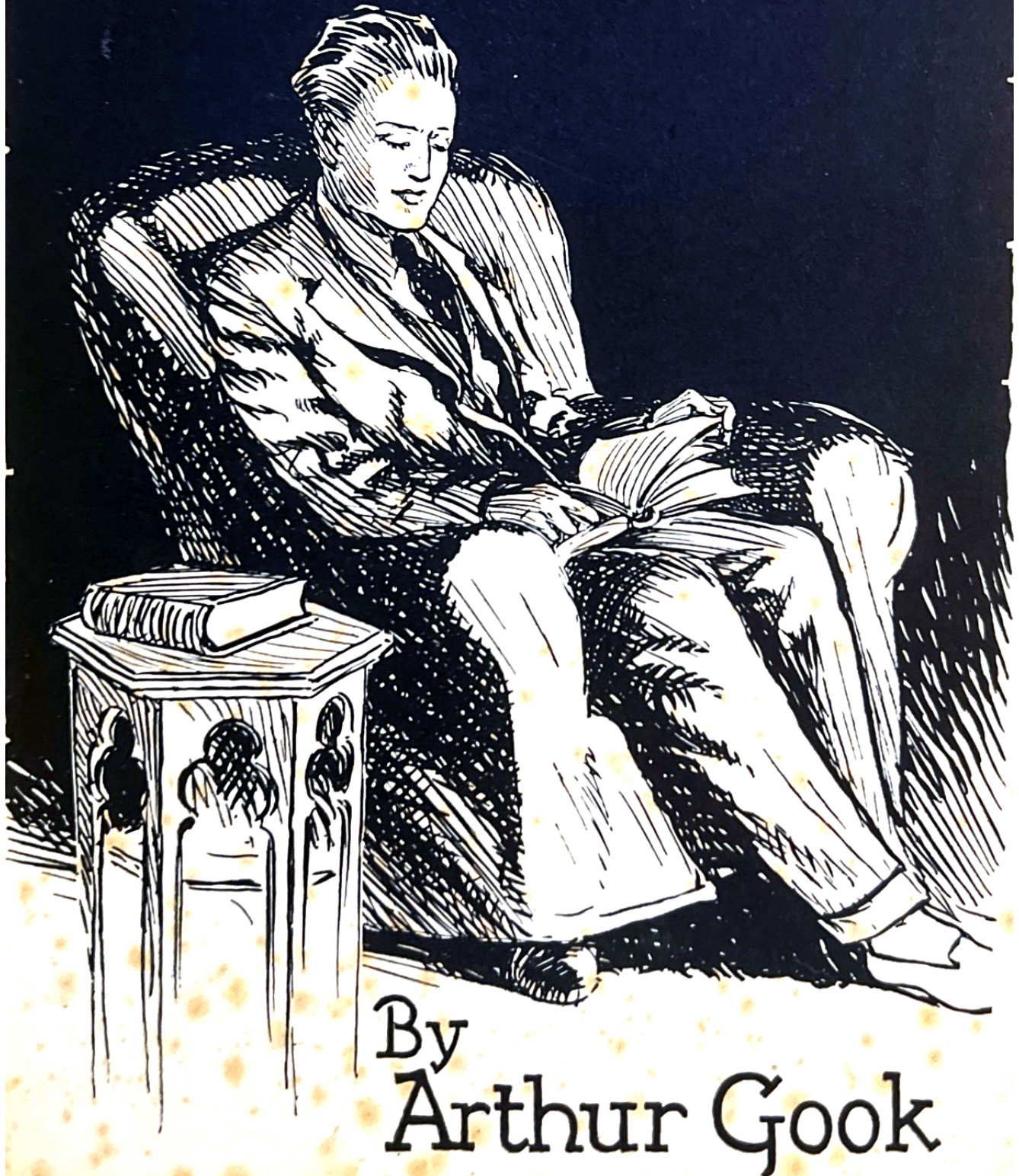


CAN A YOUNG MAN TRUST HIS BIBLE?



