of Matthew He is seen risen from the dead, but not ascended, arisen Man on the earth. And why is this? Because the Messiah’s sphere as such is not ascension glory as His church will have with Him as Bridegroom, Head of His body, and Lord of all; but His earthly people, while they will know Him as

having died for that nation, and therefore risen, will know Him as reigning here on earth, before His ancients gloriously, and sitting in David's throne; thus fulfilling all the prophecies of Him, and all the promises to Abraham and his seed. Then of the Jewish people it will be truly said, "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." This they will know and rejoice in, when they sing, "Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name . . . Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases" (Isa. 33:24; Psa. 103:1, 3). Such a truly Jewish character has this Gospel, that here only the expression of the wicked people, "His blood be on us, and on our children," is recorded; and in neither of the other Gospels have we such particular and prophetic instruction as to the great tribulation, the coming of the Lord to Israel, and His judging the nations.

Mark's Gospel. Here the Lord is looked at more particularly as to His service. We have therefore no genealogy, no account of His birth, and His ways are traced from the baptism of John to His sitting at the right hand of God. Throughout, as the elect and righteous Servant, He is seen doing most perseveringly the will of Him that sent Him. We find the word translated "immediately," "straightway" and "anon" much more frequently than in any other Gospel. The looks and feelings of the perfect Servant are referred to in a way we have not elsewhere. We are told that "He looked round about on them with anger"; that "He sighed"; and that "He sighed deeply in his spirit." He went on so diligently serving with His disciples, that "they had no leisure so much as to eat"; and again, "They could not so much as eat bread," so that His friends went out to lay hold on Him, for they said, "He is beside himself." The sufferings of Gethsemane and on the cross are briefly recorded, and, having accomplished the work of redemption, as risen from among the dead He sends His servants into all the world to preach the gospel to every creature, and afterward, though received up into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God, He confirms their ministry with signs following.

As has often been remarked, in Mark we have the events of our Lord put before us more in historical or chronological order, while in Matthew they are arranged more in regard to dispensational order, and in Luke they are more in moral order.

Luke's line of things in his Gospel is clearly Jesus as "Son of man." As born of Mary He is contrasted with John who was born of Elizabeth, the son of Zacharias. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born Son of God, and Son of the Highest; but John was only the prophet of the Highest, and though he was honored to be the forerunner of our Lord, his testimony was, that he was unworthy to loose the latchet of His shoe. It is in Luke's Gospel only that we have the account of our Lord at the age of twelve years, and that He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

The genealogy of our Lord is traced in Luke to the "seed of the woman." We, therefore, have Mary's line through Heli brought out; through David also, for she was of the house and lineage of David; and Abraham, Noah, and Enos to Adam, because in this Gospel He is looked at as Son of man.

In Luke's account of Him, He is not only brought before us praying on seven different occasions, but in Gethsemane also His humanity is specially marked out in His being in an agony, and praying more earnestly, when His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Here, too, on the cross, He makes intercession for the transgressors, and comforts the

penitent malefactor with the assurance of present salvation — not mentioned elsewhere. In resurrection also, when some were terrified because they thought He was a spirit, He said, “Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them (Luke 24). Now, why are these details as to the actual resurrection of our Lord from among the dead given us in Luke’s Gospel only? Is it not because He is there by the Spirit of God brought before us as Son of man? But further, after His resurrection, He ministered the word to them, gave commission to preach the gospel, bade them tarry in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit to endue them with power from on high, and having led them out as far as to Bethany, and blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. The Man Christ Jesus, whom they had seen and known as incarnate, as dead on the cross, as buried in the sepulcher, and as risen from among the dead, they saw ascend up to heaven, till their eyes could no longer trace Him. Having now their understandings opened to understand the Scriptures, they were filled with such joy, that they were continually in the temple praising and blessing God.

In John’s Gospel we have the Deity of the Son, and sent by the Father into the world, in richest and abounding grace to us. In it we have the endearing relationship of children of God by faith in Christ Jesus clearly set forth, so that duties and affections might be formed and maintained suitable to such relationship. There is, therefore, no genealogy in John. He was “the Word” in the beginning, before creation, with God, and was God — a person with God, and yet eternally divine, for He was God, and the Creator of everything that was made. In due time “the word was made [or became] flesh and dwelt among us.” If we have the human side of Jesus as Son of man, born of Mary, in Luke, and as Son of David, “king of the Jews,” in Matthew, we have the divine side of our Lord and of His ways in John. He is the Fountain of Life, for “in him was life” in the first chapter; the Source of eternal life to every one that believeth, in the third chapter; the One who gives an unending supply of living water in the fourth chapter. He, the Son, quickens or gives life to whom He will in the fifth chapter; and is the Bread of Life, (through His flesh, which He gave for the life of the world), in the sixth chapter. In the seventh chapter Christ Himself is the alone Source of that living enjoyment which enables testimony for Him abundantly to flow out. With all His amazing grace to man, His words are rejected in the eighth chapter; His works in the ninth chapter; and not believed on as the Good Shepherd, because they were not His sheep, in the tenth chapter. In the eleventh chapter, as has been often pointed out, He is rejected as Son of God; in the twelfth, first as Son of David, and then as Son of man; and after having shown Himself to be the Resurrection and the Life, in bringing Lazarus out of the grave to life again, He willingly goes into death as the Son of man lifted up to save sinners. The Corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die, or He would be alone. Solemn moment beyond all description. He then keeps the passover, Judas goes out, and when alone with His eleven true ones, He instructs us as to our course during the time of His absence, promises to send the Holy Spirit to abide with us forever, bids us to be without fear or care, but to believe on Him; and though the path be one of tribulation, to be of good cheer; and assures us that He will come again and take us to the Father’s house, to be where He is forever. Having said these things, He commends them and all who shall believe on Him through their word to the Father, before He goes to Calvary’s cross to glorify the Father, and finish the work that He

gave Him to do. Gethsemane is only just touched on in John, and at the sound of the Savior's voice, those who came to take Him went backward, and fell to the ground; and on the cross, He is presented as saying, "I thirst," in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, in bringing Him vinegar to drink, according to Psa. 69. All then being fulfilled as it is written, He said, "It is finished," and bowed His head and gave up His spirit, according to His word in the tenth chapter, when speaking of laying down His life "no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." It is the Son here glorifying the Father, whose prayer, when under the shadow of the cross, had been, "Father, glorify thy name."

In beautiful keeping with this divine side of Christ in John's Gospel, we find only here the account of His message by Mary after His resurrection, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God"; He meets His disciples with "Peace be unto you," fills them with joy, for they "were glad when they saw the Lord," thus giving them a taste of the blessedness of His being in the midst; and communicates risen life by breathing on them, and saying, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." Eight days after He meets Thomas, a type of the Jewish remnant who will not believe till they see Him; and in the last chapter a striking picture is given of millennial blessing when He will formally take His place as the last Adam, and reign before His ancients gloriously.

If it be asked why we have thus glanced at each of the four Gospels, our reply is, In order that it may be clearly seen, that while each honored the Lord, the lines of truth in all differed from each other, though there was nothing contradictory, and all divinely perfect. The most positive proof is afforded by it, that all was written according to the purpose of one Master mind, and could be none other than the ministry of the Holy Spirit. When we consider how much of the Gospels is made up of our Lord's own words, and works, and ways, how frequently the Old Testament Scriptures are authoritatively quoted, and how much of their prophetic teaching was actually fulfilled; and when we add to all this, that the spirit of them all is so manifestly according to the operations and testimony of Him who is the Glorifier and Testifier of Jesus, and Guide into all the truth, it is impossible not to discern the clearest possible proof of their being inspired, or God-breathed.

The Acts and the Epistles

In the Acts of the Apostles, we have the coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell and baptize believers into “one body,” by uniting them to Christ the Head, and to one another. This work of the Holy Spirit has been going on ever since in those who have believed on our Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of the soul. At Pentecost they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Peter too was filled with the Holy Spirit, and preached the gospel; and the remainder of the book gives us the various actings of the Holy Spirit who had come down in consequence of the accomplished redemption-work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Besides filling saints for the service and praise of God, we trace the Holy Spirit’s Godhead, personal actings, and hatred to sin; His sovereignty, power, holiness, and truth. The Gospel was preached not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles, and the servants of God, principally Peter and Paul, were strengthened and filled with the Spirit to set forth a crucified, risen, ascended, glorified, and coming Savior with abundance of blessing to souls. It was a time of the Spirit’s power, which gave no quarter to selfishness and covetousness. The record of it too is of the Spirit, for it magnifies God, and honors our Lord Jesus Christ, and the authority of Scripture.

We have referred already to the epistles of the apostle Paul, and have given instances in proof of the inspiration of God in his writings. It is well, however, to remember, that our Lord Jesus repeatedly spoke to him from heaven as to what he should minister to the saints; but we may notice on other occasions the way in which he so constantly points to the Lord and honors Him as such. For instance, in the second brief Epistle to the Thessalonian believers, he speaks of Him as the “Lord Jesus Christ” ten or eleven times; in Phil. 1 he speaks of Him as Lord or Christ seventeen or eighteen times, and always with reverence and honor; and he seems in all his epistles to write in such a Christ-exalting way, that he is not able to write many verses without turning to Him. Can anything more clearly demonstrate the work and inspiration of the Holy Spirit?

Though Peter’s line of instruction to the saints is very different from Paul’s, yet when Paul addresses the Ephesian saints, or Peter the converted Jews when scattered, they are both so filled with the love of God, that before they begin their communications to them, they lift their hearts in praise, and say, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Peter’s line as well as Paul’s is Christ; but Peter, especially in his first epistle, points to an unseen Savior as the fountain of “joy unspeakable and full of glory”; though such too “greatly rejoice” in Him, who has accomplished such a work in His death and resurrection, as gives us title to an incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for us, while we are kept for it.

John, however, who recognized the workings of infidelity even in his day, is so conscious of the apostolic ministry being the word of God, that he declares it to be the true test of vital Christianity. He says, “We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us” (1 John 4:6).

Though James addresses his letter to the twelve tribes, he recognizes “beloved brethren” among them, and ministers to them as such, ascribing their being begotten of God to “the word of truth”;

and though not entering upon the special truths of Christianity, he instructs, quotes from the prophets, and enjoins them to practical piety in the prospect of the coming of the Lord. With James, the man who says he has faith can only show it by his works. The more the epistle is pondered, the more clearly the Spirit's teaching can be recognized in it.

Jude, though he treats of the apostasy, tracing it from its root to its full development and judgment, of which Enoch prophesied, exhorts the faithful to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, to keep themselves in the love of God, praying in the Holy Spirit, and building up themselves on their most holy faith, while seeking the good of others, and looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All these Epistles, though written at different times, and by different instruments, tell us of unity of purpose and object.

The Revelation

When we look into the Book of Revelation, every precaution seems to be taken to guard souls from hesitating to accept it as a God-breathed or inspired writing; so much so, that it appears as if the present widespread thought of its being a Book of such obscurity and difficulty that no one can understand it, and that it was never intended to be read very much, had been anticipated. We are therefore not only told it is “the Revelation of Jesus Christ,” but so thoroughly divine in its origin that it is what “God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.” John also was commanded by the Lord, saying, “Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter [or after these].” Nothing then as to inspiration can be clearer; and as if this would be to some not enough, John was “in the Spirit,” in order to see the visions, and having seen them, he is told twice in the first chapter to “Write”; and write too not only what he had seen, but the things that are now going on, and the things that will be after these things. In the second and third chapters, which show us the things which are, we are seven times told to hearken to “what the Spirit saith unto the assemblies”: so fully are we in the region and sphere of the Holy Spirit’s activities on earth.

And further, the Apostle was by the Spirit taught to distinguish between what was of Satan and what of God in the visions which passed before him. In ch. 17 he was in the Spirit, and saw the harlot in all her worldly attire and luxuriousness, and self-complacency in the wilderness: in chapter 21 the Spirit also showed him the bride so dear to our Savior’s heart, the Lamb’s wife, but he had to go up in the Spirit for that blessed vision. He says the angel “carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God,” etc. At the end of the Book of Revelation we are told that “the Spirit and the bride say, Come” in response to our Lord’s presentation of Himself as “the bright and morning star.” So that whatever we may think, the Bible does not close its communications to us without assuring us, that those led and taught of the Spirit will look up to our Lord Jesus Christ where He is, and say, “Come.” Till that moment, His grace will be with us in all its sufficiency and reality.

