

THE DOCTRINE OF REVELATION

**BOOKLET FOUR
PART TWO
THE HOLY BIBLE**



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4. The Holy Bible Declares it Comes from God Himself

5. The Holy Bible is Unique

6. The Holy Bible Teaches the Way of Salvation

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4. The Holy Bible Declares it Comes from God Himself

We have presented a portion of that abundant evidence which makes it unmistakably manifest that God has given us a clear revelation of Himself in creation, in the constitution of man (physical, mental, and moral), in His government of this world (as evinced in the annals of history), in the advent to this earth of His incarnate Son, and in the Holy Scriptures. We based our first argument that the Bible is an inspired communication from God on the fact that man is in urgent *need of* a written revelation, because his own faculties—especially as he is now a fallen and sinful creature—are insufficient as a guide to virtue and eternal happiness. Second, that there is therefore a *presumption in favour* of the Bible's being a revelation from God, since man urgently needs such and God is well able to supply it. Since all nature evinces that a merciful Creator has made suitable provision for every need of all His creatures, it is unthinkable that this supreme need of the highest of His earthly creatures should be neglected.

We now come to point 3: *Its own claims*. These are unambiguous, positive, decisive, leaving us in no doubt as to what the Scriptures profess to be. The Bible declares that, as a Book, it comes to us from God Himself. It urges that claim in various ways. Its very names proclaim its Source. It is repeatedly denominated "The Word of God." It is so denominated because as we express our thoughts and make known our intentions by means of words, so in His Book God has disclosed His mind and declared His will unto us. It is called "The Book of the

LORD” (Isa. 34:16) because He is its Author and because of the Divine authority with which it is invested, demanding our unqualified subjection to its imperial edicts. It is termed “The Scripture of Truth” (Dan. 10:21) because it is without confusion, without contradiction, without the slightest mixture of error— infallible in every verse, every word, every letter inspired— Divine. It is designated “The Word of Life” (Phil. 2:16) because it is invested with the very breath of the Almighty, indelible and indestructible, in contradistinction from all the perishing productions of man. It is entitled “The Oracles of God” (Rom. 3:2) because in it God Himself is the Speaker.

The Bible proclaims itself to be a Divine revelation, a direct and inerrant communication from the living God, that He “spake by the mouth of His holy Prophets, which have been since the world began” (Luke 1:70). They announce that “the Law of the LORD is perfect” (Psa. 19:7)—without flaw or blemish; that “the Word of God is quick and powerful” (Heb. 4:12)—living, pungent, dynamic. They claim that “the Word of the Lord endureth forever” (1 Pet. 1:25)—surviving all the passages of time, withstanding all the efforts of enemies to destroy it. They affirm themselves to be “*the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation*” (2 Tim. 3:15). The article there is emphatic, being used to distinguish the Sacred Writings from all others, to aver their excellence and eminence over all the writings of men. The Holy One is their Author, they treat of the holy things of God, and call for holy hearts and lives from their readers. And just so far as our characters are formed and our conduct regulated by their precepts, will the fruits of holiness appear in our lives.

The instruments which God employed to bring to us the Word were themselves conscious of and frankly owned to the fact that they were but His mouthpieces or penmen. Again and again we find them avowing that truth. “Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD” (24:2). “The LORD spake thus to me” (Isa. 8:11). “Hear ye for the LORD hath spoken” (Jer. 13:15). “Hear this word that the LORD hath spoken” (Amos 3:1). “The mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it” (Micah 4:4). Said the royal Psalmist, “The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and His Word

was in my tongue” (2 Sam. 23:2). So, too, when the Apostles quoted a passage from the Old Testament they gave their testimony to the same truth. When Peter addressed the disciples, he said, “this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spake by the mouth of David” (Acts 1:16). “Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said” (Acts 4:25). “Well spake the Holy Spirit by Isaiah the Prophet” (Acts 28:25). Whoever were the human spokesmen or writers, the language of the Scriptures is the very Word of God.

Not once or twice, but scores of times, there are passages which, without any preamble or apology, declare, “Thus saith the Lord.” In the Bible, God is the Speaker. Chapter after chapter in Leviticus opens with, “And the Lord spake, saying.” And so it runs to the end of the chapter. Moses was but a scribe, God the Author of what is recorded. The question of Inspiration is, in its ultimate analysis, the question of Revelation itself. If the Book be Divine, then what it says of itself is Divine. The question is one of *Divine testimony*, and our business is simply to receive that testimony—without doubting or quibbling, with thankful and unreserved submission to its authority. When God speaks He must be heeded. “If at this moment yonder heavens were opened—the curtained canopy of star-sown clouds rolled back; if amid the brightness of light ineffable, the Dread Eternal were Himself seen rising from His throne, and heard to speak in voice audible, it could not be more potent, more imperative, than what lies *now* before us upon Inspiration’s pages” (G. S. Bishop).

God requires us to receive and accredit His Word, and to do so on His own *ipse dixit*. All faith rests on testimony, and the testimony on which faith in the Scriptures reposes is amply sufficient to support it, for it is Divine. “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater . . . he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave” (1 John 5:9, 10). If the witness of men of respectability and integrity be received in the judicatories of all nations, then most assuredly the witness of God is infinitely more worthy of our acceptance. The best of men are fallible and fickle, yet in matters of the greatest importance their testimony is credited—the affairs

of the world would soon come to a standstill if it were not so. Then with how much more confidence may we receive the testimony of Him who is infallible and immutable, who can neither deceive nor be deceived?! How unspeakably dreadful the alternative: if we believe not God's record, that is virtually calling Him a liar—regarding Him as a false witness! May the reader be delivered from such wickedness.

Now we proceed to point 4: *No other explanation is even feasible*. Whence comes the Bible is a question deserving of the very best attention of every serious mind. The subjects of which it treats are of such tremendous importance both to our present welfare and our future felicity, that the question of its derivation calls for the most diligent examination. The Bible is here, and it must be accounted for. It holds a unique place in the literature of mankind and it has exerted an unrivalled influence in moulding the history of the world; and therefore it calls loudly for an adequate rationale to be given of its origin. Only three explanations are possible: the Bible is either a deliberate imposter, manufactured by wicked men; or it is the product of deluded visionaries, who vainly imagined they were giving forth inspired messages from Heaven; or else it is what it claims to be: an infallible and authoritative revelation from God Himself unto the sons of men. Between those three alternatives every thoughtful investigator of the matter must choose. If he ponders carefully the first two and tests them by the evidence adduced in favour of the Bible's being a Divine communication, he should have no difficulty in perceiving they are not only inadequate, but utterly absurd.

It is proverbial that "water will not rise above its own level," as it is self-evident that no cause can produce any effect superior to itself. Equally incredible is it that wicked men should bring forth a Book which has done far more than all other books combined (except those drawn from the Bible) in promoting morality and producing holiness. Grapes do not grow upon thistles! To assert that the Bible was produced by evil men is refuted by the very character of its teachings, which uniformly condemn dishonesty and declare that "all *liars* shall have their part in the Lake which

burneth with fire and brimstone” (Rev. 21:8). It is thoroughly irrational to suppose that the authors of the most impious and gigantic literary fraud ever imposed upon mankind (if such it be) should invent for themselves such a fearful doom as that! It must also be remembered that some of the penmen of the Bible laid down their lives for a testimony to its verity; but the annals of history contain no record of men willingly suffering martyrdom for a known lie—from which neither they nor their families received any advantage.

Another class of sceptics dismiss the Bible as the fanciful flights of poets, the ravings of mystics, the extravagances of enthusiasts. Much in it is no doubt very beautiful, yet it is as unsubstantial as a dream, with no reality corresponding thereto, and those who credit the same are living only in a fool’s paradise. They say, If there be a God, He is so absolute and transcendent, so remote from this scene, as to take no personal notice of our affairs; that it is both unphilosophical and a slur on His greatness to affirm (as the ancient Psalm does), “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.” Thus we are asked to believe that mystics and fanatics have invented a god with more tender and nobler attributes than the real God has. But to say that fancy has devised a superior god than actually exists is the acme of irrationality. Were it possible for us to choose what kind of excellence deity should possess, would we not include among them pity linked with infinite power, using that power as its servant to tenderly minister unto the suffering?

Surely this is the most amazing chimera that has ever been invented: that men have endowed God with grander qualities than He really possesses, that they have predicated of Him a perfection which He is incapable of exercising. Rather must we affirm that that wondrous statement, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16), is a revelation which opens to us a new moral kingdom, a kingdom of unimaginable benignity and grace. The message of redemption is a Divine light breaking in upon us from Above, a revelation that proves itself. That God should send here His own Son, clothed

with our humanity, to seek and to save rebels against His government, to suffer in their stead, and by His death make full atonement for their sins, to provide His Spirit to conform them to His image, to make them His joint heirs and sharers of His eternal glory, is a concept which had never entered human heart or mind to conceive. Yet it *is* worthy and becoming of our Maker. The Gospel is the noblest force which has ever touched human character.

As another has pertinently asked, “Is it a dishonour to God that, being great, He stoops to us? Does it make Him less? Is it a reproach to Him that He gives Himself to us? Would it be more for His glory if He mocked us? It is this very wedlock of the wisdom that planned the heavens—the measureless Power that guides the stars—with the tenderness that stoops to the whispered prayer of a child, that counts the tears of a widow, that hears the sighs of the prodigal—which makes the unconceivable greatness of God. It completes the mighty curve of His attributes. And is it credible that we can conceive this amazing greatness and yet God not be capable of it? . . . The Bible represents God as saying, ‘My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor My ways your ways, for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are My thoughts above your thoughts and My ways above your ways.’ And this *ought* to be true! The realities of God ought to be nobler than the dreams of men. It would be the perplexity and despair of man if this were not so” (*The Unrealized Logic of Religion*).