By
Arthur Gook

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Author of "Can a Young Man Overcome?"
"Can a Young Man Trust His Saviour?"
"Can a Young Man Trust His God?" etc.

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PREFACE

THIS work is not an attempt to defend the Bible.

As a well-known preacher has put it, we do not need to defend a lion, but to let him loose to defend himself. The Bible needs no defence. There are, however, many whose faith would be strengthened, and whose joy would be increased, if they could realise how firm a foundation for faith God has given us in His Word.

I have quoted much on the authority of others, but only where I have good reason for trusting that authority.

I invite the cordial co-operation of Christian friends in circulating this booklet.

ARTHUR GOOK

Akureyri, Iceland

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CAN A YOUNG MAN TRUST HIS BIBLE?

I.

Introductory.

MY answer is—Yes. But before I ask you to accept it, and before I put before you a few reasons why you should accept it, I will explain why I venture to attempt this small contribution to the already voluminous literature—more or less dry to the ordinary reader—on the above subject.

From my youth I have been surrounded by people who have not believed the Bible to be the Word of God. My own father often conversed with me on the subject, and sought to show me that it was impossible to trust the Scriptures as a pure revelation of the mind of God. For a number of years I have lived in a town where there are exceedingly few men who have an intelligent belief in the Bible. I have again and again had long conversations with men of all stations, ages and opinions on this subject, and I think I may say that I have throughout had a sincere desire to follow only that which is reliable and trustworthy, and to find out the truth in this matter, whatever it may be. I can assure my reader that I have no desire to believe in a book and adapt my life to its teachings, or to persuade others to do the same, unless I have *absolutely certain ground to build on*.

I have not treated this subject from the stand-

point of a theologian, but from the point of view of a young man who saw many difficulties in the Scriptures, and could not compromise his conscience in order to be orthodox. I saw that there were two dangers to be avoided—on the one hand, that of accepting the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God whilst smothering the conscientious difficulties that arose in my mind; and, on the other hand, of assuming, because the Bible seemed *to me* to contain discrepancies and inconsistencies, that the claims of the Book to be inspired by God must be false.

There was only one course open to me. Believing that it would be a great disadvantage, supposing the eternal God *not* to be the Author of the Book, to persuade myself arbitrarily that such was the case, and realising the great loss I would incur if He should be its Author and I should not discern that fact, I sought conscientiously and with great earnestness to find tangible reasons for accepting or else for not accepting the Bible as the inspired revelation of the mind of God.

My object is not to present all the reasons for which I now believe in the Bible as the Word of God—they are too many and are continually increasing—but I desire to address all those who may be similarly placed, in the hope of giving them a little help such as I would most gladly have accepted some years ago had I known where to find it.

"If any man is willing to do His (the Father's) will, *he shall know* of the doctrine, whether it be of God," said Christ. Perhaps this little attempt may help some one to be *willing*. May God grant it.

II.

An Interrupted Conference.

THERE were "critics" in Christ's time. They were not "Bible critics," but "Christ critics." The question was not of the authenticity of the book which claimed to be the *written* Word of God, but of the man who claimed to be the *living* "Word of God"—not concerning the mind of God in book form, but concerning the being of God in human form.

These "Christ critics" were holding a conference when the officers they had sent to take Christ prisoner returned empty-handed. To the indignant query of the "Christ critics," "Why have ye not brought Him?" the poor officers, ignorant of all the theological niceties entailed, ventured to express their opinion that the Man they were sent to arrest spoke in a manner and with an authority impossible to ordinary men: "Never spake man like this Man."

The elite of Jewish learning and theological research then descended to an extremely puerile argument. "Are ye also deceived?" said they. "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed." In other words, "Have any of US believed on Him? Those who do not believe as we do, know nothing; curse them!" This was neither polite, nor wise, nor convincing, seeing that sitting in their very midst was Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews and—a believer in Jesus.