But if the opening of the Book gives such encouragement to the reader of it, and to any who hear it read, the close is solemn beyond all thought in proof of its being divinely given truth: truth too which harmonizes and is interwoven by lines running all through Scripture, and this makes it so very solemn. It is said, “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.” How solemnly all this admonishes us not only to read and hear what the Book saith, but to receive its sayings into our hearts and minds in all simplicity as it is written; for if our Lord sends this Book to us from heaven, we may be sure that He would say of it no less than when He spake on earth saying, “Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.” We have then in reading Scripture to do with God, “not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (1 Thess.

2:13).

10. Quotations From the Old Testament

It is deeply interesting to observe with what care the Holy Spirit, by the various writers or speakers in the New Testament, quotes from the Books of the Old Testament. Of course this work, like all God's works, must be perfect; but such accuracy is observed that it is not uncommon for a quotation to end in the middle of a sentence, and for obvious reasons. We all remember the account of our Lord's reading from the prophet Isaiah in the synagogue, and that when He had uttered the words, "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord," He closed the book and sat down. Now why was this? Why did He not read on? Because the next words, "the day of vengeance is at hand" did not then apply, as His mission was one of grace, not judgment. But in its literal application to the Jews, the time of their blessing and of divine vengeance will come together; for when the Lord appears as "Sun of righteousness" with healing to the faithful remnant of Israel, He will so execute judgment on the wicked, that they shall be ashes under the feet of those who are blessed. The application, therefore, of that Scripture by our Lord, and up to this time, can go no further than the acceptable year of the Lord, however rapidly the day of vengeance may be approaching.

On turning to Rom. 8, we find a quotation from Psa. 44, "as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter"; and there the Apostle stops, because, on referring to the Psalm, the next words are such as could not be now expressed by a child of God, who is loved by the Father as He loved His Son. They could, however, be the utterance of a Jewish remnant who know not the Father, nor the blessedness of the accomplished redemption of the Son. Such might add, "Awake, why sleepest thou, O Jehovah? arise, cast us not off for ever. Wherefore hidest thou thy face," etc.; but it is not the Christian's utterance who knows the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free.

Look also at Rom. 10:15, which is a quotation from Isa. 52, "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things!" Now, why does the Apostle stop there in the middle of the sentence, and omit what follows? Because it is clear that what follows, "that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth," cannot have its fulfilment till the Lord Jesus takes His rightful place as Son of David, and reigns before His ancients gloriously as King of Israel.

In 1 Pet. 3 there is a quotation from Psa. 34, "The eyes of Jehovah are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of Jehovah is against them that do evil," and stops in the middle of a sentence; and why? Because the words which follow, "to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth," while literally applying to God's earthly people, the Jews, could never be applied to those who are saved from coming wrath, and instead of inheriting the earth, are looking for "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven." Do not such things show us the perfect accuracy with which the holy Scriptures come from God to us?

But take one or two more examples. Psa. 68 is quoted in Eph. 4. We read, "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men," and stops in the

middle of the sentence, because the next words, “yea, for the rebellious also,” though they will be literally fulfilled as to rebellious Israel, could never be used toward us, who now through grace, have believed the gospel. In millennial times, when Christ will be known as Israel’s Redeemer and King, they will deeply and touchingly feel the marvelous character of the grace, above all else, which will give them “gifts “from the hand of their long-rejected Messiah.

Again, in Heb. 2, the writer quotes freely from Psa. 8, in reference to Jesus having been made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, whom we see now crowned with glory and honor, and that He will have all things put in subjection under His feet, though that has not yet taken place. Now Psa. 8 is millennial, and applies strictly to Jesus, as the last Adam, who will take His rightful place of dominion over all God’s works, “all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas,” when it will be said, “O Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth.” It is obvious that the Apostle, by the Spirit, only quotes from this Psalm enough to shew that Jesus, who has tasted death for every man, is now “crowned with glory and honor,” and will, by-and-by, have all things put under his feet.

These examples are enough to show, not only the divine authority of the Old Testament writings, and regarded by the Apostles as final and conclusive, but they also reveal to us the fine and delicate workmanship of the Holy Spirit in putting together for our profit the Scriptures of the New Testament.

It is a point not to be overlooked, that the Old Testament Scriptures are either quoted or alluded to in the New many hundreds of times.

11.the Importance of Bowing to the Authority of Scripture

Nothing can exceed the importance that our Lord and the servants of God in all ages have given to Scripture. Our Lord exposed the infidelity of the Sadducees as to resurrection, by saying to them, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God,” and by a quotation from Ex. 3:6. He also put the Pharisees to silence as to His Person, by quoting Psa. 110:1. We are told that the disciples were perplexed, because “they knew not the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead.” The Lord also sharply rebuked the two unhappy ones walking to Emmaus, by saying unto them,

O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 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.

What an exposition of the Old Testament this must have been!

Is it astonishing that they said,

Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?

The Corinthian believers were sadly wrong, because they knew not the Scripture as to the resurrection of the body. The Galatian believers got wrong because they were adding “circumcision” to the work of Christ, in order to make their salvation more secure; and the Apostle, by the Spirit, uses Scripture to set them right. The Colossian saints were not quite free as to ritualism and rationalism, because they got away from Scripture, and therefore were “not holding the Head” — not in communion with the Lord Jesus Christ as Head of the body, the assembly. The Thessalonian believers were not clear on some points as to the Lord’s coming, and were therefore sorrowful, which they would not have been had they known the truth as to the resurrection of the bodies of those who are Christ’s, the change of the living, and the rapture to meet the Lord in the air.

The Hebrew saints were some of them in danger of giving up Christianity, and going back to Judaism, because they knew not the truth which the Scriptures teach as to the eternal efficacy of the one offering of Christ once for all, and the liberty to enter into the holiest with boldness by the blood of Jesus since the veil was rent, and Jesus appears in the presence of God for us as our great High Priest. Could anything more be required than the consideration of these facts, to induce us to read and meditate on the word of God for soul-blessing, and guidance as to life and walk? Thank God, the Holy Ghost indwells us, is able to teach us, and guide us into all the truth, so that an Apostle could say of believers, “Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.”

12. Alleged Inaccuracies of the New Testament

Before leaving our consideration of the New Testament, it may be well to look at some more of the alleged inaccuracies with which infidels and professing Christians have unscrupulously assailed the holy Scriptures.

Three Days and Three Nights

It has been said, that because our Lord died on Friday at the ninth hour, was buried that day, and rose again from the dead on Sunday, the first day of the week, that, therefore, it is not true to say He was “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth,” as our Lord declared that the Son of man would be (Matt. 12:40). But let it be observed, that according to the Jewish mode of calculating time, there is no inaccuracy in this statement. In our day man has changed the scriptural order of almost everything possible, and instead of speaking of an evening and morning being a day, modern Gentiles say that a day consists of a morning and evening, and so calculate accordingly. And if the Jews reckoned any part of a day, as part of a night and a day (for the evening and the morning in Gen. 1 made a day), the alleged inaccuracy wholly disappears.

For Friday, up to six o'clock, would be spoken of as one night and day, Friday evening and Saturday morning another night and day, and thus the difficulty is removed.

Our Lord's Temptations

It has been alleged, that because Matthew and Luke, who both recorded in their gospels our Lord's temptations from the devil, do not narrate them in the same order, must be inaccuracy. But suppose one of the Evangelists, Matthew, relates them in their chronological order, and Luke puts them in moral sequence, or according to the severity of the temptations, and therefore puts the severest, when Satan quotes Scripture, last, where then is the difficulty?

Drink No Longer Water

It has been said by learned men, Can we believe that to be inspired which tells Timothy to “drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake, and thine often infirmities”? And again, “The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments”? Why not? Does it not show that the Holy Spirit considers our bodily need, and the books and writings His servants find helpful in His blessed service?

Feeding the Multitudes

One of the boldest attacks on the truth of late years has been the statement that when our Lord fed the thousands on a few loaves and fishes, with baskets of fragments remaining as not needed, it is impossible they could have all eaten, and must have had a meal before. But such infidel statements completely leave out God, and it may be said to those who so speak, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." As to the miracle of feeding so many on so little, we are told "they were all filled," and on referring to Psa. 132:15, we see it was only the fulfilment of what had been predicted ages before, as a true sign of Messiah, "I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread." Could there have been a more beautiful fulfilment of this prophecy than our Lord's feeding the multitude? And ought not the Jews to have known by it that He was the Messiah?

The Passover and Lord's Supper

In a theological work just published, among many other charges against the holy Scriptures, we are told that Matthew, Mark, and Luke made a “mistake” in assuming “that the Lord's Supper was the Passover feast”; “that the two were regarded as identical”; and also that our Lord “had desired to eat the Passover with them, but He did not eat it.” There is nothing new in these charges, though they are very far from the truth.

1. On turning to the gospels, we find that Matthew, Mark, and Luke, each, according to the line of things given him by the Spirit, supplies us with particulars as to the eating of the Passover. John usually takes the divine side, and enters little into Jewish circumstances. His gospel is founded on their rejection of the Messiah, as stated in the beginning, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

With regard to the Passover, Matthew says that our Lord sent some of His disciples into the city to make ready the Passover. They said unto Jesus,

Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples . . . and they made ready the Passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, etc. (Matt. 26).

Mark's account is the sending forth of two of His disciples into the city, much in the same way. They were to say to the good man of the house,

Where is the guest-chamber where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? . . . and they made ready the Passover. And in the evening, he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, etc. (Mark 14).

Luke gives the same account as to the furnished room. He tells us, that the two disciples sent were Peter and John. They were to say,

Where is the guest-chamber where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? . . . and they made ready the Passover. And when the hour was come he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God (Luke 22).

Thus far the account of these three Evangelists is entirely about the Passover. Where, then, is the mistake? Where is there the smallest evidence, that up to the actual eating of the Passover the disciples had an idea of its being anything but the Passover feast? Where, then, are the writers' mistakes? Where is there the faintest intimation that the Passover and Lord's Supper were assumed by these inspired writers to be identical? How appalling are such rash charges, and how calculated to promote infidelity, and to bring the holy Scriptures into contempt!

2. We have just seen that the Lord desired to eat the Passover with His disciples; that He sent Peter and John to procure a room where He might eat the Passover with His disciples; that at the appointed hour He and the twelve sat down, and as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, "I will not eat any more thereof." Referring to Judas, He also said, "He that eateth bread with me," etc. Can there be a doubt, then, that our Lord did eat the Passover? How very serious for any one without a shadow of proof to say, "He did not eat of it"!

The fact is, that the Passover having been eaten by our Lord with His disciples according to Jehovah's mind, for the last time on earth, before the kingdom comes, in the immediate anticipation of His rejection as Messiah, and His death as a Sacrifice for sin, His resurrection and ascension, He institutes another thing which was not a Jewish feast, but a Christian ordinance, and of very different import. Though they both set forth to faith the Savior's death and blood-shedding, the Passover was a memorial of the blood of the paschal lamb in Egypt, sheltering from judgment; but in the Lord's Supper, the wine is to faith the memorial of the blood of Christ which speaks to the believer of remission of sins, and of his being perfected forever by that one offering (Matt. 26:28; Heb. 10:2-20). The blood of Christ assures us of redemption accomplished, sins purged, conscience purged, and the worshiper purged, thus having boldness to enter into the holiest. It would, therefore, be impossible for those who received God's testimony to the eternal efficacy of "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," to regard the Passover and the Lord's Supper as identical. It is then impossible that Matthew, Mark, and Luke could have assumed that "the Lord's Supper was the Passover feast."

As to the Supper being instituted, Matthew says, "As they were eating"; Mark, "As they did eat." Luke gives a fuller account of the details of the Passover feast, and adds that our Lord said, in reference to eating it, "I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." After this, "he took bread [a loaf], and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Mark says, "shed for many," and Matthew, "shed for many for the remission of sins." We ask, then, was there anything like this in the Passover feast? Is it not clear that it was at the close of the eating of the Passover that our Lord instituted His Supper? It is well, however, to remember, that since then our Lord has spoken from heaven about His supper; and as, by His rejection by the nation, the kingdom is in abeyance, He has taught us that, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death TILL HE COME" (1 Cor. 11:2-26). We need scarcely add, that His "coming" for His saints will be before His "appearing and his kingdom."

