

IS THE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD?

by

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CHAPTER TWO

IT CLAIMS TO BE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In dealing with this subject we must consider the claims made by each of the Testaments for itself and for each other, and as these claims are many and varied, all that we pretend to do here is to indicate a line of evidence that the Bible is the Word of God, which shall be sufficient to prove the claim, and, we trust, suggestive enough to provoke some to further search.

I. THE OLD TESTAMENT

The inquiry here is twofold: first, the Old Testament's witness to itself, and then, the New Testament's witness to the Old. And let us be perfectly fair as we pursue the subject, bearing in mind that we are to hear what the Bible has to say about itself. In a court of law we assume that a witness will speak the truth, and must accept what he says unless we have good grounds for suspecting him, or can prove him a liar. Surely the Bible should be given the same opportunity to be heard, and should receive a like patient and unprejudiced hearing.

(A) The Old Testament's Witness to Itself.

The field here is so wide that necessarily we must place the investigation within certain limits, and so shall consider only the testimony of the prophets and of prophecy.

1. The Testimony of the Prophets.

One or two things under this head claim our careful attention, and first:

(1) *The Prophetic Function.* What are we to understand by the word “prophet,” and what was the office of such an one? The answer to these questions will contribute much to the evidence that the Bible is the Word of God.

The word “prophet” is represented in the Hebrew Scriptures by at least three words, all of which are found in I Chronicles 29: 29:

“Now the acts of David the King, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer [*Roeh*], and in the book of Nathan the prophet [*Nabi'*], and in the book of God the seer [*Chozek*].”

Roeh means one who is taught in visions divinely brought, and is usually translated “seer”; that is, one who sees. *Chosek* means one who beholds, who gazes, and is used constantly with reference to the prophetic vision. *Nabi'* is from a verb which means “to cause to bubble up.” This is the word commonly used, and signifies “to pour forth words abundantly,” “from the Divine prophets having been supposed to be moved rather by another's powers than their own” (“Gesenius”): hence, we read that “**holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit**” (II Peter 1:21). So the *Nabi'* is “the utterer of a divine message, one who conveys to his fellows truth otherwise hidden, and imparted to himself by God for them. He is, in short, the mouth of God's mind towards men.” (Findlay).

It would seem that the same persons are designated by all these words, the first two pointing to the prophets' power of seeing the visions presented to them by God, and the last, from their function of revealing and proclaiming God's truth to man.

It is clear from the above that the prophet was one who made known the divine will under supernatural impulse. This is pointedly illustrated by Exodus 4: 16; 7:1, where Moses is seen to be the “**mouth**” of God to Aaron, and Aaron the “**mouth**” of Moses to the people. It was the chief office of the prophet to reveal God's will and ways to man, not only in the capacity of “interpreter,” but by predicting future events, and foretelling the coming and work of Christ.

The bearing of all this upon the subject in hand must be apparent. If what has been said is true, then the writings of the prophets are the Word of God; and remember, most of the Old Testament writers were prophets, some descriptive, and some predictive.

In the next place consider,

(2) *The Prophetic Consciousness.*

We have said that the prophets were the spokesmen of God to man, and received their communications by the agency of the Spirit. But, it will be asked, “How did they discern what was the will of God, under what conditions and in what way did they receive divine communications?”

A fairly exhaustive answer to these inquiries will be found in Numbers 12: 6-8:

“Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, the Lord will make himself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.” But **“with him [Moses] will I speak mouth to mouth.”**

It will be observed that communications were by “**visions,**” “**dreams,**” and “**mouth to mouth.**” Between the first two there is no precise distinction, but the third was a special mode of communication, and of rare occurrence. Dream and vision predominated in the earliest and latest types of prophecy, but in the chief middle prophets of the canon these phenomena almost disappear, and the prophets speak in the full and manly exercise of their rational powers. In both cases the prophets were conscious that they were the messengers of God, speaking in his name the word which they first received from him. Isaiah says:

“The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.”