Equally false is it to assert, as some ignorant Infidels have done, that we owe the Bible to *the Church*. It is an indubitable historical fact that the larger part of the Bible was in known existence more than 200 years before the dawn of the Christian era, and every doctrine, every precept and promise contained in the New Testament is based upon that earlier revelation. Such was the sufficiency of the Old Testament Scriptures that Paul could say they were “able to make wise unto salvation.” While it is true that Christian churches existed before the New Testament was *written*, yet it must be borne in mind that there was the *spoken* Word by Christ and His Apostles ere the first of those churches was formed. On the day of Pentecost the Old Testament was quoted and

expounded, the revelation of God in Christ was proclaimed, and it was upon the acceptance of that Word that the New Testament came into being. Thus, the fact is that the Word created the Church and not vice versa. It was only after some of the Apostles had died and others were engaged in extensive travel that the need arose for the permanent embodiment of the final portions of God's revelation, and this was given gradually in the New Testament. From that time until now, the written Word has taken the place of the original spoken Word.

For centuries before the inauguration of Christianity, the Jews beheld the books which comprised the Old Testament as being the genuine productions of those Penmen whose names they bear, and they were unanimously considered by them, without any exception or addition, to have been written under the immediate direction of the Spirit of God. Those books of the Old Testament had been preserved with the utmost veneration and care, and at the same time had been jealously guarded from any spurious or apocryphal writings. It is a fact well authenticated that while the Jews of Christ's day were divided into numerous sects, which stood in the most direct opposition to one another, yet there was never any difference among them respecting the divinity and authority of the sacred writings. Josephus appealed to the public records of different nations and to many historical documents existing in his day, as indisputable evidence, in the opinion of the Gentile world, of the verity and fidelity of those portions of Israel's history to which he referred. Even to this day the bulk of the religious Jews retain an unshakable conviction of the Divine origin of their religious laws and institutions. Yet their own Scriptures record their unparalleled hardness of heart, resistance to the light God gave them, and their rejection and murder of their own Messiah—things which would have been accorded no place in a spurious production.

That *the Jews* did not manufacture the Old Testament—on which the New is largely based—is apparent from other considerations. The immense disparity between the Old Testament as a book, and the Hebrew people as a nation, shows that the knowledge of God and of Divine things contained in the former,

but wanting in the latter, came *ab extra*, that it was communicated from on high. One has but to read the writings of Josephus, the Jewish Targum and Talmud, or the Kabbala, to recognize at once the vast difference there is between them and the Holy Scriptures. That might be illustrated at great length, from many different angles, but we will confine ourselves to a single feature, and treat of it in a way that the ordinary reader will have no difficulty in following: the extreme *exclusiveness* of the Jews, and then call attention to a number of passages in the Old Testament which cannot possibly be accounted for in the light of that dominant national characteristic.

There has never been another people so outstandingly clannish in sentiment and so provincial in outlook as the Jews: nor had any other equal reason for so being. God dealt with them as with no other nation: “You only have I known of all the families of the earth” (Amos 3:2). “He hath not dealt so with any nation” (Psa. 147:20). He forbade Israel to have anything to do with the religion of other nations, prohibited all marriages with them, and the learning of their ways. Yet they carried the spirit of bigotry and exclusiveness to an unwarrantable extent—far beyond the requirements of Scripture. Their violent prejudice appears in that statement, “the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans” (John 4:9), in Peter’s reluctance to go unto Cornelius, and the unwillingness of the Christian Church at Jerusalem to believe the grace of God extended to the uttermost part of the earth. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the teaching of the Old Testament was very far from inculcating that the Israelites must confine their benevolent affections within the narrow bounds of their own twelve tribes. No spirit of bigotry breathes in the sacred songs sung in their temple.

“God be merciful unto us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us. Selah. That Thy way may be known upon the earth, Thy saving health among *all nations*. Let the people praise Thee, O God, let all the people praise Thee. O let the *nations* be glad and sing for joy: for Thou shalt judge the people righteously and lead the *nations* upon earth” (Psa. 67:1-4). “All *nations* whom Thou hast made shalt come and worship Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify

Thy name” (Psa. 86:9). “O sing unto the LORD a new song. Sing unto the LORD all the earth. Sing unto the LORD, bless His name: show forth His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among *the heathen*, His wonders among the people . . . Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name, bring an offering and come into His courts” (Psa. 96:1-3, 8). Who, we ask, put such words as those into the Psalmist’s mouth? Who caused them to be given a permanent record on the Sacred Scroll? Who preserved them intact for the thousand years which followed till the advent of Christ, during which interval the Jews were possessed of most fanatical egotism and the bitterest hatred of *the Gentiles!*?

The same striking feature appears even in the Pentateuch. “Thou shalt speak and say before the LORD your God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father: and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few, and became a nation, great, mighty and populous. And the Egyptians evil entreated us and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage” (Deut. 26:5, 6). The whole of that remarkable passage (verses 4-10)—which Israel was required to recite before God at one of her most solemn acts of worship—should be carefully weighed. What could more effectually repress their national pride than that confession? But who instructed them to make such a humble acknowledgment of their lowly origin? Who bade them utter this perpetual avowal of their base beginnings? And more—it was on the very basis of their lowly origin and the sore oppression their fathers had suffered in a foreign land that a number of most *un-*“Jewish” laws were framed—laws which bade them pity and relieve the stranger. If that fact be critically pondered it should be evident that such precepts could not have originated from such a bigoted and hard-hearted people.

Those precepts were quite contrary to flesh and blood. It is natural for sinful men to strongly resent harsh treatment, for the memory of it to cherish rancour and malevolence, to feed the spirit of revenge, so that if the positions should be reversed they would “get even.” Instead, we find the Mosaic Law enjoining the very opposite—inculcating the warmest and purest benevolence toward the wretched and defenceless of other nations. “Thou shalt not vex

a stranger nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exod. 22:21). Yea, more—“The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt *love him* as thyself” (Lev. 19:34). Now, my reader, what explanation can possibly account for such benign statutes?—statutes which were repeatedly flouted by Israel! Who was it that originated and inculcated such unselfish tenderness? Who taught the haughty Jews to return good for evil? Who but the One who is both “no respecter of persons,” and, who is “very pitiful and of tender mercy” (James 5:11).

It also requires to be pointed out that the Pentateuch contains a narration of many events which took place in the actual lifetime, yea, before the eyes, of the very people who were called upon to receive those books as authentic. Thus there was no opportunity for Moses, or anyone else, to palm off upon the Hebrews a lot of fictions, for each one of them would know at once whether the records of their cruel bondage in Egypt, the judgments which Jehovah is said to have executed there, and the miraculous deliverance of His people at the Red Sea, were true or not. Had those events been of a commonplace character, few perhaps had been sufficiently interested to scrutinize the narratives of them, still less have taken the trouble to refute them, were they untrue. But in view of their extraordinary nature, and especially since those miracles were designed to *authenticate a new religion* upon which their future hopes were to be based and by which their present deportment was to be regulated, it is unthinkable that a whole nation gave a mechanical assent, and still more so that they unitedly endorsed evidence which they knew to be false, especially when those same narratives inculcated a code of conduct which they certainly had never designed of their own accord.

But more—not only were many of the Mosaic institutions radically different from those practiced by all other nations, and from what the Hebrews had themselves observed in Egypt, they also involved numerous rites which required constant attention and which must have been most irksome and unpleasant. Moreover, those ceremonies subjected the Israelites to

considerable expense by the costly sacrifices they were frequently required to offer and the tithes they were commanded to pay the priests. Furthermore, some of the laws bound upon them were of such a character that it is altogether unaccountable, on the principles of political wisdom, that any legislator should have proposed or that a whole nation should meekly have submitted to them. Such was the law of the Sabbath year, which forbade them tilling or sowing the ground for a whole twelve months (Exod. 23:10, 11). Such was the law ordering all the males to journey from every part of the land to the tabernacle (Deut. 16)—leaving their homes unprotected. Such was the law which prohibited their king multiplying horses (Deut. 17:16); and more especially the law of jubilee, when all mortgaged property had to be restored to the original owners and all slaves freed (Lev. 25:10).

Now we submit that it is utterly incredible to suppose that any sane legislator would, on his own authority, have imposed enactments which interfered so seriously with both private and public liberty, and which involved such hazards as the people dying of starvation while their fields lay fallow, and their wives and children being murdered by invaders when all their men-folk were far removed from them. Still more inconceivable is it that, instead of bitterly resenting and openly revolting against such unpopular statutes, the whole nation should quietly acquiesce therein. It is quite pointless to say that Israel was imposed upon by Moses, that he deceived them into believing those laws were of Divine authority. No such deception was possible, for the simple reason that the entire nation was assembled at Sinai and had witnessed the supernatural and awe-inspiring phenomena when the Lord had descended and given those Laws audibly—they had with their own ears heard a portion of it published. Israel's reception of such a Law can only be accounted for on the basis that they were fully assured it proceeded from God Himself.