Nicodemus ventured to make the suggestion that it was the general thing for the law to try a

man and know wherein he was guilty before it condemned him. But these "Christ critics" were proof against any attempt to introduce discretion or common sense into their conference, and immediately crushed Nicodemus with their most treasured argument, with which they would defy any attempt to impeach their authority—"Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." Unanswerable! All opposition disposed of at one blow! "And every man went unto his own house" (John 7. 53). But if Nicodemus *had* searched and looked he would have found that at least two prophets arose out of Galilee, viz., ELIJAH, the chief of the prophets, and JONAH.* And a little further inquiry would have elicited a fact which would have revealed the superficiality of the whole "Christ critic" position and disqualified their most convincing arguments, namely, that *Christ was not born in Galilee at all*, but in Bethlehem!

It is not too much to say that this is a fair representation of the general "Bible critic" position in the present day. Times change, but history is continually repeating itself. We hear again the sneer: "Do any of the leaders of religious and scientific thought accept the inspiration of the Bible?" heedless of the many gifted men in the leading ranks of science, theology, literature, astronomy and political economy, who are humble believers in the inspiration of Scripture. We hear continually that

*Elijah "the Tishbite" undoubtedly came from Tisbe or Thisbe, and the prophet Jonah is mentioned in 2 Kings 14. 25 as being "of Gath-hepher." Most maps show both Thisbe and Gath-hepher to be situated in the district subsequently known as Galilee.

this or that man, who is totally unknown except for the blatant way in which he denies the Scriptures which he receives a salary to defend, is "one of the most learned and erudite scholars of modern times," etc., etc.

We find, however, that the difficulties which these gentlemen take so much delight in emphasising are generally very simply explained when light is thrown on the subject by honest, careful study.

The "Christ critics" did not know everything, and neither do the "Bible critics" of to-day. If we follow Nicodemus' honest advice, and hear and examine before we judge, it is my conviction that we shall find the contentions of the "Bible critics," so speciously heralded as "the approved results of the highest modern scholarship," quite as baseless, quite as hollow, as those of the "Christ critics" of olden time.

III.

The Living and the Written Word.

I CAN well imagine that some one will be tempted to exclaim: "Well now, that is *too* much—to dare to compare the Bible with Christ, and to class those who criticise the Book with those who criticise the Person!" However, let us see if they can justly be compared.

The Scriptures name Christ five times as "The Word of God," or "The Word;" and Christ on many occasions gives the Scriptures the same name. Seeing, therefore, that they compare themselves with each other there must be some points of comparison.

Christ asks the Jews how they can possibly believe His words if they do not accept the writings of Moses (John 5. 47), thus indicating that "Bible critics" and "Christ critics" belong to the same class in His estimation.

It is as if Christ takes His stand by the side of God's revealed truth, and challenges us to accept Him and the Bible, or to reject them both. There is no logical alternative to this, as we shall see.

The mission of the Bible is to reveal the thoughts, deeds and judgments of God. Christ is the only perfect representation of these thoughts, the doer of these deeds, the executor of these judgments.

We have no accredited record of Christ outside the Bible, so we cannot in any sense be said to accept Him, unless we at least accept the words which the Bible attributes to Him, for, otherwise, what do we know of Him? How can we accept a person or his teachings if we know nothing of either?

Now, the words of Christ in the New Testament prove beyond all dispute that He believed Himself to be sent of God in direct fulfilment of the many prophecies in the Old Testament concerning a Messiah. This becomes clearer and clearer as the Gospel story proceeds, until we hear Him saying in the Garden of Gethsemane, as the rabble from the chief priests and elders lay their hands on Him, "The Scriptures must be fulfilled" (Mark 14. 49). We hear His cry from the Cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" from the first verse of the prophetic 22nd Psalm, and "It is finished," from the last verse of the same Psalm;* and, again,

*"He hath done *this*." Cf. The original Hebrew.

"Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit," from the 31st Psalm. At each step it is: "That the Scripture might be fulfilled."