He speaks these words in “sober certainty of waking sense,” with clear consciousness of his high calling. Further, frequently the prophets were conscious that they acted under divine restraint rather than willingly:

“The Spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the LORD was strong upon me” (Ezekiel 3:14).

Compare further Exodus 4:11, 12; Isaiah 8:11; Jeremiah 1: 9; Hosea 9: 7; and frequently they did not comprehend the meaning of their own predictions, for they **“enquired and searched diligently . . . what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow”** (I Peter 1:10, 11).

It was the function of the priests to represent the people before the Lord, but of the prophets to represent the Lord to the people, and of this the prophets themselves were fully conscious, hence their fearlessness, and the note of authority in their messages.

It is quite evident from this that the prophets were sensible that they were called of God, instructed by God, and sent for God:

“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

Of this passage Professor Findlay says, “Amos evidently views the order to which he belongs as an indispensable intermediary between God and his people, the channel through which he declares his mind to them, whether in favor or censure.”

But let us consider now more definitely,

(3) The Prophetic Witness.

It is when we learn what the prophets declared as to the origin and character of their messages that the evidence becomes overwhelming that the Old Testament Scriptures are the Word of God.

It is not possible to do more here than briefly tabulate their testimony, testimony so abundant and explicit that we are compelled, on the one hand, to believe that these writers were “incorrigible liars and crazy fanatics,” or, on the other hand, that what they said is true. In the

(a) Pentateuch we find such words and expressions as the following:

- **“The Lord God called unto Adam and said”;**
- **“The Lord said unto Noah,”** and Abram, and Isaac, and Jacob;
- **“God spake unto Israel”;**
- **“Moses told all the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do”**
- **“And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord”;**
- **“The writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables”;**
- **“These are the words which the Lord hath commanded”;**
- **“The Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tent of meeting, saying”;**
- **“Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words”;**
- **“The voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire”;**
- **“Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice”;**
- **“Thou heardest his words”;**
- **“The Lord talked with you face to face.”**

Expressions such as **“God said,” “the Lord spake saying,” “the Lord commanded,”** and **“the word of the Lord,”** occur in the Pentateuch alone nearly 700 times, so that this part of the Old Testament writings claims to be the 'Word of God, and assuredly is.

The testimony is not less considerable and emphatic in

(b) The Historical Books.

- **“After the death of Moses . . . the Lord spake unto Joshua . . . saying”;**
- **“The word of the Lord was precious in those days”;**
- **“The Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord”;**
- David says, **“The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake to me”;**
- **“The word of the Lord came to Solomon saying” ;**
- **“The Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by the hand of all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying”;**
- **“Thus saith the Lord God of Israel”;**
- **“The Lord spoke unto God, David's seer, saying”;**
- **“Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak”;**
- **“They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words”;**
- **“The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak”;**
- **“All that the Lord speaketh that I must do”;**
- **“I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord.”**

Such expressions as these occur considerably over four hundred times between the books of Joshua and Esther; and, let us remember, these plain declarations are only a small part of the evidence: the entire history is written from the divine standpoint, and the divine purpose is as manifest in the omissions as in the selections.

(c) The Poetical Books bear the same testimony.

- **“The Lord said unto Satan”**;
- **“Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind and said”**;
- in Psalm 19 we read of **“The law, the testimony, the statutes, the commandment, and the judgments of the Lord”**;

- And the whole of Psalm 119 is a song in praise of God's Word, that Word being mentioned as many times as there are verses in the Psalm.

The entire Psalter is the answer of God to the infinitely diversified needs of men, and that is why it is more read than perhaps any other part of the Bible. And when we come to

(d) *The Prophecies*, it is scarcely necessary to quote, as predictive prophecy by its very nature is supernatural, and the prophets men sent from God and instructed by him.