Having demonstrated that the Scriptures could not have been manufactured by either wicked impostors or deluded fanatics, that they were not invented by the Christian Church or the ancient Jews, we are shut up to the only remaining alternative, namely, that they are a revelation from God—His own inspired and

infallible Word. No other choice is left; no other explanation is credible. Every other attempt to explain their origin is found, upon critical examination, to be not only altogether inadequate, but utterly absurd. If a thinking man finds it difficult, nay, impossible, to explain a created universe apart from a Divine Creator, it is no less so for him to account for the Book of books without a *Divine Author*. This is a matter which admits of no compromise: if the Bible has come to us from God, then it has claims upon us which infinitely transcend those of all other writings. If it is not from God, then it is an impious fraud, unworthy of our attention. There is no middle ground! Moreover, if the Bible is not what it claims to be, then we are left without *any* revelation which, with any reliability or authority, can impart to us the knowledge of God or warrant its reception by mankind!

We now come to the 5th point—It *bears the hallmark of genuineness*: the contents of the Bible are just what might be looked for. What are the essential characteristics we should expect to find in a written communication from God unto fallen mankind? Would they not be, first, the imparting to us of a knowledge of the true God; and second, of that instruction which is best suited to our varied needs? Such is precisely what we have in the Bible. The grand truth taught throughout the Sacred Scriptures is that God does all things for His own glory and for the manifestation of His own perfections. And is not that exactly in accord with right reason? Once men are led to entertain any true conceptions of the Supreme Being, they are brought to the irresistible conclusion that One who is self-existent and self-sufficient, the Creator and Proprietor of the universe, could not be swayed by any creature or moved to action from a regard to anything outside of Himself, or irrespective of Himself—that in all His works—both of creation and providence, He will have a supreme regard unto His own honour and the maintaining of His own perfections.

If, then, the Bible is the Word of God, proceeding from Himself, stamped with the autograph of His own authority, we naturally expect to find it possessed of *that* characteristic and directed to that end. Thus in fact it is. The cardinal design of the Sacred

Scriptures is to make God known, to exhibit the peerless excellence of His character, to teach us the homage and adoration which are His due. Their supreme end is to display to us the glorious attributes of God, that we may learn to form the most elevated conceptions of His Being, our own entire dependence upon Him, our deep obligations to show forth His praise. The scope of the entire Bible is to teach us our relations to God, and that the business of our lives is to give Him His true place in our hearts, to act always so as to please Him. Yet the very *reverse* of that is what obtains in human practice: in view of which we are forced to conclude that had men originated the Bible its teaching thereon had been very different, and that it had contained no such statements as, “The LORD hath made all things for Himself” (Prov. 16:4), “Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

Again—would we not naturally expect to find a revelation from God couched in a strain very different from that in which one man speaks to another? Since the Creator is so high above the creature, does it not befit Him to address us in terms which become His august majesty? Such is just what we find in the Bible. Its instructions are delivered to us not in an argumentative form, but in an authoritative manner, for while arguments are suited to equals, they would be quite out of place for the Allwise when directing the ignorant. Its precepts are not proffered to us as so much good advice which we are free to heed or not at our pleasure, but rather as imperial edicts which we disregard to our eternal undoing. The commandments of Scripture admit of no questioning: “Thou shalt,” and “Thou shalt not,” are its peremptory terms. In the most uncompromising way, and without the least semblance of apology, the Bible claims the absolute right to dictate unto all men what they should do, condemns them for their failure, and pronounces sentence of judgment upon every offender. From Genesis to Revelation the contents of Holy Writ are set forth in dictatorial language beyond which there is no appeal. It speaks throughout as from an infinitely elevated plane.

Moreover, the Bible does not single out for address merely the ignorant and the base, but issues its orders unto all classes alike.

The cultured as well as the illiterate, the high as well as the low, the rich equally with the poor are imperatively told what they must do and from what they must abstain. And that one feature alone places the Bible, my reader, in a class by itself. If it possessed not the same, then we should have grave reason to suspect its authenticity. It would be most incongruous for the Ancient of Days to use a conciliatory tone and employ the language of obsequiousness when vouchsafing a communication to creatures who are but of yesterday. So far from the language of dogmatism being unsuited, it is *exactly* what might be looked for in a revelation from the Most High. Nevertheless, the dictatorial ring of the Bible accords it a unique place in the realm of literature. There is no other book in the world which demands, on pain of eternal perdition, the total submission of all mankind unto its authority; as there is none other which pronounces a fearful curse on anyone who has the audacity to take away from its contents. The ring of imperial authority which sounds through all its chapters indicates that it is the voice of the living God who is the Speaker.

Yet it will also follow that if the Bible be a Divine revelation, then it must be suited to the needs of man, and not simply this or that man, but of all without distinction. One of the clearest marks of the handiwork of God in the material creation is that of design and adaptation—that all His productions are perfectly fitted to answer the ends for which they are made—as the human hand to perform so many different tasks. We should therefore expect to find this same characteristic stamped upon the Bible; nor is that expectation disappointed! It imparts to us the knowledge of God's glorious character and our relations to Him, and reveals the means by which we may regain His favour and secure our own eternal happiness. The Holy Scriptures furnish us with an accurate diagnosis of the human heart and all its manifold workings. They describe to us our enemies and make known the stratagems which they employ, and how they are to be resisted and overcome. They discover to us the character of that malady which has smitten our moral nature, and the great Physician who is able to recover us therefrom. They specify the most serious of the dangers which

menace us, and faithfully warn us against the same. They supply instruction which if heeded promotes our welfare in every way.

The Bible makes known to us how wisdom, strength, and true joy are to be obtained here, and how Heaven may be our portion hereafter. It supplies salutary counsels which are admirably suited to all our varied circumstances. It is adapted equally to the young as to the aged, to those in prosperity or those in adversity. Its language is simple enough for those of little education, yet it has depths in it which the most learned cannot fathom. In the Scriptures there is as great a variety as there is in Nature, something to meet the most diverse temperaments and tastes: history, poetry, biography, prophecy, legislation—the essentials of hygiene, profound mysteries, and a message of glad tidings to those in despair. Moreover, the Bible is self-explanatory. No reference library is required to be consulted in order to arrive at the meaning of anything in it: one part interprets another. The New Testament supplements the Old, and by patiently comparing Scripture with Scripture the diligent reader may ascertain the significance of any figure, symbol, or term used therein; though its spiritual secrets are disclosed only unto the prayerful and the obedient.

As the light is accommodated to the eye and the eye formed and fitted to receive the light, so though the Scriptures have come from Heaven, yet are they perfectly suited to those who live on earth. They contain all the information that is required by man as a moral and accountable being. There is no important problem relating to either our temporal or eternal welfare upon which the Bible does not supply excellent counsel. Though its contents be ineffably sublime, they are at the same time intensely practical, meeting every moral and spiritual need, adapted alike to Jew and Gentile, ancient or modern, rich or poor. The Bible not only makes known how the State should be governed and the Church ordered, but it furnishes full instruction to direct the individual and to regulate the home. In a word, the Bible is qualified to be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. When, then, we examine this Book which claims to come from God, and find it possesses all those marks and evidences which could reasonably be expected or

desired, that it is exactly suited to answer all the ends of a Divine revelation, we are obliged to conclude that our Creator has graciously met our deep need, and therefore that revelation should be received by us with the utmost reverence and welcomed with the deepest thanksgiving.

Let us move on to the 6th *point—Christ and the Scriptures*. What was *His* attitude toward them? What was His estimate of them? What use did He make of them? The answers to those questions are of supreme importance and must settle the matter once and for all, for what is the opinion of any man worth when placed over against the verdict of the Son of God! Give, then, your best attention while we seek to furnish a reply to those inquiries. Negatively, Christ never cast the slightest doubt upon their validity or called into question their authenticity. When His detractors reminded Him, “Moses wrote unto us” such and such a thing, He did not say that Moses was wrong, but told them *they* “erred, not knowing the Scriptures” (Mark 12:19-24). When a lawyer sought to ensnare Him, so far from brushing aside the authority of the Scriptures, He enforced the same, saying, “What is written in the Law?” (Luke 10:26). When engaged in any controversy, His invariable appeal was unto the Old Testament, and declared that what David said was “by the Spirit,” (Mark 12:36). Not once did He intimate that it was unreliable and untrustworthy.

But let us turn to the positive side. Behold the Lord Jesus when He was assaulted by the Devil, and note well that the only weapon He made use of was the Sword of the Spirit. Each time He repulsed the Tempter with a sentence from the Old Testament (Matthew 4)! And observe that as soon as that mysterious conflict was over, God—to evince His approbation of Christ’s conduct—sent angels to “minister unto Him” (Mark 1:13). Mark how He commenced His public ministry, by entering the synagogue, reading from the Prophet Isaiah, and saying, “This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Luke 4:16-21). Hear Him as He declared, “Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no

wise pass from the Law till all be fulfilled” (Matthew 5:17, 18). He had come to enforce the teachings of the Old Testament in their minutest detail, to honour and magnify the same, by rendering a personal and perfect obedience to them. He owned the Scriptures as “the Word of God” (Mark 7:13) just as they stood—without any reservation or qualification—thereby authenticating all the books of the Old Testament.

So far from regarding the Old Testament as being full of myths and fables, He taught that Abraham, Lot, Moses, Daniel, were real entities. He expressly ratified the very incidents at which the sceptics scoff: the Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from Heaven (Luke 17:28-29), Jonah being three days and nights in the whale’s belly (Matthew 12:40), thereby denying they were but “folk lore,” and establishing their historicity. Christ placed the words of Moses on a par with His own—(John 5:46, 47). Jesus said, “If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead” (Luke 16:31), which again evinces our Lord’s estimate of the Old Testament. It was of supreme authority to Him. When vindicating Himself for affirming His Deity, after quoting from the Psalms He added, “and the Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35)—it is infallible, inviolable. When engaged in prayer to the Father He solemnly declared, “Thy Word is Truth” (John 17:17): not simply *contains* the Truth, or even *is* true, but “*is Truth*”—*without* the least tincture of error, the word of Him “that cannot lie” (Titus 1:2).