The Call of Abraham

It has been widely taught by learned men, that discrepancies abound in Stephen's speech before his martyrdom; it, therefore, calls for a few remarks.

It is well to remember, that Acts 6 tells us that Stephen was "full of the Holy Ghost . . . full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles . . . they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake . . . and they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." We ask, then, was he likely to have spoken with accuracy, or not?

Add to all this, that his faithful speech was before the Sanhedrim, who were well instructed in the history of the people of Israel, and especially as to Moses and Abraham, and the Pentateuch, so that any historical discrepancy would have at once been detected by them. But of such a thing there is not a trace.

Let us now look at some of the charges of modern philosophers. One is, that in Acts 7:4, we are taught concerning Abraham, that the death of his father was after the call, and not, as according to Gen. 11:32, before it. If the accounts of the call of Abraham be carefully examined, no such phrase can be found, as "the call," because there was evidently more than one. Stephen speaks of the God of glory having appeared to Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said,

Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee" (Acts 7:2, 3).

The effect of this was, that he left his country, and, it may be, many of his kindred; but his father accompanied him, and Sarah, and Lot, and dwelt in Haran. There they remained long enough for souls to be gotten in Haran (Gen. 11:31;12:5). Then it seems God called him to get out from his country, kindred, and father's house, and come into a land that He would show him (Gen. 12:1). The effect of this call was, that he departed out of Haran. This is confirmed by Stephen saying, "from thence [Haran] when his father was dead, he [God] removed him into this land"; showing unquestionably that there was a second interposition on the part of Jehovah. Now, where is there discrepancy between the account in Genesis, and the testimony of Stephen? Nay, rather, Is not the comparison of the two accounts a further testimony to the perfect accuracy of Scripture, and of both having divine authorship?

The Years of Moses

It is alleged that there is in Acts 7:23, 30, 36, the distinct mention of three periods of forty years, of which only the last is mentioned in the Pentateuch. But if we turn to Ex. 7, we are told that “Moses was fourscore years old . . . when they spake unto Pharaoh” v. 7). Now these fourscore years of Moses exactly agree with Stephen’s account, that he was forty years old when it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel, and was forty years after in Madian. This also fits in perfectly with Ex. 2:11, 15, and 7:7. Stephen makes the age of Moses to be one hundred and twenty years altogether; and in Deut. 22:2, and 34:7, he is said to have died at the age of one hundred and twenty years. Now, where is there any discrepancy?

The Terror of Moses

We believe there is no remedy if men have not the fear of God before their eyes. Take another example, to show with what levity and trifling some of the learned in our day have published their views-some more of the last words of God's faithful martyr, when full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom, and faith. It is said, that "the terror of Moses at the bush spoken of in Acts 7:32, is not mentioned in Ex. 3:3." It is quite true it is not mentioned in the third verse, but in the sixth verse we find the words, "And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." Could any testimony more clearly confirm the agreement of the martyr's teaching with the prophet's statement?

Saul's Sight of the Lord Jesus

It is widely taught that there are contradictions in the two accounts of the conversion of Saul, in Acts 9:7 and 22: 9. Let us carefully compare them. Both Saul and those who traveled with him are mentioned. Saul saw the Lord Jesus Christ, was blinded by the light, heard Him speak words to him personally, addressing him in the Hebrew tongue, calling him by name, and Saul replied. The men who were with him saw the light, were alarmed, did not speak a word, saw no one, but heard a voice or sound. In Acts 9:7 we read,

The men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice [or sound] but seeing no man.

In Acts 22:9, we read,

They that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

In these Scriptures there is surely no discrepancy.

Holding Jesus by the Feet

It is often said that the statement that “the women held Jesus by the feet and worshiped him,” is a palpable contradiction of His command to Mary not to touch Him.

In Matt. 28:9, we read that as “they went [according to the angel’s word] to tell his disciples, behold Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet and worshiped him.”

In John 20:17, when Mary seems ready to approach the Lord in her accustomed manner,

Jesus said unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

It seems to us impossible that any one can see the beauty of these two Scriptures, and the entire absence of contradiction, unless the different lines of truth and the relationships of which each evangelist treats are discerned. This too resolves many other difficulties. The moral perfection of Scripture is then most striking.

In Matthew we have, from first to last, facts which are for the most part narrated as having a Jewish bearing. Hence we find much of that kind of instruction which is not found in the other gospels. When our Lord spake of His death and resurrection, He added, “But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee” (Matt. 26:32). The Messiah having been rejected by the Jews and Jerusalem, He now intimates that when raised from among the dead, He will still recognize the “poor of the flock” in Galilee, who will thus be a sample of the future remnant spoken of by the prophets that will be brought into their promised blessing at His appearing and kingdom. This is doubtless why we have no ascension in Matthew. This is also why the angel sent the message to the disciples to meet Jesus in Galilee, which was afterwards confirmed by our Lord, and acted on by the disciples (Matt. 28:5, 10, 16). It is here that Jesus as Messiah, having died for that “nation,” is now able, on the ground of His work, to recognize relationship with the faithful residue. Hence, in keeping with this, the women are allowed to hold Him by the feet and worship Him; for the Jewish thought is to have Messiah bodily with them on earth. This will be manifested in due time.

But John’s is a different line of things. All through his gospel we have the Father and the Son. Jesus is here looked at as having taught believers that they were loved of the Father, given to Him by the Father, and that their destiny was the Father’s house. When He went back to the Father, He spake of sending the Holy Spirit to be with us and in us during all the time of His absence; and that He would come again and receive us unto Himself, that where He is there we might be also. Therefore, in John 20:17, we have the new relationships of being God’s children, and Christ’s brethren, announced, not in connection with a Messiah seen on earth, but with the Lord of glory, not here but in heaven. It is in principle Christianity and not Judaism. Mary therefore was forbidden to “touch” Him, but was sent to tell others of His sphere henceforth being in ascension and not on earth. They were to know Him, serve Him, and honor Him as gone back to the Father. The Christian’s relationships therefore are heavenly, and for ever. Precious message!

Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

O, the untold blessedness of these new relationships, founded on Christ's work of eternal redemption!

Sin and Transgression

Though the books of Moses and the Gospels have been the portions of the sacred writings against which the shafts of skepticism have been more generally thrust, yet the Epistles have not wholly escaped their censure. We only select one instance, out of many, from a published pamphlet now before us.

It is alleged as a proof of contradiction, that in Rom. 2 it is said, "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law"; and in the fourth chapter, "Where no law is, there is no transgression." In the accuser's mind sinning and transgression are here the same thought, hence to perish without law, and yet for there to be no transgression without law, to him is a contradiction; but it is not so. We are told that "all have sinned," from Adam downwards; but the people of Israel were also transgressors, because they went across God's positive commands. Adam also transgressed in doing what God prohibited (Rom. 5:12, 14).

The accuracy of Rom. 2:12 is seen in that not having been under the law, they will not be judged by it: but having a conscience and the knowledge of good and evil since "sin entered into the world," they will be judged on other grounds. Such may be referred to in Rom. 1:18 and following verses. The accuracy of Rom. 4:15, is seen in the holiness of the principle, that if there had been no law given, there could be nothing to be disobeyed, no transgression. Speaking generally, then, all Gentiles and Jews are sinners by nature, and practice — all are "under sin," "have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"; but the children of Israel, who willingly put themselves under law, have been proved to be transgressors, and when Jews and Gentiles are classed together another word is used, the word "offences," for all are offenders, though not all transgressors, inasmuch as Gentiles have not the law — "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

It may be well to add, that the word "sin" is used about thirty times in only two chapters in Romans, the sixth and seventh. It is called "the old man," "the flesh," which the believer is not in as to his standing, though it is still in him, but to faith he is righteously delivered from, because "our old man is crucified" and "dead with Christ." "Sins" are forgiven, because they have been borne, suffered for, and atoned for by Christ, whose blood "was shed for many for the remission of sins." We read, therefore, of remission of sins, and of our old man (the nature that did the sins) being crucified with Christ; and these are important distinctions. We find "sin," "sins," "offences," and "transgression," used in this epistle and elsewhere with the greatest precision.

The Sixth Hour in John 19:14

The question is, If Mark tells us that Jesus was crucified at “the third hour,” and Matthew in accordance with Mark’s testimony, says, “from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour,” how can John possibly be correct in saying that the trial of our adorable Lord before Pilate was not ended till “about the sixth hour”?

If, however, it be true, as is generally accepted, that John’s gospel was the last book of Scripture which was written, say about thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and by that time the Jewish mode of reckoning a day, from about six of one evening to about six in the next evening, had pretty generally given way to the Roman mode of reckoning a day, as we now do, from midnight to midnight, then all thought of discrepancy in these passages of Scripture vanishes. This would make the ending of the trial to be at six in the morning, and the time of crucifixion to be nine.

Accepting, then, the above-named thought that John, unlike the other evangelists, used Roman time, and that about three hours intervened between the end of the trial and the actual crucifixion of our precious Lord and Savior, let us see, from the brief Scripture record we have, what transpired during these three hours. What hours of sorrow and suffering they must have been to Him!

First of all, we read, after the wicked trial by infuriated men led on by Satan, that the holy Sufferer was “scourged,” which must have taken up some time; then He was brought into the Prætorium, and the whole band of soldiers were gathered unto Him. There they stripped Him of His own clothes, and put on Him a scarlet robe. There too they “platted a crown of thorns,” “put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, king of the Jews!” The enmity of the heart of man to the Holy Son of God was further manifested by their spitting upon Him, and taking the reed and smiting Him upon the head. All this outrage and other indignities must have extended over some time, for, in addition to all that we have noticed, it is said, “After that they had mocked him,” etc., intimating that the Savior was publicly held in derision for some time. Lastly, we find that they took the robe from off Him, and put His own raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him.

All through these three hours the two malefactors were most likely being tried by Pilate; for, as our Lord was the first to be crucified, it is more than probable that He had the precedence in the trial. The whole account seems to imply this. And as the Scriptures of the prophets could not but have their fulfilment, the thieves must be crucified with Him, for He must not only bear the sins of many, but “be numbered with the transgressors.” Considering all these things, the three hours’ interval between the end of the Savior’s trial and His crucifixion may easily be accounted for.

The Lamb of God is now led on to Calvary, bearing His own cross till they compelled a man of Cyrene to bear it after Him. On the road, He addressed the weeping women, and enjoined them not to weep for Him, but for themselves and their children, because of what was coming upon them. Then reaching Calvary, He was most cruelly nailed to the cross, fulfilling truly the words of

the prophet,

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

It was also blessedly true that “He made intercession for the transgressors,” and that “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities,” for “it pleased the Lord to bruise him” (Isa. 53:5-12). After hanging three hours on the cross in agony and shame, there was darkness over the whole land from the sixth to the ninth hour, at the close of which, He so bitterly felt the anguish of being forsaken of God as our Sin-bearer, that He cried out, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” and having fulfilled what had been written of Him, He said, “It is finished,” committed Himself to the Father, and gave up the ghost. The rending of the veil in the temple was, no doubt, God’s own testimony to the eternal efficacy of the death of the cross, by which He can now come out to sinners with the gospel, and the believer draw nigh to God by the blood of Jesus.

Looking briefly at the other parts of John’s gospel in which hours are named, we notice that our Lord said, in the eleventh chapter, “Are there not twelve hours in a day?” which may be regarded as true, whether we look at time according to the Jewish or Roman mode of calculation.

In the first chapter, we read that the two disciples came to Jesus “about the tenth hour,” which looks like ten in the morning, for they abode with Him that day, and we are not told of anything having been done by them on that day before that hour (John 1:35-39).

In the fourth chapter we find our Lord wearied with His journey, sitting on the well “about the sixth hour.” The time seems to have been six in the evening, for the disciples were gone away into the city to buy food, which might have been for the evening meal. After this the Lord went into the city, and many of the Samaritans believed, and besought Him to tarry with them: a kindness often shown in the East when the day was far spent (vv. 6, 8, 31, 40).

