

# The Divine Inspiration of the Bible CHAPTER FOURTEEN: APPLICATION OF THE ARGUMENT

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## Transcript

The Divine Inspiration of the Bible

CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

APPLICATION OF THE ARGUMENT

What is our attitude towards God's Word? The knowledge that the Scriptures are inspired by the Holy Spirit involves definite obligations. Our conception of the authority of the Bible determines our attitude and measures our responsibility. If the Bible is a Divine revelation what follows? I. We Need to Seek God's Forgiveness. If it were announced upon reliable authority that on a certain date in the near future an angel from heaven would visit New York and would deliver a sermon upon the invisible world, the future destiny of man, or the secret of deliverance from the power of sin, what an audience he would command! There is no building in that city large enough to accommodate the crowd which would throng to hear him. If upon the next day, the newspapers were to give a verbatim report of his discourse, how eagerly it would be read! And yet, we have between the covers of the Bible not merely an angelic communication but a Divine revelation. How great then is our wickedness if we undervalue and despise it! And yet we do. We need to confess to God our sin of neglecting His Holy Word. We have time enough—we take time—to read the writings of fellow sinners, yet we have little or no time for the Holy Scriptures. The Bible is a series of Divine love letters, and yet many of God's people have scarcely broken the seals. God complained of old, "I have written to him the great things of My law, but they were counted as a strange thing" (Hos. 8:12). To neglect God's gift is to despise the Giver. To neglect God's Word is virtually to tell Him that He made a mistake in being at so much trouble to communicate it. To prefer the writings of man is to insult the Almighty. To say that human writings are more interesting is to impugn the wisdom of the Most High and is a terrible indictment against our own evil hearts. To neglect God's Word is to sin against its Author, for He has commanded us to read, study, and search it. If the Bible is the Word of God then— II. It is the Final Court of Appeal. It is not a question of what I think, or of what any one else thinks—it is, What saith the Scriptures? It is not a matter of what any church or creed teaches—it is, What teaches the Bible? God has spoken, and that ends the matter: "Forever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in heaven." Therefore, it is for me to bow to His authority, to submit to His Word, to cease all quibbling and cry, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Because the Bible is God's Word, it is the final court of appeal in all things pertaining to doctrine,

duty, and deportment. This was the position taken by our Lord Himself. When tempted by Satan, He declined to argue with him, He refused to overwhelm him with the force of His superior wisdom, He scorned to crush him with a putting forth of His almighty power—"It is written" was His defense for each assault. At the beginning of His public ministry, when He went to Nazareth where most of His thirty years had been lived, He performed no wonderful miracle but entered the synagogue, read from the Prophet Isaiah and said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). In His teaching upon the Rich Man and Lazarus, He insisted that "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31)—thus signifying that the authority of the written Word is of greater weight and worth than the testimony and appeal of miracles. When vindicating before the Jews His claim of Deity (John 5) He appealed to the testimony of John the Baptist (vs. 32), to His own works (vs. 36), to the Father's own witness—at His baptism (vs. 37), and then—as tho they were the climax—He said— "Search the Scriptures. . .they are they which testify of Me" (vs. 39). This was the position taken by the Apostles. When Peter would justify the speaking with other tongues, he appealed to the Prophet Joel (Acts 2:16). When seeking to prove to the Jews that Jesus of Nazareth was their Messiah, and that He had risen again from the dead, he appealed to the testimony of the Old Testament (Act 2). When Stephen made his defense before the "counsel" he did little more than review the teaching of Moses and the prophets. When Saul and Barnabas set out on their first missionary journey they "preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews" (Acts 13:5). In his Epistles, the Apostle continually pauses to ask—"What saith the Scripture?" (Rom. 4:3, etc.)—if the Scripture gave a clear utterance upon the subject under discussion that ended the matter: against their testimony there was no appeal. If the Bible is the Word of God—then III. It is the Ultimate Standard for Regulating Conduct. How can man be just with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? What must I do to be saved? Where is true and lasting peace and rest to be found? Such are some of the inquiries made by every honest and anxious soul. The reply is—Search the Scriptures: Look and see. How shall I best employ my time and talents? How shall I discover what is well-pleasing to my Maker? How am I to know what is the path of duty? And again the answer is—What teaches the Word of God? No one who possesses a copy of the Bible can legitimately plead ignorance of God's will. The Scriptures leave us without excuse. A lamp has been provided for our feet and the pathway of righteousness is clearly marked out. A chart has been given to the sailors on time's sea, and it is their own fault if they fail to arrive at the heavenly port. In the day of judgment the Books will be opened and out of these Books men will be judge, and one of these Books will be the Bible. In His written Word God has revealed His mind, expressed His will, communicated His requirements; and woe to the man or woman who takes not the necessary time to discover what these are. If the Bible is the Word of God then— IV. It is a Sure Foundation for Our Faith. Man craves for certainty. Speculations and hypotheses are insufficient where eternal issues are at stake. When I come to lay my head upon my dying pillow, I want something surer than a "perhaps" to rest it upon. And thank God I have it. Where? In the Holy Scriptures. I know that my Redeemer liveth. I know that I have passed from death unto life. I know that I shall be made like Christ and dwell with Him in glory throughout the endless ages of eternity. How do I know? Because God's Word says so, and I want nothing more. The Bible gives forth no uncertain sound. It speaks with absolute assurance, dogmatism, and finality. Its promises are certain for they are promises of Him who cannot lie. Its testimony is reliable for it is the inerrant Word of the Living God. Its teachings are trustworthy for they are a communication the the Omniscient. The believer then has a sure foundation on which to rest, an impregnable rock on which to build his hopes. For his present peace and for his future prospects he has a, "Thus saith the Lord," and that is sufficient. If the Bible is the Word of God then— V. It has Unique Claims Upon Us. A unique book deserves and demands unique attention. Like Job, we ought to be able to say, "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more

than my necessary food." If history teaches us anything at all, it teaches that those nations which have most honored God's Word have been most honored by God. And what is true of the nation is equally true of the family and of the individual. The greatest intellects of the ages have drawn their inspiration from the Scripture of Truth. The most eminent statesmen have testified to the value and importance of Bible study. Benjamin Franklin said: "Young man, my advice to you is that you cultivate an acquaintance with and firm belief in the Holy Scriptures, for this is your certain interest." Thomas Jefferson gave it as his opinion, "I have said and always will say, that the studious perusal of the Sacred Volume will make better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands." When the late Queen Victoria was asked the secret of England's greatness, she took down a copy of the Scriptures, and pointing to the Bible she said, "That Book explains the power of Great Britain." Daniel Webster once affirmed, "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but, if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity. The Bible is the Book of all others for lawyers as well as divines, and I pity the man who cannot find in it a rich supply of thought and rule of conduct." When Sir Walter Scott lay dying he summoned to his side his man in waiting and said, "Read to me out of the Book." Which book? answered his servant. "There is only one Book," was the dying man's response—"The Bible!" The Bible is the Book to live by and the Book to die by. Therefore read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, practice it to be holy. As another has said: "Know it in the head, store it in the heart, show it in the life, sow it in the world." "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

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