When His enemies came to arrest Him in the Garden and Peter drew his sword, the Saviour rebuked him, saying, “Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to My Father, and that He shall at once give Me more than twelve legions of angels,” yet note well how He at once added, “But how then shall the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” (Matthew 26:53, 54). Very blessed is that: showing that the written Word was what regulated His every action, and that it was His strong consolation in His darkest hour. Reverently behold Him on the Cross, and observe Him placing homage upon the sacred Psalter by using *its* words when undergoing the extreme anguish of Divine desertion (Psa. 22:1; Matthew 27:46). But

more—“Jesus . . . that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst” (John 19:28). There was yet one detail predicted of His dying sufferings which had not been accomplished, namely, that, “in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink” (Psa. 69:21), and therefore in subjection to the Divine authority of the Old Testament, He cried “I thirst!” After rising in triumph from the grave, we find our blessed Lord again magnifying the Scriptures: “Beginning at Moses and the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27).

Thus we are left in no doubt whatever of Christ’s attitude toward, estimate of, and the use which He made of the Scriptures. He ever treated them with the utmost reverence, affirmed their Divine authority, and considered that one word of *theirs* put an end to all controversy. He averred the Old testament was “the Word of God,” entirely inerrant, verbally inspired, as a whole and in all its parts. He affirmed that the Scriptures are the final court of appeal, and asserted their perpetuity. For the Christian, the testimony of Christ is final: he requires no further evidence or argument. Nor should the non-Christian. It is the height of absurdity to suppose that One who was endowed with infinitely superior wisdom to Solomon should have been imposed upon by a fraud; as it would be horrible blasphemy to say that He knowingly set His imprimatur upon what He knew to be false. Whose judgment, my friend, do you prefer: that of the so-called “advanced thinkers” or the verdict of the Son of God? Which deem you the more trustworthy?

5. The Holy Bible is Unique

We come now to our 7th point—*Its uniqueness*. Viewed simply as a book, the Bible stands far apart from all others. Amid the writings of the ancients or the productions of our moderns there is nothing which, for a moment, bears comparison with it. The Bible not only occupies a prominent place in literature, but an unrivalled one. Consider its amazing *circulation*. The number of its editions is to be counted not by the dozen or even the hundreds, but literally by the thousands. And not merely tens or hundreds of thousands of copies have been printed, but hundreds of millions!

That at once separates it by an immeasurable distance from everything penned by man. Consider its unequalled *translation*. It has been rendered into almost all the multitudinous dialects of the earth. Those of nearly every nation now have the Bible in their own tongue. It has been printed in more than 600 languages! That too, is without any parallel. The most famous and popular compositions of men have not been translated into one tenth as many tongues. Consider its *by-products*: countless works have been devoted to its exposition, millions of sermons preached and published on portions of it. That also is without any precedent.

Consider further the laborious *indexes* which have been made upon its contents. There are voluminous concordances which not only list every word used in the Scriptures, but all the occurrences of them—in many cases scores, and in not a few, hundreds of references. Now we do not possess complete concordances of any of the writings of the most renowned human author, wherein is collated every occurrence of each word he used. And why? Because no such nicety, no such significance, pertains to *his* language as makes the sense of a passage or the force of an argument turn upon a single word. Much less has the ablest of human authors employed all his terms with exact consistency and correspondence throughout the whole of his writings. Yet such is the case with the Bible—wherein no less than forty different men were used as its scribes! The *Concordance* loudly proclaims the uniqueness of the Bible. It tacitly declares that not simply this or that term, but *every* word from Genesis to Revelation is God-breathed, and that every occurrence of *each* word was directed by His unerring wisdom.

The *perpetuity of their text* is unique. The Sacred Scriptures were written originally in Hebrew and Greek, which are the only languages that, dating back of all tradition, are still recognized as living vehicles of thought. The language spoken in the streets of modern Athens is identically the same, to its very accents, as that used by Plato and Socrates, yea, of Homer's Iliad, which was composed almost 3,000 years ago. In like manner, the Hebrew of the Talmud is the Hebrew of the book of Genesis. What a remarkable survival, or rather a miracle, of Divine power! That

becomes more apparent when we contrast how other ancient tongues have long since passed away. The Egyptian language used by the builders of the pyramids has perished. The Syrian used by Rabshakeh is no more. The dialect spoken by the original Britons is now unknown. Yet the Hebrew employed by Moses is spoken by the Jewish rabbi today, and the Greek used by the Apostle Paul is heard in Salonica at this hour. Here, then, is a striking and unparalleled fact: that the languages in which God wrote His Word have outlived all their contemporaries and have remained unchanged throughout the centuries!

Even on its surface the Bible differs from all other books. That appears in the *style* of its writings. Two languages were used which are quite diverse in their manner of inscription. The Hebrew is written and read from right to left, whereas the Greek (and all modern languages) is written and read from left to right. The Scriptures make no comment upon that arresting and striking contrast, but leaves the reader to interpret the fact in the light of their contents. Once attention be focused upon the same, its significance is at once apparent: in the singular reversal of its text the Bible teaches us the two most fundamental and radical facts in human history: man's apostasy from God, and his restoration. The "right hand" is that of dignity and privilege (Psa. 110:1), the "left hand" is that of disgrace and condemnation (Matthew 25:41). The Old Testament, written in Hebrew, is an amplification of that statement, "man being in honour abideth not" (Psa. 49:12), being a record of his departure from God, with all its evil consequences. The New Testament, written in Greek, has for its leading theme how the wanderer is restored to God, how the prodigal returns to the Father's house.

As another has pointed out, the uniqueness of the Bible appears (again) in that its conjugation of the Hebrew verb puts man in his proper place. "In all Occidental languages the verb is conjugated from the first person to the third—'I,' 'Thou,' 'He.' The Hebrew, in reversal of the human thought, is conjugated from the third down and backward to the first: beginning with God, then my neighbour, then myself last—'He,' 'Thou,' 'I.' This is the Divine order: self-obliterating and beautiful." That peculiarity is very

much more than an interesting detail in philology: it embodies and expresses a profound spiritual truth. It accords God His due pre-eminence, and thereby teaches us that all right thinking must start with Him and work downward to man. For that very reason the Scriptures open with the words, “In the beginning GOD.” No theology can be sound unless it makes that Truth its foundation and starting point. The initiative is ever with God: “we love Him because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19). Once God is accorded His rightful place in our affections, man is automatically put where he belongs—but which, apart from Divine revelation and Divine grace, he never takes!

Our 8th point—*Its delineation of God*. The portrayal of Deity supplied by the Bible is so very different from and so vastly superior to that furnished by all other sources—we are forced to conclude it *cannot* be of *human* invention. Beginning with the Old Testament, let us single out two statements which were penned by Moses. “Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is *one* Lord” (Deut. 6:4). That is a startling, yea, a unique declaration, at complete variance with the conceptions of all His contemporaries. Polytheism, or a belief in and worship of a plurality of gods, prevailed universally among the heathen. Whence then did Moses obtain his knowledge of the true God, who is one in His essence? Certainly not from the Egyptians, for their king confessed, “I know not the LORD” (Exod. 5:2). “The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty”—who continue impenitent and despise an atoning sacrifice (Exod. 34:6, 7). Such a conception of the Divine perfections is as far beyond the reach of man’s mind as Heaven is above the earth. Search the philosophers, the mystics, and religious teachers of the ancients, and nothing can be found which in the least resembles such a blessed conception of God as that.

“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.” “Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool: where is

the house that ye build unto Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things hath *Mine* hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is *poor* and of a contrite spirit” (Isa. 57:15; 66:1, 2). The majesty of such language at once distinguishes it from all human compositions and evinces it was not fabricated by the brain of man. But suppose for the sake of argument that the mind of man *had* soared to such an elevated conception of Deity as is portrayed in the first part of those passages, it had certainly not conceived of what follows in the second part. Therein God is presented not only in the greatness of His infinite excellence above all creatures, but also in His amazing condescension unto the meanest of men. Those verses not only exhibit the transcendence of the Creator, but make known the marvels of His grace, “which He accounts His own glory” (Eph. 1:6).

Turning to the New Testament, we will confine ourselves to three brief statements: “God is spirit” (John 4:24), “God is light” (1 John 1:5), “God is love” (1 John 4:8). Those three descriptions of Deity furnish us with a truer and more elevated view of Him than could the most elaborate definitions of human eloquence and genius. They announce the spirituality, the purity, and the benevolence of God. The first purports to be a record of words spoken by Christ during His earthly ministry; the second and third to be inspired declarations given by the Holy Spirit through a human instrument. If their Divine origin be denied, then the sceptic is faced with this problem: all three were penned by an unlettered fisherman! Whence did he derive such conceptions?—conceptions before which philosophy is abashed. The sublimity and the comprehensiveness of those brief expressions are without any peer, or even parallel. If they originated from one unlearned, it would be a much greater marvel and miracle than that he wrote them under Divine dictation. Much more might be added by entering into a detailed enumeration of all the wondrous attributes of God, but sufficient has been pointed out to establish how immeasurably grander is the Bible’s delineation of God than anything found in the writings of men.