At the close of the fourth chapter we are told, that the nobleman’s sole was healed “at the seventh hour,” which most probably was seven in the evening. Our Lord said unto him,

“Go thy way, thy son liveth . . . and he went his way.” Now as Capernaum was a distance of several miles from Cana of Galilee, if he took his journey that night so as to reach his home in the morning, then it can easily be understood that when his servants met him, they should have said, “Yesterday, at the seventh hour the fever left him.” “So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus had said unto him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house” (John 4:46-54).

Every student of Scripture meets with difficulties, and finds much that he cannot understand; but, as we have said before, waiting on God in humility of mind, and in unfeigned dependence on the Holy Spirit, it is astonishing how He clears up the difficulties for us. It is, however, very remarkable how the Lord seems to have anticipated many of the objections which are raised by learned and scientific men, who rely on their own reasonings instead of simply accepting what God has said. In addition to some instances already pointed out, we may notice that the Lord authenticated the doctrine of the descent of the human race from one pair of parents from the beginning of the creation (Mark 10:6); of the taking away of all by the Deluge, except those who were in the ark (Matt. 24:37-39); of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone; of the

miraculous supply of the manna; and the story of Jonah and the fish (some great fish, not necessarily a whale), and his mission to Nineveh and its effects.

In meditating on the Gospels it is scarcely possible not to notice the reverence and honor paid by our Lord to "the Scriptures." Only think of Him as to this when on the cross. After being bodily suspended there for six hours with nails in His hands and His feet, in unmitigated and indescribable pain, with all the sorrow too that pressed upon His spirit of being betrayed by one, denied by another, and forsaken by all; when lover and friend had been put far from Him, and His acquaintance into darkness; when consciously too bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, the Holy One made sin for us; the wrath of God, the forsaking of God, the judgment of God for our sins falling upon Him, so that His soul was made an offering for sin; so occupied was He with the perfect will of Him who sent Him, that the silence of the unparalleled crisis was broken by the words, "I thirst"; and why? There remained one little Scripture that had not as yet had its fulfillment. What was it? "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink" (Psa. 99:21). We therefore read, "Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar; and they filled a sponge with vinegar and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished, and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (John 19:28-30). And we may well ask, when pondering such a scene as this, could anything be more perfect as sealing the divine authority of Scripture with His own blood? What true reverence for the sacred writings! What perfect subjection to every word of it! In a moment too of unutterable agony, depths of deepest sorrow, hours of darkness and unutterable woe, and above all, the forsaking of God. His heart broken with reproach, Satan bruising, men deriding in hateful enmity, every bone out of joint, yet manifesting perfect love to the Father, perfect obedience to His word, perfect subjection to His will, perfect reverence for what is written, and perfect love to all who trust in Him. What perfections cluster around the cross at Golgotha Happy those who know Him risen and ascended as the Object of their faith, and the One in whom they trust. What lessons this unparalleled scene reads to us as to reverence for Scripture, because it is the will and word of God; and how truly the Holy Spirit says of Him, that He hath "left us an example, that we should follow his steps."

13. the Bible — Its Unity

If a friend handed to us a ponderous volume, consisting of sixty-six books, written by between thirty and forty persons, and at different times, extending over fifteen hundred years, and said, Notwithstanding all their differences there is a remarkable unity throughout, should we not be astonished? As a matter of fact, there is no such book as the Bible in this respect; nor could there be, unless all the writings it contained had been under the guidance of One mind, and its communications throughout given by the One Spirit.

One thing which would be likely to strike some persons in considering the principle of unity in a book, would be to compare the end with the beginning, and see if there be any connection as to similarity or contrast. In the Bible it is written, "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). Let us turn and examine a few Scriptures as to this.

The first words we find in the Bible are, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1), and, as a matter of fact, much of the Bible is about God's heavenly and earthly people; also as to things in connection with the present heaven and earth; and in the end of the Book we read of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1).

In the beginning of the Book it is said, "Let there be light, and there was light"; afterward we are told that Christ is "the light of the world"; and in the end of the Book we read, that "the Lamb is the light thereof."

In the beginning, we read of a tree of life in the garden of Eden, from which man was afterward excluded through his sin; in the end we find "the tree of life" with its many fruits, and are taught that the faithful will eat of "the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Gen. 2:9; Rev. 2:7; 22:2).

A river too was in Eden, and at the end of Revelation we read of "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Gen. 2:10; Rev. 22:1).

In Gen. 2 we see the first man (figure of Him that was to come) and his help-meet, of whom he could say, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh"; and in Rev. 21 we have presented to us "the bride, the Lamb's wife . . . having the glory of God"; of whom it had been said, that He "nourisheth and cherisheth it," and that "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Rev. 21:9, 11; Eph. 5:29, 30).

In the earthly paradise man was in dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every creeping thing, and the name he gave to every living creature that was the name thereof; but toward the end of the Book the Lord Jesus, the last Adam, will bring this groaning creation into the liberty of the glory of the children of God, and have His rightful place as "Lord of all," having subdued all things unto Himself (Gen. 1:28; 2:19; Psa. 8; Phil. 2:10, 11; 3:21).

In the beginning we have Satan tempting, then sin, and the curse; and in the end, we see Satan in the lake of fire, sin taken away, righteousness dwelling, and no more curse. In the beginning

sorrow and death; in the end, “no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away” (Gen. 3; Rev. 20:10; 2 Pet. 3:13; 1 John 3:5; Rev. 21:1-4).

Surely then we find a remarkable unity of thought in the beginning and ending of the Bible, though the contrasts are most striking; because the Son of God had come meanwhile to accomplish redemption, destroy the works of the devil, take away sins, make good the promises, vindicate God in all His ways, honor Him in perfect obedience as Man, and glorify Him in clearing us from all iniquity, and bringing us to God, to share the inheritance with Him who is Heir of all things.

Another mark of unity is found in the truth it sets forth throughout. If early in the Old Testament it is said of man, that “the imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,” it is said in the New Testament that “the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Gen. 6:5; Rom. 8:7). If a prophet in olden time said, “all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness hereof is as the flower of the field . . . the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever,” an Apostle, seven hundred years after, writes the same, only adding to “the word of the Lord endureth or ever,” “And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (Isa. 40:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:24, 25). If the Psalmist exclaimed, “For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven,” our Lord said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Psa. 119:89; Matt. 24:35). If the testimony of a prophet was, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts,” an Apostle informs us, that “the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” (Zech. 4:6; 1 Cor. 2:11). If Moses was inspired to write, “it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul,” we read in Hebrews, that “without shedding of blood is no remission (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22). If an Old Testament writer warned the people not to “add unto the word” which he commanded them, “neither shall ye diminish ought from it,” the ancient writings are not closed without enforcing the exhortation by saying, “Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar”; nor can the canon of Scripture be concluded without the last of Revelation giving us the most solemn warning concerning it (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18, 19).

Take another subject. All through the entire Volume, from Genesis to Revelation, we find since man became a sinner, that he has been accounted righteous before God on the principle of faith, and never on the principle of works; a fundamental truth of vital importance. We read, that God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skins; that is, their nakedness could only be truly covered up from the eye of God through the benefit derived from the death of a sacrifice. Abel’s offering shows out the same. Also in Gen. 15, we read, “Abram believed in Jehovah, and he counted it to him for righteousness”; and David, who lived nine hundred years after, describeth the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works, saying, “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (Rom. 4:6-8). These Scriptures are quoted by the apostle Paul to make clear to us, that the principle on which all are justified from all things, is that of faith, without the deeds of the law. Hence, “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe” (Rom. 3:22, 28).

The typical instruction in the Old Testament having its accomplishment in the New Testament, gives a remarkable complexion of unity to the whole Bible. Take, for instance, Abraham offering up

his loved and only son Isaac; what an accurate fulfilment of the type we have in God's delivering up His only-begotten Son as a sacrifice for us! In this one instance we have shadowed forth divine love and grace in laying our iniquity on Him; divine righteousness in judging unsparingly our sins on Him instead of on us; and divine power to usward in raising Him up from the dead, and giving us risen life in association with Him.

The unity of the Bible is further shown by the one leading Subject throughout, being Christ Jesus, the Son of God, full of brightness and blessing; while the history of man, side by side, tells in all ages the sad tale of his antagonism to God, and unbelief in His goodness and mercy.

Let us look at the dark background of this divinely drawn picture of man's ways, though created in the image of God, whose delights were with the sons of men.

1. Man created upright, and in innocence, listened to the lie of Satan, instead of standing firm by the word of the Lord God; he therefore sinned, and thus death came into the world, and death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Gen. 3).

2. From fallen Adam to Moses, man though now having a conscience, and knowing good and evil, showed increasingly his departure from God till he actually became a god-maker (Rom.1:20-23).

3. From Moses to Christ, Israel, though in foolish self-reliance and ignorance, promised to keep the law, yet had they the advantage of God's immediate dealings and care, a religious ritual, priesthood, and prophets; but they became such abominable idolaters, and worse than the heathen, that God had to give them unto captivity; and those who returned from the Babylonish captivity, Judah and Benjamin, when their Messiah came received Him not, and openly preferred a known murderer, Barabbas, to Christ.

4. From Christ's death, resurrection, and the preaching of the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit come down from heaven, sinners are called and saved for eternal glory by Christ Jesus. The effect still is that "few" comparatively believe, and the "many" are going on the broad road to destruction. When the Lord comes to receive His saints, all who have believed through grace, will be caught up to meet Him in the air, and be taken to the Father's house. But when He comes out of heaven with His saints, He tells us that the world will be as it was in the days of Noah, ripe for judgment, and meriting everlasting destruction (1 Cor. 15:23; Matt. 24; 2 Thess.1:7-9).

5. Christ reigns, and His saints reign with Him. He will "reign in righteousness," therefore He must judge first the living, then put down all rule, all authority, and power, and finally at the close of the thousand years, judge the dead, small and great. The effect of our Lord's personal reign as King of Israel, and King over all the earth, will be that the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth "as the waters cover the sea"; but it will be knowledge instead of the new birth in many instances, and restraint from Christ's personal reign, so that they will yield "feigned obedience" (Psa. 51:3, margin); the consequence will be, that when Satan, who has been bound during the millennium, is let loose again, myriads will fall away, and fire come down from heaven in judgment upon them (Rev. 20:8, 9).

6. This is followed by "a new heaven and a new earth," in which righteousness dwells. The works of the devil having been destroyed, sin and iniquity completely taken away, and all things made new, righteousness now abides. Before law men were "filled with all unrighteousness"; under law

righteousness was demanded in the way of works; by the gospel righteousness is reckoned without works to every one that believeth on Jesus; during Christ's reign He reigns in righteousness; in the eternal state righteousness dwells in heaven and in earth.

But before leaving this dark side of the picture, let us never forget that man has utterly failed in every trial to which he has been subjected, and will do so, more or less, till the new creation order of things is fully established by Him, who said, "Behold I make all things new." Man in innocence, surrounded with every possible privilege and blessing, sinned. The Flood having long after this taken all away in judgment except eight souls, because all flesh had corrupted God's way on the earth, the chief of the spared eight becomes drunk, and through it lasting shame was brought on some of his descendants. Abram called out to trust in God, at the first trial of faith so fails, that he goes down into Egypt for help. The children of Israel, so confident of their own ability, no sooner promised to keep the law, saying, "all the words which Jehovah hath said will we do," than they made an idol of gold, and danced around it, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." When priesthood after this is set up, perhaps the first thing they did was to offer strange fire, which God commanded them not, and there they died before Jehovah. Moses, the man who was specially noted for meekness, could not enter the land because of his rashness in smiting the rock, and calling God's people rebels. The sons of Israel, long after this, wished to have a king, but he soon lost his place because he acted as he thought best, that is, as a rationalist, instead of in obedience to God's word (1 Sam. 15:1-23). David, a man after God's own heart, fell into grievous sin immediately all his enemies had been subdued. After all this, God sent prophets to His people, and the people persecuted, stoned, or slew them. Jehovah sent John the Baptist to the Jews, and first imprisonment, and then death was his portion. Our Lord came with grace and truth, going about doing good, delivering all that were oppressed, and saving all that came to Him; but they said, "this is the heir; come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours." At last they cry, "Away with him, crucify him." The Holy Ghost came down after Christ's ascension, by whose power the Apostles and others preached the gospel of the grace of God, and from that time to this many resist and few believe. Such is man, and, unless born of God, such he will be, for "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Hence Stephen, in his famous speech before the Sanhedrim, said they were "stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears," and declared them guilty of not having kept the law which they had received, of having persecuted and slain the prophets, of having been the betrayers and murderers of the Just One, and of always resisting the Holy Ghost. And in the coming age, as we have seen, with Satan bound, creation delivered, Israel blessed and enjoying their own land beyond all description, the church in manifested glory over it, Christ Himself ruling and reigning, all persons and things in subjection to Him, even then, when Satan is let loose for a little season, myriads will fall away, and openly dishonor God. Well has it been said, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?"