Yet it may be well to state that such expressions as **“Hear the word of the Lord”**; **“saith the Lord”**; **“I heard the voice of the Lord saying”**; **“The Lord hath spoken”**; **“It was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts”**; **“The word of our God”**; **“My word that goeth forth out of my mouth”**; **“The word of the Lord came unto me”**; **“Whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak”**; **“I have put my words in thy mouth”**; **“The word of the Lord came unto me, saying”**; **“He said unto me”**; **“He spake unto me”**; **“Thou shalt speak my words unto them”**; **“My words that I shall speak unto thee”**; **“When I speak with thee”**; **“I heard the voice of his words”**; **“The Lord hath spoken it”**; **“Thus saith the Lord”**; such expressions as these occur in the prophecies *over thirteen hundred times*, and double that number of times in the whole of the Old Testament. Truly this is none other than the voice of him who sitteth on the throne. The testimony of the Prophets is united and abundant that these Scriptures are **“the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever.”** But to their personal witness must be added that of their writings, the substance of which furnishes the same evidence, so look at

2. *The Testimony of the Prophecies.*

Here we shall look briefly at the character, substance, and harmony of Hebrew prophecy.

(1) *The Character of Hebrew Prophecy.*

It is perfectly true that the utterances and writings of the prophets arose out of, and are to be interpreted in, the light of their national history at its successive stages, and that a large proportion of these writings is strictly historical in character; but that, notwithstanding, it is simply a fact that prophecy is chiefly predictive, and is therefore revelation, that is, the Word of God. Yet this has been and still is challenged.

Dr. A. B. Davidson wrote: “It is now commonly admitted that the essential part of Biblical Prophecy does not lie in predicting contingent events, but in divining the essentially religious in the course of history . . . In no prophecy can it be shown that the literal predicting of distant historical events is contained . . . In conformity with the analogy of prophecy generally, special predictions concerning Christ do not appear in the Old Testament.”

Canon Driver wrote: "To base a promise upon a condition of things not yet existent, and without any point of contact with the circumstances or situation of those to whom it is addressed, is alien to the genius of prophecy."

He applies this principle of interpretation to the second division of the book of Isaiah: "Judged by the analogy of prophecy, this constitutes the strongest possible presumption that the author actually lived in the period which he thus describes, and is not merely (as has been supposed) Isaiah immersed in spirit in the future, and holding converse, as it were, with the generations yet unborn. Such an immersion in the future would be not only without parallel in the Old Testament; it would be contrary to the nature of prophecy."

And Dr. David Smith, of Londonderry, with more assurance than understanding in the matter, writes, "Prophecy-mongering is morally and intellectually ruinous. It issues in madness." The prophets never predict far remote events."

The objection to the idea of prediction underlying these and all other similar opinions is that "to concede the quality of prediction in the writings of the prophets is to admit the miraculous."

Certainly, and it is for that very fact that we contend. If miracles are either physically or morally impossible, then prediction is impossible. This is only saying that belief in prediction is not compatible with the theory of Atheism, or with the philosophy which rejects the overruling Providence of a personal God.

How weighty in this connection are the words of Bishop Westcott: "A divine counsel was wrought out in the course of the life of Israel. We are allowed to see in the people of God signs of the purpose of God for humanity; the whole history is prophetic. It is not enough to recognize that the Old Testament contains prophecies: the Old Testament is one vast prophecy. The application of prophetic words in each case has regard to the ideal indicated by them, and is not limited by the historical fact with which they are connected."

Let the matter be submitted to the test of fact, and the problem will be to say how any one in his senses could ever deny that there are hundreds of predictions in the Old Testament which have already become history, and there are hundreds more which, we believe, will become history in God's own time. This brings us to:

(2) *The Substance of Hebrew Prophecy.*

It is, in the main, threefold:

(a) *Gentile Prophecies.* There are scores of these, affecting the smaller nations such as the Syrians, Philistines, Ninevites, Edomites, Moabites, which have long since been fulfilled, and many concerning other Gentile powers which have for centuries been in progress of fulfillment, and are yet to be fulfilled. The outstanding illustration and proof will be found in Daniel 2.