Our 9th point—Its *representation of man*. The account which the

Bible gives of man is radically different from that supplied by all human compositions. That sin and misery exist, yea, *abound* in the world, is a patent fact, however unpleasant it may be. The daily newspapers report it, the police courts illustrate it, the prisons witness thereto. Nor is this fearful moral disease confined to any one nation, or even limited to any particular strata of society, but is common to all. It is no new epidemic, for it has prevailed in all periods of history. Every human attempt to banish or even curb it has failed. Legislation, education, increased wages and improved environments have produced no change for the better. Sin is too deeply rooted and widely spread in human nature for the remedial efforts of social reformers to extirpate it. The wisest men who reject the Divine explanation of this tragic mystery are completely in the dark as to the real nature and origin of the malady. The Bible is the only book in existence which truly describes the sinful condition of man, accurately diagnoses his case, and ascribes it to an adequate cause. It teaches that as a result of his defection from God at the beginning of human history, he is a fallen, ruined, guilty, lost creature.

The picture which the Scripture gives of man is a deeply humiliating one, radically different from all drawn by human pencils. It is so because human writers describe how man views himself and how he appears in the eyes of his fellows—the Bible alone informs us what man is in the sight of *God!* His unerring Word affirms, “There is none righteous: no, not one” (Rom. 3:10)—not a single member of our race who is conformed to the Divine Rule. That Word solemnly asserts, “There is none that doeth good” (Rom. 3:12) according to the Divine Standard of conduct: not one in his natural condition whose actions proceed from a holy principle, acts out of love to God, or with an eye only to His glory. Such statements as those are much too unpalatable to proud human nature to have been made by any who sought to palm off an alleged communication from Heaven designed for universal acceptance. The Bible also shows why we cannot meet the just requirements of our Maker: each of us is “shapen in iniquity” and conceived in sin (Psa. 51:5). Depravity is transmitted from parent to child: each one enters this world with a defiled nature, with a

bent toward evil.

Since the fountain is polluted, all the streams issuing therefrom are foul. Fallen Adam “begat a son in his own [moral] likeness, after his [sinful] image” (Gen. 5:3), and thus it has been with each succeeding generation. “Man is born like a wild ass’s colt” (Job 11:12)—thoroughly intractable, hating restraint, wanting to have his own way. Think you, my reader, such a description of human nature as that was invented by man? “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies” (Psa. 58:3). Entering this world “alienated from the life of God” (Eph. 4:18), that which is bred in the bone quickly comes out in the flesh. No child requires to be taught to tell lies—it is natural for him to do so, and the more he is left free to “develop his own personality” without “inhibitions,” the more will his delinquency appear. “Man at his best estate is altogether vanity” (Psa. 39:5)—an empty bubble, yea, as vain as a peacock. He is as unsubstantial as the wind. “Men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance they are altogether lighter than vanity” (Psa. 62:9). Man, who so glories in himself, would never originate such an estimate of himself.

Instead of making Satan the author of all our iniquities, the Holy Bible teaches, “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from *within* and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23). External temptations would have no power unless there were something within us to which they could appeal: a lighted match is a menace to a barrel of gunpowder, but not so to one filled with water! That explains why all the efforts of statesmen, educators, and social reformers are unavailing to effect any improvement of man—they are incapable of reaching the seat of his moral disease; at most, they can but place outward restraints on him. It is vain to move the hands of a watch or polish its case if the mainspring be broken. “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9), is another concept which would never originate in the human mind, for it is quite contrary to our ideas and too abasing for our

acceptance. Such a pride-withering delineation of human nature as the Bible furnishes could have been supplied by none other than God Himself.

The Bible not only paints human nature in the colours of truth and reality, but it also reveals how it has come to be what it now is. The existence of moral evil has been acknowledged in every age, for it was far too palpable and potent to be denied, but whence it came and how it originated proved to be a problem which the wisest, without Divine revelation, were unable to solve. To ascribe it to the malignity of matter (as some of the ancients did) is a manifest absurdity, for matter possesses no moral qualities, and could not corrupt the heart and mind, however closely it were placed in connection with them. The Scriptures inform us that, “Man being in honour abideth not” (Psa. 49:12). The Hebrew word for man, there, is *Adam*, and that verse informs us that the father of our race continued not in the state of purity in which God created him. He disobeyed his Maker, lost his innocence by his own fault, and having corrupted himself, has communicated his depravity unto all his descendants. “By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12). The root was vitiated, and therefore every part of the tree springing from it is tainted.

We now come to point 10—*Its teaching on sin*. As might well be expected, the teaching of Holy Writ thereon is as different from that of fallen man’s as is light from darkness. So long as it breaks not forth in open crime, to the injury of their own interests, those of this world regard sin lightly and minimize its seriousness. In many quarters sin is regarded as being merely a species of ignorance, and the sinner is looked upon as more to be pitied than blamed. The various terms which are commonly used as substitutes for *sin* indicate how inadequate and low is the popular conception: infirmities, mistakes, shortcomings, youthful follies they speak of—rather than iniquities, transgressions, disobedience, wickedness. In the Bible sin is never palliated or extenuated, but from first to last its heinousness and enormity are insisted upon. The Word of Truth declares that “sin is very grievous” (Gen.

18:20), that “abominable thing” which the Lord “hates” (Jer. 44:4). It regards sin as being “red like crimson” (Isa. 1:18), and declares it to be “exceeding sinful” (Rom. 7:13). It likens sin to “the poison of asps,” to the “scum” of a seething pot, to the loathsome disease of leprosy.

The Bible declares “the *thought* of foolishness is sin” (Prov. 24:9)—what human mind devised such a standard as that?! It teaches that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Rom. 14:23), so that unbelief and doubting are reprobate. It insists that, “to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17), so that sins of omission, equally with those of commission, are condemned. Yea, sins of *ignorance* are culpable (Lev. 5:17), for with God’s Word in our hands ignorance is inexcusable. Holy Writ teaches that sin is more than an act, namely, an attitude which precedes and produces the action. “Sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4 Revised Version), spiritual anarchy, a state of rebellion against the Lawgiver Himself. It insists that we are sinners by nature before we are sinners by practice. It does not restrict its indictments to any particular class, but declares that “*all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Now a book which uniformly depicts sin as a vile and hideous thing, which strips man of every excuse, which declares that “every imagination of the heart of man is only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5), and which brings in “all the world guilty before God” (Rom. 3:19) could not have been created by fallen creatures, but must have come from the thrice Holy One.

The same applies with equal force to the teaching of the Scriptures concerning *the punishment of sin*. A defective view of sin necessarily leads to an inadequate conception of what is due unto it. Man looks at sin and its deserts solely from the human viewpoint, but the Bible exhibits its malignity in the light of God’s broken Law, and shows it to be one of infinite enormity and guilt, which—where the atoning sacrifice of Christ be rejected—demands and *receives* eternal punishment. The Word of Truth reveals that all who die in their sins will be consciously tormented forever and ever in “Hell fire,” and there will not be a drop of water to relieve the sufferer. The sphere of their anguish is

described as “the blackness of darkness forever,” for not a ray of hope ever enters there, and where there is “wailing and gnashing of teeth.” None but the Holy One, who alone is capable of determining what is due to rebels against Himself, could have lifted the veil and given us a glimpse of the terrible character of sin’s wages. The fact that this solemn truth is so distasteful to all and so widely rejected, and yet occupies a place of so much prominence in the Bible, is one of the many proofs that it is not of human origin.

Let us proceed to the 11th point—Its *historical parts*. Much of the Bible consists of historical narratives, yet both their contents and the style in which they are written at once distinguish them from all others. They cover a period of no less than 4,000 years! The Old Testament contains the oldest records of the world, dating far back of the chronicles of men, yea, of the dimmest traditions of all nations, save the Jewish, and therefore the Scriptures of the Old Testament are many centuries older than any other historical records. Herodotus, who has been styled “the Father of History,” was born a thousand years after Moses!—the penman employed by God in writing the Pentateuch. They not only impart information which none of the writings of antiquity contain, but are in striking contrast with the legendary fables of early Greece and Rome. The Bible alone supplies us with any knowledge of the affairs of this world during its first 15 centuries. Antedating all human historians, God Himself has made known to us how the earth came into existence, how the nations originated, and has given a brief but succinct account of the antediluvian era which terminated in the Flood—all of which matters are entirely beyond our imagination.

The opening verses of Genesis stand in a class entirely by themselves. Their teaching upon the creation of the universe out of nothing is quite peculiar to Holy Writ. Such an idea is not to be found in the most rational and refined systems of secular writers. Even where an intelligent Architect was conceived of, as in the speculations of Plato and Aristotle, yet he was portrayed as working upon existing material, on eternal matter. While the hypothesis favoured by the earlier Egyptians and Babylonians was

that everything, including the stars and this earth, has developed from the inherent power of the sun. For reconditeness of theme and yet simplicity of language, for comprehensiveness of scope and yet brevity of description, for scientific exactitude and yet the absence of technical terms, nothing can be found in all literature which for a moment compares with the opening chapter of the Bible. Its Divine revelation stands out in marked separation, not only from the meaningless cosmogonies of the ancients and the senseless mythologies of the heathen, but equally from the laborious jargon of our moderns who essay to write upon the origin of things, and which are out of date almost as soon as published.

Again—the historical portions of the Bible, alone, supply us with a satisfactory explanation of the present state of the world. As was pointed out earlier, the earth exhibits numerous marks of intelligence and benignity, yet they are neither of unvaried orderliness nor of unmixed benevolence. If on the one hand we behold the fertile fields and beauties of nature, on the other there are icy wastes, vast deserts, death-dealing volcanoes. It is apparent that this earth has experienced some fearful convulsion, by which its original structure has been deranged. It is still subject to earthquakes, devastating tornadoes and tidal waves. Man and this earth are manifestly adapted to each other; nevertheless there are many examples of such discrepancy. Why is this? Certainly not because of any imperfection in the Creator. Then why? The Bible alone accounts for these abnormalities, and it does so in a way without the wisdom and power of the Creator being impeached. It reveals that, as the result of sin, God is now dealing in justice and holiness with His refractory subjects, as well as in goodness and mercy with the creatures of His hand.