It is important though to observe the unity of thought pervading all Scripture as to man's utter ruin, and incurably bad condition, calling for nothing less than being born anew. If, early in Scripture, we are told that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," many hundreds of years after another prophet declared, that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked"; while hundreds of years later, our Lord said, "from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts," etc., and He did not name anything good in it. Later on an Apostle declared, that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither

indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7); so that as to man's moral condition in God's sight, ever since the fall, the testimony throughout has been, that "there is none righteous, no not one." The giving of the law, instead of helping or improving those who accepted the yoke, only caused the offence to abound, and gave "the knowledge of sin." Happy are they who so know the Lord Jesus Christ as their life and peace, as to be not under law, and vainly hoping to reach God by doings and efforts, but as brought to God in Christ, and through His precious blood can bow in adoring praise and thanksgiving to Him for the accomplished work of eternal redemption. Such is the uniform testimony of God concerning man throughout the entire volume of inspiration.

The bright line which runs from Genesis to Revelation, and gives the whole Book a unity which nothing else could, is its testimony to the infinite glory of the Person of the Son, the eternal efficacy of His one sacrifice for sin, His moral worth and excellency beyond all thought, the glorious offices on our account He now sustains, as well as His glories yet to be revealed when He cometh with clouds, and His saints accompany Him, to put down all that is contrary to God, and fulfil all the promises to Israel, and much more, which assure us of the verity of our Savior's words when speaking of the "Scriptures," "they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39).

It has been well said, that redemption was no after thought with God — that God's thoughts and purposes of love were toward us before the foundation of the world. And, in sweet accordance with this, we find the first man, who "was a figure of him that was to come," with his loved and loving help-meet by his side, on awaking from his deep sleep, saying, "This is now bone of my bones."

But by one man sin entered into the world, and "by man came death"; but no sooner had these enemies been brought into God's creation than we hear of a Redeemer, a suffering Redeemer, too, who should effectually render null all the power of that old serpent, the devil. This Abel believed, and therefore offered a firstling of the flock, and of the fat thereof; and "Jehovah had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Noah's burnt-offerings of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, again in type set forth the sweet savor of the offering of Christ, and the blessings to man and the earth which flow from it to this day. Abram offering up Isaac, as we have seen, prefigures, as no other type does, that "the Father sent the Son, the Savior of the world"; that He would provide a lamb for a burnt-offering. Thus we have in Isaac bound on the altar and afterward loosed from it, a striking type of the death and resurrection of God's only-begotten Son. And as the Holy Spirit makes no mention of Isaac after this, till he comes forth to meet, and embrace his beloved bride, so in the intermediate chapters we have the line of pilgrimage and present circumstances of the man of faith, as well as the father of the typical dead and risen One, calling out a bride for his loved and only son, the heir of all his possessions. God's way of blessing having been set forth by the death and resurrection of Isaac, Sarah dies, type of the Jewish system being broken up, the man of faith is a pilgrim and stranger, can find nothing here to possess but a grave; and though in the world, not of it, not beholden to it, or indebted to it for anything, he obtains a grave for which he pays full price. On the other hand the true sent one is calling out a bride for the dead, risen, and now hidden son, by whose testimony she is separated in heart unto him, whom she has not seen but loves; and the first glance she has of him detaches her from everything here, and she hides herself under her veil. Absorbed with the object of her heart, self was lost sight of, in the consummation of her longing desire to "see his face."

And so we might trace in Joseph again the dead and risen Christ in relation to Israel. While in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, as well as Deuteronomy, types and shadows abound in the various sacrifices offered of the infinite value and various aspects of that one offering of the body of Christ, offered once for all, never to be repeated; "for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). In so many ways, and by such various types, the sufferings and death of our adorable Savior are set before us in many parts of the sacred writings, that we can now go from the New Testament statements of facts to learn details in the records of the Old Testament types and prophecies.

Not only did God declare that our Redeemer should be the Seed of the woman, the Seed of Abraham, and the Fruit of David's loins, as concerning the flesh, but that He should be the virgin's Child, and yet His name be Immanuel, God with us. It may be frequently noticed in Scripture, that when the Savior's perfect Humanity is brought before us, His Deity is also mentioned not far off. Again, we are told that Bethlehem would be the place of the Savior's birth; and there it is added, "whose goings forth have been of old from everlasting," words which can only apply to Deity. Prophets had long before declared, that He would grow up before Jehovah as a tender plant, be a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, be despised and rejected of men who were so blind that they saw no beauty in Him that they might desire Him, so that in astonishment the prophet could add, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Not only His spotless and unblemished life, in suffering, temptation, and sorrow occupied the prophetic page, but the cross in all its unutterable woe was again and again set forth. If one spake of Him as wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and that it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, and to put Him to grief as having our iniquities laid upon Him, another was able to foretell the details of those sorrows some hundreds of years before they occurred, and that His cry at that moment under desertion would be, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The actual death of the cross had been predicted as having His hands and His feet "pierced." The derision and mockery, and cruel scourging of men, and His heel under the bruising of Satan, were not forgotten. His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, the scattering of the sheep when the Shepherd was smitten, the rejection of the "Stone" which was to be the Head of the corner were not omitted by the prophetic pen. That the soldiers should part His garments among them, and for His coat cast lots, that He should occupy in death a rich man's grave, that He would be numbered with the transgressors, bear the sins of many, pray for the wicked murderers, and His soul be made an offering for sin, that a bone of Him should not be broken, but that they should look upon Him whom they "pierced," we have only to look into the New Testament to find every jot and tittle of it literally fulfilled. That He died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, was what Paul declared in the gospel that he preached (1 Cor. 15:3, 4); and Peter also owning Him as "Lord of all," and coming to judge the living and the dead, delighted to add, "to him give all the prophets witness that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). If in almost the beginning of the sacred Volume the blood of the firstling of the flock was shed, as the only way of sinful man approaching God, at nearly the end we find it is blessedly recorded, "Unto him that loveth us, and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." Is it possible, we may well ask, that anything can more clearly demonstrate the unity of the Bible than the discovery, that the one grand absorbing and paramount subject throughout, is Jesus the Son of God, who is Lord of all,

and the Savior of sinners that believe?

We must not however forget, that with all the similarities there are very striking contrasts. No two systems could be more distinct and separate than Judaism and Christianity, or law and grace. As to the former, the law said, Do and live; the gospel says, Believe and live; the law said, Thou shalt love God and your neighbor, or be cursed; the gospel says, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." With regard to Judaism, the three things which characterized it were,

(1), a place of worship on earth;

(2), an earthly order of priesthood between God and the people;

(3), all the people at a distance from God-outside the veil; but Christianity, in virtue of the accomplished work of Jesus, is characterized in Scripture,

(1), by access to God with confidence inside the rent veil;

(2), worshiping the Father in spirit and in truth; and

(3), a heavenly order of priesthood — Christ the High Priest and all believers priests. Any other order of priesthood is subversive of Christianity, and why? Because the believer's standing is always in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and the Holy Spirit has come down to indwell and abide with us for ever.

Another thing that marks the unity of the Bible is the remarkable way in which its various parts are adapted and interwoven with each other, so that not one of the smallest books of it could be taken from us without serious loss. Perhaps some one would be ready to say, "It would be no loss to miss the book of Esther, for neither God nor Lord is once named in it." Such, however, have little considered that the omissions of Scripture often show their beauty and perfection. It is so in this and other cases. When many of God's people returned from the Babylonish captivity, there were some who, though they had the thoughts and feelings of His people, yet did not act in faith in returning to the land God had given them; such God never forsakes, though He does not openly show Himself to them. He always cares for His own, however weak and fallen they may be. This the book of Esther remarkably illustrates, and it is a point of all importance in the ways of God.

Others may say, Could we not part with the book of Proverbs or of Ecclesiastes without loss? Certainly not. In Prov. 8 we have one of the finest descriptions given of Christ as "wisdom" found in Scripture; and in other parts many of His actings and wise counsels, besides His kingly power and Sonship. And by losing Ecclesiastes we should be deprived not only of the experience of one who had had it in his power to try everything of earthly blessing to secure happiness, yet found it all to be vanity and vexation of spirit, and everything stamped with death; but we should lose the comfort given us of two things "under the sun" which are not vanity; one seemed "great" to him this was the deliverance and salvation wrought out on Calvary, alluded to at the end of ch. 9; the other is the service of Christ — "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shall find it after many days" (Eccl. 9:13-15; 11:1). These things also show that the sacred writings are so adapted to each other, so fitted together and interwoven, that the more they are pondered the more the unity of the Bible becomes apparent. To lose any part of what we now possess would be like missing some links of a golden chain, and could not fail to produce a gap or defect.

Before closing this part of our subject, there is another character of unity seen amidst all the infinite variety of the Holy Scriptures. We sometimes find the prophets, though unknown to each other, and without any intercourse, going on from the points where others ended, though almost all the prophets went on to the reign of Messiah. Look, for instance, at Isaiah, though he saw terrible failure in Judah and Jerusalem, and even touched on the Jews' rejection of Christ coming in humiliation, yet he does not speak of their captivity; whereas Jeremiah, about a hundred years after, not only enters much into their being given into captivity, but declares it will be for seventy years. Daniel, after this, finds out from Jeremiah's books, that the captivity will be for seventy years, and goes on not only to give a prophetic sketch of the times of the Gentiles, but he also speaks of his own people in the famous prophecy of the seventy weeks. Hosea tells us of their present state and its continuance until the children of Israel return to seek Jehovah (Hos. 3:4, 5). The post-captivity prophets give us an appalling description of their moral condition, without hope, except in a few who fear Jehovah, till the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings. The prophecy in Malachi of John's preceding the Lord coming in grace, and of Elijah preceding the Lord coming in power and glory, were both referred to by our Lord, thus connecting the Old and New Testaments, between which there is a period of more than four hundred years. Nearly a thousand references are made in the New Testament to the Old; and a multitude of prophetic Scriptures in the Old have the records of their fulfilment in the New. It need scarcely be added, that the so-called Apocrypha is nowhere quoted in the New Testament, nor does it commend itself to a spiritual mind as inspired. It is doubtless correctly refused as such.

The same unity of purpose and links of connection are seen in the New Testament. If Matthew closes with showing Christ risen and on the earth, Mark goes on to tell us of His ascension, and sitting on the right hand of God. Luke tells us not only that they saw Him go up into heaven out of their sight, but the disciples were told to wait for power from on high—the coming of the Holy Spirit; while John's gospel goes on still further, for there Christ not only speaks of new relationships, His ascension, His breathing on His disciples the Holy Spirit — risen life — but hints at His coming again, saying, "If I will that he tarry till I come." In speaking to Thomas He refers to the Jewish remnant being blessed on seeing Him after we are gone; and the last chapter gives us a millennial scene.

So in the epistles. Peter looks at us as "pilgrims and strangers," going on to the inheritance "reserved in heaven" for us; but under divine keeping all along the path, with trials and difficulties by the way, Paul, however, usually begins with us as in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and bids us walk here on earth as those who are heavenly, with all our resources in the glorified Son of God, and keeps His blessed coming before us as our hope. John goes on from the rapture at our Lord's coming, sees us in heaven during the apocalyptic judgments of seals, trumpets, and vials; then, after the judgment of the great whore, the marriage supper, we come out of heaven with Christ in manifested glory to judge the quick and the dead, to establish His rightful place and kingdom on earth, and subdue all for

God's glory. It is impossible, then, not to be struck with the element of unity amidst all the almost endless variety of the contents of the Bible, and to see that one mind, and that divine, even the Holy Spirit, must have indited it.

