

# **THE DOCTRINE OF REVELATION**

**BOOKLET FIVE  
PART TWO  
THE HOLY BIBLE**



**A. W. Pink**

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## **Booklet Five**

### **Part Two**

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#### **7. The Holy Bible its Fulfilled Prophecies**

If the Bible is a human invention it ought not to require very much perspicuity to discover and demonstrate its imposture. The Scriptures claim to be of Divine inspiration, but if that claim is an empty and unfounded one, then it should be no hard matter to prove it is so. The Bible not only treats considerably of history and moral instruction, but it contains not a little prophecy, and that not in dark and dubious language, like that of the pretended Sibylline Oracle, such as that ambiguous answer made to the inquiry of Croesus when he was about to engage the Persians in war: “Croesus, having passed the river Hilys, shall overturn a great empire”—which would be verified whether his own kingdom *or* that of the Persians was subverted. Radically different are the predictions of Holy Writ. They are clear and definite, enter into specific and minute details, and in many instances are too plain to be misunderstood. Thus, the dispute between the Christian and the Infidel may be reduced to a short and simple issue: if Scripture prophecy be Divinely inspired then it will be accomplished; if it be spurious, it will not be.

Since the words “prophecy” and “prediction” are frequently used in a loose and general sense in present-day parlance, it is requisite that we should carefully define our term. By a “prophecy” we mean the annunciation of some future event which could not have been foreknown by natural means or arrived at by logical deduction from present data. Such are scores of predictions

recorded in the Bible hundreds of years ago, and which have been accurately verified by history. They are entirely different from weather forecasts, which are more often wrong than right, and merely announce climatic conditions a few days ahead. To bear any resemblance to the prophecies of Scripture, they would have to prognosticate the specific temperature, the direction of the wind, the precise rainfall upon a certain city or country on a given day, 500 years hence! The reader will readily perceive that all of the scientists and astronomers in the world possess no such prevision as that. Yet the Bible abounds with forecasts far more wonderful.

It requires no prophetic spirit to declare that, life permitting, a certain male infant *will* develop into a child, and then into a man; but it *would* to announce from his cradle whether he will be a fool or a wise man, a failure or success; and still more so to predict the exact span of his life, and where and how he will die. A well-informed politician may foretell how soon there will be a general election, and which party will win the same; but he is quite incapable of foreseeing the political, social, economic and religious condition of his country 100 years from now. And, likewise, it would be completely beyond his powers to give the name and describe the character of its ruler in that day. An experienced statesman may indeed discern the speedy breakup of his state, and from the temper of its subjects deduce that it is likely to collapse under a fearful revolution, but he could not predict and describe the successive changes of empires centuries in advance—changes which depend upon countless unknown incidents. Yet the Bible does that very thing!

Sagacious conjecture is very different from Scripture prediction. Prophecy is, as one has well defined it, “the eyes of the omniscient God reading the predestinated future, and revealing the secret to His servants, the Prophets.” It is demonstrated to be such by the actual accomplishment of the same as testified to by the records of history. And it is highly significant that sacred history ends where profane history—that part of it, at least, which is commonly regarded as reliable—begins, so that the great changes in world

affairs which the Divine seers foretold are confirmed by *secular* recorders of events, thereby effectually closing the mouths of sceptics. Thus the remarkable predictions of Daniel concerning the rise, the career, and the character of the great Gentile powers which occupied the stage during the last six centuries before the advent of Christ may be fully checked from the chronicles of heathen historians, who, entirely unacquainted with the Old Testament (which then existed only in the Hebrew language), were quite unaware that they were narrating the fulfilment of the same.

The book of Daniel contains prophetic visions which describe one momentous event after another that has come before the observance of the whole world: events so unlikely, so startling, and so far-reaching, that no wisdom could possibly have foreseen the same—least of all, so far in advance. It was therein revealed that four successive world kingdoms should arise, to be followed by a spiritual and everlasting kingdom set up by God Himself. Those four empires are viewed under the figure of wild beasts, to denote their strength, ferocity, and agility. It was therein foretold that they should come forth from “the great sea” (Dan. 7:2, 3), which in Scripture always has reference to the *Mediterranean*, thereby defining the centre of their territorial origin. By that limitation of four, God made it known that after the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires there should never again be another kingdom commensurate with those. Charlemagne, Napoleon, the Kaiser, Hitler, in their insatiable greed, coveted and strove to form one, but in vain. Equally so will prove the ambitions of Moscow. [Written in 1948].

It is an incontrovertible fact that no Infidel has ever dared to meet the great body of Scripture prophecy, nor seriously attempted a reply to the many books written thereon, calling attention to their accomplishment. Either they are silently ignored, or dismissed with some such scurrilous remark that the Scripture prophecies are “a book of falsehoods,” as Tom Paine’s accusation in his blasphemous *Age of Reason* (Part 2, pages 44, 47). Let the reader judge for himself from the following. Almost 100 years before the

event, the Lord announced through Isaiah that Babylon should be destroyed by the Medes and Persians. “Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them. . .And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. . .Go up, O Elam [the ancient name of Persia]; besiege, O Media. . .Babylon is fallen” (Isa. 13:17, 19; 21:2, 9). Utterly unlikely as such a catastrophe then appeared, nevertheless, Herodotus and Xenophon record its literal fulfilment!

Again, Daniel, more than 200 years before the event, foretold the overthrow of the Medo-Persian empire by the arms of Greece, under the direction of Alexander the Great, depicting the government of the latter under the symbol of a he-goat with a notable horn between his eyes. That prophecy, in figurative language, is found in Daniel 8:3-7, and then (verses 20-21) its meaning is explained in plain terms: “the ram which thou sawest having two horns, are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia, and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.” Ask the historians of those times, Diodorus and Plutarch, if that were a falsehood! In his *Antiquities* (Jud. 11:8) Josephus tells of Alexander’s journey to Jerusalem for the purpose of dealing severely with the Jews, and how that when he was shown by the high priest a copy of the prophecy of Daniel announcing that a *Grecian* monarch should overthrow Persia, was so deeply impressed that, contrary to his invariable course, he showed remarkable favour to the Jews.

The same Daniel went on to announce that upon the death of Alexander his vast empire should be divided between four of his principal generals, each of whom should have an extensive dominion (8:8, 22), which, as profane historians record, is precisely what took place. But more—he also predicted that out of one of those four branches of the Grecian empire would arise one who, at first weak and obscure, should become “exceeding great,” blatant and impious, and that he would meet with no ordinary end (8:9, 12, 23-25). Therein was accurately described the infamous career of Antiochus Epiphanies, king of Syria. In that remarkable

prophecy it was plainly intimated that that monster should, by means of flattery and treachery, accomplish his evil designs; and because of the degeneracy of the Jews would be permitted for a time to ravish their country, profane their temple, and put many of them to death; yet, that in the heyday of his career he should be cut off by a sudden visitation from Heaven. All of which was fulfilled to the letter!

Daniel also went on to herald the rise of yet a fourth kingdom. As he foretold that the Babylonian should be succeeded by the Medo-Persian and it by the Grecian, so in turn would this be vanquished by another yet more powerful. It is described as being “strong as iron: for as much as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all” (2:40); and as “diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful” and which “shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces” (7:19, 23). Therein was given, more than 500 years beforehand, a delineation of the Roman empire, as differing from the others in its democratic form of government, in the irresistible might of its military power, and in its world-wide dominion (compare Luke 2:1). Finally, Daniel announced that “in the days of these kings” (2:44) should “the God of Heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed” (2:44; 7:13, 14). And it was in the days of the Caesars that the Son of God became incarnate and established His spiritual kingdom, which, despite all the efforts of Satan and his emissaries to overthrow it, continues to this very hour. What proofs of Divine inspiration are these!

But let us now come to a phenomenon which falls more immediately before our own observation, namely, *the Jews*. To the man of affairs the Jews present an interesting, yet perplexing problem, for they are the greatest paradox of the ages. No other nation was so highly favoured by God, yet none has ever been so severely chastised by Him. They are the only people to whom God ever gave a land, yet the only one which for so many centuries have been without one. They are the only nation to whom God ever immediately gave a king, yet for 2,000 years they have been without a ruler or head. They are the outstanding miracle of

history. Scattered throughout the earth, they are yet a unit; dispersed among the Gentiles, yet unassimilated by them. They are not wanted anywhere, yet because of their financial strength, needed everywhere. Taxed and plundered as no others have ever been, yet the wealthiest of all people. Persecuted and slaughtered as no other nation, yet miraculously preserved from annihilation.

The Bible alone supplies the key to their history. Not only so—the Bible described, in numerous particulars, their history long in advance. We will now single out but a few from the many scores. Two thousand years before the event, their conquest by the Romans and the terrors of the siege of Jerusalem were graphically depicted: see Deuteronomy 28:49-57—the passage is too lengthy to quote here, but let the reader be sure to consult it. The worldwide dispersion of the Jews was foretold centuries in advance: “And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, and from the one end of the earth even unto the other” (Deut. 28:64). The restless migrating of the Jews was made known ages before their actual dispersion: “And among those nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind” (Deut. 28:65). So literally has that been fulfilled that “the *wandering Jew*” has become a proverbial expression adopted by all modern nations!