Such predictions are not the guesses of men, but the Word of God.

(b) *Israelitish Prophecies*. No one can seriously question the fact that Israel's future course was early predicted, and that up to the present time those predictions have been fulfilling with unmistakable exactness.

Take for illustration the following: **“I will make your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries into desolation. And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your lands shall be desolate, and your cities waste.”**

The evidence that this is the Word of God is twofold – firstly, it was spoken before the Israelites entered Canaan, but assumes that they would do so, which they did; and secondly, those things predicted of them at a time subsequent to their possession of the land have literally come to pass.

To this add those passages which predict the restoration of Israel, a restoration which, obviously, has not yet taken place: **“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old . . . And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them . . . and I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.”**

It is the Lord who has declared this, therefore it must be so.

Further, the Old Testament is full of:

(c) *Messianic Prophecies*. There are at least three hundred of these traceable, many of which were fulfilled by Christ's first advent, and the remainder shall be fulfilled at his second advent. Nowhere is the evidence of genuine prediction more manifest than in those passages of the Old Testament that tell of the Messiah. Such passages are so numerous, and go into such detail, that our intelligence is more greatly taxed to believe that they are not predictive than to believe that they are. And if they are predictive, they are of divine and not of human origin.

(3) *The Harmony of Hebrew Prophecy*.

It follows from what has been said that all the notes of the prophetic Scriptures must harmonize. God cannot contradict himself.

Prophecies were being written or uttered concerning Israel, the Gentiles, and the Christ, for over a thousand years, and by men of very varied intellectual ability and social standing, and widely separated even when contemporaneous, yet, though there was no collusion, there is not contradiction. How is that to be accounted for? Only in one way, namely, that **“Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit;”** that is, the prophecies are the Word of God.

This, then, is part of the Old Testament's witness to itself that it is of divine origin.

The evidence of prophecy is particularly valuable because no spiritual qualification is necessary in order to apprehend it. Given common sense, a few sound principles of interpretation, and a spirit of fairness, and it is demonstrable that, in great detail, events were predicted hundreds of years before they became history, and as it was not and is not in the power of man to forewrite history, these prophecies must be the Word of God.

Consider now,

B. The New Testament's Witness to the Old.

It were as easy to separate a superstructure from its foundation as to separate the New Testament from the Old, for they stand in that relation to each other. The New Testament assumes the Old Testament, and assumes that it is of divine origin and authority. If there were no Old Testament, hundreds of passages in the New Testament would be meaningless; and if the Old Testament be not the Word of God, the whole assumption and attitude of the New Testament is wrong. That is just another way of saying that the New Testament bears witness to the Old Testament as being of divine origin; and by this we mean that it is and not merely contains the Word of God that the inspiration is both of thought and of record, sometimes of thought, but always of record.

This, at any rate, one may affirm: that if the Old Testament is not the Word of God, it is certain that the New Testament is not, because, in that event, its entire assumption would be an error, and God cannot be guilty of error. The Old Testament is in the very warp and woof of the New Testament, there being, in addition to hundreds of allusions, at least three hundred plain quotations; and these latter are made, not in the way of contradiction but of affirmation of the Old Testament, not in the way of denial, but of fulfillment. If the Old Testament be not the Word of God, then Christ and his apostles were wrong; and alas! There are not lacking those who affirm that they were, for no one with any show of reason has suggested that our Lord and his apostles ever impugned the authority of the Old Testament.

But let us look at the evidence, and first,

I. The Testimony of Jesus Christ.

A rapid survey of the Gospels will suffice to show that Christ deliberately placed the seal of his approval and authority upon the Old Testament Scriptures in their parts, and as a whole; and that not only before the Cross, but more emphatically after.

The passages from which we learn that Christ believed these Scriptures to be the Word of God may be divided into three classes:

- Those which refer to particular narratives.
- Those which declare that the prophets were divine agents.
- Those which endorse the Old Testament as a whole.