14. the Bible — Its Perfection

The Bible must be perfect. Being God's words they could not be otherwise, for all His works, whether in creation or redemption, bear the stamp of being perfect. "The law [or doctrine] of Jehovah is perfect converting the soul"; and "His way is perfect" (Psa. 18:30; 19:7). Again we read, "The words of Jehovah are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times," and that "Every word of God is pure" (Psa. 12:6; Prov. 30:5). The Bible must be perfect, because, as we hope we have fully proved, it emanates from God.

It is also perfect in being able not only to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, but because it is sufficient to furnish the believer completely unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:15-17).

The holy Scriptures are infinite too in their quality because divinely perfect. Take up another book, and you may soon master most of its contents, but the written word who can grasp? If an inspired Apostle had to say, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part," we can surely add, "that the little we know we know very imperfectly." Who can say he has fully learned the divinely-given ministry of any part of Scripture? And why? Because being God's word it is infinite in its height, and depth, and length, and breadth. We do well to remember this; and that because we are finite creatures we can know only in part, and give out to others but in part.

Few things show more the divine perfection stamped upon the Bible than its infallible accuracy as to what has been already fulfilled. Let us look at a few instances. More than four thousand years ago, Jehovah said, "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Gen. 8:22); and do they not continue to this day?

Again we read, that Abram's seed (therefore reckoned from Isaac's birth) should be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, etc., for "four hundred years" — which would be consequently four hundred and thirty years after the promise made to Abram; hence we read, "It came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of Jehovah went out from the land of Egypt" (Gen. 15:13; Ex. 12:41; Acts 7:6; Gal. 3:16, 17).

Again, in the time of Jeroboam's abominations, a man of God came unto Bethel by the word of Jehovah, and cried, saying,

O altar, altar, thus saith Jehovah; Behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which Jehovah hath spoken; Behold the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out. And it came to pass when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel,

that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand which he put forth against him dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of Jehovah. And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Entreat now the face of Jehovah thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought Jehovah, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before (1 Kings 13:1-6).

Now look at the accurate fulfilment of this saying of the man of God about three hundred years after. We read of King Josiah,

Moreover, the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove. And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchers that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchers, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of Jehovah, which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. Then he said, What title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulcher of the man of God which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel (2 Kings 23:15-17).

Were words ever more solemnly and more accurately fulfilled? How little men think they are refusing God's word, and dishonoring His holy name when they speak of their opinions of the Scriptures, instead of bowing implicitly to their authority and instruction!

In reference also to God's dealings with some of the ancient cities recorded in Scripture, we have the most accurate and solemn fulfilment. Look, for instance, at one of the finest cities the world ever knew, and one which existed very early after the Deluge — Nineveh. We know from the book of Jonah that it was "a very great city." Historians tell us that it extended in length about eighteen miles, and was surrounded with a wall more than a hundred feet high, wide enough to drive three chariots abreast, and ornamented with fifteen hundred towers. The breadth of the city was about twelve miles. Hence Jonah speaks of it as an exceeding great city of three days' journey; and if the "six score thousand persons in it, who could not discern between their right hand and their left," refer to young children, the population of the city must have been very large. The "much cattle" also intimates that there were fields, or parks and palaces, within the enclosure of its high and massive wall; and its ruins show there must have been extensive and magnificent buildings in it. The modern excavations prove the magnificence of the past and fallen greatness of Nineveh. With all her worldly and royal splendor Jehovah said, "I will make thy grave, for thou art vile

. . . Nineveh is laid waste, who will bemoan her . . . her young children were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets; and they cast lots for her honorable men, and all her great men were bound in chains" (Nahum 1 and 3).

Another prophet said,

He will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations; both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for he shall

uncover the cedar work. This is the rejoicing city, that dwelt carelessly; that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me; how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! Every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand” (Zeph. 2:13-15).

It is said that the whole surface of the country is now covered with fragments of bricks and pottery. Not only is it “desolate,” but it has long appeared a huge misshapen mound, like a large grave, covered with rank vegetation, and a place for beasts to lie down in; so literally has the prophetic word been fulfilled. It is probable that Nineveh was built soon after the confusion of tongues.

Let our thoughts now turn for a moment toward another ancient city — Tyre. It was a maritime city, and its prosperity, riches, pride, and costliness have been abundantly described by the prophet Ezekiel; and Zechariah has also spoken of the awful doom that then awaited it from the hand of God. Hiram, king of Tyre, was well known in David’s and Solomon’s days, for from him they obtained much of the material for their buildings at Jerusalem. From all accounts, Tyre was a large and magnificent city, with a profusion of wealth, and all its usual accompaniments of vice and ungodliness; and it is said to have had all the chief merchandise of India and other countries. So elegant was the city in her own esteem, that the inspired penman describes her as saying, “I am of perfect beauty,” and adds,

All thy men of war that are in thee; and all thy company, which is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin . . . what city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea? . . . The merchants among the people shall hiss at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt be any more . . . By thy great wisdom, and by thy traffic, hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; behold, therefore, I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness . . . They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas (Ezek. 27:3, 27, 32, 36; 28:5, 8).

Another prophet describes this city, saying,

Tyrus did build herself a stronghold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets. Behold the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire (Zech. 9:3, 4).

Referring to her fall and terrible doom, Ezekiel further said,

Thus saith the Lord God to Tyrus . . . at the sound of thy fall . . . the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments; they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee. And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which was strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it! . . . Thus saith the Lord God, When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited . . . I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more, though thou be sought for, yet shall thou never be found again.” And in the beginning of the same chapter we read, “Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and

break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God (Ezek. 26).

From modern travelers we learn how truly literal has been the accomplishment of these most solemn prophetic utterances. They have described the town as “environed by rocks, on the ledges of which are scattered the fragments of ancient columns.” They have expressed their conviction, that the waves of the sea now roll where once stood the vast and magnificent palaces of Tyrian wealth and luxury; and that the monuments of commercial enterprise and prosperity have been overwhelmed by the storm of divine indignation, and are as if they had never been. Another traveler says, he found it “a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, etc., there being not so much as one entire house left! Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches harboring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly by fishing; who seem to be preserved in the place by divine Providence, as a visible argument how God has fulfilled His word concerning Tyre, namely, that it should be “like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon.” To this hour all has been accomplished according to the word of the Lord God, and as to the future, He has declared, “thou shalt be built no more” (Ezek. 26:14). We cannot forbear quoting also a few sentences of a Mr. Hardy on this solemn matter. He says, speaking of the scenes of joyousness and of wealth that have been exhibited on these shores, “They have passed away, like the feverish dream of a disturbed sleep. Ships may be seen at a distance; no merchant of the earth ever enters the name of Tyre upon his books; and where thousands once assembled in pomp and pride, I could discover only a few children and a party of Turks. It was impossible,” says the writer, “not to think of another people, still more favored in their privileges, and whose commercial transactions are as extended as the world. Cities of my country! shall it ever be said of you, that ye are no more? The patriot may sing exultingly over his cups the praises of Britannia, ruler of the waves; but the Christian will fear and tremble, and offer up prayer to God, that what we deserve in justice may be withheld from us in mercy.”

Babylon was another ancient city, and unsurpassed for its beauty and magnificence. It has been described as “a square of about fifteen miles on each side.” The reader will remember that ambassadors were sent from it to Hezekiah to honor him on his recovery from sickness. The wall surrounding the city is said to have been three hundred and fifty feet high, and eighty-seven feet thick.” The city was surrounded, too, with a very capacious ditch, which was kept full by the river Euphrates; so that it seemed with all this, and its many towers and gates of brass, to be quite impregnable; and so it was in man’s account; but when God speaks all things are possible to Him, and this many men do not think of. Its palaces, hanging gardens, and wealth showed a profusion of luxury and of human achievement far beyond anything that has been known since. But pride and idolatry, and vice, after long patience, with its gross immoralities and idol worship, notwithstanding the testimony of Daniel and his associates, called for God’s judicial interference. The testimony of an inspired prophet was,

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there: but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of

the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces . . . For I will rise up against them, saith Jehovah of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith Jehovah. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith Jehovah of hosts. Jehovah of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand (Isa. 13:19-22; 14:22, 24).

Where is now this magnificent city, the glory of kingdoms? Have its infidel maxims stood, or has God's word been fulfilled? Alas! alas! travelers tell us it is a mass of dust and barrenness, with heaps of bricks and broken pillars, instead of, as it once was, the fruitful valley of Shinar. So full is it of venomous creatures that no one is safe to approach it within a mile and a half, except for about two months in the year, when these animals never leave their holes.

What appalling facts are these we have thus far noticed in the history of some of the greatest cities that ever existed in the world, and how truly has the word of Jehovah been fulfilled! Well is it for those who so believe God's testimony as to tremble at His word!

But before leaving these examples of the predictions of the Bible, there is another city with which we are rather more familiar, which calls for a few remarks: we mean Jerusalem. A later prophet said, "Jerusalem shall become heaps" (Mic. 3:12); and does not this agree with every description we have of its state ever since its destruction by Titus? Are not our Lord's words also truly fulfilled, "Behold your house is left unto you desolate"? Are not the stones of the temple so scattered, that there is not one stone upon another which has not been thrown down? Is not Jerusalem still trodden down of the Gentiles? Is it not well known that Arab boys break off pieces of stone from the heaps of scattered materials of the ancient temple to obtain a small gratuity from her visitors? And are we not assured that the treading down of the holy city by the uncircumcised will go on "till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"? How surpassingly solemn then is the word of God, and how earnestly it admonishes us to adopt the motto of a less favored and far less instructed servant of God in a past age, "Believe in Jehovah your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper!" This subject — "the times of the Gentiles" — now calls for a few remarks as a further and very striking example of the accurate fulfilment of the word of God by the prophet.

When the last two tribes of Israel were delivered by Jehovah into captivity to the king of Babylon, the sword of God's rule in the earth was handed over to Nebuchadnezzar, so that "whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, and created things were also given unto his hands. The prophet said to him, "Thou art this head of gold" — the power derived in its purest state. The whole course of "the times of the Gentiles" was revealed to Daniel by Jehovah, and made known to the king, extending from that moment till the Lord will be revealed from heaven to judge, as "the stone cut out without hands." As our space only admits of a brief glance at this Gentile image as another example of the perfection of Scripture, let it be especially noticed that it consisted of four empires, and is to terminate in ten kingdoms. It has been the ambition of some to have a fifth monarchy; and if it be true that the first Napoleon led an immense army into Russia with this view, it was painfully proved that God's mind is four empires among Gentiles and not five, and they have all long since been and gone. The head of gold — the Babylonian. The next inferior to this — the Medo-Persian of silver; then the Grecian, of brass; then the Roman strong as iron; then the feet and toes of the image, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, with which there can be no union,

strikingly showing the political conservative and radical elements so manifest unto this day. It is remarkable also, that when the ten toes, or ten kingdoms, are fully developed, then judgment falls upon it. And it is most solemnly true, that for many years past most of the political changes that have taken place on the continent in that part of Europe comprehended in Nebuchadnezzar's image, have more and more developed these ten kingdoms (Dan. 2).

We refer to this not merely to show how accurately Scripture has been fulfilled, and is still being fulfilled as to the Gentile kingdoms, but because of our Lord's words, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." For when the Lord comes out of heaven with His saints in manifested glory, and every eye shall see Him, and they also who pierced Him, then He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, be their Savior and Deliverer, and establish them in their own land as their rightful King, and "the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings." The Lord's promised blessings to Israel will be accompanied with judgment; but when His saints are taken to heavenly glory, to the Father's house, the translation will be all of divine grace and to them power and blessing without judgment.