The taunts universally passed upon them were prophetically declared: “thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee” (Deut. 28:37). Who has not heard the expression, “as greedy as a Jew!” When one man gets the better of another by means of tricky dealings, it has become the custom throughout the English-speaking world to say “he Jew’d me.” Literally has he become a “Proverb and a byword.” Their survival, despite all the efforts of men to exterminate them, was made known: “when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not... destroy them utterly” (Lev. 26:44). The preservation of their national distinctness was expressly predicted: “lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations” (Num. 23:9). Though scattered

throughout the whole earth, they still subsist—unassimilated by the Gentiles—as a distinct people! And so we might go on. Let the reader carefully bear in mind that all of those fore-announcements were made upwards of 3,000 years ago! Such forecasts manifestly render imposture out of the question: they must have been God-breathed.

We now call attention to that which is central in prophecy, namely, the amazing description supplied of the Messiah many centuries before He came to this earth. A full portrait of Him was drawn in advance: one inspired artist after another adding fresh details, until the picture was complete. The Prophets, with one consent, gave witness to the Lord Jesus Christ, so that nothing remarkable befell Him and nothing great was done by Him which they did not foretell. Those prophecies were in the hands of the Jews, and translated into the Greek, generations before His birth, and were so well known that the Apostle Paul could say to king Agrippa that he taught 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 the dead” (Acts 26:22, 23). Thus did the fulfilment exactly correspond to the predictions made long before, for it pleased God to supply such an exact description of the Messiah that His identity should be indubitably established when He appeared among men: and thus the Jews were condemned by their Prophets for rejecting Him.

The supernatural character of our Lord’s humanity was declared when it was said that He should be the *woman’s* “Seed” (Gen. 3:15), unbegotten by a man: conceived and born of a “virgin” (Isa. 7:14). In Genesis 9:25-28, it was made known through which of the three sons of Noah the Messiah should issue, namely, Shem: for God would “dwell” in *his* “tents.” Later, it was revealed that Christ, according to the flesh, should be of the Abrahamic stock (Gen. 22:18, and compare with Matthew 1:1). Still further was the compass narrowed, for of the twelve sons of Abraham’s grandson, Judah was chosen (Gen. 49:10). Out of all the families of Judah, He would spring from the house of Jesse (Isa. 11:1). The place of



His birth was specified (Micah 5:2). The very time of His advent was mentioned (Dan. 9:24-26). So definite were the Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ that the hope of Israel became the Messianic hope: all their expectations centred in His appearing. It is therefore the more remarkable that their sacred Scriptures contained another set of prophecies, telling of His being despised by His own nation and put to a shameful death.

Though Christ would preach good tidings to the meek, bind up the brokenhearted, and proclaim liberty to the captives of sin and Satan (Isa. 61:1), and though He should open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, and make the lame leap as a hart (Isa. 35:5, 6), yet utterly incredible as it appeared, He would be “despised and rejected of men” (Isa. 53:3). His back would be smitten, the hair plucked out of His cheeks, and His face covered with the vile spittle of those who hated Him (Isa. 1:6). He would be sold for “thirty pieces of silver” (Zech. 11:13), brought as a lamb to the slaughter, taken from prison and judgment, “cut off out of the land of the living” (Isa. 53:8). His death by crucifixion was revealed a thousand years beforehand (Psa. 22:1). So, too, His being crucified with malefactors (Isa. 53:12), His being derided upon the Cross (Psa. 22:7, 8), His being offered vinegar to drink (Psa. 69:2 1), as well as the soldiers gambling for His garments (Psa. 22:1 8)—were all described. It was also foretold that He should rise from the dead (Psa. 16:1, 2), and ascend into Heaven (Psa. 68:18).

But perhaps the most remarkable feature about the prophecies concerning Christ is their paradoxical character. He was to be the seed of David, which should proceed out of his bowels (2 Sam. 7:12), and at the same time be David’s “Lord” (Psa. 110:1). He was to be both “the Son of man” (Dan. 7:13) and “the mighty God” (Isa. 9:6); “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3), yet “anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows” (Psa. 45:7). He was to be One in whom Jehovah’s “soul delighted” (Isa. 42:), yet “smitten of God and afflicted” (Isa. 53:4). In one passage it was fore-announced, “Thou art fairer than the children of men” (Psa. 45:2), in another, “His visage was so

marred more than any man” (Isa. 52:14). It was said that, “Messiah shall be cut off, and shall have nothing” (Dan. 9:26, margin), yet “of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end” (Isa. 9:7). He would “make His grave with the wicked” (Isa. 53:9), yet would be made “higher than the kings of the earth” (Psa. 89:27). The fulfilment in New Testament times of those apparently glaring contradictions evinced there was perfect harmony between them; yet is it not evident that such seeming inconsistencies as those had ever been inserted in an imposture!

Now we submit to the sceptical reader that the fulfilment of all those prophecies demonstrated the Divine origin of the Book which contains them. They were given not in the form of a vague generalization, but with a precision and minuteness which no human sagacity could possibly have supplied. Again and again have men attempted to foretell the future, but only to meet with failure; the anticipations of the most far-seeing are repeatedly mocked by the irony of events. Man stands before such an impenetrable veil that he knows not what a day may bring forth. How then shall we explain the hundreds of detailed prophecies recorded in the Scriptures which were fulfilled to the letter centuries after they were given? Only one explanation is rational, adequate, and satisfactory: they were revealed by God Himself. It is the prerogative of God alone to declare the end from the beginning, and the numerous, varied, and detailed predictions recorded in the Bible, demonstrate beyond a doubt that that Book is His own inspired and infallible Word. The prophecies of Scripture are supernatural: nothing in the remotest degree resembling or even aiming to do so, is to be found in any of the religions of the world. Prophecy is as truly the product of Omniscience as miracles are of Omnipotence.

## **8. The Holy Bible - More Unique Characteristics—1.**

1. *Its doctrine.* Probably that heading would be more intelligible unto most of our readers had we employed the plural number. As a matter of fact, it is at this very point that its uniqueness first appears. Error is diverse and multiform, but Truth is harmonious

and one. Scripture speaks of “the doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1) and “the doctrines of men” (Col. 2:22), which are “divers and strange doctrines” (Heb. 13:9), but whenever it refers to that which is Divine, the *singular* number is always used. Thus “the doctrine” (John 7:17; 1 Tim. 4:16), “the Apostles’ doctrine” (Acts 2:42), “sound doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:1), “good doctrine” (1 Tim. 4:6), “the name of God and His doctrine” (1 Tim. 6:3). Yet, like a single diamond with its many facets or the rainbow combining all the colours, the doctrine of God has numerous and distinct aspects, which to our finite minds are best apprehended singly. Nevertheless, they are not like so many separate pearls on a string, but rather resemble branches growing out of a single tree. What we term “the doctrines of grace” are only so many parts or phases of the revealed favour of God unto His people.

The more time one devotes to a prayerful and diligent perusal of “the doctrine of Christ” (2 John 9), the more will he perceive not only the spiritual excellence of each of its parts, but also their perfect harmony, their intimate relation to one another, and the mutual furtherance of all unto the same end. It is ignorance of the whole which lies behind the supposition that any one part conflicts with another. It is designated “the doctrine which is according to godliness” (1 Tim. 6:3), for when truly believed it produces and promotes piety. It is a mould into which the mind is cast and from which it receives its impress (Rom. 6:17, margin). An observing eye will easily perceive that a distinct spirit attends different religions and different systems of the same religion which, over and above natural temperament, stamps their respective adherents. Thus it was at the beginning: those who received “another Gospel” received with it “another spirit” (2 Cor. 11:4), and hence we read of “the spirit of truth and the spirit of error” (1 John 4:6). Scripture doctrine produces holiness of character and conduct because it proceeds from the Holy One.

It would require a whole volume to do justice to this argument and illustrate it at length. The doctrine of *the Godhead is* unique. That God must be one is an axiom of sound reason, for there could not be a plurality of supreme beings. But that God should be one

in His essence or nature, yet three in His Persons, is something which mere reason could never have discovered. That God is Triune, a trinity in unity, transcends infinite intelligence, and therefore never originated therefrom. That it is clearly set forth in the Bible evinces its verity. The doctrine of *federal headship* is peculiar to Divine revelation. That one should legally represent the many, that the many should be dealt with judicially according to the conduct of the one, is a truth which has no place at all in any human religion. Yet the Bible teaches explicitly that the guilt of Adam's transgression is reckoned to the account of all his natural descendants, so that because of it they stand condemned before God—a thing far too unpalatable for human invention. The merits of the obedience of the last Adam is reckoned to the account of all His spiritual seed, so that they are all accounted righteous before God—something far too wonderful to be of human contrivance.

The doctrine of Divine *grace* is equally unique. It is a truth peculiar to Divine revelation, a concept to which the unaided powers of man's mind could never have risen. Proof of this is seen in the fact that where the Bible has not gone, grace is quite unknown. Not the slightest trace of it is to be found in any of the religions of heathendom, and when missionaries undertake to translate the Scriptures into the natives' tongues, they can find no word which in any wise corresponds to the Bible word "grace." Grace is something to which none has any rightful claim, something which is due unto none; being mere charity, a sovereign favour, a free gift. Divine grace is the favour of God bestowing inconceivable blessings upon those who have no merits and from whom no compensation is demanded. Nay, more—grace is exercised unto those who are full of positive demerits. How completely grace sets aside all thought of worth in its subject appears from that declaration, "being, justified freely by His grace" (Rom. 3:24); that word, "freely," signifies "without a cause," and is so rendered in John 15:25—justified gratuitously, for nothing!

