

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bib-sacra\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php)

THE  
BIBLIOTHECA SACRA,  
NO. XLVI.  
AND  
AMERICAN BIBLICAL REPOSITORY,  
NO. XCVIII.

---

APRIL, 1855.

---

ARTICLE I.

THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF DIVINE INSPIRATION.

By Eleazar T. Fitch, D. D., New Haven, Ct.

THE first outspoken word of God — *ὁ λόγος προφορικός* — was the creation of the outer world, in which man was to live and behold the expressions of his eternal power and godhead. His first inspiration in man was the breathing, by creative power, into the outer body of man the unseen spirit within — *ὁ λόγος ἐνδιάθετος* — which, consisting of conscious thought, feeling and will, spake to man within of the like Infinite Essence of God.

But the Scriptures claim more. They speak of a word, superinduced upon these original works of creation and powers of the soul; a new word, and a new inspiration, proceeding, not from the existing powers of nature, around and within man, as the cause, but directly from the power of the invisible spirit of God; a *supernatural* and *extraordinary* word and inspiration from himself, given to mankind through chosen prophets and his elected Son, in a public ministry of the word and a written record of the inspired revelations. God spake by his prophets and his Son. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God — *θεόπνευστος* — breathed from God.

These are the claims to a supernatural and extraordinary inspiration of God which are set before us in the Scriptures.

But, starting from a point back of these particular claims, and comprehensive of all possible claims and teachings in our race, the subject of this Article is: "The True Doctrine of Divine Inspiration."<sup>1</sup>

The subject is so general in the statement as to open a very wide field of thought and research. A doctrine is that which is taught by any teacher. There may be, on a particular subject, many differing or opposing views taught by separate men or classes of men. How, then, where different teachers set forth different views, shall any one undertake to set forth that which is alone the true doctrine; how show that it is the true; how show that all others, whether actual or possible, are false; and how show this with convincing authority? The individual to whom is assigned this task, must found his teaching on the reality of things; and, therefore, seek and find, for his own conviction and the conviction of others, those evidences of what the reality is which exist in immovable facts made known by inward consciousness, the external perception of the senses, the self-evident principles of inward reason, the authentic statement of credible human testimony, or the infallible testimony of God.

Again, the field of inquiry before us is not merely what constitutes true doctrine on any given subject, but on the one subject of Divine inspiration. We have opened before us now all the variety of teachings which have been set forth by men on the subject of Divine inspiration.

The word *inspiration*, derived from the act of breathing, is employed as a figurative representation of that act of God by which, at the creation of man, he infused into his body an animating soul; that unseen spirit within, which thinks and wills and feels. As that unseen and living essence is represented as a thing breathed into us, it receives the name of the thing breathed, *spiritus* or spirit. Now as God has made the spirit within us in its essence to consist, like his own, in thought, will and feeling, the term *spirit* is used to denote, as well as our own, the like essence of thought, will and feeling, in which consists his unseen and Infinite Being. He is a Spirit. "There is a spirit in man and the inspiration," in-breathing, "of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Now, as the living powers of

<sup>1</sup> The substance of this Article was given as a *Concio ad Clerum* upon a subject, assigned by the General Association of Connecticut, and stated in the above terms.

thought, will and feeling are given of God to men in different degrees, the term *inspiration* in common usage is applied, comparatively, to denote an unusual degree of power and extent pertaining to these gifts in certain individuals. So when individuals are occasionally, in the providence of God, greatly excited or elevated in any of these native powers, they are commonly said to be inspired, at the time, with elevated and noble thoughts, or with a strong and unyielding purpose of will, or with ecstasy or enthusiasm in emotions. Here we have, coming into our language, the inspiration of the skilful artist, Bezaleel and Aholiab; the powerful thought and earnest purpose breathed into the eloquence of the orator; the songs of poets, awaked and inspired at the fount of feeling, to strike with sympathy each chord of feeling in kindred hearts. Under the same term have mankind spoken of the vaticinations and frantic excitements of the priests and priestesses of idolatry.

Besides inspiration in this higher relation of the Deity toward man, the same term is used in the relation of man to man; one breathing, by language and example, the thoughts, the purposes, the feelings of his own soul into the soul of another.

But all these are mere natural inspirations, in-breathings, which cover necessarily the whole ground of the things into which God has breathed life and motion by creative power; such as the movements of worlds, the life of growth in plants, the life of sense and perception in animals, and the essential life of reason, will and feeling, in rational souls. The established modes of life that he has inbreathed and upholds in ourselves and all these living existences around us, all proceed in accordance with fixed and faithful ordinances assigned to them by his wisdom from the beginning; and are thus comprised within the province and regular course of nature. Now, as this will be conceded by all who admit the existence of this Infinite Being, by all with whom we have to deal in our argument, we bring the subject before us within the limits of the question: What is the true teaching respecting the *supernatural* and *extraordinary* impartation of the power of God to men? Has it constituted any prophets among them to teach, directly from his mouth, his mind and will? Has it secured any records to be made by prophets, so employed, to remain as the permanent expression of his mind and will for the instruction of all who choose to be taught of God in all generations? Does that super-

natural and extraordinary power now operate without the inspired record, or even with it, to communicate any direct revelation or truth to believers?

What we have said already, will show the way in which we are to arrive, if ever, at the true doctrine and teaching on this subject. For, whether any divinely inspired prophets have arisen in our world in any past age of its history, or whether any are existing and active in the world at present, is a question not to be decided merely by our personal consciousness, or the observation of our senses, or the deductions of reason, or the testimony of our fellow-men. We say *merely*; for, if God himself directly inspires a prophet with some word or message for others, the evidence of personal consciousness must be confined to the breast of that prophet alone. Nor can the observations of sense in others discern the acting of God within the mind of the prophet; they can take cognizance only of the outward declarations of the prophet, and those visible miracles accompanying them, by which God himself testifies to his inspiration by immediate witnesses. Nor can reason and conscience, from the self-evident axioms on which they proceed in their cognitions, make out beforehand, that God would employ the given prophet and inspire him with the given message; they can only deduce *à posteriori*, from the testimony of God given to the prophet by infallible signs of omnipotence, omniscience and holiness, that he has employed the prophet to speak in his name. Nor can human testimony avail anything in the case, unless God first gives his own testimony before eye-witnesses; it can proceed with authority only from eye-witnesses of those facts which God himself produces, in testimony to the inspiration of the prophet in their presence; which facts the witnesses may hand over with authority to others who were not witnesses themselves, who live in other places or in other times. Nothing, therefore, but the testimony of God himself can furnish evidence of what is the true doctrine of his supernatural inspiration. He must give extraordinary inspiration, before it exists. He must show what that inspiration is, and where it exists, before we can learn what is the true doctrine.

We are now brought to the field of Divine testimony. Has God himself given us his testimony concerning any supernatural and extraordinary inspiration of his Spirit, from which we can learn the true doctrine on the subject? If so, what is the doc-

trine which that testimony sets forth? The question before us is twofold: Is there a testimony from God? What does that testimony say?

Is there any testimony from God, in existence, that he has employed any prophets among men, and furnished them supernaturally with any revelations of his own mind and will?

Now, though many deny that it is necessary for God thus supernaturally to interpose in the affairs of our world, and some even impiously deny that he can do it, it is clear that the feelings of our dependent race, in their guilt and fears, predispose them to expect it; and the great majority of our world claim it to be fact. The Pagan world have claimed to hear his voice in the sacred books, the oracles and divinations of their priests; the Mohammedan, in the person and Koran of the Arabian prophet; the Jew, in Moses and the prophets, and the writings of the Old Testament; the Christian, in Christ and the apostles, and the writings of the New Testament; completing the system of revelation begun in the Old Testament; and, under Christianity itself, or rather by its side, corrupt leaders, like Mohammed, have filed off with their followers, pretending to new revelations from the Spirit.

Now, as there is but one Infinite Spirit from whom all things proceed, it cannot be that all these various and discordant claims to his supernatural inspiration have proceeded from his being. In order to discharge our personal obligations to our Creator and ourselves, as well as our race, we must not without examination, accept all as equally true, that *cannot be*; nor discard all as equally false, that *may not be*; the witnesses for God and duty may be at hand. Let us rather search and see. Something may come forth to us from Nazareth with life eternal from our God.

But, before we search these claims, let us look awhile at the positions assumed by those who reject them all on the grounds of prejudgment, that supernatural communications from God are not possible, or, if possible, are superfluous.

They who believe in the existence of the Infinite God, and in the fact that by his power he created all things at the first, will not deny that it is possible for him to transcend, by his immediate act, the powers and properties of things in nature, or the laws upheld by his own providence over the created universe. He may do this in respect to an individual thing or per-

son, at a given time, and not disturb at all those general and fixed ordinances which give his creatures confidence, and motive to action, in the stability of things. He may change a portion of water by an instantaneous act into wine, and not disturb or change at all the fixed properties of such substances. He may raise a man instantaneously from death to life, and not change at all the natural causes of life or death. He may communicate the gift of a new language to a man instantaneously, without changing at all the general laws by which languages are naturally acquired in the world. He may, by direct testimony from his Spirit, communicate to a man some portion of his own knowledge or will, which, from other evidences man has not acquired, or may never acquire. Whether it will be wise for him to do this in any case, he can judge and see for himself. We are to abide his expressed judgment and testimony, if he gives it. If any one, therefore, denies a miracle or supernatural revelation from God, to be possible, he denies, virtually, that there is a God who ruleth and judgeth over the kingdom of nature. To those who hold such an atheistic opinion, all we have to say as we advance in the argument is, that a God of such power may exist independently of their opinions about it; and that it is well for them to inquire whether there are not such facts as give convincing evidence of it; and whether they may not offend his holiness and slight his mercy, and incur the retributive consequences, if they fend off all serious inquiry into the facts that are given in evidence.

But there is a far larger class of minds who deny any occasion for God so to interpose to guide man to religious truth and duty. They assert that God may be sufficiently known from the light of the first and universal revelation of himself, in the works of his creation around man and within man; that the great truths taught in the Bible are taught by the light of reason and conscience; and that its teachings being dependent on human tradition and testimony are further removed from credibility than those of ever-present and ever-living nature. Many talk thus, in our day, of receiving the mind and will and feelings of the Infinite Spirit into their own, from his inspiration of a book, older than the Bible, the book of universal nature. Now that man has by nature capacities to apprehend the first principles of truth and duty, and that the works of God furnish him with indications of the Divine mind and will, is not to be denied. For

if man could not, from intuition into his own spirit, know what is the essence of truth, righteousness, goodness, in a spiritual being, he could not possibly know God, or be under obligation and accountability to him, much less receive any revelation of his mind, his will, or his feelings with any evidence of its authority. But the possibility to know God in nature being admitted, it is a possibility to know more of him in fresh and new revelations direct from his Infinite Spirit. And it does not appear that, with the teachings of nature alone before him, man will attain to a sufficient knowledge of God to secure his true spiritual welfare in a moral conformity to God.