Not only His own words, however, but the actions of His enemies prove Him to be the One of whom "Moses and the prophets did write."

I once had a conversation with a group of young men on the subject of the inspiration of the Bible. Most of them opposed me. I reminded them of the numerous prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, which were literally fulfilled in Christ. One of them was sharp enough to see the force of this argument, and he admitted that these prophecies were undoubtedly written hundreds of years before Christ was born and that He fulfilled them in every detail, but he endeavoured to parry its force by advancing the theory that Christ had intentionally planned His actions in accordance with the Messianic programme in order to establish His religion, so that there was, after all, nothing very wonderful in the fact that these prophecies were fulfilled.

This sounded very neat and ingenious, but I asked my friend to explain to us how Christ, in accordance with this theory, was able to arrange to be born in the very village—one of the smallest in Judaea—where the prophet Micah foretold that the Eternal One should be born on earth. I asked him what precautions He had taken, if a man as we are, to ensure being born at the very time and in the very family that the Scriptures had forecast. My friend was not inclined to surrender his position without a struggle, so he contended that Jesus, seeing that

He happened to be born in this particular village, at this particular time, and in this particular family, had been seized with the idea of carrying out the remaining details requisite to establish His Messianic claims.

My reply, in substance, was as follows: "Well and good. In accordance with this you will now perhaps tell us why Jesus was allowed to make arrangements for two thieves to be crucified with Him in order to fulfil Isaiah's prediction in his fifty-third chapter. You must tell us whether Judas arranged with the chief priests to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver merely in order to fulfil the word of the prophet; and, after Judas had hanged himself, who it was that arranged for *a potter's field* to be bought with the money which the betrayer flung down in the Temple, and whether it was done in order to fulfil the prophecy to that effect! You will also doubtless show us how, while hanging on the Cross, Jesus persuaded the four Roman soldiers who crucified Him to divide His outer garments into four parts and to cast lots for His inner robe, as the 22nd Psalm had accurately described! You will also need to explain whether His enemies gave Him vinegar to drink in His agony of thirst in order to fulfil the 69th Psalm. If your theory is to hold good you must explain to us how it was that, after Jesus was dead, the soldiers decided not to break His legs, as they did to the two thieves by His side. Did they desire to make Him fulfil the type of the Passover lamb in the twelfth chapter of Exodus and the ninth of Numbers, or the reference in the 34th Psalm? Did they act as accomplices with Jesus in thrusting a

spear into His side, because Zechariah had said in the name of Messiah: 'They shall look upon Me whom they pierced?' How did Jesus arrange that all these details should be fulfilled in Himself?"

My friend had nothing more to say.

If the reader does not desire to ride rough-shod over all the rules of logic he must admit that the fulfilment of these prophecies marks out Christ as a Divine Person separate from all others who have lived on this earth.

But the Word of God is as a two-edged sword, and cuts both ways. If Christ is Divine because the Scriptures prophesy of Him, then the Scriptures which prophesy of Him are also Divine—that is, the original manuscripts as they came from the writers—since He establishes and confirms them.

The Written Word often meets with the same reproach as the Living Word suffered. In His own countryside people said of Jesus: "Is not this the carpenter's Son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brethren and sisters, are they not all with us?" They thought they knew all there was to know about Him. His perfect manhood, to the thoughtless mind, was a barrier to a belief in His divinity. People say also of the Bible: "Is not this the production of men? Are not similar books with us—its brothers and sisters, so to speak?"

It is quite conceivable that the features of the Lord Jesus bore a natural likeness to those of His mother, Mary, and He would therefore to some extent have resembled His brothers and sisters. The superficial observer would notice this, and perhaps nothing else, but to those who knew Him,

who watched His life and heard His words—to those who, like Peter, willingly received enlightenment from the Father, He was “the Christ, the Son of the Living God” (Matt. 16. 16, 17).