Grace is a Divine provision for those who are so corrupt that they cannot better their evil natures; so averse to God they will not

turn unto Him; so blind they perceive not His excellence; so deaf they hear Him not speaking unto them; so dead spiritually that He must open their graves and bring them forth on to resurrection ground if ever they are to be saved. Grace implies that its object's condition is desperate to the last degree: that God might justly leave him to perish—yea, that it is a wonder of wonders He has not already cast him into Hell. That grace is told out in the Gospel, which is not a message of good *advice*, but of *good news*. It is a proclamation of mercy, sent not to the good, but to the bad. It offers a free, perfect, and everlasting salvation “without money and without price,” and that to the chief of sinners. To the convicted conscience, salvation by grace alone seems too good to be true. Grace is God acting irrespective of the sinner's character, not as a Demander but as a Giver—to the ill-deserving and Hell-deserving—who have done *nothing* to procure His favour, but *everything* to provoke His wrath.

There are other portions of doctrine taught in the Scriptures which by virtue of their very transcendency indicate their Divine source, as, for example, that of the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man. It is a dictate of sound reason that if God be God—God in fact as well as in name—then He must have full control of all His creatures and regulate their every action in subservience to His own glory. It is equally self-evident that if man be created a moral agent, he must be endowed with the power of choice, and as such, be answerable unto God for all his volitions. So teaches the Bible: on the one hand that God is working all things after the counsel of His own will, not only in Heaven but also “among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand” (Dan. 4:35); and on the other that “every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12). Yet no human intellect is able to explain how that responsibility of man consists with the fact that God has eternally predestinated his every action and infallibly directs the same without the least violence to his will.

The same seeming paradox appears in the doctrine of man's spiritual impotence and accountability: that the fallen creature is in

such complete bondage to sin that he is incapable of performing a spiritual act, yea, of originating a spiritual desire or *thought*, and yet is justly held blameworthy for all his moral perversity and impiety—that none can come to Christ except they be drawn (John 6:44), yet are condemned for not coming to Him (John 3:18). So, too, the doctrine of particular redemption: that Christ acted as the Surety of and made atonement for the sins of God's *elect only*; yet that the Gospel makes a free and bona fide offer of salvation unto all who hear it. In like manner, the complementary doctrines of the saints' preservation by God and the imperative necessity of their own perseverance in faith and holiness—that no child of God can perish eternally, yet that he is in real danger of so doing as long as he is left in this world. Such things appear to be utterly inconsistent to human reason, which is sure evidence that no impostors, would have placed so much in the Bible as is foolishness to the natural man.

Another unmistakable hallmark of the genuineness of the several branches of the doctrine of Holy Writ is the manner in which they are set forth therein. They are not presented as so many expressly defined articles of faith or items of a creed. There is no formal statement of the doctrine of regeneration or of sanctification: rather are there many brief references to each scattered throughout the whole of the sacred writings. They are introduced more incidentally than systematically. Instead of being drawn up as so many propositions, they are illustrated and exemplified in the practical history of individuals. So different from man's method, yet characteristic of the ways of God! Man reduces botany to a system, but the Creator has not set out the flowers and trees in separate beds and fields according to their species, but has distributed them over the earth in beautiful variety. In like manner, He has not gathered into one chapter the whole of any one truth, but requires us to search and collate the numerous references to it, which are mingled with exhortations, warnings and promises. God's Word is addressed not only to our understanding but to our conscience, and no doctrinal statement is made without some practical end being answered.

Another striking feature of Biblical doctrine is its orderly presentation. As in the processes of nature, so there is a gradual unfolding of each particular doctrine. The diligent student will find that every vital truth made known in Scripture is seen first in the blade, then in the ear, and then in the full com in the ear. Thus, for example, with the Messianic prophecies: the germinal announcement in Genesis 3:15, the fuller revelation in Isaiah 53, the complete fulfilment in the New Testament. So with God's justifying of a sinner: briefly hinted at in Genesis 15:6, more plainly disclosed in Psalm 32:1, 2, fully expounded in Romans 4. The Bible is more than a book: it is a living organism, growth marking all its parts.

All through Scripture there is seen a systematic advance in the communication of Truth. In Genesis, the basic doctrine repeatedly exemplified is that of election; in Exodus, redemption by blood and power; in Leviticus, the chosen and redeemed are brought nigh to God as worshippers. Then the complementary side of things is set before us: in Numbers, our passage through this wilderness-world; in Deuteronomy, the enforcing of responsibility. While in Joshua we behold the people of God entering into and enjoying their heritage. What unmistakable progress is there! The same feature marks the New Testament. In the Gospels, Christ accomplishing the work of salvation; in Acts, the proclamation thereof; in the Epistles, salvation experienced by the members of His mystical Body; in Revelation, the saved in Glory around the Lamb. Such progress demonstrates both the unity of Scripture and continuity of its inspiration. Behind all the varied penmen is one Author working according to a definite plan.

2. *Its precepts.* This is another aspect of our many-sided subject which deserves as many separate chapters as space requires us to condense into paragraphs. At no other point does the heavenly origin of the Bible appear more plainly than the exalted standard it sets forth and the conduct it requires from us. Therein it is in marked contrast with the writings of all who oppose the Bible. Infidels and atheists have no ethical standard, yea, their code is utterly subversive of all morality. So too it differs radically from

the teaching of the best of the ancient moralists and philosophers. They far surpass the most celebrated maxims of the sages and religionists, and immeasurably transcend the best statutes of all human legislation. The Divine precepts embrace every relation and duty, and not only prohibit all evil but promote all virtue. They reprehend practices which all other systems approve or tolerate, and inculcate duties they omit. The laws of man reach no farther than human action, but those of God the fountain from which all actions proceed. If the laws of God were universally obeyed this earth would be a scene of universal peace and good will.

The world approves of ambition, the eager pursuit of wealth, fondness of pleasure, and in many instances applauds pride, ostentation, contempt of others, and even the spirit of revenge—whereas the precepts of Scripture condemn all of those in every form and degree. They require us to renounce the world as a source of happiness and to set our affection upon things above (Col. 3:2). They repress the spirit of greed: “having food and raiment, let us be therewith content” (1 Tim. 6:8). “Labour not to be rich” (Prov. 23:4); “lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth” (Matt. 6:19); and warn that “the love of money is the root of all evil.” They bid us “lean not unto thine own understanding. . . be not wise in thine own eyes” (Prov. 3:5, 7), and prohibit all self-confidence: “he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool” (Prov. 28:26). Not only do they reprehend the spirit of revenge (Rom. 12:19; 1 Pet. 3:9), but they enjoin upon us, “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). Such precepts as those never originated in any human mind, my reader.

In these precepts morality and duty are advanced to their highest pitch. “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them” (Matthew 7:12). Many of them are entirely against the bent of nature: as “rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth” (Prov. 24:17); “If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat” (Prov.



25:21); “In honour preferring one another” (Rom. 12:10); “let each esteem each other better than themselves” (Phil. 2:3). None others so “holy, just and good” (Rom. 7:12). Such statements as the following were never devised by man: “When thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret” (Matthew 6:3, 4). “Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31); “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another” (Eph. 4:31, 32). “Giving thanks always for all things unto God” (Eph. 5:20); “Rejoice evermore” (1 Thess. 5:16).

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). The only objection which an Infidel could bring against the precepts of Scripture is that such an exalted standard of conduct as they inculcate is manifestly unattainable by imperfect creatures. That is readily admitted, yet so far from making against them, it only serves to exhibit the more clearly the design and wisdom of their Divine Author. In requiring from fallen creatures that which they cannot perform in their own strength, God does but maintain His own rights, for our having lost our original power does not release us from rendering to God that fealty and honour which is His due. Moreover, they are admirably designed to humble us, for our unsuccessful attempts to meet their demands make us the more conscious of our infirmities, and thereby pride is abased. They are intended to awaken within us a personal sense of dependence upon Divine aid. Where there is a genuine desire and endeavour to obey those statutes, they will be turned into earnest prayer for help—nor *will assistance be denied the seeking soul*. Thus, the seeming foolishness of God is seen to surpass the feigned wisdom of man.

One other remarkable feature about the precepts of the Bible calls for a brief notice, namely, *the motives* by which they are enforced. No appeal is made to vanity, selfishness, or any of the corrupt propensities of our nature. Obedience to them is urged by no consideration of what our fellows will think or say of us, nor

how we shalt further our own temporal interests. Rather are the animating motives drawn from respect to God's will, hope of His approbation, concern for His glory, gratitude for His mercies, the example that Christ has left us, and the claims which His sacrifice has upon us. Christians are bidden to forgive one another because God has for Christ's sake forgiven them (Eph. 4:32). Wives are called on to submit themselves unto their own husbands as the Church is subject unto Christ, and husbands to love their wives "even as Christ also loved the church" (Eph. 5). Servants are required to be obedient unto their masters in singleness of heart "as unto Christ" (Eph. 6:5), while their employers are to act toward their servants in the knowledge, that they also "have a Master in Heaven" (Col. 4:1). Christ's commandments are to be kept out of love to Him (John 14:15). How radically different are such inducements as those from urging that which will win the esteem of our fellows! Not that which will promote our own temporal interests, but what "is right" (Eph. 6:1) is that which the Holy Spirit presses upon us.