If God should condescend to come before man in the form of a personal teacher, employing human speech, and giving unmistakable tokens that himself was the speaker, he surely could interpret to man the voice of nature itself more distinctly, with more authority, with a more impressive force, than man alone would do it, and profit man with lessons superior to what he would otherwise attain. The advantage might be much, every way; since language from that source may do what nature does not; it may provide a permanent book of oracles, set forth covenants and promises to beget faith and assure the hearts of men, and institute ordinances of social worship and instruction to mutual edification of believers. Would not the proffer of advantages like these be worthy of all acceptance, even to the most diligent students of nature and to those most disposed to seek after the knowledge and favor of God?

But what is of still higher importance to our world, in its known sin and guilt before God, a word from his Infinite Spirit might unfold new plans for our welfare, before hidden in his secret purposes, which none of his previous works had ever revealed. He might testify, in a language that nature knows not in all her works, of his readiness to forgive and restore those to his love who turn to him, seeking salvation; of a Mediator from himself, to stand sponsor for his righteousness while freely bestowing such undeserved grace; and of an immortal state of glory after death, to which he will advance the souls of obedient believers. Would not the proffer of advantages like these to the free acceptance of the called, be full of immortal hope and life to the obedient even here on their way to eternity; and stamp with endless folly the conduct of those who could dash from them such hopes and prospects to grovel in the



darkness and sins and fearful apprehensions of a state of nature?

From these prejudgments against all claims set up to supernatural inspiration in our world, let us turn now to an examination of the evidence whether any of these claims are confirmed by the testimony of God.

Now, of all the oracles, divinations and sacred books upheld by the priesthood in Pagan nations, it is clear that they have not originated in the supernatural inspiration of God. They fail of bringing with them either the external or internal testimony of God. There are no appeals to such plain works of God in their favor, as the dividing of seas apart, like walls, for a nation to pass through, the gushing of waters from a flinty rock in the desert to flow as a river to accompany a nation on its march, the instant cure of diseases, the restoration of sight to the blind, the raising of the dead to life; the open and wonderful signals of omnipotence before the people. There is no clear and particular foretelling of events which are future, to show that behind the oracle or the priest, it is the Omniscient God that speaks. And, more than all, there is nothing in the spirit of the books and of the ceremonies of heathenism, that bespeaks the Holy Spirit of God at work convincing, reproving and correcting the people of the selfishness and sin of idolatrous worship. The very object of all is to obscure and screen the Divine glory beneath the mask of idols, impure and vengeful; and to minister thus to the gratification of like passions in men. The very teachings of nature implanted in the conscience, show that God cannot thus stoop from his infinite holiness to pander to the vices of men; that he cannot thus deny himself and deceive his creatures. But, on the other hand, it is easy for men, in their apostasy and sins, and under the influence of superstitious fears of wrath, to get up systems, and give circulation to systems, of imposture and falsehood, that will prove a yoke of blinding superstition and bondage to consenting millions. Here, then, we are clear in denying all the pretensions ever set up in heathen nations to Divine inspiration of their oracles or priests, as things to which God has not given the sanction of his direct testimony.

Shall we, then, dismissing all testimony from God in favor of the inspiration of idolatrous priests, accept the testimony of Mohammedans in favor of the inspiration of their prophet and of his book, the Koran? Does the testimony of Mohammed to his

own inspiration of God, prove the fact of his inspiration? Not unless God gives testimony to the fact. Mohammed might, or might not, be conscious of certain thoughts and feelings within him which he superstitiously ascribed to the immediate teaching of God; but that would be no testimony to other persons that God set his seal and testimony to the prophet; and would impose no obligation on his followers to justify them in acceding to his claims. Did God testify to Mohammed, by any outward miracles or any revelations of future things, to show to men that he spoke the words of God? Mohammed did not pretend it in giving his Koran; his followers do not claim it in accepting the book at his hands. He relates his own dreams and visions; but what are these without the outward signs of a prophet, through which the power of God is immediately manifest? Indeed, he assigns as a positive reason why he wrought no miracles, that they can be wrought by magicians and sorcerers, the agents of Satan. But can this impious apology come forth from God; that, in employing a prophet to set up his kingdom among men and destroy the kingdom of Satan, he cannot use the wonders of his own omnipotence, without his being mistaken for Satan? But, whatever truth may be contained in the chapters of the Koran, there is one thing embedded in the whole plan of the book, which is fatal to the claim that the supernatural inspiration of God was granted to its author. For, as we said of the comparison of Pagan oracles with the teachings of universal nature, that God could not interpose directly to deny what universal nature taught of his glory, so now we say, that God could not directly interpose to deny, in one revelation, as false, what he had directly interposed to set up in another, as eternally true and obligatory. The case lies thus: Mohammed followed in the wake of Moses and Christ, inculcating his pretended revelation over regions where the monotheism of Jews and ignorant Christians extensively prevailed among the remaining idolaters of that part of the Roman empire. He, therefore, starts with the acknowledgment that God spake by Moses, and spake by Christ; and, while consenting to the Jewish and Christian story in many particulars, claims to be the one, final, absorbing prophet, before whom Moses and Jesus fade away; and calls the ignorant multitude to gather to his standard, under the simple creed: There is but one God, and Mohammed is his prophet. Now, whether the Old and New Testaments are the word of Divine inspiration or not,

we will not assume, or deny, at this stage of the inquiry; it matters not in this argument; for, in either case, out of his own mouth we condemn the prophet and his followers. For if the claim of Christ, as the only Saviour, was set up by Divine inspiration and authority, as the prophet acknowledges, then it cannot be that God should directly interpose to contradict himself and set up Mohammed above him. But if the claim of Christ was not set up by Divine inspiration, as Mohammed says it was, and which he claims as the basis for his own inspiration, then the prophet is false in asserting it; and, in claiming to himself the inspiration of a prophet upon that basis, he proceeds and works upon a lie. But if we test the claims of Mohammed by the character of holiness, goodness and truth that belong to God, can it be that God is the author of such a scheme of selfishness, sensuality and fierce passions as was set up by the prophet over his followers? Do we see breathing through it a system of Divine worship and morality that bespeaks the animation and inbreathing of a spirit of love, gentleness, purity, peace; such as characterize infinite goodness and love?

Shall we, then, denying all testimony from God in favor of his inspiring Pagan oracles or systems of religion, or the system of monotheism set up in the Koran by Mohammed, accept as true the claim set up in behalf of the Bible by Moses and the prophets, and by Christ and his apostles?

Now the claim of the Bible to contain a revelation from God to man, is commended to us as probably true, from the manifest design and character of the book.

Before we survey the historic proofs of the extraordinary origin of the Bible, let us look at its *internal design and character*. Since it is a word in which God, the Infinite Spirit, is set forth as the chief speaker, uttering his own mind, and will, and feelings, we may justly inquire, whether it has not the marks of his Spirit impressed upon it; whether the statements do not rest on those axioms of reason and conscience which lie at the foundation of all truth and moral obligation? The infinite perfection which the book ascribes to God, must be a true representation of his character. The law of action given in it to his creatures, is just and holy and good. The forgiveness of sin through faith in a Divine Mediator, dying to sustain his righteousness in such an act of grace, which it proclaims, is full of inexpressible love. And the institutions, which it establishes, of a living min-

istry of the word and of ordinances of worship, for perfecting the sanctification of a people by his Spirit, is full of immortal hope and joy to those who are called, and consonant to his own character as a perfect being thus to complete the work he begins, in the endless exaltation of a people, redeemed and sanctified, to the joys of his holy presence. This internal character and design of the Bible, is every way honorable and glorious to the Infinite Spirit of the Creator, and obviously suited to the highest happiness of man; though, at the same time, it is humbling and abasing to human pride and selfishness; administering a rebuke and correction which, though salutary to man and most kind on the part of the Creator, man would by no means be disposed to minister to himself. The word has these internal marks that it comes to us from God our Creator, most holy, just, merciful and true.

Besides these marks of God in the holy, righteous and merciful nature of the teachings of the Bible, the way in which its instructions are given seem every way worthy of the wisdom of God: through a special line of prophets, appearing on the same public theatre in our world, century after century, with advancing revelations, until the drama was closed by his only begotten Son, uttering the full messages of his truth and grace, and sending forth the chosen witnesses of his public life and ministry to proclaim his Gospel to all the world and secure the record of it to all ages. For if God undertakes to teach mankind through supernatural revelation for their spiritual welfare, it is wise to give his messages in a way to mark them with infallible tokens of his Omniscience and Almighty power, so publicly as to render them worthy of credit permanently and for all ages. Now a supernatural word from God must come to mankind either by an inspiration of each and every individual of the race, or by inspiration of some particular men with a revelation in trust, for communication, through them, to all others. In view of this alternative, we may see, in some measure, that the Bible, in the very construction of it, is marked with the wisdom of God. For what would be the result of a direct inspiration, made to the inner consciousness of each and every individual? Such an inspiration would not correct the depravity and moral disorders of men, any more than an outward book of inspiration, without moral obedience. It could not be a substitute for the appearance of a living Mediator from

God to make an atonement for the sins of men, and protect the righteous character of God in granting pardon and spiritual life to the ill-deserving. It would lay out no time and place, in the scheme of Providence, for the coming of a Saviour and the heralding his advent by the voice of prophecy for ages, and from whence witnesses of his death and resurrection should publish his Divine majesty and glory to the nations. It would not furnish, like the published, unalterable words of a book, any public and fixed standard of truth and duty, to be consulted of all men. It would constitute every body his own rule. Then, amid the corruptions of men, every one might lay claim to confusion and every evil work as the dictate of inspiration. It would not furnish believers with any published message of truth and mercy from God, in the circulation of which they would have fellowship with Him. It would not furnish them with any common ordinances of worship, in which they might have fellowship with one another. It would disintegrate them, as cold, isolated beings; living, each one for himself, and, in reality, no one for God and his fellow-man. The gift would be torn away from analogy and harmony with all the other gifts of God in the world — knowledge, power, wealth — which are given, not to be enjoyed by the individual alone, but to be used for the glory of God and the good of man. But if the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit to the inner consciousness of every individual is supposed to be given, not for the individual himself but for others; then, how can it avail to others, when all stand alike before the same Infinite fountain, and receive from its infinite fulness for themselves? What is the profit withal of looking for God in my neighbor, when I find him in myself as well?