The uniqueness of Scripture history appears not only in the disclosures which are made, but also in its *style* and *omissions*. Its method of chronicling events is radically different from all other histories. It only just touches upon, and often entirely ignores, matters which had been of most interest to men of the world, whereas it frequently treats at length of things which they had deemed of no importance. How amazingly brief is the account

given the creating and furnishing of this earth! Man had never restricted *that* to a single chapter, and then have devoted more than 10 others to the tabernacle and its erection. No indeed: the wisdom of this world would have regarded the grand edifice of the universe as worthy of a much fuller description than that of a religious tent! Nothing is told us of the “seven wonders” of the ancient world. Men of renown are passed by in silence, while the pastoral lives of insignificant individuals are narrated. The great empires of antiquity are scarcely alluded to, and then only as they touch the interests of Israel. A principle of selection obtains such as no secular historians adopt, and the events singled out are set down as a plain record of facts, without any attempt of the writers to mingle their own reflections with them.

The *design* of sacred history is entirely different from that of all others. Its aim is not simply to preserve the memory of certain occurrences, but to teach us the knowledge of God and His salvation, and to show us our deep need of the same. Its purpose is not merely to narrate bare facts, but rather impart important moral instruction. It does very much more than convey us a knowledge of events, an account of which is nowhere else obtainable—the agency of *God* in connection with those events is constantly brought out. That which uninspired historians either overlook or deliberately ignore is made prominent, namely, the Divine displeasure against sin. The historical portions of Scripture display to us throughout, the excellence of the Divine character, and set before us His governing of this world. Sacred history is very much more than an authentic record of human affairs: it exhibits the perversity and folly, the instability and unbelief of human nature, and reveals the springs from which our actions proceed. In its narratives the thoughts and secret motives of men are discovered, and that in a manner and to an extent which none but the great Searcher of hearts was capable of doing. The real character of man is unveiled as in no other writings.

“The Bible describes, in action and exhibition, the perfections of Jehovah as fully as the proclamation in which He declares Himself to be longsuffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. It delineates the deceitfulness and desperate

wickedness of the heart, as forcibly and distinctly as the annunciation's of the Prophets, when they aloud and spare not" (Robert Haldane). It emphasizes the providential interposition of God in human affairs and His ways with men. Therein we are shown what a mad and bitter thing it is for either an individual or a nation to forsake the living God—and, contrariwise, what blessings attend those who walk in subjection and fellowship with Him. Consequently its narratives are of great practical value: not only in a general way by showing how God punishes sin and rewards righteousness, but by specific and personal illustrations of the same. Vital ethical and spiritual lessons are thereby inculcated, and from the lives of different individuals we are taught what examples are worthy of our emulation and what evils and dangers it will be our wisdom and profit to avoid. Thus those sacred narratives afford us scope for constant meditation. Into the inspired history is most wondrously interwoven all the doctrines and duties promulgated by Christ and His Apostles.

But the grand design of the Old Testament was to make manifest the need for, the nature of, and the various preparations made unto the redemptive work of Christ. Everything else was subordinated unto an anticipation of the all-important advent of God's Son to this earth and the inauguration of the Christian era. As there is one central object in the heavens which far surpasses in glory all other planets, so the Person and mission of the Lord Jesus Christ is accorded the place of pre-eminence in the Sacred Volume. *That* was what regulated the principle of selection as to what should or should not be recorded in the Bible. Hence it is that the history of Adam and his posterity during the first 2,000 years is condensed into but eleven chapters, and why very little indeed is said about them—special attention being directed only unto those individuals from which the promised Messiah was to spring. For the same reason, from Genesis 12 onwards we are occupied almost entirely with the history of Abraham and his descendants. The lives of the Patriarchs are described in much more detail, that we may perceive the sovereignty and grace of God in His choice of and dealings with them; and that we may obtain a better view of the stock from which Christ, according to His humanity, was to

issue.

Most of the Old Testament is a history of the nation of Israel, and it, too, is written in a manner quite different from all others, for as one has well said, “It is recorded by the unerring hand of Truth.” No effort is made to magnify the virtues of Israel, nor is there the least attempt to hide their vices. Had those records been composed by uninspired Jews, then obviously they would have laboured to present the most attractive picture possible of their own people, and therefore no reference would had been made unto their base ingratitude and hard-heartedness. Particularly would a forgery have sought to impress other nations with the might, valour, and military genius of the Jews. But so far from that, their faint-heartedness and defeats are frequently recorded. The capture of Jericho and the conquest of Canaan are not attributed to the brilliance of Joshua and the bravery of his men, but to the Lord’s showing Himself strong in their behalf. Nor did the victories granted them proceed from partiality or caprice, for only while they walked in obedience to God’s Law did He crown their efforts with success. It is noteworthy that the sacred history of the Old Testament ends at the point where credible secular history begins, for the occupation of Palestine by the Persians, Greeks and Romans is recorded by Xenophon and his successors.

And finally, point 12—*Its typical teachings*. Since the incarnation of His Son, with the attendant blessings of redemption, was the grand object contemplated by God from the dawn of human history, He ordered everything in the early ages of the world to pave the way for the same, particularly in the educating of His people concerning it. It pleased God to first preach the Gospel to them by means of parables, by symbolical instruction and typical occurrences which foreshadowed the Person and work of the future Redeemer. Therein lies the key which opens many a chapter of the Old Testament, which to those lacking, it appears not only of little interest but unworthy of a place in a Divine revelation. But once their scope and significance be recognized, we perceive in those ancient institutions and religious rites such a wondrous anticipation of and perfect correspondence with what is set forth more openly in the New Testament as no human wisdom

could have devised. There is a pre-arranged harmony between type and antitype as no mortal could invent; a prophetic meaning in them which only God could have given. The fitness of the types and the agreement of the antitypes lie not so much in their external resemblance as in the essential oneness of the ideas they embody and express and their relations to each other.

The types are so many outward emblems and visible signs appointed by God to portray spiritual objects. They were so constructed and arranged as to express in symbolical form the great truths and principles which are common alike to all dispensations, such as the holiness of God and its requirements, the sinfulness of sin and its polluting effects, the necessity for a Mediator. Under the Levitical ceremonies there was set forth a palpable exhibition of sin and salvation, the purification of the heart, and the dedication of the person and life unto God. His method of revelation was first to portray heavenly things by means of earthly, to make known eternal realities through temporal events, to exhibit to the physical senses what was later presented more directly to the mind. Thereby was indicated on a lower plane what was to be accomplished on a far higher one. Visible things were made to image and prepare the way for the disclosure of the more spiritual mysteries of Christ's kingdom. In that way the earlier dispensations were made the servants for getting ready the stage of things to come. God so modelled the institutions of Israel's worship as to set before their eyes the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, the one being a stepping-stone to the other. During the immaturity of God's family celestial things were more easily grasped when set forth in a corporate form than by abstract statements about them.

The events recorded in the Old Testament were actual occurrences, yet they also presaged the more excellent things which were promised. Divine Providence so moulded human history that in many instances there was made a typical representation of the work of redemption. That was set forth, in its broad outlines, in the days of Noah. The fearful flood which God sent upon the world of the ungodly made known His intense hatred of sin and the punishment which it entails. Yet before that

judgment fell, merciful warning was made and time given for repentance; but the wicked repented not. In the ark we behold the gracious provision which God made for those who feared Him. Noah and his family sought refuge therein, and accordingly they were preserved from the overflowing scourge. That ark was the *only* place of deliverance. It was therefore a prophetic sign of Christ as the sole Saviour of sinners, and the security of those who sheltered therein shadowed forth the deliverance from the wrath to come of those who flee to Christ. There was room in the ark for all who availed themselves of it, and the Redeemer has promised to receive and cast out none who come to Him. The dove sent forth by Noah was an emblem of the Holy Spirit, and her return to the ark with an olive leaf in her mouth spoke of that assurance which believers have that God is now at peace with them.

The whole history of Israel was a typical one and was made to adumbrate the experience of God's people in the days of their unregeneracy, the provisions made by God for their deliverance, and the complete salvation which He effects for them. The cruel bondage suffered by the Hebrews in Egypt under the merciless oppression of Pharaoh supplies a vivid picture of our natural servitude unto sin and Satan. Their crying in the brick kilns and their groaning under the whips of their taskmasters spoke of those smiting of conscience and sorrows of heart when God convicts us of our rebellion against Him and when He makes sin to become exceedingly burdensome and bitter to our souls. The utter inability of those Israelite slaves to free themselves from the galling yoke of their masters portrayed the helplessness of the natural man, his complete impotence to deliver himself from the dominion of sin. The sovereign grace of God in raising up a deliverer in the person of Moses pointed forward to the Redeemer emancipating His people. The appointment of the lamb and the efficacy of its sprinkled blood to shelter from the angel of death on the Passover night revealed yet more clearly what is now proclaimed by the Gospel. While the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts at the Red Sea, and Israel's sight of the "Egyptians dead upon the sea shore" (Exod. 14:30), told of the completeness of the Christian's salvation—the putting away of his sins from before the face of

God.