A final word to the preacher: The solemn fact is that every unsaved hearer is "*dead* in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1), devoid of any spiritual perception or sensibility, incapable of any spiritual action—such as evangelical repentance and saving belief of the Gospel. Nothing short of a miracle of grace can bring a lost soul from death unto life, and nothing but the almighty and invincible power of God can accomplish the same (Eph. 1:19). It therefore follows that neither your faithfulness nor your earnestness can, of itself, save a single sinner: you will simply be "beating the air" unless the Holy Spirit is pleased to graciously accompany the Word with power and apply it to the heart of your hearer. None but the blessed Spirit can effectually convince of sin, and bring an unsaved person to realize his desperate condition and dire need. Even the Word itself only becomes "the Sword of the Spirit" as He wields it, and we cannot warrantably look unto Him to do so if we grieve Him by using fleshly means and worldly methods. It is unbelief in the imperative necessity of the Spirit's operations which has caused so many churches to descend to the level of the

circus, and evangelists to conduct themselves like showmen. Humbly seek His presence and blessing, and trustfully count upon the same.

3. *Its promises*, which hold out the highest felicity of which man is capable. There is a natural instinct in the human heart after happiness, yea, after eternal happiness; yet instead of looking unto God for the same, the unregenerate try to find it in the creature. They fondly imagine that satisfaction is to be obtained in things visible, that it is to be found through the medium of the senses. But in vain do they gratify their bodily lusts: material things cannot satisfy the longings of an immaterial spirit. The springs of the earth are unable to quench the thirst of the soul. Wealth does not, for the millionaire is still a stranger to contentment. The honours of the world are but empty baubles, as their securers quickly enough discover. The eager devotees of pleasure find there is no real happiness in any form of amusement. Serious souls are at a loss to know where to look for that which will reward their quest. “There are many that say, Who will show us any good?” (Psa. 4:6): they neither know what it consists of, nor where it is to be found.

Hence it is that the Lord says unto them, “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Harken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto Me: hear and your soul shall live” (Isa. 55:2, 3). God *has* “shown” what substantial and lasting “good” consists of, and where it is to be obtained. He has made known the same unto us in the wondrous and blessed *promises* of His Word: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit” (1 Cor. 2:9, 10). This is yet another of the many excellencies of the Bible: that its promises set forth the greatest happiness of which we are capable of enjoying. The One who gave us being is alone capable of putting real gladness into the human heart. That gladness comes to us not through the delights of sense, but

consists in communion with the One who is the sum of excellence.

The promises of Scripture are the assurances which God has given us that He will bestow the best of blessings, for this life and also for the life to come, on those who seek them in the right spirit and comply with their terms. From the many hundreds which are scattered throughout the Bible we can but single out a few specimens. The sum of them is that the soul of man shall delight itself in God Himself as its everlasting portion. But that is impossible until the guilty conscience has been pacified, and that can only be through the knowledge of His forgiveness of sin. Therefore we begin with the evangelical promises which are addressed unto sinners. “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon” (Isa. 55:7). “Come unto Me [Christ] all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28)—peace of conscience, rest of soul, joy of heart. What precious promises are those! They are the promises of Him that cannot lie.

God has solemnly pledged Himself to bestow a free, full and eternal salvation upon every penitent sinner who comes to Him as a beggar and relies upon His Word. Not only to blot out all his iniquities, but to clothe him with the robe of Christ’s righteousness, to receive him as a son, and to henceforth supply his every need. He has promised to be “a sun and shield” unto all such, to “give grace and glory,” and that “no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly” (Psa. 84:11). The promises of Satan are every one of them lies, those of man unreliable, but every one of God’s is infallibly *sure*. The writer can testify that after forty years of Christian experience, in his travels around this earth, he has never met with a single person who trusted God and found that His promises mocked him. At the close of his long life Joshua said unto Israel, “ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you: all are come to pass unto you” (23:14). So, too, acknowledged

Solomon: “Blessed be the Lord that hath given rest unto His people Israel according to all that He promised: there hath not failed one word” (1 Kings 8:56).

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee” (Psa. 50:15). That is a promise which every person may test for himself. We can personally bear emphatic witness that many times have we put that word to the proof and never found it wanting; and many, many others, too, can bear witness that the living God is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God. That is an argument—a well-attested one—which no Infidel can answer. There is no gainsaying the fact that thousands of men and women have called upon God in the day of their trouble and were miraculously and gloriously delivered by Him. What a monument to God’s faithfulness in honouring His promises was raised by George Muller of Bristol, whose 2,000 orphans were daily fed and clothed in answer to believing prayer! In like manner shall everyone who puts his trust in the Divine promises yet receive fulfilment of that most amazing word; “when He [Christ] shall appear, we shall be like Him” (1 John 3:2)—perfectly conformed to His holy image! The Divine promises unmistakably bespeak their Author to be none other than “the God of all grace” (1 Pet. 5:10).

4. *Its profundity.* There are books in the writer’s library which thirty years ago he read with no little pleasure and profit. Some of them he has recently re-read—with mingled disappointment and thankfulness. In the past they were helpful to him: but today they are too elementary to be of service to him. As he outgrew the clothes of childhood, so every minister of the Gospel who continues to pursue his studies assiduously will advance beyond the primers of his theological youth. Yet no matter how intensely nor for how many years he may study God’s Word, he will never advance beyond it, either spiritually or intellectually. What a laborious and thankless task would it be to read through the ablest human production twenty times! Yet many who have read through the Bible scores of times have testified that it was more attractive and edifying to them than ever. The deeper any regenerate soul digs into the wondrous contents of the Bible, the more will he

discover that it contains a boundless and fathomless ocean of Truth, and an inexhaustible mine of precious treasure.

The Bible treats of the most exalted subjects which can engage the mind of man. It rises above the merely human and temporal, and occupies its readers with God, the unseen world, eternity. Everything is shown to be related to Him whose throne is eternal in the heavens. Human conduct is viewed not so much as it appears unto their performers and fellows, but rather as it appears in the eyes of the Holy One and in the light of the final Day of reckoning. There are many things in Scripture which are above the capacity of man to have devised. Such as a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the Divine incarnation and virgin birth of Christ, the union of the human nature to a Divine Person, the manner in which the Holy Spirit operates upon souls. A delineation of fallen nature is given such as neither philosophy nor medical science could furnish; the secret workings of the heart are exposed in a manner in which no analysis of the self-styled “psychiatrists” could supply. Parts of human history are chronicled not for the purpose of magnifying man but to show how far the human race has departed from God, and what obstacles stand in the way of recovery to holiness and happiness. Heaven and the everlasting bliss of the redeemed are portrayed not in a manner to gratify curiosity, still less to appeal unto the corruptions of the natural man, but to that place into which nothing that defiles can enter.

The profundity of its teaching appears throughout the pages of the Sacred Volume. The origin of sin, the fall of man, the federal relation of Adam to his posterity, the transmission of his own nature to all his descendants, the consistency of man’s freedom with God’s sovereignty, his total depravity with his accountability, the justification of a believing sinner by the imputed righteousness of Christ, his union to Him as a member of His mystical body admit of no philosophical explanation. They defy intellectual dissection and cannot be mapped out so as to show their precise points of contact or mode of union with each other. They are not reducible to a system of “common sense,” but rather are presented as awful and insoluble mysteries. They possess depths which no

man can sound and heights which none can scale. Yet so far from stumbling the reverent student of the Bible, those very mysteries are just what he expects to find in a book written by the Most High. They are designed to humble the arrogance of man, by a demonstration of his intellectual limitations, and should cause him to exclaim, “O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!” (Rom. 11:33).

5. *Its simplicity.* Here is a remarkable phenomenon: that combined with real profundity there is the utmost simplicity. Here again we find the same thing characterizing the Word of God as appears in His works of creation: while there is much that is occult, yet there is much more that is plain and obvious. Though there be hidden prophecies and difficult doctrines, yet on all practical matters and points of duty the Scriptures are so clear that they may be understood by the dumbest minds. What is more explicit than the precepts? “The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple” (Psa. 19:7). Though there be things in the Bible which are sufficient to confound the proudest efforts of human reason, yet it does not, as to its general tenor, require either genius or erudition to grasp its terms, but is adapted to the level of the unsophisticated. Since its contents are of universal concern, they are presented in language suited to the capacity of all. That which concerns man’s temporal well-being and everlasting felicity is written so distinctly that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. Though there be depths which no leviathan can swim, yet the babe in Christ may safely wade in its refreshing streams.

Though the Bible is full of majesty, yet the naked Truth itself is presented in a manner suited to the meanest capacity. God graciously accommodates Himself to our limitations, setting forth His mighty power under such a figure as the baring of His arm, and represents Heaven unto His people as “the Father’s house” in which are many mansions. Its very unaffectedness is perfectly suited to the gravity of its Author. Its penmen employed not the “enticing words of man’s wisdom,” but wrote “in demonstration

of the Spirit and of power.” The Bible is not written in the style of the “classics:” there is an entire absence of any appearance of art. Take the four Gospels. Their obvious design is to magnify the Redeemer, yet they never resort to the usual method of elaborate praise. There is a plain statement of His virtuous life, yet no eulogizing of His perfections. His most gracious works are plainly recorded, and no attempt is made to heighten their effect. His wondrous miracles are chronicled as matters of fact, to speak for themselves, no comment being passed upon them, no note of admiration affixed to them. They are sufficient to suitably impress our minds, without any remarks from the narrators. In all of this the candid mind will perceive the signature of Truth, an unadorned account of events which actually took place.