In nothing, perhaps, is the perfect accuracy of Scripture more manifest than in the present state of the children of Israel; not but that the word of Jehovah as to the Gentile nations is also very solemnly being fulfilled — "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is" (Ezek. 21:27). But as to Israel, the ten tribes are scattered to the four winds "outcasts," no man knows where; a few of them were not carried away in the Assyrian captivity, and that is why we read of Anna, who was of the tribe of Asher, and now and then we meet with one of the remnant of these ten tribes which were left behind (see 2 Chron. 34:9). But most of the Israelites with whom we have intercourse are of Judah and Benjamin. This distinction is kept up in the prophets, and is important; for our Lord taught, that the ten tribes would not be gathered till He appears in manifested glory. Isaiah remarkably distinguishes them by speaking of the "outcasts of Israel," and of the "dispersed of Judah," instead of preserving their own nationality. But though one here and there repents, receives Christ as his Savior, and openly confesses Him, and is really born anew and saved, "according to the election of grace," as the Apostle tells us, yet, as a people, they are still in unbelief; some are pious Jews, and others openly infidel, yet at this moment fulfilling the words of the prophet Hosea,

The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image [or pillar, margin], and without an ephod, and without teraphim.

Thus it is to this day, though they have much of the wealth of the world, the word of God must be fulfilled, for it endures forever; so the Jews have no king, no prince, no proper sacrifice, no pillar, no high priest with ephod, and no teraphim or idol. How appalling are these facts, and how the eternal verity of the written word should be endeared to our hearts! It is a serious blunder to suppose that the Jews, as a people, are to be converted by the present ministry of the gospel, for both Old and New Testaments assure us, that it will be by seeing their Savior, and not like us by believing in One whom we have not seen, but for whom we look and wait. Hence Hosea goes on to say, "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king, and shall fear Jehovah and his goodness in the latter days" (Hos.. 3:4, 5). Nothing is more plainly stated in Scripture than Israel's future blessing, and that by the Lord's personal coming. The prophet Isaiah said, "The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from

transgression in Jacob, saith Jehovah" (Isa. 59:20); and an Apostle taught that, "all Israel [i.e., all the twelve tribes] shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Rom. 11:26, 27).

The faithfulness of God to His own word in all these ways is very precious to our souls. A story is published of two Rabbis approaching Jerusalem, who observed a fox running on the hill of Zion, when Rabbi Joshua wept, and Rabbi Eliezer laughed. "Wherefore dost thou laugh?" said he who wept. "Nay, wherefore dost thou weep?" demanded Eliezer. "I weep," replied the Rabbi Joshua, "because I see what is written in the Lamentations fulfilled, 'because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it' (Lam. 5:18)." "And therefore," said Rabbi Eliezer, "do I laugh, for when I see with mine own eyes that God has fulfilled His threatenings to the very letter, I have thereby a pledge that not one of His promises shall fail, for He is ever more ready to show mercy than judgment."

In nothing, however, is the perfection of the Scriptures more strikingly seen than in the use of the divine titles. As we have before noticed, God's creatorial title is simply God — Elohim; but when man and God's relationship to him are brought in, it is then Lord God, or Jehovah-Elohim. Afterward when Abraham is called out from idolatry to trust God, He then is revealed to him as "the Almighty God" (Gen. 17:1). It is also to be remarked, that in the brief account of king Melchisedec he is also spoken of as priest of the Most High God — king and priest; and he was as we learn from Heb. 7, eminently typical of the Lord Jesus in a future day, when He will "be a priest upon his throne"; and there God is spoken of as "the Most High God," and also that He is "possessor of heaven and earth." These titles will be asserted by our Lord in the millennial age, when He comes forth wearing His many crowns, and reigns in power and great glory (Gen. 14:18-22).

When God has a people on earth, He is made known as Jehovah, or I AM; and when they are redeemed out of Egypt, He dwells among them, and maintains covenant relationship with them as Jehovah. This goes on as long as He can own them as His people, and when He can no longer say of them, "my people," even then, instead of utterly giving them up, Jesus is born into the world to "save his people from their sins." He is called Jesus, or Jehovah Savior. He is spoken of in Scripture as that Holy Thing born of Mary, Son of God, Son of man, Son of the Highest, the Christ, Messiah or Anointed, the Lord Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus, Jesus Christ, the Word, Lamb of God, King of Israel, etc., and each title is used with the most perfect accuracy and point. Take a few examples. Stephen full of the Holy Spirit looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and why did he say that he saw Jesus? Why not use another of His many titles? Because Jesus is His name as incarnate, and Stephen's special comfort when suffering for His truth was the contemplation of Him as Man, who after suffering for the truth unto death was now on the throne of God. His confession therefore was, "Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Though the faithful martyr beholds Him as glorified Man, yet be it also observed, that he bows to Him there as "Lord of all," and says, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" and again, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep" (Acts 7:55-60). All true believers bow to Jesus as Lord.

Again, when an alarmed and sin-convicted man cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul's reply was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house"; but why does he here repeat all these titles of the Savior? Because he is presenting Him to this anxious soul as the Object of faith, and in such a way as to fully satisfy his awakened conscience. Jesus is not only Son of man in the glory, but has been there made "both Lord, and Christ" (Acts 2:36). If the question of the troubled heart be, Is He willing to save me? The answer is, Yes; He is JESUS, and came into the world for the very purpose of saving sinners. If the inquiry be, Is He able to save me? The answer is, Yes; He is "LORD of all," and has all power in heaven and in earth; and His being the CHRIST, the anointed One in heaven, consequent upon His finished work on the cross, is the unquestionable proof that every one that has come as a sinner to Him the Savior, is forgiven and blessed. How perfectly accurate, therefore, was the Apostle's reply, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Again, when the same apostle is writing about the Lord's coming, he says, "We look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ"; because he is then contemplating Him not in humiliation but in power, that power as Lord of all, by which "he is able even to subdue all things unto himself," and yet Savior even to the changing and saving of our body.

Look at another instance, when saving faith is referred to. It is said, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus"

— not simply Jesus, for many speak of Him as such who never savingly know Him, but Lord Jesus — the Son man in the glory in whom dwells "the fullness of the Godhead bodily," and who is "Head of all principality and power," — "and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Could anything be more precise and pointed in the use of titles?

It is well known that the book of Psalms consists of five divisions, or books. The Hebrew Bible is so arranged; and it is very striking to see how remarkably the titles of God are used in them. Look, for instance, at the first and second books. The first book consists of Psa. 1 to Psa. 41, and the second book from Psa. 42 to the end of Psa. 72. In the first book the prevailing title by far is Jehovah, because the godly Jews are looked at as in Jerusalem, and still in association with the temple; whereas in the second book the title most commonly used is not Jehovah, but God. And why? Because the remnant of Jews are looked at there as having fled from Jerusalem, in fulfilment of our Lord's words, "Then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains," and their covenant relationship with Jehovah is little realized by them. Far away from their beloved city and temple, in the hill Mizar, they feel cast down, as if God had forgotten them. Take a Psalm in the first book, say Psa. 34, and Jehovah is mentioned sixteen times; and in a Psalm in the second book, say Psa. 41 or Psa. 42, and we find God used nearly as many times as there are verses. The accuracy is most striking.

The precision and depth of meaning with which the divine titles are used all through Scripture is very manifest. If in Proverbs we have Jehovah, is it not because those addressed are looked at in relationship with Him? If in Ecclesiastes we have God, is it not because it is for the most part man seeking on earth an object for his heart, and finds vanity and vexation of spirit? And if in the Song of Solomon we have neither, is it not because the heart has there found a satisfying Object? No doubt in its primary application it is Jewish, but who among the children of God has not delighted in our Lord Jesus Christ as the "altogether lovely," and rejoiced at realizing that He has brought us

into His banqueting house, and that His banner over us is love? By the Spirit we are able, while
“Gazing on the Lord in glory,”

to sing, “I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine,” and can surely add, “I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste.”

We have already observed how minutely and accurately the Scripture has been fulfilled as to the birth, life, sufferings, atoning death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ; and we may be assured that not one jot or tittle shall fail of all that is written concerning His coming for His saints, His glorious appearing, judgments and reign. Few things have so obscured the simplicity of the truth, or been more misleading than the traditions that there will be one general resurrection, and a general judgment, till which no one can have the assurance of his eternal safety. The reception of such doctrines, which are unknown in Scripture, can only be accounted for by persons going to the Reformation as the source of orthodoxy, instead of to the word of God, to that which was at the beginning, and has been treasured up for us in the inspired writings. As to the Reformation we have much to thank God for in the wonderful recovery of the grand foundation truth of justification by faith, and the diffusion of copies of the Bible for general reading; but with these and other blessings, a mass of doctrines were received from Papists, which are held by many Protestants to this day; and among them that the church will convert the world, that Christianity will triumph over infidelity and every opposing power. That a time will come when “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,” is unquestionable, as we have seen; but in the same chapter we are told it is to be brought about by Christ reigning in “righteousness,” and not therefore by the preaching of the “gospel of the grace of God” (Isa. 11). From Scripture we learn that Christ is “heir of all things,” that, as the glorified Man, all things are to be put under His feet, and that all judgment is committed unto Him because He is the Son of man. His rightful place also, as having died for all, and triumphed over death and Satan is, that to Him every knee should bow, in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. How is it possible that these things can be otherwise than strictly and accurately fulfilled by His power, whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself! It is, we repeat, God’s unfailing faithfulness to His own word that comforts our hearts and strengthens our confidence in Himself, for “He is faithful that promised: he cannot deny himself.” Was He ever truer to the soul that seeketh Him than now? Was it ever a greater reality to souls than now, that,

Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”? (Matt. 18:20).

Is it not to thousands in these days as real to their hearts as if they saw Him in the midst? Oh the untold blessedness of having to do with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, receiving His testimony, and setting to our seal that God is true

Our gracious God having caused His word to be written for our instruction, how could we expect it otherwise than its being accurately fulfilled according to His own will? Nor is it surprising, because it is His word, the revelation of His own mind, that both Old and New Testaments give a note of most solemn warning to any who add to it or take from it (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18, 19). Nothing surely could more truly authenticate the sacred writings, or more thoroughly show the

infinite perfection of the Bible.

“What Christ hath said must be fulfilled;

On this firm rock believers build;

His word shall stand, His truth prevail,

And not one jot nor tittle fail.”

15. the Bible—Its Blessedness

It is impossible to tell out in human language the full blessedness of having the holy Scriptures. But what is most striking in it is the revelation it gives us of God, so that we now know Him not only as Creator, and One who is kind to the unthankful and the unholy in providing for His creatures (for “his tender mercies are over all his works”), but we also know Him in the exceeding riches of His grace as a Savior-God, in and through our Lord Jesus Christ. Having received “the words of God,” and “the Spirit of God,” we know that we are brought to God, and are “in the light as he is in the light.” Precious grace! It is not merely that we have title to glory through the blood of the cross, but we are brought to God who is “light” and “love” in Christ, who is our Life, Righteousness, and Peace.

Before the death of Christ, God was not so revealed. Till Jesus the Son of God came, God was hid behind a veil, and little known except by His acts; then Christ revealed the Father, and made Himself known as the Son, and on leaving promised to send the Holy Spirit to abide with us for ever. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” The Son, the effulgence of His glory, has fully manifested God in-flesh. We have the Father so perfectly represented in the Son, that He could say, “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also . . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father”; and He declares that His rejectors were guilty, and had no cloak for their sin, because as He said, “Ye have both seen and hated both me and my Father” (John 1:18; 14:7, 9; 15:24).

Though God had been so far made known in Old Testament times, that He visited Adam and Abraham, and dwelt among His redeemed earthly people; yet it was not till the Savior’s baptism that God, in the plurality of Persons — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — was made known. THE SPIRIT came down as a dove, and abode on the spotless One, and the voice from heaven, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” manifested also the personal glories of the FATHER and the SON. From that time the unfathomable blessedness of knowing God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — one God — abounds in holy Scripture; and the believing knowledge of redemption, through grace, according to divine counsel and eternal purpose, has brought us into conscious relationship with God as our Father, with the Son as our eternal life, and the Spirit given to guide us into all the truth, to strengthen us with might in the inner man, and also as the Anointing, Seal, and Earnest of our inheritance.