Unless, therefore, we have some men, or some series of men, chosen of God to be prophets for a public utterance of doctrine and precept from his mouth; unless these utterances are given with manifest signs, accompanying them, of the direct presence and power of the infinite Spirit; and unless they are gathered up, and published to the world by these men, or with their sanction, in a book which remains for copying, translating and circulating through the wide family of man, we have no sufficient and authoritative rule of faith and life to guide men to God and holiness. This is the very kind of rule which man needs; to speak to him of God, of the soul, of duty, of grace in

salvation, of life eternal; to speak with one unchanging, infallible, authoritative, merciful voice; to minister to his repentance, his instruction and correction in righteousness; and to furnish him thoroughly unto all good works, as a man living to the glory of God among men. But here, we have the very character and design which are inwrought into the whole structure and preparation of the Bible.

We might say, therefore, from the mere character and design of the book, that it corresponds to what nature teaches of the character of God and the spiritual wants of man; that it speaks with a single and faithful view to the glory of God and the good of men. If it is not got up by imposture, it must be from God. But why think of imposture? What motive could lead to an imposture of this sort? Who would get up such a book as this, if desirous to commit a fraud? Wicked men would not have written a book so holy; so uncompromising in its frowns upon all iniquity, and so full of the holiness and glory of God. Honest men would not be principals or accessories to a fraud of this sort; for they could not be deceived themselves, if the case were one of wilful fraud; and, not being deceived themselves, they would not, as honest men, consent to deceive others. But if any baits of temporal interest might lead any wicked man to assume an air of holiness in getting up a fraudulent book, or tempt any honest man to swerve so far from principle as to condescend to fraud, they would be fools, indeed, who expected to palm off on the world, with the least hope of success, a story so full of the history of public individuals and communities, and even of nations, and the world at large, for a series of ages, as is contained in the Old and New Testaments, if the work and its claims were founded in fraud and not reality.

But the claim of the Bible to contain a revelation from God, is founded on the *positive evidences of the facts of history*. The Bible claims to be the word of God, on the basis of two facts: that God spake his oracles to men by a series of prophets in ages past; and that He gave witness to their testimony before the people with diverse miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost. Now, if these statements are not mere conjectures or fables; if they point to realities which took place as the book states them; then we have the testimony of a long series of prophets, and of Christ and his apostles, that they spake as they were instructed and moved by the supernatural inspiration of the Spirit; and we

have the witness of God himself, confirming the invisible fact of his direct movement on their minds, by the accompaniment of outward and sure signs before the people. The positive evidence, then, is full and clear to the interposition of God to give a revelation to man, if the historical facts, stated in the Bible, in reality took place. Have we, then, positive historic proofs that these statements of the Bible are true?

The books of the Old Testament and the New are evidently genuine productions of the men and times to which they lay claim. The books of the Pentateuch were written, professedly, by Moses, at the time of the migration of the Israelites from Egypt, and on their march to Canaan. The Gospels of Christ in the New Testament, either claim, on their face, as Luke and John, or were acknowledged by the church, to be written by two apostles, the eye-witnesses of Christ, and two companions of theirs, familiar with them and their preaching. These books are traced, on the line of manuscript copies, of versions made of them in different languages, and of quotations from them in the writings of Christians and their adversaries, continuously, as far back as the days of the apostles. The New Testament speaks of the Old Testament as a book already written, and held sacred, before the days of Christ and the apostles. The Jews must have had the book at that period; for they have carried it with them in all their dispersions in the earth; and ever since that period, the Christians, in their separation from the Jews, have kept the book incorporated with the New Testament. The Jews must have had the Old Testament and held it as sacred, therefore, when they dwelt together in their land, before their dispersion, and before Christ and the apostles founded the separate Christian church. But the Old Testament is traced back still further; in the Chaldee versions made of it in the Targums; in the Greek translation of it by the Seventy made nearly three centuries before Christ; and the Pentateuch of Moses is traced back to an era preceding the rise of the prophets, in the copy kept by the Samaritans in their separation from the men of Judah, and handed down even to this day. Add to these evidences, the testimonies of Philo and Josephus, secular writers among the Jews, the latter specifying the particular books composing the canon of the Old Testament, and the testimonies of writers in the nations surrounding the Jews, Manetho, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Tacitus, all admitting that Moses was the leader of the

Jews and the founder of their laws. Even Porphyry and Julian, the enemies of Christianity, confess the books of the Pentateuch to be the genuine and authentic productions of Moses.

But time would utterly fail us to enter into a specification of the many testimonies internal, embedded in the compositions of these books, and external, embedded in the writings, the geography, the customs and manners, and the antiquities of the world; testimonies, that the books of the Old and New Testaments are the genuine and authentic productions of the men to whom they are ascribed. The details would be tedious and unnecessary. If we consider, one moment, who have been the keepers of these books; what large bodies of men, both Jews and Christians, and how widely distributed among the nations and languages of men; and the stern principles of duty and godliness which the books inculcate as necessary to life eternal, which, from the first, have given occasion to divide men into the obedient with their defences, and the disobedient with their controversies, it is obvious that there must exist tenfold more evidence of their genuineness than of any other books which have come down from antiquity by their side. If any one asks how we know that Moses, John, Paul, ever lived, and wrote; we reply: just as we know of the existence and books of Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Cicero; by uninterrupted tradition, and universal consent. If any person doubts the existence of such men and their writings, his mind is not sound on the very subject of historic truth; his is "a madness," as Calvin roughly says, "which ought to receive corporal punishment," esteeming that, doubtless, a better correction, than wasted logic.

But there is a short method of showing that the books of the Old Testament and of the New have the virtual verdict of those who were eye-witnesses to the facts which they relate, and on which rests the evidence of Divine inspiration.

The Jews, then, have the Old Testament in their keeping, and are observant, at this day, of those festivals and ceremonies which the book appoints, so far as they can do it in their dispersion. From the nature of the case, it is obvious, that they would not observe the rites unless they believed the facts which the books state, and upon which the rites are founded. Here, then, we have a chain of dependence of ceremonies upon facts recorded in the book, which facts lie as foundation-evidences of the inspiration of Moses, which chain carries us back necessarily



to the very day of Moses and the generation itself who witnessed those facts and were persuaded by them to submit to the laws and institutions of Moses, as enjoined from the presence and authority of God. For, if the book was not received at the time of Moses, and by that generation of Israel in which the book says he lived and acted, it would never have been received as true and authoritative, nor its laws and ceremonies have been submitted to, afterwards. For the book is directly published in the name of Moses; it is a recital, to the nation which he had led out of Egypt, of the wonders God had wrought by him in their presence; and if Moses really published it, the men of his generation must have known it; and if they took upon themselves the observance of its laws and institutions — say the pass-over — they must have witnessed the wondrous works of God wrought by the hand of Moses in Egypt, and at their exodus through the sea, and felt the power of those fearful tokens of the Almighty's presence at Sinai and in the desert. How otherwise than by knowledge of the facts and fear at the presence of God, would a whole nation have received the book and submitted to its severe laws and burdens at the dictation of Moses? But that generation must have received the book as true and submitted to its institutions, and handed them over with their testimony and obedience for the faith and observance of generations to follow, in order to account for present belief and observance of the books among all the Israelites. For, without the belief and submission of the eye-witnesses contemporary with Moses and their tradition of the book and its ceremonies to the generation immediately succeeding them, it could not obtain credence in any generation following; coming to them, as it must, devoid of the necessary antecedents of the faith and observance of the fathers. But this belief and observance of the book, is now in the world among all the descendants of Abraham; it was in the days of Christ; it must, therefore, have originated back at the only possible fountain; the Lawgiver Moses publishing it with manifest tokens of Jehovah's presence; and Israel receiving it, and entering upon obedience to it, in the conviction wrought within them by those tokens that God was with Moses of a truth. We have, then, virtually, in the tradition and observance of the Old Testament, the testimony of eye-witnesses to the facts recorded in it of Moses the Lawgiver. But these facts prove that God made a revelation of himself directly to Moses; that he

commissioned him to act as the deliverer of Israel and their law-giver; that he sanctioned the records and laws of Moses as dictated by his Infinite Spirit. We have the testimony of God to his inspiring Moses in the writings of the Pentateuch.

So, again, if we begin with the universal credence of the church in the New Testament, as setting forth the history of the word and work of Jesus, we can see that this belief must have sprung from the conviction and testimony of the immediate witnesses of his words and works. For these books purport, on the face of them, to come from men who were eye-witnesses of Christ; or, at least, who lived and coöperated with these witnesses; from the apostles and their intimate companions; and these books set forth the outward observances of baptism and the Lord's supper, as appointed to his followers, for a profession of their faith in him and a commemoration of his death. Now these books, and these observances of Christian believers, must have been handed down from the very days of the apostles. For, if the writings had not been received, by the first generation of converts, as genuine and authentic productions of the apostles and persons to whom they are ascribed, and if the rites which they inculcate had not been observed at the beginning, they could not have gained credence on their appearance at a later age, in the absence of all knowledge or reception of them among the previous converts. It is clear, therefore, that the New Testament was received by the first generation of converts, and its ordinances observed by them, in order to gain that credence and footing they have at this age. The next age after the apostles could no more have taken up the books as genuine and adopted the prescribed ordinances, independently of the fact of their reception and observance by the generation preceding, who must have received them from the apostles themselves, than would the present generation receive them, if they were published now for the first time, so many centuries since the days of Christ, with no trace of their existence or observance in any preceding generation. Faith in these books, and observance of their ordinances, therefore, traced back on their living line of descent to us, necessarily carry us up through every generation to the fountain itself; to the generation who heard the apostles, the eye-witnesses of Christ, to whom the books were first committed and upon whom the ordinances were enjoined. We have, then, in the New Testament, the testimony

of those who were eye-witnesses to the majesty and power of Jesus at his coming; who heard the words of authority and revelation from God that he uttered; who saw those words confirmed by his mighty works, by the voice from heaven, by his resurrection from the dead, and by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, after his ascension, as he had promised. We have, then, in the New Testament, the testimony of the apostles who were eye-witnesses to the mighty works they have recorded in it of the Saviour. And their testimony, uttered before the multitudes, at first, in the very places where must have lived many other witnesses, with them, of these works, and uttered extensively among their contemporaries on a long and arduous mission; their testimony, embodied in letters to their converts, and in histories of Christ and of their own missions, comprising the New Testament; their testimony, we say, establishes the main facts of Christianity. And these facts show that Christ and his apostles gave a revelation from God to men; and that the revelation is recorded in the New Testament. For, if Christ said and did what the apostles testify of him in the books of the New Testament, then is it true that he spoke the words of God, and that, according to his promise, the apostles, in what they wrote of him, were guided into all truth, by the Holy Ghost. In other words, the New Testament is a revelation from God.