In the same way we take up the Bible, and say, “This is Isaiah’s phraseology. Here we see the evidences of Luke’s observant eye; here we recognise the burning rhetoric of Paul, and here the gentle persuasiveness of John.” We see, in fact, in each book or epistle marks of the human authors. But there is something more; to the soul which, with humble willingness to accept all the truth it can find, seeks enlightenment from God’s Holy Spirit, it is “the Word of the Living God.”

Christ, the “Living Word,” had a higher parentage than Mary. The words of the angel to her, recorded by Luke the physician, were: “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1. 35). The Bible, the “Written Word,” likewise has a higher authorship than that of the men who penned the sacred words. “Prophecy came not at any time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1. 21).

By the direct co-operation of the Spirit of God with human instrumentality were both the Living Word and the Written Word given to mankind as the only revelations of the Person and the Thoughts of the Almighty God. We must accept *both*, or reject *both*. There is no alternative.

IV.

The Creation History.

It is twice recorded in the Gospels that Christ confirmed the Mosaic account of the Creation (Matt. 19. 4, 5; Mark 10. 5-8), so that all who discredit the words of Moses concerning the Creation discredit also the words of Christ Himself, as indeed He said: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" (John 5. 46, 47).

Much has been written about the difficulties which geology is supposed to put in the way of a belief in the Genesis account of Creation. We are told that the earth is far older than the Bible would lead us to suppose. Although we know that geology is confessedly on very thin ice when it attempts to fix the age of this planet, yet we have no object whatever in questioning its approximate accuracy in these matters. There is no conflict between Genesis and geology. Blind unbelief, however, and the determination to discredit the Scriptures by unfair methods if reasonable methods are not forthcoming have conspired to persuade some men to the contrary.

The Pharisees could doubtless have heaped up proof upon proof that the Messiah should not be born in Galilee, but we have seen that their arguments had no force whatever in view of the fact that Christ was not born in Galilee, but in Bethlehem.

Unbelievers in the Scriptures might likewise heap up proof upon proof that the world is so or so many

millions of years old, and think that this quite disposed of Genesis, but this conclusion would still be the grossest presumption, when we consider the fact that Genesis does not by any means attempt to fix the date of the original creation of the heaven and the earth.

Between the events described in the first and second verses of the first chapter of Genesis ages may have passed, leaving time for all the developments and changes in the earth which geology demands that we acknowledge.

Many of the most distinguished geologists accept the Creation story of Genesis, but they are divided in their opinions as to the meaning of the six days following the original Creation. Some view them as long periods of time, spoken of as "days," as marking the sessions of creative activity of Him, to whom "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3. 8). This might be supported by the fact that the whole period of six days is spoken of in the second chapter (vv. 4, 5) as one day, thus: "*In the day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew."

The geological researches of others, however, lead them to conclude that the days mentioned were literal days of twenty-four hours each, and that all the geological changes recorded in the strata of the earth took place between the periods mentioned in the first and second verses of Genesis.

HUGH MILLER, a king among geologists, inclined to the latter view during the earlier part of his career,

but became convinced in the course of his studies that the former was the correct one.

If one should be inclined to doubt whether such a vast age could have been allowed for between two verses, without the writer making more direct reference to it than is done in the chapter before us, I would point out that this is by no means uncommon in the Scriptures. A good example is seen in Isaiah 61. 1, 2. When Christ read this passage publicly in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4. 17-20), He stopped short after reading "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord," and, to the surprise of all, did not finish the verse, which, in Isaiah, continues as follows: "and the day of vengeance of our God." We read: "He closed the book, and . . . sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him." Although men did not understand it then, there is a great expanse of time between the personal ministry of Christ—preaching the Gospel to the poor, healing the broken-hearted, preaching deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, and setting the bruised at liberty—and the "day of vengeance of our God." The former began nearly nineteen hundred years ago. The latter has not yet come. "He closed the book." When the judgment begins we read: "And the books were opened."