6. *Its impartiality.* To fully appreciate this striking feature of the Bible, the reader needs to cast his mind back to the conditions prevailing in society during the centuries when it was written. Women were then the mere chattel of men, slavery was extensively practiced, and with the utmost rigor, while kings reigned with the most despotic sway. Yet the teachings of Holy Writ are without the least bias, requiring obedience to their imperial edicts from all classes alike. So far from being written to keep the oppressed in awe and subjection, rulers and ruled are the subjects of its authoritative commands. Kings and subjects are bound by the same laws, liable to the same punishments, encouraged by the same promises. God’s Word declares, “there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:22, 23); while it also announces, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:13). Such declarations as those were entirely foreign to the spirit and sentiments which universally prevailed in the day of God’s Prophets and Apostles.

The Gospel of Christ is designed for no privileged class, but is to be preached to “every creature” (Mark 16:15). It does not prescribe one way of salvation for the rich and another for the poor: rather does it affirm on the one hand, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:23),



and on the other, “God hath chosen the poor of the world” (James 2:5). There is no toadying to the scholar or sage: “Thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes” (Matthew 11:25). Husbands are bidden to “love their wives as their own bodies” (Eph. 5:28), and masters are enjoined to treat their servants in manner which comports with the fact that they, too, have a Master in Heaven with whom “there is no respect of persons” (Eph. 6:9). No such declaration as the following was ever coined by an impostor: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are *all one* in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28).

7. *Its comprehensiveness.* God’s Word is a compendious and complete Rule of Life, so that we may be “thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:17). Every truth in it is designed to influence our character and conduct. It contains full and explicit instructions for all our relative duties. No case has ever occurred, or ever will, for which adequate provision has not been made in its invaluable treasury. Here are directions suited to any situation in which we may find ourselves. Whether its reader be young or old, male or female, rich or poor, illiterate or learned, he may find that which will supply all his need. That any should read it without receiving any benefit therefrom is due alone to his own vanity or perversity. His duty and his danger are plainly marked out as though it had been written for him alone! Its very fullness proclaims its Author: it is a revelation and communication from the Infinite One. Its contents have supplied material for thousands of books and matter for millions of sermons.

The Bible is more than a book: it is a library. Its history covers a period of 4,000 years. Its prophecies extend to literally dozens of nations. Its teachings respect good and evil, God and man, time and eternity. It makes known how He is to be worshipped acceptably. It informs us how His blessing may be secured upon the home. It reveals its secrets of health and longevity. Here is milk for babes, meat for the strong, medicine for the sick, relief for the weary, consolation for the dying. The particular experience of every believer is so vividly delineated therein that whoever

reads it aright may discover, by His grace, his precise state and degree of progress. In the Bible is stored up more true wisdom, which has endured the trials of the centuries, than the sum total of thinking done by men since the day of human history down to the present hour. Of all the books in the world the Bible alone can rightly be said to be comprehensive and complete. It needs no addendum. It has been truly affirmed, “If every book but the Bible were destroyed, not a single spiritual truth would be lost” (Torrey). The comprehensiveness and fullness of the Scriptures is yet another of their innumerable evidences which demonstrate their Divine inspiration.

## **9. The Holy Bible - More Unique Characteristics—2.**

8. *Its conciseness.* Here is yet another remarkable feature which distinguishes the Bible from other books: though it be the most comprehensive of all, yet the most compact. Though it contains a complete library, having no less than sixty-six books within its covers, yet a small-print copy may be carried in one’s pocket. Though there is here an amazing fullness, yet no excessive length. There is an abundance of matter wrapped up in a few words. An epitome of the heavens and earth, an account of the forming of this world into an habitable globe, the creation of its denizens, the making of man, the formation of woman, their state in Paradise, a description of the garden of Eden—are all condensed into two chapters which require but two pages! If “brevity” be “the soul of wit,” then here is the quintessence of wisdom. A vivid description of the fall of our first parents, how it was brought about, with the effects thereof; to which is subjoined the appearing of the Lord, their arraignment by Him, with their trial, sentence, and expulsion from the garden, are all given within the space of only twenty-four verses! So briefly narrated, yet all-sufficient to answer every purpose for which the revelation of the same is made to us.

Within the space of seven chapters we have the creation and furnishing of the world, the apostasy of our first parents, the birth of Abel and Cain, an account of their worship of God, the murder of the former, and an enumeration of seven generations of the

latter—with a description of 10 of the progenitors of Christ. In addition, we find in them an account of the wickedness of men, the announcement of God that He purposed to destroy the earth and the human race; His detailed instructions to Noah for the building of an ark, in which were to be preserved himself, his family, and representatives of all living creatures. Then we have described the coming of the flood, the destruction of the old world, and the salvation of all within the ark! All the wisdom of men could not have expressed and compressed subjects of such vast importance and interests within so brief a compass. Moses himself could not, unless he had been inspired by the Holy Spirit. No book besides the Bible contains so much in so short a space. The brevity of Scripture is beyond imitation. The wisdom of God is most gloriously displayed in revealing so much in language so simple and so succinct. There is nothing within the wide range of human literature which in the least resembles this striking yet little noticed feature.

The unique brevity of Holy Writ only becomes really apparent when we compare the biographies which men have written and the systems of religion which they have drawn up. The Jews have joined to the Scriptures their Talmud, to which they affix equal authority—the one followed by most of their rabbis consists of 12 folio volumes; while the Romanists receive with the same veneration the writings of “the fathers,” the decisions of the “councils,” the vast accumulations of synod edicts and papal decrees and bulls, and a mass of “traditions” respecting both faith and morals. Who among uninspired historians and narrators would or could have recorded the birth, life, ministry, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ in less than 1,200 lines? Who among them could have related the history of Christianity during the first thirty of its most memorable years within the space of thirty pages? For fullness and brevity, dramatic description yet terseness of language, for outlines of sermons, details of miraculous conversions, intervention of angels, all pictured with a few brief touches, there is nothing comparable to the Acts of the Apostles. What but the Divine Mind could have

comprehended in so small a book as the Bible such an immense store of information and instruction?

9. *Its Numerics.* As the Creator has been pleased to provide an endless variety in Nature, which appeals to widely different tastes and temperaments both as it respects objects for the eye, sounds for the ear, scents for the nose and flavours for the palate, so He has deigned to supply many different kinds of evidence for the inspiration of His Word, which are suited to all kinds of minds. As one man prefers this dish or flower to that, so one investigator will be more impressed and convinced by a particular line of demonstration than another. It is with that fact in mind we have prepared this material and multiplied their divisions. All of them will not appeal with equal potency and pertinence to the same reader: what strikes one most forcibly may seem not at all interesting to another, while what one finds unimpressive may settle the matter for another. Thus with the argument we are about to expound. Some may deem it fanciful and unsatisfactory, while others will not only find it interesting and instructive, but weighty and conclusive.

Our present argument may be briefly stated thus: as there are innumerable evidences of mathematical design in God's works of creation, we should naturally look for the same in His Word. If the One who "telleteth the number of the stars" (Psa. 147:4), who "bringeth out their host *by number*" (Isa 40:26), who "weigheth the waters *by measure*" (Job 28:25), should vouchsafe to grant the sons of men a written revelation, it is to be expected that it will bear similar evidences of numerical significance and exactitude. If the heavenly bodies move with such unfailing regularity that an eclipse can be calculated centuries in advance of its occurrence, and if all of our chronometers are set by the motion of the sun, which never varies a fraction of a second, then it is to be anticipated that similar phenomena will appear in the Holy Scriptures. Nor is such an expectation disappointed: rather does it receive abundant confirmation and illustration. Everywhere in the Bible there are to be found the same evidences of a supreme Mathematical Mind as appear to the careful observer in the

material realm.

Those marks of mathematical design are seen both in the general and in the particular. For example, 12 is the number of *rule* or government. Thus, the only theocracy or nation immediately governed by God, and in whose midst He set up His throne, comprised 12 tribes; and when Christ established His spiritual kingdom upon earth, He ordained 12 Apostles to be His ambassadors. Now both Scripture and common observation tell us that God has set in the heavens, “two great lights: the greater light to *rule* the day and the lesser light to rule the night” (Gen. 1:16). In perfect accord with that fact, day and night alike have 12 hours, each hour consisting of 60 minutes ( $12 \times 5$ ), with 12 months for the year. From the remotest ages of antiquity astronomers have divided the stellar heavens into the “12 signs of the Zodiac;” so, too, the vast circle of the heavens has been divided into 360 degrees or  $12 \times 30$ . But why should 12 thus pervade the heavens? Why not 10 or fourteen? Man can give no reason. But Scripture supplies the explanation: “the heavens do *rule*” (Dan. 4:26), and 12 is the number which stands for that!

The very *structure* of the Bible evinces numerical design and arrangement. First we have the five books of the Pentateuch, like basal blocks. They are surmounted by the 12 historical books—Joshua to Esther. Next follow the five “poetical”—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon. Then come the five major Prophets, succeeded by the 12 minor ones. Above these are the five historical books of the New Testament, then the 21 Epistles (by *five* writers!), and over all, like a crowning dome, the Apocalypse. It will be seen that *five* is the number which occurs most frequently, appearing conspicuously at four points: at the beginning of the Old Testament and at the beginning of the New Testament; the other two in the centre of the Bible! Nor will the student of Scripture be surprised at this when he discovers that the numerical significance of that number is Divine *grace*. Hence five is the dominant number in the Tabernacle; and hence too, the five great offerings of Leviticus 1-6. “This mathematical law, pervading the Book, is at least a hint of the mathematical mind of

the Author, who reveals the same regard to the symmetry of number and form in the material universe (*"The Bible and Spiritual Life,"* A. T. Pierson).