But aside from historic testimony to the main *facts* recorded of Moses and Christ, which set forth the clear testimony of God to their being employed by Him to give a revelation to men, the very books of the Old Testament and the New Testament, in their *contents*, set forth the testimony of God, that he is the author, through them, of a revelation to men. For not only the Pentateuch, but all the books of the Old Testament, were written and held by the Jews, long before the birth of Jesus and the rise of Christianity, and the New Testament. This fact cannot be denied; since the whole codex of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, are, at this day, in the keeping of the Jews, as well as the Christians. What, then, shall we say of the *prophecies* recorded in the Old Testament? The very contents of the Old Testament show that the Infinite Spirit, who sees the end from the beginning in his kingdom, who plans, indeed, every scheme and design of his providence as it extends over the world and its ages, has sketched down, in the Old Testament,

by different prophets, employed at great intervals of time, and with the filling up of continually new and unexpected particulars, a plan of grace for man to be effected by the coming of a future Deliverer and Saviour of the race. For, look at the contents of the predictions on this one main point, lying at the foundation of Christianity, apart from all the minor prophecies recorded of the coming fates of Israel and surrounding nations. The first prediction follows immediately the record of the sin and fall of Adam and Eve, the head of our race: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Next, the promise is recorded as made to Abraham, that this child, to extend salvation to the world, shall arise from his seed. On this promise and expectation are the children of Abraham, when Moses gives them laws and rites, separated from the nations, and bid to expect on their land this coming deliverer. The description, as filled up by different prophets in succession, assigns to him his origin of the tribe of Judah; he is to be of the lineage of David; he is to be born of a virgin and in the town of Bethlehem; he is to preach the Gospel and perform miracles; he is to be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver; to be pierced; to be numbered with transgressors and the rich in his death; to be cut off, at a certain definite period in the Jewish history, after the restoration from Babylon; and, with all these minute and numerous particulars, the description combines in it two characters, so opposite and extraordinary, as to baffle the comprehension of the prophets themselves when writing, and as to furnish occasion of stumbling to many in Israel on the day of his coming. He was to be the babe; the man; the man of sorrows, despised and rejected of men; and yet to be the Wonderful Counsellor; the Mighty God; to hold the supreme government of the world upon his shoulders; to die for the sins of men; to justify many; to gather the Gentiles and all nations to his standard. Now all this minute foreshadowing of the Messiah predicted to come, is written down in the separate books of Moses and the prophets; all which were received by the whole nation of the Jews, as authentic records of the writers to whom they are attributed; written at different times in the Jewish history, from the days of Moses to Malachi, a period of at least ten centuries; given out by the writers, professedly, as predictions from the mouth of the Lord; all in existence, surely, before the birth of Jesus.

Open now the New Testament, and read in it the history of Jesus, from his extraordinary conception and birth to his resurrection and ascension, and to the demonstration of his exaltation to the throne of God, by the descent of the Holy Ghost on his apostles; and say, whether the minute foreshadowing of so many, so varied, so minute, so definite events in relation to a single person yet to come, could have all been so exactly fulfilled in Jesus, unless the sketch was furnished to the successive writers by that Omniscient Spirit who casts the mighty plan of Providence and who foresaw, from the beginning of our race, an elected Messiah and Saviour, whom he was to raise up to us in the person of Jesus. The exact coincidence between the prophetic sketch of Messiah in the Old Testament, and the historic sketch of Jesus in the New Testament, admits of no other solution than design on the part of God. There is no room for the coincidence of mere fortuity and chance; no room for mere conjecture and human forecast; the events, centering on a single individual, are too minute in time, too clear and minute in the particulars, too opposite in character, too supernatural to admit it; no room for human conspiracy to get up a fraud to impose on mankind; for the prophetic writers of the Old Testament wrote at intervals of centuries; they never could have come together to agree upon their full picture of Messiah, and to assign to each his part of the story. The apostles could not have originated the story of Jesus in the New Testament, for the life of Jesus, most of it, was a public one, witnessed by Jews and Romans, as well as apostles, and admitted as a reality by all these classes before the books of the New Testament were written; for these books when published, as their contents show, profess to record a story already well known.

The Old Testament sketch of Messiah, and the New Testament story of Jesus, stand, therefore, completely independent and separate, in the time of their origin; and, viewed in their order and union, bespeak a higher source than human invention and fraud. We hear, as it were, one Spirit, back of all the separate prophets, giving out, through them, in successive ages, a fuller and clearer revelation of the person, character, and work of the Messiah; and thus, with his Omniscient voice, giving witness to Jesus, and pointing him out to every nation, and in all ages to come, as the Christ; the anointed Saviour and Ruler of mankind; the only name given under heaven whereby we

can be saved. "The spirit of prophecy is testimony to Jesus." Thus does the Old Testament and the New Testament furnish separate and independent testimonies of revelation from God; and, in their union, hold up, with the voice of prophecy, the sacred name of Jesus Christ, as the Saviour provided in the eternal plan of God, from the foundation of the world, to effect an eternal covenant of reconciliation between God and sinners of our race. Thus in all ages to come, the faith of Jesus, the Christ, standeth sure, on the prophets, and the apostles; on the Old Testament, and the New Testament; persons and writings, to which God has affixed the seal of his inspiration by miracles of Divine power and knowledge.

Now, in this long train of examination into the facts which lie at the basis of a true doctrine of Divine inspiration, we are brought to the conclusion that, in the records of the Old and New Testaments, we have an authentic account of a revelation from God, given to men by Moses and the prophets and by Christ and the apostles. Say what you will, then, of the records themselves, they are at least genuine and authentic accounts of certain persons who were inspired of God to give a revelation to men. Now, to learn what is true in respect to Divine inspiration, as to its nature, as to the extent to which it pervades these writings, as to its continuance in the world, we must take the testimony of some one or more of those persons whom we know to have been directly employed of God to speak in his name in giving out revelation to men. We go, thus, to authoritative statements on the subject of inspiration; we go to infallible examples of it; and, if we can understand these, we shall gather, so far as we understand them, the true doctrine of inspiration; the doctrine which, being taught from a perfect and infallible source, must be true.

We come, then, to the statements and examples presented in the Scriptures of Divine inspiration; and inquire, more particularly, what do they teach us to be true?

They teach us, at least, the following things, as the limits of extraordinary and authoritative inspiration of the Spirit:

1. That Divine inspiration was imparted, by the Spirit of God, in order to give a *revelation of God to man*. Whatever the deep things of God, the thoughts, the purposes, the feelings, which are hid in their infinitude in his own being, which are slowly developing to the view of his creatures in his works of creation

and common providence, were thus taken out of their concealment and shown to men, an *ἀποκάλυψις*. Some portion of his purposes concerning his providence and government over men; some precepts of his will; some promises and threatenings, expressive of his inward feelings and determinations; above all, some things pertaining to a plan of redeeming, from sin and condemnation, a people to himself, by the completed revelation made in his only begotten Son; were thus freely given out, parcel after parcel, unto prophet succeeding prophet, to publish to their fellow-men, until they received and declared the whole counsel of God pertaining to men in this life, the finished revelation of his fulness in Christ Jesus. Prophets, thus, without being taught their messages by education and their own faculties, not receiving them from man, have received them by immediate revelation from God. Thus does the Infinite Spirit bring forth the deep things of God from their eternal concealment in his Being, and show them unto us, freely, for our good; and God becomes manifest in that eternal life which was in possession of the Father, and is brought down by his Son, Christ Jesus.

2. Divine inspiration, in communicating the things of God to the prophets, has employed *sundry ways of approaching their minds*.

By an outward miracle of power he has addressed himself to the organs of perception, sight or hearing; singly, or both united. Thus, the flame in the bush, seen of Moses in Midian, and the voice that came forth from it, appointing him his mission, talking with him, and giving some portion of his plans concerning enslaved Israel. The pillar of cloud at the door of the tabernacle, and the voice of the Lord speaking before the congregation of Israel, expressing his purpose to come to Moses, not as to a prophet, in the congregation in a vision or dream, but to speak mouth to mouth, apparently, and grant him to behold the similitude of the Lord. From the visible cloud and light of the Shechinah, whence were uttered distinct oracles to Moses and the sacred servants of the Lord.

By dreams and mental visions he has made, when the senses were locked up in inaction, inward impressions of visible objects or audible sounds, which represented, by clear emblems or by after interpretation of obscure emblems or by distinct words accompanying them, some revelations of his mind concerning the individual or others around him.

By direct communication to the inward thoughts, or invigoration of the faculties of the prophet, when a gift came upon him; by inward and clear conviction, to speak, before others, a "word of wisdom" or a "word of knowledge" imparted from God, or to write to others an epistle of Divine instruction from the Lord; to write Divine songs for public celebration of the Divine praise; to write prophetic burdens to be read to the congregation; to write the history of the acts of the Lord and of his servants.

3. Divine inspiration, the supernatural communication of the revelation of the Divine mind and will from the Invisible Spirit of God, was closed, with the *full revelation of Christ*, in person and through his apostles. The whole system of the Gospel was fully uttered, when, having finished his work on earth and sent down the Comforter to the apostles to guide them to the close of their mission, Christ took them to himself in heaven, leaving their word of testimony and his Spirit, with the church below, for faith; henceforth expecting on his throne until the end shall come for him to deliver the whole kingdom of the redeemed unto the Father, and make his persistent foes his footstool. The Spirit, without further extraordinary inspiration, employs the records of the imparted revelation, as the secondary and established means of applying the truth of God to the minds and hearts of men. In his ordinary works of conviction, humbling, effectual calling, spiritual illumination, and sanctification, no more prophets, no more apostles, were to be sent forth to the church with new revelations, but pastors and teachers, and their believing congregations, were to seek the knowledge and will and love of God from the teachings of the ever present Spirit received from this word.

With these views of the general nature of inspiration in the living and acting prophets, we come now to the question of the book, which has come down to us from those ages, and which has been received, from their hands, by the church, as a book of Divine inspiration. Are these books of the received canon, which have been, from the days of the apostles, received by the universal church as from God and authoritative, books of Divine inspiration? At this point, Christian teachers somewhat differ in their answers, who, nevertheless, unite in the proposition that they are all sanctioned of God as the books he has caused to be prepared in his wisdom and through his inspiration. But how is inspiration, as the supernatural and extraordinary work of God,



concerned in the production of the books? How is the writing breathed from God?