Between Genesis 1. 1 and 1. 2 the book of Creation was closed, so to speak, perhaps for many millions of years, and long enough to allow for all the geological changes which science demands.

In reality, however, it matters little which of these two points of view we accept, for neither clashes with what geology has hitherto established.

An important point, which is not taken into sufficient consideration as a rule, is that it would have been quite impossible for Moses to have avoided the most palpable blunders if he had attempted to describe the great work of Creation, without Divine guidance, and from the point of view of the then current scientific knowledge, with which we are told he was well acquainted. Nothing could have delivered him from the ridiculous mistakes of which, for instance, the Buddhist account is guilty.

As it is, true science has no quarrel with Moses, as witness the numbers of able scientists who have been sincere believers in the Creation story of Genesis, and the many scientific books written to show that it is not superiority of knowledge but the lack of it that often supplies fuel to the flame of unbelief in rebellious hearts.

It should be noted that after the first verse it is only twice stated that God *created* anything. These two occasions refer to the present animal creation (v. 21) and man (v. 27). Nowhere else in the whole chapter is a creative act indicated, but rather a Divine arrangement of that which was already in existence. We notice, for instance, that it does not state that God *made* light. Light is not a substance, but minute vibrations in the ether. It is therefore scientifically more correct that the Creator's words should be reported as "*Be* light," instead of "And God created light."

HERBERT SPENCER, an agnostic, writing of what he called the "manifestations of the Unknowable," said that such a manifestation must, on scientific grounds, take five distinct forms, which he specified

thus: Space, Time, Matter, Motion and Force. Some one has pointed out that these five elements are found in the first two verses of Genesis, when God first manifested His great power on this earth, thus: "In the beginning"—*Time*; "God created the heaven"—*Space*; "and the earth"—*Matter*; "and the Spirit of God"—*Force*; "moved on the face of the waters"—*Motion*.

As to the creation of man himself, the very few specimens found, alleged to be fossil remains of man, contrast in a remarkable way with the profusion of animal fossils to be had in a great number of places simply for the trouble of digging them up. Geology is not an "exact science," like geometry or arithmetic, and in discussing fossils, geologists are forced to allow for all kinds of unexpected "accidents" in the formation of the various strata, and a study of their works will show how very cautiously they have to tread in dealing with them. Landslips and local floods in past ages have left most extraordinary phenomena to puzzle modern geologists, and cause great diversity of opinion among them on various points. These and similar "accidents" will leave a comparatively recent fossil in the closest juxtaposition to very ancient strata, and give the impression that it is a few million years older than it really is. Thus the discovery of a very few fossil remains of man in ancient strata cannot be accepted as evidence against the comparatively recent creation of man, as indicated in the Bible. There is, however, nothing in Scripture inconsistent with the theory that generations innumerable of pre-adamic animals have lived and died on this earth.

20 **The Microscope an Unfailing Test.**

The statement that God formed man of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2. 7) has been challenged, but it is a significant fact that there are no less than fourteen elements which compose the dust of the earth, and fourteen elements in the human frame, which are identical.

Perhaps these fragmentary remarks on a subject on which numerous books could be and have been written, will suffice to show the reader that the first chapter of Genesis, at any rate, cannot reasonably prevent the sincere seeker after truth from accepting the Scriptures as the Word of God, although so many would seek to persuade us to the contrary.

V.

The Bible Under the Microscope.

WHILE travelling some time ago through a beautiful valley, the heat of the summer sun tempted me often to rest for a few moments, and while my horse munched the luscious grass around me, I would lie on my back gazing up at the blue heavens, bordered by the majestic, snow-capped mountains, and think of the grandeur of creation and the majesty of the Creator.

The silver river, gradually tapering away upwards and upwards until it lost itself in a wind of its bed in the bosom of the mighty mountain-side; a rocky, steeple-like mountain-top lifting its proud head as by an effort above its many fellows, bidding defiance to the tiny clouds which sought to draw a flimsy veil over its severity, and the unfathomable blueness of space itself—all reminded me of the awful vastness of God's handiwork.