The subsequent history of Israel after their miraculous exodus from Egypt while on their way to Canaan foreshadowed, in a remarkable and unmistakable manner, the experiences of Christians from the time they are born again until their entrance into Heaven. Israel's long journey across the wilderness supplies a graphic picture of the believer's passage through this world. Once the heart has been really captivated and won by the loveliness of Christ, the things of time and sense lose their charm and this world becomes a dreary desert to him. As the wilderness, with its sterile sands and waterless wastes, was a place of trials unto the Hebrews, so this world is made the place of testing unto the graces of the saints. But as God ministered unto Israel of old, so He has made full provision to meet *our* every need. They had the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night to direct their course, and we have the Word of God as a lamp unto our feet and the Holy Spirit to interpret it for us. As God furnished them with manna from on high, so He has given us "exceeding great and precious promises" to feed upon. As He caused water to flow from the smitten rock for Israel, so He now revives the souls of the contrite. As He enabled them to overcome Amalek, so His grace is sufficient for us.

That remarkable feature of the Old Testament Scriptures which we are now dealing with is a very comprehensive one, and a large volume might readily be written thereon. The whole of the Mosaic ritual possessed a typical and spiritual significance. The tabernacle in which they worshipped was an emblematic representation of Christ and His Church, and by ordaining that more than a dozen chapters should be devoted to an account of its structure, its furniture, and its setting up, while but a single chapter describes the creating and peopling of this earth! This tells us that in the Divine estimation, the latter is of infinitely more importance than the former. The world was made *for* Christ (Col. 1:16) and His people (2 Cor. 4:15), as a platform upon which the celestial hierarchies "might be known by [or rather "through"—*dia*] the Church, the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10). The tabernacle was God's dwelling-place in the midst of Israel. Its holy courts, its

sacred vessels, the priesthood which ministered there: the sacrifices they offered, were, to their minutest detail, all, so many object lessons brought down to our finite capacity, setting forth the grand truths of Divine revelation, without which we could not so fully understand what is set forth in the New Testament.

Many of the outstanding characters of the Old Testament adumbrated Christ in the varied relations He sustained. Adam presaged His federal headship (Rom. 5:14), Moses His prophetic office (Deut. 18:18), Melchizedek His priestly (Psa. 110:4), David His kingly (Rev. 5:5). The checkered experiences through which Joseph passed foreshadowed Christ both in His humiliation and His exaltation. Joshua typified Him as the Securer of the inheritance. The miraculous birth of Isaac prefigured the supernatural incarnation; the murder of Abel, His death; the budding of Aaron's rod, His resurrection. Every perfection of Christ's character, each office that He sustained, all the aspects of His redemptive work—Godwards, manwards, and sin-ward—were indicated by or through one and another of the historical persons of the Patriarchal and Mosaic eras. That so very much in the Jewish Scriptures should be adapted to image the Person and history of the Saviour cannot be accounted for on any other hypothesis than that God Himself is the Author of them. The spiritual instruction conveyed by the Old Testament narratives, their deeper and hidden meanings, the great number and variety of the types, their anticipations of and perfect accord with what is taught in the New Testament, clearly demonstrate that Judaism and Christianity—so dissimilar in their externals, so opposite in their incidentals, yet uniting in their essentials—both belong to the same Lord.

6. The Holy Bible Teaches the Way of Salvation

The uniqueness of the Bible appears most conspicuously here, as anyone may ascertain for himself by comparing the teaching of the so-called “sacred books” of all human religions. The difference between what is revealed in the Scripture of Truth and the systems of men upon the attainment of holiness and eternal felicity is like unto that between light and darkness. At no other

point does the celestial nature of the Bible shine forth more unmistakably than in the plan of redemption which is made known therein. The good news which it heralds to ruined and lost sinners is such as was undiscoverable by the light of nature, yet is authenticated by its own intrinsic excellence. The Gospel which is published in the Bible attests itself by virtue of its matchless merits. It discovers its Divine origin by a proclamation of truth which is self-evident. There is no need for an appeal to be made unto any external testimonies, for a true perception of the Gospel demonstrates its Divine nature. That which is affirmed in the Gospel is manifest by its own assertion as something far surpassing all the inventions of the human mind.

The Gospel itself is light, for its central Object is “the Light of the world” (John 8:12). The advent of Jesus Christ to this earth was predicted as the rising of “the Sun of righteousness” (Mal. 4:2), and the universal spread of His Gospel is represented under the figure of that grand fountain of natural light diffusing His beams over every part of the earth (Psa. 19:1-5, and compare with Rom. 10:17, 18). Now light necessarily *proves itself* for it is self-evident, needing nothing to manifest it. It serves to discover other objects, but requires nothing to discover itself. “Whatsoever doth make manifest *is* light” (Eph. 5:13), and the Gospel makes manifest the perfections of God, setting forth an open discovery of them before our minds, beyond any other of His wondrous works. Therefore is this Divine revelation, this message of glad tidings unto condemned criminals, designated “the glorious Gospel of the blessed God” (1 Tim. 1:11) because His ineffable glories are there so brightly displayed. The consummate wisdom of God is evidenced far more eminently in the work of redemption than in any of His marvels in creation or in Providence, so that none but the blind can be unconvinced thereby.

The Gospel evinces its Divinity by the solution which it offers to a problem for which the combined wisdom of all mankind can furnish no adequate solution. That problem is succinctly stated thus: “How, then, can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?” (Job 25:4). The problem is twofold: legal, and moral, respecting man’s relation to the Divine

Law, and his fitness for the celestial Temple. Man is a transgressor of the Divine Law. Every member of the human race is such. Anything short of perfect and perpetual obedience to the Divine commandments in thought and word and deed constitutes one a transgressor. Measured by such a standard, each of us must plead guilty, for we come far short of it. The Law condemns us: how, then, can we be acquitted? On what possible ground can the righteous Judge declare us to be entitled to the award of the Law? But more—we are fallen and sinful creatures, and as such unfit to dwell in the immediate presence of the ineffably holy God. How shall we get rid of our defilement? How do we obtain that unsullied purity to make us meet for Heaven?

Let us briefly amplify the several elements which enter into that problem.

1. The requirements of God's Law. They are founded upon the perfections of its Framer, and therefore nothing less than spotless holiness is demanded of us. Negatively, it proscribes not only wrong deeds and corrupt counsels of the heart, but—as no human legislation ever did—it also prohibits evil desires and propensities, so that all unchaste imaginations are forbidden, as also the spirit discontent, envy, revenge—anything which is contrary to the perfections of God Himself is interdicted. Positively, the Divine Law demands from us an entire, unreserved, and uninterrupted yielding of soul and body, with all their faculties and powers, unto God and His service. It requires not only that we love Him with all our heart and strength, constantly, but that love to Him must actuate and regulate all our actions unvaryingly. Nor is that unreasonable, for we are all God's creatures, made for His glory, and originally created without sin, in His own image and likeness.

2. The charge preferred against us: "there is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10). Not a single member of our fallen race measures up to the holy standard which our Maker and Governor has set before us—not one who meets the just requirements of His Law. Nor is there one who has made a genuine, wholehearted, and sustained effort to do so. So far from subordinating all his interests to the will of God, the natural man follows the desires and devices of his own heart, giving place to God only so far as that is pleasing

to himself. Though he owes his very life to His daily care, yet he has no concern for His glory. He is ungrateful, unruly, ungodly, abusing God's mercies, despising His reproofs, trampling under foot His commandments. And therefore "all the world stands guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19).

3. The sentence of the Law. This is clearly stated in the Divine Word. "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them" (Gal. 3:10). Whoever violates a single precept of that Law exposes himself to the displeasure of God, and to His just punishment as the expression of that displeasure. No allowance is made for ignorance, no distinction is made between persons, no relaxation of its strictness is possible. "The soul that sinneth it shall die," is its inexorable pronouncement. No exception is made whether the transgressor be young or old, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile: the wages of sin is death, for "the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. 1:18).

4. The judge Himself is inflexibly just, "that will by no means clear the guilty" (Exod. 34:7). In the high court of Divine justice, the Lord interprets the Law in its sternest aspect and judges rigidly according to the strictness of its letter. "He is a holy God, He is a jealous God: He will not forgive your transgressions and your sins" (Josh. 24:19). God is inexorably righteous, and will not show any partiality either to the Law or to its violator. "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things .., who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. 2:2, 6). He has determined that His Law shall be faithfully upheld and its sanctions strictly enforced.

5. The sinner is unquestionably guilty. It is not merely that he has infirmities, or that he has done his very best, yet failed to attain unto absolute perfection. He has set at naught God's authority, and has proved a proud rebel rather than a loyal subject. He has gone his own way and gratified himself, without any concern for the Divine honour. Morally respectable he may be in the sight of his fellows, but a criminal before the Divine tribunal. It is impossible for any man to clear himself of the solemn charge:

he can neither disprove the accusations which the Law prefers against him, nor vindicate himself for the perpetration of them.

Here, then, is how the case stands. The Law demands flawless and continuous obedience to its precepts in heart and in act, in motive and performance. God charges us with having failed to meet those just requirements, and declares us guilty. The Law then pronounces sentence of condemnation, and demands the infliction of the death penalty. The One before whose tribunal we stand is omniscient, and cannot be imposed upon; He is inflexibly just and swayed by no sentimental considerations. We are unable to refute the charges of the Law, unable to vindicate our sinful conduct, unable to offer any reparation or atonement for our crimes. Truly our case is desperate to the highest degree.