Look at a few illustrations of each of these.

(1) *Those passages which refer to particular narratives.*

There are passages in which our Lord endorses as historical, narratives which modern scholarship:

(1) pronounces to be “mythical” or “legendary,” as, for example,

- The stories of the Flood (Matthew. 24:37-39);
- Of the doings of Elijah and Elisha (Luke 4:25-27);
- Of Noah;
- Of Lot and his wife;
- Of Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17: 26-32; Matthew 11:21-24);
- Of Jonah in the fish's belly (Matthew 12: 40);
- Of many others.

Denial here is not of the divine utterance, but of the divine action; but Christ declares that God did so act, and that the record is true.

(2) *Those passages which declare that the prophets were divine agents.*

There are further those passages which reflect our Lord's belief that the Old Testament Scriptures were of divine origin, by declaring that the human speaker or writer was not the originator, but the bearer only, of his message.

- **“All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying . . .”**
- **“Thus it is written through the prophet.”**
- **“Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet.”**

And finally,

(3) *Those passages in which our Lord endorses the Old Testament as a whole.*

Christ began his public ministry by using these Scriptures with which to visit the onslaughts of the Devil, and his thrice-repeated **“It is written”** is double evidence that the passages quoted are divinely inspired, first, by reason of his making use of them in that way at such a solemn time, and then by reason of the effect they had upon his enemy: **“then the devil leaveth him.”**

Further, allow the following passages their full weight, and then say what they claim and prove with reference to Christ's conception of the Old Testament:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil, for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

Referring to the way the Pharisees treated a certain Old Testament statute, he said, **“Full well ye reject the commandment of God . . . making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition.”** What Moses wrote was therefore the **“Word of God.”** Again:

- **“Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying . . .”**
- **“David himself said by the Holy Spirit, The Lord said to my Lord.”**
- **“The Scripture cannot be broken.”**

- **“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? . . . All this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.”**

- **“After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were accomplished, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.”**

Alas, that there should be those who, assuming our Lord's fallibility, would not regard the above utterances as carrying much weight. But what are such going to do with Christ's post-resurrection affirmations?

- **“Beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”**

- **“These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.”**

Could it be granted – which it is not that he might have erred before the Cross in his reading of the Old Testament, that stricture certainly cannot apply to him after his resurrection; yet it is then that he categorically endorses the whole of the Old Testament in the form in which the Jews have it to this day, the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

About these and similar passages let two things here be said:

First, that the word “Scripture” is never used of any writings except the sacred Scriptures; Secondly, that Christ did not come to do the bidding or fulfil the purpose of men, but of God, and that he was conscious of what underlies all the passages just quoted.

We endorse without reserve the words of the late Bishop Moule:

“The New Testament as a whole is a mass of valid historical evidence to the opinions of Jesus Christ. And in this character it attests beyond a doubt his profound veneration for the Holy Scriptures then existing; that is to say, for the Old Testament as, in substance and practically in detail, it exists to-day. For him it possessed the peculiar and awful characteristic of divine authority. He stated no theory of its construction, but, looking upon it as it existed, he recognized in it the decisive utterance of God, even in its minor features of expression. For the mind which recognizes in Jesus Christ all that he claimed to be, this verdict on the supernatural character and divine authority of the Old Testament is final.”

2. *The Testimony of the Apostles.*

Christ's Bible was the Bible of the apostles and his attitude towards and interpretation of it were theirs. All the evidence proves this, so that attacks made upon the apostles are virtually attacks on Christ, for they were prophets sent by God and taught by God. But let us look at a few passages in which the apostles and others bear testimony to the Old Testament as of divine authority, passages in which this authority is always assumed where it is not plainly declared:

(1) The Virgin Mary, in her beautiful song, modeled on Hannah's, says, "**He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever**"; and what he said to Abraham was written, so that it is the Word of God.