One class of Christian teachers reply, we care not for the writers, whether they received internal inspiration in one thing or another; in one degree or another; willingly or against their wills; the writings themselves are inspired. But how is a writing breathed forth from God? It will not be pretended that it fell on the paper without a pen, or from the pen without a human hand to guide it, or from a human hand without a mind to guide that, or from a mind led to words in all cases without any guidance of thought. But this leads us to the writer; whence, then, has he the thoughts and the significant terms to express them, if the writing that flows from him, is inspired of God? Now, that some revelations recorded by the prophets, came to them by the words themselves, first presented or brought before them, we have their testimony; as, in the words of the law written in presence of Moses by the finger of God upon stone, the writing traced on the wall of the king of Babylon, and the words which came to the prophets from some speaker before them, beheld in vision. Others, as in prophetic oracles, may have been from inward suggestion of words. But can the same be affirmed of all the writings contained in the sacred books? Can it be, of the Gospel history given by Luke, who professedly wrote as one already well acquainted and assured of the facts he narrates; or of Matthew, who writes in respect to what he had seen and heard, in his attendance on the ministry of Jesus, in the character, at once, of an eye-witness placed beyond self-deception, and of a long tried and faithful apostle, exalted beyond suspicion of fraud? The prophets, too, wrote, usually, their descriptions of the visions they saw and the words spoken to them in vision, not at the very time of the vision, but afterwards; as appears from their use of the past tense in their narration; the style of an after history: I John *was* in such a place; on such a day I *was* in the Spirit, I *heard* a great voice, I *turned*, I *saw*, I *fell* down, he *lifted* me up, and *said*; and so through the whole narrative of the Apocalypse, except at the preface and the conclusion. This appears, too, from the fact that, when they saw the word of the Lord in vision, the voice sometimes commanded them to write the message in a book; consequently, after the completion of the vision. Thus, in the opening vision of the Apocalypse, the voice from the supernatural glory which held

him in vision, appointed him to write the whole in a book afterwards. The voice said: "What thou seest, write in a book, and send to the seven churches of Asia."

The same is true of all the historical books of the Old Testament, as well as the books of the prophets, that the writers interweave the narrative of the particular revelations given to them from God, into a continuous history of the events which took place in the nation at the time, so that the books must have been written at a date subsequent to the events and subsequent to receiving the revelations. The prophets may, indeed, in some instances, have seated themselves to write, at the very time the Spirit was about to give them a message, and have written the whole from the words "Thus saith the Lord," to the close, as the Spirit dictated; and have spoken the message to Israel afterwards from the manuscripts. But who can suppose this was the method in every case? The word of the Lord, which came to them at different times, met them often, as did the gift of prophecy in the churches in the days of the apostles, in places, or before assemblies, where it is preposterous to suppose that they had with them their writing materials, and wrote before they spoke; as Moses, at the burning bush; in the presence of Pharaoh; Moses, in presence of the congregation of Israel, commanded of the Lord to speak unto them; Isaiah, in the temple and before the people. It is clear, therefore, that, whether any messages were written down at the time or not, the whole collected book of these writers was written afterwards. And, if you ask how it was, all we can say, is, that the utterances which they gave in speech, when a gift of seeing or prophesying was upon them, they could afterwards record from manuscript, if they had written it at the very time, or if not, they could record it correctly and wisely from memory, by the help of the same Spirit, if needs be. Just as the words which dropped from the living lips of Christ and were never written by him, could be written, years afterwards, by the apostles who heard them, with accuracy and with wisdom, by the help of the self-same Infinite Spirit who spake in Christ. We say, accuracy, such as will convey the moral meaning of the original, without error; and wisdom, such as will take those particulars, from the mass of Christ's works and instructions, and set them forth in such order and style as appeared to the apostles, from the position of their own experience and years of preaching, good to beget a true and

living faith in the Saviour, and promote his cause of salvation in the world; and not merely so, but such particulars in such order and style as seemed good to the Holy Ghost, also, who moved within them, to secure, and preserve for faith and salvation, in all the coming ages.

But, again, if we place the writers, in the position of mere amanuenses, copying words, one by one, what shall we affirm of their personal veracity, or of their voluntary testimony? Take an example: Suppose John with his pen writing mere words, dictated to him. Thus: "I—turned—to see." Here he is made to assert a proposition respecting himself, which is not true unless it took place before he wrote the sentence; and if it did, he knows it from memory. But if the vision did take place before, it was a supernatural communication from God, no less that he wrote it down afterwards as a thing known to memory. Where, too, on this theory of mere verbal dictation of the writings, is the voluntary testimony of the writer to the matters he records? The witness is not supposed to comprehend any given proposition, until the words composing it are given; and then he has written them down, already, by dictation; and, on this view, it is not his testimony at all; it is the testimony solely of the Spirit. For example: John writes thus, near the close of his Gospel, respecting himself: "Then went in, also, that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed" (20: 8). He writes this down as a fact, not from memory, as an eye-witness, but from mere dictation of words. But was not John chosen of Jesus to be an attendant, in order that he might hand over his personal testimony, as an eye-witness, to other men and times? His testimony, therefore, must spring from the things and facts which he has witnessed, as things retained or revived in clear memory, and from the will to communicate these things to others, on his own veracity and authority; knowing, no doubt, that his testimony carried with it, also, the veracity and authority of the Holy Ghost.

What said Christ to the twelve? "Ye are my witnesses. Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1: 8). "When the Comforter is come from the Father, he shall testify of me" (John 15: 26). "He will bring all things to remembrance. He will guide you into all truth. He shall glorify me. He shall receive of mine and show it unto you. He will show you things to come" (John 16: 14, 13). "And

ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (15: 27). Thus their character as witnesses was not to be destroyed by the descent of the Holy Ghost, instructing them more fully and deeply into the things of Christ and God, by his quickening their memories, by his guiding them into truth, by his revelation to them of still future events in his kingdom. They were still the witnesses of Jesus and his resurrection. And as witnesses, they must, though receiving these forms of supernatural inspiration, have been voluntary in giving testimony from the point of their own experience and in their own language, as in their living ministry; so when, before the close of life, they wrote the histories which they were to leave as legacies to the church for after ages.

We might still further observe, that, in those passages in which the inspired writers speak of their compositions as the word of God, they refer to the thought or sense of the writings, and not to the words specifically, in distinction from all other words which might express the sense.

One proof is here. The words spoken from the Lord in vision to the prophets, or in the person of Christ to the apostles, were specific and determinate, and admit of no change afterwards. Each, being uttered and past, is the *verbum irrevocabile*. Now, when the prophets and apostles profess to give the speech afterwards, with the preface: "The Lord spake these words," "Jesus spake and said," or some other equivalent formula, do they profess to give out the specific words used on the occasion, or to give out the meaning and thought chiefly, using the same essential propositions? If they profess to give the same sense, and not the same words precisely, no more, no less, they use the formula in its common usage and acceptance; and all is well. But if they profess to give the same words exactly, how can we defend their veracity, when two or more of their records, given of the same speech, are found to agree, not in the specific words used or the precise arrangement, but in the sense only? Compare Exodus with Deuteronomy, and the four Gospels with one another.

So the passage, sometimes pressed into the service of the mere verbalists: "Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." The apostle had reference to the method he adopted in teaching the spiritual

knowledge that was freely given to him ; that, in setting forth these subjects, he resorted, not to the flowery and ornate style of the sophists, which enticed the men of this world with the appearance and show of wisdom rather than the reality, but in the simple and grave style of one speaking in behalf of the Infinite Spirit, on realities of endless importance to the souls of men ; " comparing spiritual things with spiritual ;" dwelling on the sacred themes of revelation in their comparison one with another ; as a system of spiritual things, agreeing one with another ; the earliest with the latest ; the types and prophecies with their accomplishments ; the Redeemer and his work, with the law of God ; the duties prescribed, with the doctrines ; and all, evincing one plan of wisdom and love, hidden in the counsel of God, and ordained, before the world, unto the final glory of his name in the everlasting glory of his people. The apostles, therefore, asserted that, in setting forth these things, he differed from the sophists, not in his general vocabulary of words surely, for both resorted to the same language ; but in his grave, simple and energetic manner of setting forth the things of God ; the manner and style impressed upon him and all the sacred writers by the sacred teachings of the Spirit.

These facts we have alleged at this length as proofs, not that the Scriptural writings did not proceed from the supernatural inspiration of God, as their fountain and guide, but that the inspiration which guided the prophet at the time he was writing, was not in the mode of dictating each single word only, one after another, without the use of the understanding, memory, feeling, vocabulary, style of the prophet himself ; that it gave at once the testimony of the spirit and the testimony of the writer to the things written.

Our next affirmation respecting Divine inspiration, relates to the Scriptural writings ; that the whole of the canonical books are sanctioned as of *Divine authority*, being prepared under the *superintending guidance* of the Holy Spirit, who gave his revelations to the prophets.

We choose to say, superintending guidance of the Spirit over the writers ; for this secures to the whole book whatever of supernatural aid is necessary, and wherever it is necessary, and in whatever form ; and covers over the whole book with the Divine sanction, so that we need never look back to the writer, at any other time or in any other act, than at the very time and

in the very act of making the protograph; and are to consider the whole as then fixed and secured, under the approbation and authority of God. And this is all that is necessary to the Divine authority of the book; that it was all written by whatever of the suggesting, the impressing, the invigorating form of inspiration which the superintending Spirit of inspiration saw necessary to his purpose to use; so that, imperfections in character or whatever else objectionable may come before us in the prophets, at other times and on other occasions, in this work, at least, God secured the record of his own wisdom and authority to be written; as much so as if the book had dropped to us from the skies. This is all that can be proved in our reasonings from the known facts; and with far greater evidence. And our conclusions are cumbered, if we attempt to bring into them more.

Now for the inspiration of the whole book, we have three facts in testimony.

The first is, that God raised up the prophets in order to use his express authority and grace over men in executing a work of redemption; and this work he testified he was to pursue on earth till the second and final coming of Christ. "God," says Calvin, "did not make a vain ostentation of himself in these ages, and then retire from the scene." He gathered souls to his name and praise. His Spirit and his words were never to depart from the congregation of the faithful on earth. The patriarchal revelations were given to nourish faith. Moses, Samuel, the prophets, Christ, and the apostles, all executed a living ministry to the church and the people, in order, in their day and time, to bring souls to the Lord. This work of redemption in our world, began not with men, or their own contrivances, or the teachings of nature, but with the Lord himself, by the supernatural teachings of his own Infinite Spirit. This supernatural teaching of God must still carry forward the work, if the work still continues. But the prophets all passed away on the death of the apostles. They speak to men no more with the living voice. But, on their long course of preaching, they left their writings in the ark of the testimony set up at God's command in the typical and outward tabernacle, and in the hands and care of the living church of Christ, as a sacred deposit for all people in all ages. What, then, remains as the authoritative word of the Unseen and Infinite, by which, in these latter ages,

he calls men to repentance and faith in Christ Jesus, and by which he nourishes his children to eternal life, but this book descended to us from the hands of the prophets? If we have traditions, what more can they serve for redemption than to hand down these writings, pure and intact? They can add nothing to the sacred authority of the treasure. They can detract nothing from it. The Bible, then, alone remains as the source of the supernatural teaching of the Spirit, as the voice of God to call men to repentance and faith in these latter ages; and the presumption is, that the whole book came forth to us, from those scenes, on the authority of God, as the book he, by his own Spirit, caused to be published to mankind on his high authority.