Before passing from the more general to the particular, let us point out that Bible numerics assure us of the integrity of the Canon of Scripture. How so? The very number of its books intimates the Canon is complete. The Old Testament has in it 39, or  $3 \times 13$ , and three is the number of manifestation and 13 of apostasy: its dominant theme being the apostasy of man and of Israel. The New Testament has just 27 books, or the cube of three:  $3 \times 3 \times 3$ , and three is the number of God and of manifestation—God fully and finally manifested in the incarnate and risen Christ. Now take out a single book, or add one (like "Asher"), and that significance will disappear! But as it is in Nature, so with the Bible: its wonders and perfections, especially in minutiae, are only perceptible to the studious investigator. When examined under the microscope the flakes of snow and even the scales of the herring (as the writer recently saw for himself) are formed and arranged after perfect geometrical patterns. In like manner, the number of times a word or an object is found in the Bible is always in strict harmony with the meaning possessed by that numeral.

As others before us have pointed out, *four* is the number of the world or earth. The fourth day of Genesis 1 saw the material creation completed—the fifth and sixth being devoted to furnishing and peopling the earth. It is divided into four quarters: north, east, south, west. It has four seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. The fourth clause in the Family Prayer is, "Thy will be done on earth." Four Gospels present our Lord's earthly ministry. *Five*, which is  $4 + 1$  (God coming to the aid of the creature), is the number of *grace*. The fifth day's work in Genesis 1 illustrates: "life" and "God blessed them" occurring, for the first time. When Joseph signified his peculiar favour unto the beloved Benjamin, "his mess was five times so much" as that of any of his brethren (Gen. 43:34), and while he provided change of raiment for them, he gave "five changes of raiment to Benjamin" (Gen. 45:22). The fifth clause in the Family Prayer is

“Give us this day,” etc. The 50th year was that of “jubilee.” Six is the number of man, for he was made on the sixth day, and see Revelation 13:18. There were six cities of refuge for the manslayer (Num. 35:13). In the Bible there are six words for “man”—four in the Old Testament and two in the New. Our Lord was crucified by men and for men at “the sixth hour!”

Seven, as is well known, is the number of perfection: how exceedingly striking, then, that in Matthew 1:17, the Holy Spirit informs us there were “14 generations” from Abraham to David, 14 from David to the Babylonian captivity, and 14 from the captivity till Christ: or 42 in all. And 42 is  $7 \times 6$ : the 42nd generation from Abraham being the perfect Man! Stand in holy awe, my reader, before such Divine handiwork: Eight signifies a new beginning. It was Noah, “the eighth person” (2 Pet. 2:5), who stepped out of the ark onto the earth to begin a new order of things. Circumcision was to be administered on the eighth day (Gen. 17:12). On the eighth day Israel’s priests entered upon their service (Lev. 8:33, and 9:1). On that day the leper was cleansed (Lev. 14:10, 11), and the Nazarite was restored (Num. 6:10). Just eight penmen were employed by God on the New Testament. Thirteen is the number of revolt or apostasy: “Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the 13th year they *rebelled*” (Gen. 14:4). Note Esther 3:13! In Mark 7:21, 22, our Lord enumerated 13 features of man’s apostate heart. The “dragon,” the arch-apostate, is mentioned just 13 times in the New Testament. Much of the above has been culled from *Numbers in Scripture*, by E. W. Bullinger—unobtainable.

The same meaning appears in their multiples. Thus, one of the significations of two is that of witness (John 8:17; Rev. 11:3), and 14 speaks of perfect or complete witness, as in Nehemiah 8:4, the 14 Epistles of Paul. Fifteen ( $5 \times 3$ ) is a manifestation of grace: 2 Kings 20:6; Leviticus 23:6, 34, 39. Ten is the number of responsibility (Gen. 18:22; 24:55; Ex. 34:28), and therefore when Christ graciously fed the multitude and they were required to partake in an orderly manner—“make them sit down by fifties [ $5 \times 10$ ] in a company” (Luke 9:14). Jude is the 26th book ( $13 \times 2$ ) in

the New Testament and its obvious theme is *apostasy*, witnessing unto and against it: verses 4-8, 11-13, 24—a fitting prelude to the Revelation. When the Jews treated Paul as an apostate, they laid upon him “forty stripes *save one*”—39 or  $13 \times 3$  (2 Cor. 11:24)! Thus, all through the Scripture numbers are not used haphazardly but with design. Not only so, but though they are employed by no less than 40 penmen, yet always with *uniform precision*; which can only be accounted for on the ground that all were inspired by one and the same Spirit.

10. *Its reserve.* Had the Bible been of human origin—a fraud passed on upon the world—exactly the opposite had been the case. When human writers take up matters of extraordinary interest they deal with them dramatically rather than prosaically, and in a manner which will appeal to lovers of the sensational. But there is nothing like that in the Scriptures: instead, a holy constraint rests upon its scribes. When secular writers arouse curiosity they endeavour to satisfy it, whereas the sacred penmen lift not a finger to remove the veil from off the mysteries of which they treat. They never draw upon the imagination, nor indulge in that speculation which is so prominent in the authors and disciples of all heathen religions. That can only be accounted for on the ground that the Holy Spirit suppressed their natural proclivities. The Divine inspiration of the Bible appears not only in what is said, but equally in what is not said. Its silences are as eloquent as its speech. No explanation is given of the modus of the three Persons in the Godhead—in marked contrast to the presumptuous reasonings of not a few theologians, who sought to be wise above what is written.

How scanty the information furnished on many things upon which the human heart craves light! In the historical portions men and nations appear abruptly, raising the curtain of oblivion, stepping to the front of the stage for a brief moment, and then disappearing into the unknown. It is full of gaps which human authors would have filled in. How often we wish the Evangelists had been more communicative. Had they been left to their own wisdom, the Gospels had been much fuller and lengthier! No



description is given of the bodily appearance of Christ: they say not a word about His stature, complexion, or features. What is yet more remarkable, except for one brief statement concerning Him as a boy of twelve, the first 30 years of our Lord's life are passed over in complete silence, which is very different from the fabled accounts of the Apocryphal writers! There is not the least gratifying of idle curiosity in the Bible, but a noticeable repressing of the same. Nothing is told us of the experiences of the soul—either redeemed or reprobate—immediately after death, and little about the Eternal State. The Scriptures are not for entertainment, but are given for practical and spiritual ends.

While Holy Writ makes known many facts unto us, it does so no further than they contribute to the design of the Holy Spirit and are for our moral instruction. Very little information is furnished, and sometimes none at all, concerning the amanuenses of God—we do not even know who wrote the books of Ruth and Esther. No account is given of the closing hours of Peter, Paul and John. It is not thus with uninspired historians and biographers! How natural for the Apostle John to have spoken of our Lord's mother in terms of adulation, yet not a word does he utter which affords the least support to the sickly sentimentality and blasphemous idolatry of the Popish Mariolatry. Only once is she mentioned after Christ's ascension, and then at a prayer meeting: not as the object of supplication, but taking her place among brethren and sisters as a supplicant (Acts 1:14)! Frequent mention is made in the Gospels of "the devils" or "demons," yet nowhere are we told anything about who or what they are. There are many matters of which we should welcome information, but the Bible is silent thereon, because such knowledge respected not our duty nor would it have promoted personal piety. But nothing concerning our well-being is omitted. An account is given of how the human race became infected with the virus of sin, but not a word on the origin of evil.

11. *Its ingenuousness.* Had the historical portions of the Old Testament been a spurious production, how vastly different had been their contents! Each of the books was written by a son of Abraham, yet nowhere do we find his posterity flattered. So far

from extolling the virtues of the Jewish nation, it is uniformly portrayed as an ungrateful, rebellious, and sinful people. There is scarcely a book in the Old Testament which does not relate that which is most unfavourable and highly disgraceful to them. Nowhere do we find their bravery eulogized, and never are their victories ascribed either to their valour or military genius. Success is always attributed unto Jehovah, their God. In like manner, their defeats are referred unto Him, as withholding His power because their evil conduct had justly displeased Him. Their defeats are accounted for neither by misfortune nor bad generalship, but to their own wickedness restraining a holy God from showing Himself strong in their behalf. Now such a God is not the creation of the human mind, nor are such historians actuated by the common principles of human nature. Time after time Israel's subjugation by heathen nations is faithfully chronicled.

The Jewish historians have also impartially recorded the numerous backslidings and spiritual declensions of their own people. One of the outstanding truths of the Old Testament is the unity of God, that beside Him there is none else, that all others are false gods, and that the paying of any homage to them is the sin of all sins. Yet the idolatry of Israel is frankly and repeatedly recorded. The guilt of some of their leading men is mentioned, as that of Aaron and Solomon. Nor is there the slightest attempt made to excuse such appalling wickedness: instead, it is openly censured and roundly condemned. Nor do the writers spare *themselves* or omit that which is to their discredit. Moses concealed not the reflection cast upon his own tribe (Gen. 34:30; 49:5), nor the incest of his parents (Exod. 6:20), or the rebellion of his sister (Num. 12:1). He failed not to set down his own faults and failings, but frankly tells us of his disinclination to respond to Jehovah's call (Exod. 4:10-14), his murmuring against God (Num. 11:11-14), his lack of faith after so many Divine interpositions on his behalf (Num. 10:12), and the Lord's displeasure against him because of his disobedience (Num. 27:12-14). Such unsparing fidelity is found not in those who are left free to follow the bent of their own hearts.