Here, then, is the problem. How can God justify the wilful transgressor of His Law without justifying his sins? How can He receive him into His favour without being the Patron of a rebel? How can God deliver him from the penalty of His broken Law without going back upon His word that He “will by no means clear the guilty?” How can life be granted to the culprit without repealing the sentence, “the soul that sinneth it shall die?” How can mercy be shown to the sinner without justice being flouted? That is a problem which none of the jurists of this earth could solve, one which must forever have baffled every finite intelligence. Yet, blessed be His name, God has, in His consummate wisdom, devised a way whereby the chief of sinners can be dealt with by Him as though he were entirely innocent. Nay, more—He pronounces him righteous, up to the required standard of the Law, and entitled to its reward of eternal life. The Gospel provides a plain, satisfactory, and glorious solution to that problem, and therein evidences its *Divinity*. To that solution we now direct the reader’s attention.

That solution may be summed up in one word, namely, *substitution*, though a million words could not express all the stupendous wonders attending the same. God decreed that salvation should be provided for transgressors and, in order that His righteousness might not be compromised, determined that Another should take their place, and in their stead make a full

satisfaction to the Divine Law, by rendering a flawless obedience to it. But where was to be found one suitable for this task, for, first, he must be a *sinless* being? There was not a single candidate among the sons of men, for the whole human race was guilty. From whence, then, could a substitute be found? Suitable, we say, for not only must he be without sin, but his obedience to the Law must possess such super-abounding *worth* as to pay the debts not of one sinner, but of *all* sinners for whom it was vicariously performed. His obedience must needs possess more merit than their total demerits. That necessarily excluded all the angels, for as creatures of God they themselves were obligated to render perfect obedience to Him, and in so doing merely performed their duty; consequently no *merit* attached to the same, and so there was no excess for others.

Further, none would be suitable save one who could act in his own absolute right, one who in himself was neither a subject nor a servant, otherwise he could merit nothing for others: he that has nothing that is absolutely his own cannot pay any price to redeem others. He must be a person possessed of infinite dignity and worthiness, so that he might be capable of meriting infinite blessing. He must be endowed with infinite power and wisdom to qualify him for such a stupendous undertaking. He must be one of unchanging integrity and immutable faithfulness, or he could not be depended upon for such a momentous task. He must be one of matchless mercy and love to willingly serve as the Substitute and die in the room of fallen and depraved men. It was also requisite that he should be a person infinitely dear unto God the Father, in order to give an infinite value to his transaction in God's esteem. Now where, my reader, was such a one to be found? Had that question been propounded to the ablest of men, yea, to a conclave of angels, it had remained unanswered forever.

But "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke 18:27). That problem which was far above the compass of all creatures was solved by Omniscience. The surpassing goodness and infinite wisdom of God selected *His own Son* for the undertaking, for He was in every way fit, possessing in Himself all the requisite qualifications. But here another problem,

no less than the former, presented itself. The Son was absolute Sovereign in Himself: how then could He serve? He was infinitely above all law: how then could He perform obedience to law? He was the Lord of Glory, worshipped by all the heavenly hosts: how then could He be substituted in the place of worms of the dust? Moreover, as their Substitute, He must not only fulfil all the preceptive requirements of the Law, but He must also take upon Him their sins and expiate their guilt; He must suffer the Law's condemnation, endure its penalty, receive the awful wages of sin. But how could One of such infinite dignity enter such depths of humiliation? How could the ineffably Holy One be judicially "made sin" for them? How could the Blessed One be made a curse? How could the Lord of Life die?

As another has said, "If God had declared who the person is that should do this work and had gone no further, no creature could have thought which way this person could have performed the work. If God had told them that His own Son must be the Redeemer, and that He alone was a fit person for the work, and that He was a person every way sufficient for it, but had proposed *to them* to contrive a way how this fit and sufficient Person should succeed, we must conclude that all created understandings would have been utterly at a loss." Yet the Gospel makes known the wondrous and glorious solution to that problem, a solution which had never entered the mind of man to conceive, and in the revelation made of that salvation the Gospel bears unmistakably the impression of Divine wisdom and carries its own evidence of its Divinity.

The manifold wisdom of God determined that His Son should become the Representative and *Surety* of sinners and so be substituted in their place. But who else would have thought of such a thing: that the Son should occupy the place of rebels and become the Object of Divine wrath! And in order for the Son to be the sinner's Surety, He must render satisfaction to the Law in man's own nature! What created intelligence had deemed such a thing possible: that a Divine Person should become *incarnate* and be both God and man in one Person! Had God made known such a marvel, what finite intelligence could have devised a way whereby

the Son should become flesh *without* partaking of the pollution of fallen human nature! Not only that the infinite should become finite, the Ancient of Days an *infant*, but that He should be born of a woman without being tainted by the virus of sin! No angel had ever dreamed of the miracle of the virgin birth, whereby an immaculate human nature was produced in Mary's womb by the operation of the Holy Spirit, so that "a holy thing" (Luke 1:35), spotless and impeccable, was born by her! But that was no mystery to Divine wisdom. The Son of God became the Son of man.

And so we might continue, paragraph after paragraph, pointing out that the circumstances of Christ's birth, the details of His life, the reception which He met with from the world, the character of His mission, the nature of His death, His triumphant resurrection from the tomb, His ascension into Heaven, His there being crowned with honour and glory, seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, now reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords—each and all of which transcend the powers of human imagination. But a word requires to be added upon *the application of Christ's work to His people*. How shall they partake of the benefits of His redemption without robbing Him of His glory? By what means shall their enmity be subdued and their wills be brought into subjection to Him? That was a further problem which no man could have solved. It is by the Spirit's communicating to them a new nature, making them sensible of their wretchedness and need, and causing them to stretch forth the beggar's hand and receive eternal life as a *free* gift. Though indwelling sin be not removed in this life, Christ's love has so won their hearts that it is now their fervent desire and sincere endeavour to live daily so as to please and glorify Him.

Now we submit to the critical reader that the Gospel is stamped with the Divine glory, that the wisdom of God appears conspicuously in the way of salvation that it exhibits. In its unique contrivances, its accomplished designs, its glorious ends, its blessed fruits, its stupendous wonder in transforming lawless rebels into loving and loyal subjects, we have that which is worthy of Omniscience. Never had it entered into the heart of man to

conceive not only of Hell-deserving sinners being saved in a way suited to all the Divine perfections, but which also provides for their being personally conformed unto the image of God's Son, made "like Him" in holiness and happiness, made "joint heirs" with Him and eternal sharers of His glory. When impartially examined, it is self-evident that the Gospel is not of human origin. Certainly the Jews did not invent it, for they were its bitterest enemies. Nor the Gentiles, for they knew nothing about it until the Apostles preached it to them. Nor did the Apostles themselves, for at first they were offended at it (Matthew 16:21, 22). The Gospel is of God: thanks be unto Him for His unspeakable gift!

In what way shall depraved and guilty creatures be delivered from wickedness and punishment and restored to holiness and happiness, is the most difficult as well as important question which can engage the mind. Such an inquiry is of no interest to a pleasure-loving trifler, but is of vast moment to the sin-convicted soul. He knows that God is justly displeased with him, but how He shall become reconciled and receive him into His favour, passes his comprehension. A sense of guilt makes him afraid of God: how shall the cause of that fear be removed? Those are difficulties which human religions do not resolve and before which reason is silent. No amount of present repentance and reformation can cleanse the blotted pages of the past. When brought face to face with the dread realities of death, judgment, and eternity, the soul is appalled. A vague hope in the general mercy of God suffices not, for that leaves His justice unsatisfied. The Gospel alone provides a satisfactory solution to these problems and peace for the burdened conscience.

Neither sorrowing nor amendment of conduct can right the wrongs of which the sinner is guilty before God, nor can he by any self-effort change himself for the better, still less fit himself for Heaven. A sinner may be filled with bitter remorse for his vicious excesses, but tears will not heal his diseased body or deliver him from an early grave. The gambler will condemn himself for his folly, but no self-recriminations will recover his lost estate or save him from spending his remaining years in poverty. Thus it is evident that when it comes to the blotting out of his iniquities

before God and the obtaining of a new nature which renders him fit for the Divine presence, man must look outside himself. But where is he to look for deliverance *from himself* for sin has made fallen man averse to fellowship with the Holy One? How then shall he desire, seek after, delight in that which is repellent to him? He is bidden to look unto One who is “mighty to save” (Isa. 63:1). The Gospel presents a Divine Physician who can heal the moral leper, yea, give eternal life to one who is spiritually dead. The Lord Jesus is “able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by Him” (Heb. 7:25). His salvation is an all-sufficient and everlasting one, freely offered, “without money and without price.” Such a Saviour, such a salvation, is of no human invention; therefore the Book which makes them known must be Divine.

It may be asked, If the Gospel be self-evident, why do not all men believe it? The answer is, “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19). The great majority deliberately close their eyes and steel their hearts against its appeal, because that appeal clashes with their corruptions and worldly interests. Not until men solemnly contemplate the character of God, their relation to Him as the subjects of His government, and their utter unpreparedness for His awful tribunal, will they seriously consider the claims of His Gospel. As food is relished most by the famished, as health is valued highest by those who have suffered a painful and protracted illness, so the Gospel is only welcomed by those who realize they are under the curse of a sin-hating God, stricken with a moral malady which no human remedy can relieve, hastening to hopeless eternity. Nevertheless, he who believes not shall be damned.

The fourth of eight booklets.

Booklet Four Contents

Part Two

4. The Holy Bible Declares it Comes from God Himself

5. The Holy Bible is Unique

6. The Holy Bible Teaches the Way of Salvation