It is because the Scriptures give us God’s revelation of Himself, and of His mind and will, and so constantly testify of Christ, that by the teaching and ministry of the Holy Spirit, they are the food of our souls. And here observe, it is not our own thoughts about Scripture, or our reasonings about it, or opinions of it, or deductions from it, but what God says. “It is written,” was the word so often uttered by our adorable Savior and His apostles; and we may be assured that we can only “resist” Satan by being “steadfast in the faith.” And what is this, but believingly holding and using Scripture as the word of God? How else could we be steadfast in the faith?

Again, we see the untold blessedness of the Scriptures in giving us divine intelligence as to ourselves, our state, our path, our circumstances, and everything around us, as to Jews, Gentiles, and church of God. They open up to us the past, present, and future; things heavenly and earthly, things temporal and eternal, the two Adams and all in connection with them as heads of races; and the curtain is so drawn now and then, that the Spirit-led soul can survey the coming glories and their felicity, and also solemnly contemplate the infernal regions of unending misery and punishment.

In the Old Testament, we have the sons of Israel, a people God called out to Himself; also the Gentiles, with promise that God's blessing should even reach out to them — that in Christ, the Seed, all nations should be blessed. But the church, the body of Christ, was not revealed there. The prophets went from "the sufferings of Christ" to "the glories which should follow," and entirely passed over the marvelous work of forming and removing the church to her destined heavenly glory, before the Lord comes out in blessing to His ancient people, and judgment of the quick and the dead at His appearing and kingdom. Typical intimations and shadows there were now and then of Christ and the church as in Adam and Eve, Isaac and Rebecca, Joseph and Asenath, Moses and his wife; but the assembly as "the body of Christ" on earth, united to Christ the Head in heaven, and formed into one body by the gift of the Holy Spirit, was not revealed till Paul was called by divine grace. Eph. 3 plainly shows this, and that the mystery of the church was "hid in God." "not made known," "kept secret since the world began." (See also Rom. 16:25, 26; for "Scriptures of the prophets" read "prophetic Scriptures.")

Believers are now, by the Holy Spirit, in union with Christ ascended; for "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." All this most blessed workmanship of the Holy Spirit, His present ministry through gifts bestowed by Christ ascended, all the affection and care of Christ for His assembly, and the perfection of the Father's love to His children, loving them as He loved His Son, are richly and blessedly brought to us through the apostolic writings, and especially by those of Paul, who was emphatically a minister of the church or assembly (Col. 1:23). This, therefore, gives them a sacred charm to the believer, and through faith they necessarily produce a walk of separation and devotedness to the Lord.

The Scriptures give us divine intelligence about everything necessary to completely furnish the believer unto every good work. Do I inquire what God's present ways on earth for blessing are? I learn from His word that He is calling out and forming a bride for His own Son, whose heart is set upon her as His own body, and who "nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church"; and that this will go on till we hear the "shout," and are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so are "for ever with the Lord." Do we inquire as to the Jews? We still find the "outcasts" of Israel — the ten tribes are cast out, no man knows where; and the two tribes are still "dispersed" among the nations, fulfilling the Scriptures of the prophets as to their state; and one now and then believing the gospel, and forming part of God's assembly. If a question be asked about the European nations, which once formed part of the Roman empire? According to the word of God by Daniel, we learn that all is going on to the development of the ten kingdoms before divine judgment falls upon them. Does any one inquire whether Scripture tells us anything about Protestantism? Most surely; it is referred to in the epistle to the church at Sardis, and is described as having a name to live and being dead. Protesting against error may be with those who are quite devoid of faith in God's revealed truth concerning His Son, and therefore such have not life — "He that hath not the

Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). And it would be impossible that such a huge system as Popery, established on the earth for so many centuries, should be omitted in God's word written for our instruction; we find, therefore, much in Scripture concerning it, and what is so striking, it stands in the end of this age in rival antagonism with infidelity; and it needs but little spiritual discernment to see how rapidly this ill-feeling and fear of each other is growing. Nevertheless, as before observed, the result must be that the infidel power will be too strong for the Papal power, and will spoil and destroy this unchaste woman (Rev. 17:16, 17; 18:8). The great whore may include all in Christendom who are untrue in affection to the Lord Himself. Thank God, not one child of His can be lost, and He knoweth them that trust in Him.

With regard to the church or assembly of God in the true sense, (which is doubtless the most blessed testimony that ever emanated from God, and the workmanship of the Holy Spirit, it must abide for ever, because each true believer is by one Spirit united to Christ in ascension as a member of His body, and is always an object of His care and blessing. On the other hand, the assembly looked at as God's corporate witness on the earth it has terribly fallen from the Pentecostal character of blessing and power in which He set it. Too often it is a witness of division, carnality, and strife, instead of keeping diligently the Spirit's unity in the uniting bond of peace, through holding the Head, subjection to the word, and owning the presence and power of the one Spirit for all true blessing and unity.

And so with our open Bible we can look around on every hand, and see things just as they are set forth there for our guidance and instruction. One thing is certain, that while God looks for individual faithfulness and separation to Himself, and will always honor few or many who are really gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, yet He gives no hope of the re-construction and return of unity in general of His assembly on earth; but enjoins us individually to purge ourselves from vessels to dishonor, and be with those (if we can find them), who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (2 Tim. 2:19-22).

And further, not only are we told that "God . . . hath in due times manifested his word through preaching," but it is also written, "Thou hast magnified thy word, above all thy name" (Titus 1:3; Psa. 138:2). So that, because Scripture is God's word, it assures us, without any question, of what is His mind and will concerning us. By it every one who has truly looked as a lost sinner to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Object of faith and trust, is assured that his sins are forgiven, and blotted out for ever. "To him [Christ] give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins"; and "their sins, and iniquities will I remember no more" (Acts 10:43; Heb. 10:17).

Such know, also, on the authority of the Scriptures, that they have eternal life given to them, and that they possess it. We never find an apostle saying, "I feel that I have this and that, and because I feel it I know I have it." Never; because feelings quickly change, and the word never directs us to look at our feelings for evidence, but at what God says. Now what does He say about the present gift of eternal life? He says, in John's first epistle, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." He does not say here that you may feel it, but know it; know it on the authority of God's word, which we are told was written that we might know, with divine certainty, that we have eternal life. "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the

Son of God hath not life.” Nothing can be more simple, more decided, more comforting, to such as trust God according to His own word. Nothing less is faith. Oh the untold blessedness of knowing, and being able truthfully to say, that God hath given to me eternal life, communicated it to me, and this life is in His Son Christ my life, so that Christ liveth in me; and so real that it comes out in affections, thoughts, and feelings according to Him. “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death” (1 John 3:14). How very comforting, and yet how solemn!

And more than this; for nothing short of having us in the new and eternal relationship of children could suit the Father’s heart; and this, too, the Scriptures clearly teach, not only for present comfort, but to bring out the duties and affections that necessarily flow from knowing such an endearing relationship. The Scripture not only says, “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,” but goes on to tell us that the Holy Spirit dwells in us because we are sons. “Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father”; and it is also clear that those who have the Spirit in them know that they are God’s children; for “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, [the new life or nature], that we are the children of God” (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:16). Those then who know, or are personally assured, on the authority of God’s word, that they are children of God, have received the Spirit, and can approach God as their Father. We have received “the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” Duties and affections, as we have said, flow from known relationships; for how can any one manifest the love, interest, subjection, and devotion of a child, or walk as a child, unless he knows he is a child? O the unfathomable blessedness and treasure of the Scriptures!

And yet more still. We learn also from the page of inspiration, that the believer is now set by God in a totally new standing, “in heavenly places in Christ Jesus”; so that he is recognized and addressed in the epistles as not in his sins, not in the flesh, not under law, not of the world, not now in Adam, but “in the Spirit,” and “in Christ Jesus.” Hence there is a new creation in Christ Jesus, and such are always before God in all the nearness and acceptance of “the Beloved.” What a position of favor and blessing to be always thus before God in all the nearness and relationship of children? Known too on the unfailing authority of His word, with joy and peace in believing, and for such present blessing that we may rejoice in the Lord always, obey His word, and wait for His return from heaven. The question now for every true believer is not, Am I in Christ? or am I a child of God? for God has told such in His word, as we have seen, over and over again, that these questions are settled for ever; but the important question for us is, “Am I living in the enjoyment of communion with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ?” How can this be, if His word be not loved, received, and meditated on by us, as the treasury of His thoughts, affections, purposes, and ways? Jesus said,

If a man love me, he will keep my words . . . he that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine but the Father’s which sent me (John 14:21-24).

Concluding Remarks

The important practical question is, How do we treat the Bible? Do we honor it because it is the word of God? Are we guided by its counsels? Have we proved its sufficiency? Do we, when we read it, meditate on it, and mix faith with it, and realize the personal enjoyment of its soul-comforting ministrations? Do we habitually rely on the Holy Spirit to enable us to discern, receive, and communicate its precious mysteries? “He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true” (John 3:33).

Why then do we read the holy Scriptures? Because they reveal “the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,” and are written for our learning and comfort. To neglect them is therefore very serious. The faithful in all ages have been noted for standing for the authority of the sacred writings. Moreover they give us divine assurance as to the eternal future, as well as sure guidance for every step of the way.

How do we read the Bible? is also a searching question. If we approach the imperishable word with the thought of our own competency to discern and understand it, then let it not be surprising if we get nothing from it, or fall into the most grievous errors (1 Cor. 2:14). If, on the contrary, the reader takes his true place on opening the sacred volume of utter inability to discern the deep things of God, and waits on God to guide and teach him by the Holy Spirit, then he will never be disappointed, and, mixing faith with the word, will find much profit and blessing.

Again, we may remind the Christian reader of the tendency to read certain favorite chapters or books, instead of “all Scripture”: consequently such do not get a grasp of the scope of the written word, and are always uncertain as to what the sacred volume really contains. We are not now speaking of reading the Scriptures publicly or in the family, but of reading them privately to honor God, to find food and blessing for our souls, as well as intelligence as to how to walk and please God.

When do we read the word of God? is another important question. With those who have to arise from their beds early, and have much to do, there is often a strong temptation to put off the private reading of the word of truth till later on in the day; the consequence is that other things so engage the mind that such either give up reading, or are unable to apply themselves to the study of the word, and therefore decline in soul. The best things in Israel were devoted to the Lord. Our Lord was found in prayer a great while before day. The manna came down early, and they had to gather it before sunrise; and our Lord said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.” Now it is manifest, that if we are to seek God’s things first, having to do with Him and His word would precede our having to do with earthly things. We hesitate not to say that such as practically rank earthly things before the heavenly occupation of prayer and reading of the word are not honoring God as they should; and we believe much of the failure even in God’s people can be traced to their not giving the things of God the “first,” and therefore the “best” place.

It is said, that when Dr. Johnson was told that Mr.—had imbibed infidel notions as to the Scriptures, he replied, “He never read the Bible.” We believe the same may be said of many a busy sceptic in the present day. The misquotations that some of them make, as well as the egregious errors and misapplications of Scripture, leave no doubt as to this; but those who do “search the Scriptures,” pray over them for divine guidance and teaching in humility and uprightness before God, learn to say with an ancient prophet,

thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.

And further, those who follow on to know the Lord through meditation in faith of the written word, and faithful walk, sooner or later discover that the great testimony of the sacred volume from beginning to end is Christ; and those indeed are blessed who have thus learned that “Christ is all.” Happy indeed is the reader, who can truly say, Christ is all my salvation, all my desire, my life, my righteousness, my peace, my hope. All my springs are in Him. Christ is my refuge, my resource, my strength, my food, my Friend, my power for all fruit bearing. So absolutely is He all to me, that without Him I can do nothing, apart from Him I have nothing, and am nothing! In turning then to the sacred pages, may we never forget that they testify of Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God! And looking off unto Jesus where He now is, and waiting for His coming, we can happily sing —

“He’s gone within the veil,
For us that place has won;
In Him we stand, a heavenly band,
Where He Himself has gone.
And stayed by joy divine,
As hireling fills his day;
Through scenes of strife, and desert life,
We tread in peace our way.
That way is upward still,
Where life and glory are;
Our rest’s above, in perfect love
The glory we shall share.
For ever with the Lord,
For ever like Him then,
And see His face in that blest place,
Our Father’s house in heaven.”

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