But again. There is testimony from the writers of the Bible, that they were commanded to write and hand over the oracles of God for the faith and obedience of mankind in all the following ages. Moses, the first writer, testifies that he not only was appointed of God to act as the legislator and magistrate of Israel, and was supernaturally guided by direct word from the Lord in all his measures, but that he was commanded to record the messages as providential dealings of God with that people in his day, to place the writings before the Lord and the people in an ark expressly to be put for that purpose in the most holy apartment of the tabernacle. And the Lord said to him, in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.

This ark, containing the protographs, was to be under the sacred keeping of the Levites, and to be read by them to all the people; and a law was made by Moses, anticipatory of the time of the kings, that a copy also should be kept in the royal archives. The ark was designed to receive, not the writings of Moses only, but such after records as might be prepared by the servants of God under his superintending authority. So Joshua, immediate successor to Moses, having care of the ark, committed to it a record of the oracles and providential dealings of God in his day. Samuel, the prophet, it is testified (1 Sam. 10: 25), told the people the manner of the kingdom, in a speech from the Lord at Mizpah; "and," of course, afterwards, "wrote it in a book and laid it up before the Lord;" — meaning the ark in the holiest presence. So we find, in some other books left of the prophets, that the Lord gave them express order to write a particular vision or oracle in a book, as Isaiah 30: 8;

Jeremiah 30: 2; Daniel 12: 4; Nahum 1: 1; Habakkuk 2: 2; Ezekiel 43: 11.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that a series of writings were to be gathered, under the plan of God, in the ark of the covenant; as a book begun and to be extended according to the direction of his authority and wisdom. It were reasonable, therefore, to infer from these facts, that whatever writings were subsequently incorporated with the original books of Moses into the collected book of the sanctuary, under the care of the Levites, they had the sanction and authority of God as writings subservient to the design of his immediate revelations. The clear evidence that he began a revelation, and made provision for extending it in written records, and bade successive prophets and servants add to it, is presumptive proof, that whatever to his wisdom seemed best to incorporate into the book, was incorporated into it, until the close; and that, when the book was finished, it was the book, precisely, in all its contents, which, by his direct interpositions or his superintending care, he chose to sanction as his word to men, and employ for the calling, correction and instruction of the children of redemption. The inference is the same, whatever the form of the books; or to whatever other sources they may refer for their contents, than immediate revelations. Thus, the histories proceed, in their contents, upon the recital of the dealings of God over Israel, in his common providence as well as special revelations and grace. The books of the prophets interweave into them both subjects. These books, too, refer to other books, at the time well known, as secular testimonies corroborating their statements.<sup>1</sup> And if any of these books, appealed to as authority, were inspired ones, not identified with any now extant in the Old Testament, all we are authorized to conclude from their absence from the collected and inspired canon, is, that it seemed best to Divine wisdom not to gather them to the sanctuary record; as we find to be true of the inspired words that fell from the lips of Christ, that only such, out of the voluminous mass, were recorded by apostles, as seemed wise for the perpetuation of the faith

---

<sup>1</sup> As in Numbers 21: 14, the book of the wars of the Lord; Joshua 10. 13, 2 Sam. 1: 18, the book of Jasher; 1 Kings 11: 41, book of the acts of Solomon; 1 Chron. 9: 1, book of the kings; 29: 29, book of Samuel the seer; 2 Chron. 9: 29, the acts of Solomon in the book of Nathan; 12: 15, acts of Rehoboam in the book of Shemaiab; 20: 34, the acts of Jehoshaphat in the book of Jehu.



and the salvation of men. The book of Job and the book of Proverbs are records of human thought, human maxims and human devotions, which, whether gathered from human experience, as the experience alone of sanctified men, or men supernaturally inspired, or as the experience of the common life of men, also, it seemed wise to God to incorporate into the book of moral and religious instruction, which he designed to prepare for the welfare of such as would be taught of him and made wise unto salvation.

3. We noted that the testimony of inspired men is given to the fact itself, that these very writings are breathed forth to us from God; and are clothed with the authority of his inspiration. Jesus Christ and his apostles were conversant with the Jewish Scriptures, as extant in their day; and to the whole volume they gave the title of the Scriptures; and in their appeals and reasonings, they quoted, indifferently, from any part a passage apt to their purpose, as invested with Divine authority, and decisive. The formula with which they often introduced a quotation, was expressive of the same fact, that the volume was regarded by them as the word of God; such as these: "The Holy Ghost saith" (Heb. 3: 7); "Well saith the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet" (Acts 28: 25). Paul, the apostle, in his letter to Timothy, speaking of the religious instruction with which Timothy had been favored in having known from his childhood the Holy Scriptures, "which were able to make wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus," adds this testimony concerning the Sacred Book, which,—as the New Testament was not written, and was not in the possession of Timothy, certainly, in his childhood,—must refer to the Old Testament: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This is said of the whole collected writing: "*πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος.*" The whole, collectively, or each, distributively, is breathed from God. We will add only, that this decisive testimony from men employed of God to give a revelation, expresses no more than the common belief of the whole Jewish church in their day; as appears from the testimonies of Philo and Josephus, Jewish secular writers of that age; and from the hereditary and united belief of every remnant and portion of that people, in their present wide dispersion among the nations.

We have, too, from the men whom we know to have been inspired of God, testimony in respect to the inspiration of the particular writings of the *New Testament*. We have, first of all, the testimony of Jesus Christ, that he appointed his apostles to be his witnesses and to proclaim his Gospel in all the world, to every creature. And, in his last interview with them before his crucifixion, he promised them another helper, in his human absence, in the Spirit of truth, who would be sent to them from the Father and from himself, to assist them, and to work with them, on all their mission; in their preaching, in their defences before human opinion and human tribunals, and in all the writings they should leave in the bosom of the church for the use of after ages. And that they were to prolong their testimony in the form of writings, appears from the intercessory prayer with which he closed the interview; in which he represents all who shall ever be gathered unto him as the body who shall believe on him through their word and testimony. The record of their testimony, thus prepared by the aid of the Spirit of truth, and left in the world after their decease was, therefore, to be the permanent means of calling men, in the after ages, to the obedience of the faith in Christ.

If any writings were left, in the care and keeping of the Christian church, by the apostles themselves, or, with their approval, by any intimate companions in their missions and partakers of their gifts, those writings remain as the word of Divine instructions and authority for building up the kingdom of God and Christ among men, in all ages, until the number of the redeemed is completed, and Christ shall come to take them to glory. We are to presume, at least, from this promise of Christ, that the *New Testament*, which consists of the histories and epistles written by the apostles, and the histories of Mark and Luke, who were prophets and intimate companions of the apostles, the genuineness of which as proceeding from those persons, cannot be justly questioned,—that the *New Testament* is a book proceeding from Divine inspiration and invested with the full and infallible authority of the word of God.

But there is direct testimony to the inspiration of several of the writings which have been left by them and gathered into the *New Testament*. The epistles of Paul, nearly all of them, commence with the pro-signature and seal of Divine authority,

in the formal salutation: Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God to the church—the saints—the called, etc.; if we except the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is without salutation, and one or two epistles, which unite the name of Timothy, or Silvanus and Timothy, with his own, in the salutation. In almost every epistle, he speaks to the church with the authority of Divine command in particular precepts. In 1 Cor. 2: 12, 13, he claims to have received the Spirit of God in his apostleship, and to speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; and, speaking afterwards of things in the epistle he was writing, he says (14: 37): "If any man think himself a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord." In 2 Cor. 10: 8—11, he speaks of the authority which the Lord had given him and the fear that had fallen on the Corinthians from his former letter, and closes by saying: "I write these things being absent; lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me for edification and not for destruction." 1 Thess. 5: 27, he closes the epistle: "I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." 2 Thess. 3: 14: "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man," etc. 1 Thess. 4: 8, he writes, respecting the precepts he was giving: "He that despiseth not man,"—myself, the writer, considered merely as man, giving out my own instructions—"but God who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit."

To the letters of Paul, the Apostle Peter (2 Pet. 3: 15, 16) gives a testimony, to establish the fact of their inspiration. Writing a universal epistle to all the churches, he says: "Even as our beloved Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." Peter, also, speaking of his former epistle and of the one he was then writing, claims, for himself and other apostles, in all their instructions, the same authority which belonged to the holy prophets of the Old Testament, in these words: "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us, the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." In respect to the Apocalypse, the very structure of it shows that it was a revelation from God, imparted by visions and by the dic-

tations of a supernatural voice; and it is but a fulfilment, more clearly than in the case of any other apostle, of the promise of Christ, that the Paraclete, on his mission, should "show them things to come."

God, then, by imparting extraordinary inspiration to the living prophets, during a limited period, for the express purpose of calling men to salvation in all ages; by adopting means, at the first, to secure from them a record of his revelations for the use of after ages; and by the express testimony of the prophets who closed the records of the New Testament, has given a clear and cumulative testimony, before the world, that the whole collected book of the Old and New Testament, has proceeded from his inspiration, and that it speaks to us infallibly his mind and will.

Shall we not, with such evidence before us, come to the word to hear and understand, to believe and obey? Shall we seek to find blurs and blemishes on the book that God edits? Shall we presume to point out errors in the statements which he brings forward? The book has the warrant of the Infinite Spirit of truth, that it will never deceive one on the great subjects upon which it treats. And that is enough for unwavering faith.

What if it does not treat distinctly of astronomy, geography, natural history, and the sciences; and leaves these subjects to the keeping of men, and alludes to them, when necessary, in the common language of the times; is anything more than this necessary in order to verify the main topics which are brought forward relating to our moral and religious duty, and our salvation? To break in upon the common apprehensions of the mass of men, with abstract treatises on the natural sciences; how little would that subserve the great moral ends of the reproof, instruction and correction of mankind in the duties of righteousness. How much, rather, would it serve to perplex common minds with subjects to them of little practical utility, and to sink, comparatively, in the scale of importance, the far weightier matters of the law of God and the Gospel of his grace?

What if, in minute circumstances, in which the historic part so much abounds, we may not always see the precise mode in which to reconcile all the minute particulars, with one another, or, with other known facts and truths; shall we not seek for some possible mode of reconciliation, or admit that there is a possible one, whether we attain it or not, rather than charge on

those men, who were witnesses of the facts, a misunderstanding of what was seen, and heard, and handled, and felt familiarly by them in their lives; or, what is more, charge on the omniscient Spirit of God, who stands sponsor for the truth, an inability to bring all things to their remembrance?