The same unusual feature is found in the New Testament. John the Baptist is presented as a most eminent personage: miraculously born, the Lord's forerunner, accorded the high honour of baptizing Him. Where had human wisdom and sentiment placed him among the Saviour's followers? Surely, as the most distinguished and favoured of His attendants, set at His right hand. Whereas he was granted no familiar discourse with Him, but was treated with apparent neglect, suffered to be cast into prison through no fault of his own, left there unvisited. See him harassed with unbelief, doubting whether or not He was the true Messiah. Had his character been the invention of fraud, nothing had been said of his lapse of faith. The same shocking unbelief is recorded of the Apostles, who not only basely deserted Christ in the hour of His crisis, but had no expectation of His rising from the dead—nay, when informed that He had done so, were full of scepticism. A spurious history had omitted such glaring blemishes. But the Bible characters are painted in the colours of truth and nature, and in the unrivalled honesty of its penmen we have yet another evidence that they wrote by Divine inspiration and not by natural impulse.

12. *Its majestic tone.* If God is the Author of the Bible we should naturally expect to find in it a loftiness of tone and majesty of diction which surpasses all human productions. And such is indeed the case, especially in those portions of it which more especially treat of the Divine perfections. Amidst great plainness of speech and homeliness of expression, adapted to that meanest capacity, there is often an elevation of spirit and grandeur of language which not only command attention but fill with reverent awe. Thus, "Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth, for the LORD hath spoken" (Isa. 1:2). "The LORD reigneth, let the people tremble" (Psa. 99:1). It would be the height of presumption for any creature to speak thus, yet perfectly fitting for the Almighty to do so. When the Son of God became incarnate, the people who heard Him declared that, "He taught with authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:29), and the very officers sent to arrest Him testified, "never man spake like this Man" (John 7:46). The same

qualities mark God's written Word. It possesses a sovereign majesty which is unrivalled and inimitable.

Though the contents of the Bible are not presented pompously or bombastically, but calmly and with becoming dignity, there is yet an unmistakable elevation of style and an august solemnity of diction which is without parallel. God speaks therein and reveals the glory of His excellence. His supremacy, His omniscience, His holiness, His immutability, His faithfulness, His goodness and grace, are set forth in a manner worthy of Himself, yet at the same time admirably suited to our weakness. The most laborious efforts of scholars and rhetoricians are insipid in comparison with those passages which are particularly designed to convey to us due apprehensions of the One with whom we have to do. "He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in" (Isa. 40:22). Yet, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Isa. 40:11).

We adduce but one other specimen. "O LORD my God, Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds His chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: Who maketh His angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire: Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever. Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains. At Thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away" (Psa. 104:1-7). Where shall we find in human compositions anything as chaste, so elevated, so sublime!

13. *Its undesigned coincidences.* Infidel challengers of the Scriptures and deniers of their Divine inspiration have shown some industry and ingenuity in gathering together apparent contradictions between different statements in the Bible. But such alleged contradictions are only apparent, and betray the ignorance

and misapprehension of those who urge them. The men who present them are merely retailing old trivial objections, which have been refuted again and again. On the other hand, those who undertake the defence of the Bible may appeal to innumerable proofs not only of its general harmony but also of its detailed consistency and verbal precision. The veracity of Holy Writ is demonstrated by hundreds of undesigned coincidences in them, or the uncollaborated agreement of one part with another. Though the Bible has in it 66 books, written by 40 penmen, covering so many generations of the world, relating to widely different states of society, containing such a variety of matter upon so many different subjects, and abounding in supernatural incidents, yet it exhibits concord in all its parts, which becomes increasingly evident the more closely it is examined. Their consonance without collusion is too uniform to be accidental, and too incidental to have been mutually planned.

That which gives greater force to this argument is its self-evident feature that the perfect agreement of all its writers is *undesigned* on their part. The closer their productions be scanned, the more is it manifest that their perfect unity was not studied but casual. This line of argument was developed at considerable length by Paley and later by J. I. Blunt, who fully evinced the minute agreement and yet unpremeditated concurrence of one writer with another. The value of such evidence cannot be overestimated. As Professor Blunt pointed out, "It does not require many circumstantial coincidences to determine the mind of a Jury as to the credibility of a witness in our courts even when the life of a fellow creature is at stake." When independent narrators describe an incident in detail and there is no discrepancy but perfect accord between their several accounts, we logically conclude that they have related actual occurrences—the more so when there is no indication of conference or contrivance. We shall now condense a number of examples from those authors.

After Joseph's brethren had cast him into the pit, we are told that, "they lifted up their eyes and looked, and behold a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing

spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to *Egypt*" (Gen. 37:25). Now this, by no means an obvious incident to have suggested itself, does appear to be a very natural one to have occurred. But what is more to our point, it tallies exactly with what we read of elsewhere, yet in a passage which has no reference whatever to the one just cited, namely, "Joseph commanded the physicians to *embalm* his father... and the Egyptians mourned three score and ten days" (Gen. 50:2, 3). It was the practice of the Egyptians to embalm their dead, and hence the Ishmaelite would find a ready market in Egypt for their spices! Again—when during the famine, Joseph possessed himself on the king's account of all the land of Egypt, "he did not buy the land of the priests" (Gen. 47:22)—as a specially favoured class, they were exempted. In perfect accord is the fact that the final mark of the king's regard for Joseph was his giving him to wife, "the daughter of Potipherah *the priest*" (Gen. 41 :45)—showing that the priests were held in peculiar esteem by their monarch.

"Moses gave. . . two wagons and four oxen unto the sons of Gershon, according to their service; and four wagons and eight oxen to the sons of Merari" (Num. 7:7, 8). Why twice as many to the one as to the other? No reason is expressly stated, yet if we turn to an earlier chapter—separated by sundry details on other matters—we discover for ourselves a satisfactory explanation: the sons of Gershon carried the *lighter* part of the tabernacle furniture (Num. 4:25), those of Merari the heavier (Num. 4:32, 33). Does cunning contrivance or truth lie behind that? "But he [Israel's king] shall not multiply horses to himself" (Deut. 7:16). The governors of Israel rode on "white asses" (Judges 5:10, and compare with Joshua 15:18; 1 Sam. 25:23), and it was the asses and not the horses of Kish which were lost (1 Sam. 9:3). News of Absalom's death was brought to David by runners *on foot* (2 Sam. 18:21-23). Thus it appears quite incidentally in the history of Israel that for several centuries they had no horses—a coincidence of reality which had never occurred in a fiction.

When praising the Lord for deliverance from their enemies, Deborah mentioned there was not "a shield or spear" among the

Israelites (Judg. 5:8). Strange though that be, it fully accords with several other details found in that book. Ehud “*made him a dagger*” (3:16), Shamgar slew the Philistines “with an ox goad” (3:31), Jael had to improvise and use a tent pen, (4:21), Samson searched in vain for a weapon till he “found a new jawbone of an ass” (15:15). Yet more remarkable was Gideon’s victory over the Midianites with trumpets and broken pitchers, with their satirical cry of faith “the *sword* of the Lord and of Gideon” (7:15-22). No explanation is furnished by the writer of Judges, nor does he link together those incidents. But when we turn to 1 Samuel 13:19-22, they are fully accounted for, for there we are told that when the Philistines subdued Israel they suffered “no smith throughout the land!” Those who are qualified to weigh evidence will perceive in such “undesigned coincidences” the marks of truth—the more convincing since our attention is not directly called to them.

“Goliath of Gath” (1 Sam. 17: 4). Let us mark the value of that casual mention of the giant’s town—a detail of such little importance that its insertion or omission apparently mattered nothing. In Numbers 13:32, 33, we are informed that, “the sons of Anak were men of great stature.” Later, that Joshua “cut off the Anakim from the mountains and utterly destroyed their cities,” but a few remained “in Gaza, in *Gath*, and in Ashdod” (Josh. 11:22). Thus 1 Samuel 17:4 is found to square with those independent statements in Numbers and Joshua—in the mouth of those three witnesses the veracity of history being established! In 1 Samuel 22:3, 4, David trusted his father and mother to the protection of the Moabites. Why he made such a strange and dangerous choice we are not told. Had not the book of Ruth come down to us, the mystery had been left unexplained, but there we learn that the grandmother of David’s father was “a Moabites” (Ruth 4:17), and thus the propriety of his selection of their place of refuge appears—yet only by comparing the two books together is the circumstance accounted for.

The undesignedness of many passages in the Gospels is overlooked in our familiar acquaintance with them. For instance,

why were the sick brought to Jesus “when the even was come” (Matthew 8:16)? From the parallel passages, (Mark 1:21; Luke 4:31) we learn that the transaction took place on the Sabbath—which ended at *sunset* (Lev. 23:32). Then from Matthew 12:10—an entirely independent passage—we discover there was a superstition among the Jews that, “it was not lawful to heal on the Sabbath day.” No explanation is given in Matthew 8:16, and had it not been for the accounts of Mark and Luke we had not known it *was* “the Sabbath!” How came it to pass that Peter, a stranger, who had entered the house in the night, and under circumstances of some disorder, was identified by the maid in *the porch* (Matthew 26:71)? John 18:16, tells us: he had stood there with John until “her that kept the door” admitted them—one Gospel minutely confirming the other.