(2) Zacharias, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied, saying, "**He spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.**"

A man filled with the Holy Spirit, as Zacharias was, could not attribute to God what were but the pious thoughts and utterances of men.

(3) Peter in his addresses and letters has the same belief. At Pentecost he said:

- "**Brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spake**";

- "**Lord, thou art God . . . who by the mouth of thy servant David said**";

- "**The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham . . . and said unto him.**"

Right or wrong, Peter certainly believed that the Old Testament was a divine revelation, and that God spoke to and through the fathers and the prophets.

Turning to the letters of this apostle, we find two passages which are classic on this subject. Speaking of the present salvation, he says, "**Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ who was in them did signify, when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.**"

This passage teaches at least two great truths:

First, that what the prophets wrote—for it is written prophecy that is in view here – was what the Spirit communicated to and through them;

Second, that these revelations frequently transcended their own comprehension, and led them to search into one another's prophecies, to learn, if possible, what was meant and what time was indicated.

The other passage reads: "**No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.**"

Between this and the rationalistic view of the Old Testament there can be no compromise; one must be right and the other wrong, and there can be no doubt as to which is right. To this let us add that of:

(4) Paul, who was a scholar in the presence of whom some who pride themselves on their scholarship should speak with more modesty. What was Paul's view of the Old Testament?

The Bible was to him, as Meyer says, "A history of divine acts, and the unfolding of divine ideas, continually manifesting the superintendence of a divine sovereignty; not a history of the world, or of all God's providence in it, but only of one kingdom and society, which was elected out of the rest to exhibit principles applicable to all kingdoms and societies, and to preserve certain privileges with which it was provisionally endowed in order that they might ultimately be extended to the whole race of man."

This view is reflected in all Paul's speeches and letters, both in the way of affirmation and implication. Here are a few illustrations:

- **"Well spake the Holy Spirit through Isaiah the prophet."**
- **"The Gospel of God, which he had promised afore through the prophets in the Holy Scriptures."**
- **"What saith the Scripture?"**
- **"The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh."**
- **"He saith also in Hosea."**
- **"The Scripture foreseeing."**

These passages refer to the Scripture or the Scriptures as the body of divine revelation, as the very voice of God and words of God; the divine thoughts and utterances are here personified; the Scriptures have not only voice, but vision; they not only say, but see.

How entirely this was Paul's reading of the Old Testament may be judged from the fact that he quotes from twenty-five of its thirty-nine books. There are seventy-four quotations in Romans, twenty-nine in I Corinthians, twenty in Second Corinthians, thirteen in Galatians, twenty-one in Ephesians, six in Philippians, four in Colossians, seven in First Thessalonians, nine in Second Thessalonians, two in I Timothy, four in Second Timothy, and three in Titus. These Scriptures are appealed to as being authoritative, as setting forth the mind and acts of God. But in addition to all this, it is plain from Paul's writings that his view of any part of the Old Testament was also his view of the whole, for there are passages in which he speaks of his Bible (the Old Testament) in its completeness. What does he say about it?

- **"Believing all things which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets."**
- **"These things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come."**
- **"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."**

And the classic passage, the full force of which not even the Revised Version can rob us:

- **“From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”**
- **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God [is God-breathed], 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.”**

The Authorized Version fairly gives the meaning of the Greek, and it is simply absurd to render it **“Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable.”** Of course, what God has inspired is profitable; but what Scriptures has he inspired? Some or all? Paul declares, **“All Scripture is inspired [God-breathed].”**

But there are more witnesses.

(5) John commences his Epistle by saying that **“the Word of life was from the beginning.”**

Westcott interprets this “Word” of “those truths which were gradually realized in the course of ages, through the teaching of patriarchs, law-givers and prophets, and lastly of the Son himself.” In that view, the Old Testament is in the first place the “word of life,” and must therefore be as truly the word of God as Christ was the Son of God.