Now, in those centuries in which God was giving out supernatural revelations of his mind and will by prophets in Israel, and, by his spiritual teachings, preparing the way for the full and completed word of his grace, in the Gospel, by means of which all nations were to be disciplined in after ages; it is obvious, that the life of the creation was still upheld by him in all lands; that his common providence was over all, attesting his care; that the inspirations of his Spirit, in the natural gifts of wisdom and genius, which often adorn the natural man under the teachings of revelation, were breathed into those philosophers, orators, poets, whose books have come down to us, as the highest models of human eloquence and art. There was the inspiration of nature and these its books, prepared, as it were, to show the helplessness of the highest human wisdom to emancipate men from the bondage of sin and idolatry; a wisdom, which, in all its efforts in those ages, left the world still in its idolatrous estrangement from God and under the dominion of sin and ignorance. But the word of grace,—prepared in those same ages, in the spiritual school of Jehovah set up on the retired hills of Canaan, by his supernatural revelations through the prophets and his Son Jesus Christ,—being the word of his own immediate revelation and grace, has gone forth to the nations on the mission of disciplining the world in the school of Christ; and, leaving behind all other books and efforts of man as fruitless to the spiritual redemption of the race, has proved itself, in its history, to this day,—in abiding in its unshaken stability through every storm and tempest of opposition; in pulling down in the nations these strongholds and systematized schemes of error, behind which sin and idolatry entrench themselves; in casting down in the heart of individuals the vain imaginations of human pride, which there exalt themselves against God, and bringing every thought and purpose into sweet captivity to the obedience of Christ, to be indeed of Divine origin; the power of God, and the wisdom of God, unto the salvation of every true believer.

If, therefore, you inquire in what sense the Bible is breathed

forth from God, the true answer is, the whole book was prepared by his direction, in subservience to a scheme of redemption through Christ, which had been planned in his eternal wisdom; by men, to whom he gave direct revelations or imparted necessary wisdom and knowledge to guide them in their writings; and that, consequently, the whole book has endorsed upon it his name and authority. While all other books are the books of men, this is the book of God. While others are liable to err respecting truth or duty, this is infallible. While others are subject to our conscientious judgments, even in the decisions they pronounce, this binds the conscience as the eternal rule of judgment, and our only inquiry is, what are its decisions? What if God, in his wisdom, saw fit to incorporate in the book not merely supernatural revelations of his own mind and will, but also such materials as were furnished from the existing works of creation; from the history of the human race; from the history of his people and surrounding nations; from the epithalamium of human love; from the maxims and proverbs of human wisdom; from the many-sided views taken by man of the affairs of this life or of his particular providences towards individuals; from the acts of grateful praise and testimony arising from the hearts of his servants as they meditate on his glories and his wondrous works; from the sentiments of truth or error, inscribed on heathen altars or found in heathen writers and poets? What if he embodies in his book these materials from the side of human life, as well as the direct oracles of revelation, imparted from his own mouth to prophets, and uttered from the mouth of his living oracle and word in the flesh, his Son, Jesus Christ; oracles which define the system of Divine truth and grace imparted to men for salvation? Cannot the other materials of the book be used for the instruction and moral benefit of the man of God, who, through grace, is saved in Christ Jesus? The Scriptures make us wise to salvation only through faith in Christ Jesus; yet the Spirit of inspiration has been exuberant to man, in affording those examples, and maxims, and teachings from the human side of instruction, which, if not the essentials of salvation, are profitable for teaching and correcting him in righteousness. They were all written as instructive examples to us, on whom the ends of the worlds are fallen. What, too, if we admit the interaction of human thought, memory, judgment, language and style, in much of the writings of the

prophets and wise men who were employed on the composition of the book? What if we cannot tell, exactly, in what degree supernatural inspiration was mingled into the thoughts and words of each writer; whether he directly suggested words to the ear, or suggested to the mind things before unknown, or guided to selection and expression of particular things among those already known? Can infidelity demand more for the obligations of faith? can believers wish more for the firm satisfaction of faith, than that God has put into the book a revelation direct of himself; in his character, his purposes, his government, his plan of salvation, his offers of forgiveness and help, his promises, his threatenings, his commands, his ordinances, his dealings with man beyond this life; and sealed the revelation with the infallible signs of Omnipotence and Omniscience? The revelation is from him; and if he has caused it to be written down in a book to call men to salvation in every age, all of human instruction and reading which he has gathered around it, has the certificate, in the revelation itself, that he has gathered it in his wisdom; and that he has suffered nothing to enter that is injurious to the great design of the book; nothing that his wisdom does not approve, as positively conducive to the design. The book, therefore, we may rest assured, sprang from the mind of God; and contains, in every tittle, precisely that which, in his eternal plan, he foreordained should compose the book; from which none can take anything, or to which add anything, without invading his right and prerogative to be heard, just as he speaks in his word.

We are prepared now to assert, finally, that God, having completed the full revelation of himself by the extraordinary inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and having made the record of that revelation to serve as the foundation of saving faith, in all ages, has ceased to employ this inspiration any more to guide men to faith and practice in religion.

We say the *extraordinary* inspiration of the Spirit has ceased to be the immediate guide in religion. For, as when, in creation, by the extraordinary act of his Spirit, God had once given existence to man and external nature, those works remain perpetually as means of instruction concerning his Being; so when, in redemption, by extraordinary inspiration of the Spirit he completed the book of revelation, that book of grace remains, ever after, as the only sufficient and authoritative source to guide

men to faith and salvation in Christ Jesus. The Gospel itself, in those living ministrations of it, appointed and upheld by its authority among believers and before the world, is the ministration of the Spirit of truth and grace in Christ Jesus from the Spirit of God.

The perpetual work of the Spirit in redemption proceeds, therefore, since the completion of the canon of the Holy Scriptures, on the basis of its authoritative teachings. Though his supernatural power is employed, in convincing, reproofing, illuminating, calling, purifying and consoling the subjects of his grace, yet that power makes use of its own prepared teachings of faith and duty in the Scriptures, as the means of producing these effects.

For the Spirit prepared these teachings as the means to be employed in calling sinners to repentance and in building up the body of Christ in faith and love unto the measure and stature of perfect spiritual manhood.

How, then, shall any become spiritually alive to God and his service except through the truth, as made known in these teachings of the Spirit? How shall they believe, except they hear the preaching of Christ; how hear, except the preacher be sent to them; and, we may add, since the immediate inspiration of living preachers has ceased, how shall they preach, except they draw their messages from the published word of the Spirit?

The conclusions to which we have come, in our inquiries into the true doctrine of Divine inspiration, prepare us to close our Article with two remarks.

The first, is, that the continued ministration of the Holy Spirit, being connected with faith in his published revelation of God in Christ, none are to receive his guidance except through obedience to his teachings in the Holy Scriptures. The men of God who would "keep themselves in the love of God, looking for his mercy unto eternal life," must "build themselves upon the most holy faith" as it is given in the Gospel of Christ, "praying in the Holy Ghost." They who depart from this faith, are "separate, sensual, not having the Spirit."

There have arisen, indeed, pretenders to post-apostolic and post-biblical inspiration, in almost every century since the completion of the canon of Scripture. All these, from Montanus, in the middle of the second century, down to Joseph Smith, in the present, have laid claims to new revelations from God, in addi-



tion to the Bible, as postscripts of equal, or of superior and more absorbing, consequence; and have led off with them many followers. And, in the present century, a new pretension has arisen to the influence of the Spirit of inspiration, from believers in the rationalistic and the pantheistic philosophy; a pretension, which discards the old records, the old Christ, the old miracles, if not as utter fables, yet as utterly needless to that God who lives in nature, in reason, in conscience, in feeling, and who can raise up an inward Christ in every heart without presenting the model of an outward and an ancient one.

Now, before we try the claims of this modern idea of universal inspiration, let us try the more ancient claims to inspiration which professedly start from the inspiration of the Bible, to a super-added revelation made to their minds by the universal Spirit. We have seen that the Spirit finished his extraordinary revelations to men, and recorded them all in the Bible; and that all his ministration of grace is confined, now, to applying these revelations to the mind and heart of men, for their conversion from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, and for their edification in faith and holiness unto eternal life. This truth would seem enough to show that every spirit in man which goes aside from these published and finished teachings of the Spirit, to obtain from him any new revelations, departs from the rule of faith and doctrine set up by the Spirit; forsakes the sphere of his operations; and deceives himself and others with a lie.

But those who lay claim to the present inspiration of the Spirit, allege, in their favor, the testimony of the Bible, that the regenerate are "spiritual" men; that they "have the Spirit;" that "they discern the things of the Spirit;" that "the Spirit, by his anointing, teacheth them all things;" so that they depend on his living teaching and not on the letter of an outward word. But, in resorting to the Bible for the defence of their claim, they either rely on the supreme authority of that word for their faith, or they do not. If they do not, then all their appeals to it in defence of their faith, are mere hypocrisy and pretence. They assume that they have the Spirit, independently of its testimony. They rely on an immediate inward inspiration, and not on an outward word. How, then, can they pretend that the faith which they assume without Scriptural authority, is in reality rested on that authority? Starting and proceeding without

Scriptural authority, it is all pretence, to quote that authority as the ground of their faith. But, on the other hand, if they do rely on the supreme authority of the Bible for the belief that they have the Spirit, then they will resort to that word, as the decisive means, to know what is the mind of the Spirit, and will admit of nothing as coming from the Spirit, which is unsanctioned in that word; then they will, as truly "spiritual" men, mind, as their supreme rule, the things of the Spirit; then, by that word, will they try the inward suggestions of their own minds, or the suggestions made to them by others, whether the Spirit that dictates them, is of God; then will they trust the tests, the rules and principles of faith and holy living, laid down in the word of God, as the only teaching by which they can truly follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

But, it may be objected to our position, that it is incompatible with the universal presence, the living power, and perfect freedom of the Infinite Spirit himself, thus to restrict his agency within limits. Shall he be confined in his operations to the province of the Bible; or shall the soul of man be sent for spiritual life to the pages of a printed book? The Bible, then, you say, is a restraint upon the agency of the Infinite Spirit, that is derogatory to the glory of his freedom and majesty. But if he, in his infinite glory, freely and wisely, establishes laws of operation in his kingdom, is he not equally free and wise in carrying out those laws into execution, in the operation of his government and grace? Does he less freely or less beneficently breathe natural life through the fields of nature and his temporal providence, or spiritual life into the minds and hearts of his chosen, that he moves forward on the plan and path marked out and settled by his own infinite wisdom, in accordance with secondary causes set up between Himself and his creatures? That he abides faithful and true to fulfil his own ordinances; that he adheres to his full and unalterable word and carries it out into execution? But you ask, will you send men, in order to obtain spiritual life, to the pages of a printed book, and not to the Infinite Spirit himself, the author of life? No. We send men not to the mere words of the book; to gaze at them, thoughtlessly; to read them over, mechanically; to institute a mere bodily formalism, to serve and worship the outward book, in a vain bibliography, as the Roman church accuses the Protestant. We send them to the thoughts revealed in the book; to the spirit that is

breathed forth from its words into the attentive and believing mind; to the Infinite Spirit, who breathes forth, through them, the power of his Divine authority and grace upon the heart; who transcribes his own living words upon that living tablet, in characters of living thought and purpose and life. The fact is, men divorce the Spirit from the Word, no less when they seek his word without seeking after his voice and love in it, than when they seek his communications apart from seeking them in his word. His word is not the mere outward form of paper and print, but the treasury of Divine thoughts and feelings, the fountain of Divine truth; at which, the soul receives truth; to which, it needs to resort, continually, after all it has learnt, to hear afresh what the Spirit says, and receive constant rebuke, correction and instruction in righteousness. And there, at the fount of the word of life, men must seek, in humble faith, in earnest study and prayer, for his power to kindle and sustain within them the life of holy purpose, obedience and conformity to his will.