The Bible, my reader, consists of no cunningly devised fables, but authentic records of momentous events. They court examination and will sustain the most diligent scrutiny, evidencing themselves to be eminently trustworthy and faithful accounts of actual happenings. While they relay much that is extraordinary, miracles many and mighty, yet confidence in the historicity is established by the numerous marks of reality, consistency, and accuracy which the ordinary matters of fact combined with them constantly exhibit. The exact agreement between incidental statements in widely separated parts of the Bible argues the truthfulness of each of them. The closer we check one narrative with another the more does the veracity of the writers appear. Thus, when I find Paul affirming that from “a child” Timothy had “known the Scripture” (2 Tim. 3:1 5)—which necessarily implies at least one *Jewish* parent—and then discover his mother *was* “a Jewess” (Acts 16:1), I am compelled by the very obliquity of such a statement to accept it as inerrant.

14. *Its dispassionate poise.* In all the historical narratives of Old and New Testaments alike there is a most noticeable absence of any expression of feeling on the part of those who penned them. One and all maintain candour and calmness when chronicling the most pathetic or the most atrocious incidents. There is no trace



anywhere of *their own* delight or anger—not a single outburst of that personal bitterness and rancour which so often mar the writings of uninspired men. Instead, we behold a mild equanimity and quiet dignity breathing throughout the sacred pages. Thus, when the fall of our first parents, with all its disastrous consequences, is recorded, it is with out any reflections of the scribe annexed thereto. The murder of Abel is related, but no recriminations are cast upon Cain. Even when informing us there was “no room in the inn” for Joseph and Mary, and that the newly born Saviour was perforce laid in a manger, the evangelist indulges in no cutting invectives upon those who so grievously insulted the Son of God.

When another evangelist records the ferocious and wicked attempt of Herod upon the life of the infant Saviour by ordering all the children in Bethlehem under the age of two to be slain, he voices no horrified denunciation at such brutality; and when he relates how the legal parents of Christ had to flee into Egypt in order to escape from the murderous designs of that king, he pronounces no railing accusation upon him, such as an ordinary writer had deemed fit. Another of them tells us of the tetrarch of Galilee vilely yielding to the demand of a dancing girl that the head of John the Baptist be brought to her on a platter, but refrains from all aspersion upon the woman’s baseness and the weakness and wickedness of his consenting to the murder of our Lord’s forerunner—and with unparalleled honesty states that, “the king was exceeding sorry” (Mark 6:26). It was not that the evangelists were devoid of feeling, but that they were so completely under the control of the One who moved them to write that their natural passions were wholly subdued.

Still more remarkable is the entire absence of any reproaches from the evangelists upon the glaring injustice of the judges of the Redeemer, the horrid indignities to which He was subjected during His last hours, and the blasphemous taunts hurled at Him as He hung upon the tree. Their temperate and unvarnished description of Christ’s trial and crucifixion is without parallel. Instead of indignantly upbraiding Caiaphas and Pilate, instead of hot

strictures upon the hypocritical priests and Pharisees, instead of strong declamations of the brutal soldiers—there is nothing but the calm discharge of their task as sacred historians. How entirely different from the temper and tone of the ordinary biographer when recounting the injuries of those he loves or highly esteems! So, too, in the accounts of our Lord’s resurrection—what an opportunity did that unique event afford the evangelists to break forth in accents of admiration! What an occasion was it for extolling the powers of their triumphant Redeemer! Instead, there is only a brief account of the bare facts of the case. Surely it is patent that such moderation and sobriety can only be accounted for on the ground that the Holy Spirit fully controlled them, that as the amanuenses of God they wrote not by natural impulse, but by Divine inspiration!

15. *Its amazing anticipations.* A few words need to be said upon the *scientific* reliability of the Bible. First, there is not a word which clashes with any known fact discovered since it was written. Therein it differs radically from the Shafter of the Hindus (which affirms the moon to be 50,000 leagues higher than the sun!), the Koran of Mahomet (which teaches the mountains were created “to prevent the earth from moving!”), the statement of Pope Zanchary (which denied the antipodes), or the blunders which the latest generation of scientists find in the writings of their immediate predecessors. Second, the Bible makes known “secrets of Nature” of which all contemporary writings were totally ignorant. Space permits of but few illustrations to show that the Bible has always been far in advance of “science.”

There is not a little recorded in Holy Writ of which the ancients knew nothing, but which was verified long afterwards. For example: “Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, Pleiades, *and* the chambers of the *south*” (Job 9:9): centuries after that was said the southern hemisphere was unknown! “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing” (Job 26:7): sustaining it in space without any material support, kept in position by the centre of gravity. As Dr. Leathers (King’s College London) pointed out, “Job, more than 3,000 years ago, described

in the language of scientific accuracy the condition of our globe.” “Or ever the silver cord [the spinal column] be loosed, or the golden bowl [the skull] be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel be broken in the cistern” (Eccl. 12:6). The lungs take in and pour out air as a pitcher does water. The heart is “the wheel” on which the pitcher is brought up from the cistern: one of its lobes receives blood from the veins, the other lobe casts it out again, pulsing it through the arteries. Therein *the circulation of the blood* was figuratively described long before Hervey discovered it!

Any good encyclopaedia will inform its readers that in the 17th century AD., Sir Isaac Newton discovered the “law” of the circular motion of the wind; yet long before, Solomon had declared, “The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again to his circuits” (Eccl. 1:6). It will likewise attribute to Newton the discovery of “the law of evaporation,” yet the Bible had previously made known, “He causeth vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth” (Psa. 135:7). One would think from man’s writings that the scientists had invented these things! But many centuries before coal was first mined, Job declared, “As for the earth out of it cometh bread, and *under it* is turned up as it were fire” (28:5): combustible material which provides the most suitable fuel for the furnace. Millenniums before Henry Ford was born, Nahum. (2:4) foretold, “The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings!”

In Genesis 15:5, God said to Abraham, “Look now toward Heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them,” while in Jeremiah 33:22, we read, “the host of Heaven cannot be numbered.” When those verses were penned, none on earth had the least idea there was a countless number of stars. Ptolemy made a catalogue of the whole sphere of the heavens and made them to be but three thousand and fifty! But when Galileo turned his telescope on the heavens, he discovered there were many more than had been seen by the naked eye; when Lord Rosse used his

great reflector, he found they were to be numbered by the millions; and when Herschel examined the “milky way,” he learned it was composed of countless myriads! How came it that Moses and Jeremiah used expressions so far in advance of the knowledge of their day, unless guided by Omniscience? “Thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall be revealed: in that *day*. . . he that is in the field . . . in that *night* there shall be two in bed, the one shall be taken and the other left” (Luke 17:30-35). How strikingly accurate: day on one side of the earth, night on the other!—a fact quite unknown in Luke’s time!

16. *Its ineffable purity.* This appears relatively, by comparing the Bible with other writings, for it far excels all human codes of law in its injunctions, prohibitions, and motives as the light of a sunny day does that of a foggy one. It is equally evident when considered absolutely in itself as no other book, the turpitude and horrid nature of sin as “that abominable thing” which God hates (Jer. 44:4), and which we are to detest and shun. It never gives the least indulgence or dispensation to sin, nor do any of its teachings lead to licentiousness. It sternly condemns sin in all its forms, and makes known the awful curse and wrath of God which are its due. It not only reproves sin in the outward lives of men, but discovers the secret faults of the heart, which is its chief seat. It warns against its first motions, and legislates for the regulating of our spirits, requiring us to keep clean the fountain from which are the issues of life (Prov. 4:23). Its promises are made unto holiness, and its blessings bestowed upon the pure in heart. The ineffable and exalted holiness of the Bible is its chief and peculiar excellence, as it is also the principal reason why it is disliked by the majority of the unregenerate.

The Bible forbids all impure desires and unjust thoughts, as well as deeds. It prohibits envy (Prov. 23:17), and all forms of selfishness (Rom. 15:1). It requires us to “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, to perfect holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1), and bids us “abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thess. 5:22)—injunctions which are quite foreign to the “moralists” of the ancients! Heavenly doctrine is to be matched

with heavenly character and conduct. Its requirements penetrate into the innermost recesses of the soul, exposing and censuring all the corruptions found there. The law of man goes no farther than “thou shalt not steal,” but that of God, “thou shalt not covet.” The law of man prohibits the act of adultery, that of God reprehends the looking upon a woman to lust after her (Matt. 5:28). The law of man says, “thou shalt not murder,” that of God forbids all ill-will, malice or hatred (1 John 3:15). It strikes directly at that which fallen nature most cherishes and craves:

“Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you” (Luke 6:26)—a denunciation of no human invention! It prohibits the spirit of revenge, enjoins the forgiveness of injuries, and, contrary to the self-righteousness of our hearts, inculcates *humility*.

Though we have now set forth no fewer than thirty separate lines of evidence for the Divine Authorship of the Scriptures, we are far from having exhausted the subject. We might have shown that the Divine inspiration of the Bible is attested by its miraculous preservation through the centuries, its unrivalled influence upon humanity, its perennial freshness, its inexhaustible fullness, its marvellous unity, its verification in Christian experience—but we have previously written thereon. Separate sections could have been devoted to the setting forth of its minute accuracy, its pride-abasing contents, its inculcation of altruism, its power to search the conscience, its intense realism—dealing not with theorizing and idealizing, but the actualities of life, its utter unworldliness, its sanctifying tendency, its teaching on Providence—but we hesitate lest the reader be wearied, and because young preachers should now be able to work them out for themselves.

The fifth of eight booklets.

## **Booklet Five Contents**

### **Part Two**

- 7. The Holy Bible its Fulfilled Prophecies**
- 8. The Holy Bible - More Unique Characteristics—1**
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