Again, John says: **“I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.”**

In view of the time at which the Epistle was written, the reference here could quite well be to the Scriptures of the New Testament, but the evidence is still valid, as the New Testament rises from and rests upon the Old Testament as **“The Word of God.”**

Add to this testimony that furnished by the book of Revelation, which, just because it is revelation, is the Word of God.

Speaking of this last book of the Bible, the late Professor Milligan wrote:

“The book is absolutely steeped in the memories, the incidents, the thoughts, and the language of the Church's past. To such an extent is this the case that it may be doubted whether it contains a single figure not drawn from the Old Testament, or a single complete sentence not more or less built up of materials brought from the same source. It is a perfect mosaic of passages from the Old Testament, at one time quoted verbally, at another referred to by distinct allusion; now taken from one scene in Jewish history, and now again from two or three together.”

Out of the total number of 404 verses in this book, about 265 verses contain Old Testament language, and about 550 references are made to Old Testament passages - a fact significant enough.

Logic comes to our aid here: If this book is a revelation from and of God, seeing that the book is substantially the Old Testament in a new combination, therefore the Old Testament must be a revelation from and of God. John's view of the Old Testament was that of his brother apostles and of his Master all regarded it to be the Word of God. So did:

(6) *The Writer to the Hebrews.*

With perhaps one exception (4:7), the quotations from the Old Testament in this epistle, of which there are many, are not attributed to those whom God employed to speak or write, but are given as being Holy Scripture.

- **“Wherefore as the Holy Spirit saith”;**
- **“As he said”;**
- **“the Holy Spirit also is a witness to us; for after that he had said before”;**
- **“if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.”**

Westcott has made it clear that the contrast here is not between Moses and Christ, but between the character of these two revelations which were made, **“on earth”** and **“from heaven.”** The point is that both covenants are revelations, that alike the Law and the Gospel are the Word of God.

This is emphasized at the beginning as well as at the end of the epistle: **“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.”**

“From first to last it is maintained that God spake to the fathers in the prophets. The message through the Son takes up and crowns all that had gone before . . . The New is the consummation of the Old . . . There is nothing in the Old which is not taken up and transfigured in the New.”

If the Old Testament be not the Word of God, the foundation is knocked from the argument of this epistle; it exists only on that assumption. To the same effect is the testimony of:

(7) James.

“Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his doing.”

The **“perfect law of liberty”** is, of course, the Old Testament revelation of the divine will. As no law of man's is perfect, that to which James refers must be God's. Again, he calls it **“The royal law according to the Scripture.”**

And in quoting some words of the wise he attributes them to God:

“Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.”

But this epistle is saturated with the Old Testament; its language and its atmosphere are those of the Old Covenant, only that covenant is seen in the light of the Sermon on the Mount. To the same effect is:

(8) Jude.

Though there are here only twenty-five verses, yet reference is made to Moses, Cain, Balaam, Korah, and Enoch; also to the deliverance from Egypt, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and to the Israelites who perished in the wilderness. And these references, as everywhere in the New Testament, are made on the assumption, not only that the Old Testament is actual and accurate history, but that in that history God stands revealed, and for our sakes has caused it to be written.

It is surely an impressive fact that whereas you will find about 280 direct quotations from the Old Testament in the New, and these taken from 28 of its 39 books, you will not find one clear quotation from the Apocrypha.

No doubt the apostles were acquainted with these latter writings, and in all probability in Hebrews 11:33-37 reference is made to the books of Maccabees, but the New Testament writers certainly knew the difference between the Apocrypha and the Old Testament writings, and knew the latter, not the former, to be of divine origin and authority.

“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum,” Jesus Christ and all his apostles believed that the Old Testament as they had it, and as we now have it, was the record of a divine eternal purpose in process of outworking; that, not only in its various parts, but also in its completeness, it is **“Holy Scripture.”**

This view of these Writings may be challenged, as, alas, it has been; but at any rate it cannot be questioned that that was Christ's and the apostles' view. The Old Testament, therefore, claims to be the Word of God.

~ end of chapter 2 ~

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