But it is time that we turn to the claims, set forth at the present age, to a guidance of the Holy Spirit, without any external written revelation from God whatever; effected through the powers of man as an individual, or of humanity as a race, existing and acting amid these scenes of nature. What we oppose in this theory is, the assumption that the teaching of Christ in the Scriptures are faded away, as useless and puerile, before the progress of the science, philosophy and arts of this age; and that the spiritual feelings which are sprung up under the culture of a more refined civilization and humanity, are the out-growings and maturing of a spirit of universal truth and goodness which lies, as a secret germ of the Deity, concealed within, in the bosom of humanity, superseding the necessity of any outward book of revelation from God, and warranting the denial of its use and authority. But the Scriptures have not, as the sceptics hold, grown old and useless. Nor does the Spirit of God uphold a truly spiritual and holy life in those who reject the authority and teachings of God and Christ in the Scriptures. Whatever progress the powers of man, in the individual or in the race, may effect, they cannot substitute anything for faith in, and obedience to, the word of God. Nothing but the voice of Christ speaking to *these* from his Spirit in the holy oracles, will draw them to a true life of spiritual union to God. The transcendental and pantheistic

sceptic relies on the inner sense of the conscious soul, to unite it with God. The socialists of the French school rely on the organization of society, in such a way as to use up every passion and tendency in man into an harmonic action for the common good. But, after all, is the Bible old in its healing application to the sins and woes of our nature? The word of God abideth forever; setting forth the only true remedy to reach the radical evil—the basis of all other evils—the heart estranged from God by wilful wandering after idols. It was sent forth from God on this great errand of mercy; and it is no less necessary, or less powerful and beneficent, in the hands of his Spirit now, than when it was first proclaimed among the nations by the apostles; when, by it, converts to righteousness were first brought in multitudes to bow to the authority and love of Christ, and were filled with the precious fruits of his Spirit. What if the Bible is old, and individual man and the race have made great progress in science, in useful arts, in taste, refinement and humanity? Yet human depravity has not died out. Sin has not ceased to offend God, and to demand just punishment. Christ has not ceased to be the atoning Redeemer, who only can maintain Divine justice in the administration of free pardon. He has not ceased, from his holy throne, to bestow his Spirit, to give repentance, and to sanctify and cleanse through his word. In Him, and by the dispensation of his Spirit, the word of God liveth and abideth forever; and is to effect on the earth, by subordinate human instrumentalities, marvellous changes in elevating, purifying and sanctifying sinners of our race. The radical emendation of our corrupt race cannot spring out of its own unassisted and ruined nature. Its redemption must come from a higher source than mere man, in his individual self or in his associate capacity as a race. It can spring from no other primary and effective cause than the Holy Spirit ministering redemption from sin through the word of Christ. There are subsidiary agencies and helps in building up the kingdom of God among men; such as science, arts, learning, wealth, when sanctified and consecrated by the Spirit of truth and love. And while the Bible is the prime source to purify and bless the soul of the believer, in instituting and upholding in his heart a holy and peaceful fellowship with God, the Infinite Spirit of love, it does not sunder him from those social unions with his fellowmen which the providence of God has instituted in the family,

in society, in the church; but draws around him the bonds of higher love to man in all these relations, to do good to all as he has opportunity, as a servant of Christ, in acts of self-denying good-will; in a life and example of uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, faithfulness.

The second and last remark we offer, is, that the word of God, being the rule of supreme authority in matters of religious faith and duty, requires the submission and subordination of every power exercised by man.

This conclusion depends on the simple fact, that in this word God himself speaks, as our teacher and our ruler; that the principal object of the book is to set forth what we are to believe concerning him, and what duty he requires of us; all matters of faith and duty pertaining to our spiritual union with Him, and salvation in his kingdom.

What power, then, can be assumed to step between any individual man and this word of God, as of higher authority than the word itself, or as of any authority whatever except in subordination to its teachings and inculcations? The chief authorities which have been supposed to give rule in matters of faith, or which have usurped the province of the Scriptures to speak with supreme authority to man, are, the church, the State, human reason, and conscious emotional feeling in man.

But can the voices that come to us from these sources be justly allowed to usurp the authority of Christ, or to turn us aside from hearing, first of all, the voice of his word, and following it with implicit faith and obedience?

Can the church, by its authority, overrule the word of God? But what is the church? It is a body, simply, of men whom the Holy Spirit, by the power of this word, has brought to a living and obedient faith in Christ, and to a spiritual union with him and with one another, in the fellowship of truth and love. There is no true church of Christ on the earth but the congregation of believers, who bow in submission to the word of God, and are built up in faith and holiness, on the foundation of prophets and apostles, on the chief corner stone, Christ Jesus. Shall they who have no being but what springs from submission to the authority and power of the word of God, pretend to hold in themselves a derived authority and power equal, nay, superior, to the word? Shall they thrust their own teachings before weak-minded souls, as authoritative substitutes for the teachings

of the Bible; and forbid, as an impiety, that a humble soul should go directly to the oracles of its God, and receive instruction and salvation at that fount of authority and truth? That were to step down, themselves, from the foundation of faith; to stand up in their own feebleness to contest the palm with the infallible God, and to prevent the victories of his word and grace in the earth. But *what* church is it that may claim authority over the word of God? Is it the Greek church, that is scattered over lands where apostles preached, and which has continued on the line of direct descent from that primitive age until now? But the voice of that church, now in its old age, is not the voice of its infancy, as it resounded from the lips of Paul, at Corinth and Ephesus. Is it the church of Rome? But that church, in its prescriptions of meritorious rites and its decrees against the circulation of the word of God, now utters a language of impiety that was thundered against, in its earliest infancy, when its members bowed, before the letter of Paul, to the truth, that they could not establish their own righteousness before God; that they were "justified freely in Christ Jesus;" and that the word of Christ and prophets, "according to the commandment of the everlasting God, was to be made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. Is it the *Protestant* church, which has separated itself from the church of Rome? But that church has separated, on the very ground of returning to the old basis on which it stood, with others, in the purity of its infancy — that of submission to the word of God alone. It claims only, like the primitive church, to publish the word of Christ; to give to it a free and hearty circulation; to testify of its truths and precepts, and its power in the heart; and all this, as the helper to faith, to lead others to that fount of authority and grace, that their faith may stand, not on the weakness of human authority, but on the eternal rock of the Divine testimony.

But, if the voice of the church can set up no tradition, or decree of authority, to bind the conscience, but must submit herself, in all her children and in all her teachings, to the authority of the Holy Scriptures; can, any more, the authority of civil rulers, avail against the authority of the word of God? The field committed to them is that of the temporal welfare of States, in the administration of wise and just laws; but, over that field, the Divine law is the supreme rule of justice; and the doctrines and precepts of Christ, in their claim over the soul and life of

man, may not be directly invaded by these governments, without accusation and criminality before the tribunal of Christ; who is exalted, in his Gospel, to authority over all the kings of the earth; the King of kings, the Lord of lords.

But, if the word of God is of supreme authority over all decrees of the church and of the State, can its authority be overruled by the power of human reason or emotional feeling in man? But reason can never overrule the Divine word. This faculty only fits man to discern truth and its evidences. It does not create either. These must come from God as he sets them before man, in the works of his creation and providence, or in some word of direct testimony from his mouth; a testimony which gives the highest evidence of truth, the highest reason for faith; which unites reason and faith in the one act of submission. So far, therefore, from being a substitute, in itself, for the word of God, or overruling the authority of that word, reason is the very faculty through which that word produces intellectual apprehensions and convictions, in the soul of man, of the doctrines and duties it reveals; and by which it enforces them, as truth and righteousness, upon the heart. Divine realities become, thus, realities to man; the objects of faith to work effectually in their spirit upon the heart and life.

But, if reason must yield to the supreme authority of the word of God, can emotional feeling justly stand in the way of submission to that word, or take the place of a substitute? But the capacity of feeling, which enables man to enter into the pleasures of sin as well as those of holiness, cannot form the criterion of what is right. It does not create right, but fits us to submit to the right, to receive impressions of pleasure from that which is benevolent and holy. And when God reveals himself to faith, in the love and purity of his character, claiming that his love should occupy and rule our hearts; have we any duty or happiness greater than submission? How can we love God, if the word of faith from him, that reveals his infinite loveliness, is not allowed to awaken feeling in our hearts and to rule it to accordance with his character? We are, therefore, at the word, that reveals to us his infinite love and mercy in Christ, if anywhere, to fill our hearts and purposes with the same spirit of love. Unless our feelings are thus awayed and overruled, they cannot witness to us, that we love God, or are moulded by his subduing grace into his moral image.

The book of God, therefore, is the supreme rule of faith and duty which his Spirit has prepared to guide men to redemption in Christ Jesus; and, before its high authority, all the powers which rule in the world, or which rule within man, should be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ and the honor of his name.

---

## ARTICLE II.

### THE SITE OF CAPERNAUM.

By E. Robinson, Professor at New York.

On the morning of May 18th, 1852, we broke up from our encampment at the village of Lûbîeh; and, under the guidance of the Sheikh of the village, proceeded on our way toward the Lake of Tiberias. We visited first the *Hajar en-Nusrâny*, or Stone of the Christians, where a quite recent monkish tradition places the scene of the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand.<sup>1</sup> We next came to Irbid, the Arbela of Josephus and the Beth Arbel of Scripture.<sup>2</sup> Here are the distinct remains of a single edifice; in which we at once recognized the same type of Jewish architecture, which we had already seen at Kefr Bir'im and Meirôn. From this place we passed down through the wild gorge of Wady el-Hamâm, with the caverns in its almost inaccessible cliffs, known as the *Kûl'at Ibn Ma'an*. This brought us to the Round Fountain; where we struck our former path, and kept upon it till we reached *Khân Miyyeh*. Passing on, we dismounted at 10.25 on the green carpet around 'Ain et-Tîn.

The ruined *Khân* is situated close under the northern hill, just where the Damascus road ascends; some thirty or forty rods from the shore of the lake.<sup>3</sup> The fountain, 'Ain et-Tîn, is a beautiful one; with an abundance of sweet and pleasant water, and

<sup>1</sup> See *Biblical Researches*, III. p. 240.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* p. 251, 279 seq.

<sup>3</sup> This place is mentioned under the same name, *Miyyeh*, by Bohæddin in the eleventh century; p. 98 bis.