And then I turned and plucked a tiny flower. I turned back its petals, noted the beauty of its stamens and pistil, and examined its stalk—all was perfect. It bore the mark of its omnipotent Creator, and seemed to be a message from the God I love, telling of His inscrutable wisdom and of His unfailing care for the least of His creation, and therefore—for me. It taught me also that the power and love of God are seen not only in the grandeur of great things, but in the hidden beauties of the details of nature, not only in the vastness of the ocean and the mightiness of the “everlasting hills,” but in a blade of grass, on the underside of a minute leaf, beneath a stone, behind a twig, and on the wing of a beetle!

If I had taken that flower and put it under a microscope I should have discovered perfections that were hidden to the naked eye, and the more I increased the power of the lens the more glories I should have discovered.

Indeed, whatever object of nature we may choose to examine, be it but a withered leaf or a dead fly, the closer our investigation the more numerous will be the traces of Divine forethought that call forth our admiration. I venture to say that the microscope is an unfailing test to discern between the works of God and the works of man. If I take the mainspring of the smallest watch—one of the finest articles produced by the art of man—and put it under a microscope I shall see more and more imperfections and irregularities as I increase the power of the lens. The point of the finest needle will appear as a rugged, blunt spike, the most beautifully burnished surface will look like a pitted slab—all that does not come direct

from the hand of the Creator must lose its beauty and fineness under the searching eye of the microscope.

We will apply this test to the Bible. We will put the Bible under the microscope with a view to finding whether it bears the mark of being man's work or God's.

Leaving the Creation story, we turn over the pages until we come, in the fifth chapter of Genesis, to the list of Adam's descendants and their respective ages. Here we will make our examination. Let us take Methuselah—his is the longest life of all. We shall find a blunder here, if one is to be found. Nine hundred and sixty-nine years! People say this must be an exaggeration, or the years must have a different value from our years nowadays. Let us try the microscope.

What does "Methuselah" mean? It is a long name, and must mean something. Hebrew scholars tell us that it means: "*When he is dead, it shall be sent.*" And who was responsible for this mysterious name? Enoch, the man who "walked with God," and whom the Apostle Jude calls a prophet. Can he have had any object in giving his son this peculiar name, and can it have any connection with his remarkable longevity? What was it that happened when he died? *What* was "sent"?

Increase the power of our microscope, and we shall see:

"Methuselah lived *an hundred eighty and seven years*, and begat Lamech" (Gen. 5. 25), 187 years

"Lamech lived *an hundred eighty and two years*, and begat a son, and he called his name Noah" (Gen. 5. 28, 29), 182 ..

TOTAL, .. 369 years.

Methuselah was therefore 369 years old when Noah was born. As he lived 969 years (v. 27), he must have died in Noah's 600th year. "*When he is dead, it shall be sent.*" What remarkable event took place in Noah's 600th year, the year Methuselah died?

We read on until we come to the seventh chapter, where we find in the eleventh and twelfth verses the following: "In the *six hundredth year* of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights."

It was the *Flood* that Enoch had prophesied when naming his child. But our attention is not in any way called to this in the Scriptures. If the writer had said 968 instead of 969, no one would have discovered a mistake, but when we dig down and examine closely the sacred record we find an unsuspected harmony, a hidden perfection, that we do not see in the works of man. This instance is like our flower—it tells us of its Author.

It tells of Him, however, in a still more striking way if we consider it a little closer. Methuselah lived longer than any other man we read of. *Why?* "When he is dead, it shall be sent." According to God's promise through His prophet Enoch the awful judgment on the earth, threatened on account of sin, would not take place in Methuselah's lifetime. While he lived the world was safe, as safe as the promise of God. While he lived he must have been a constant warning to the ungodly

around him; his very name must have reminded them of the need for immediate repentance. As he grew older and older the warning grew more and more urgent. And God, unwilling to execute judgment, prolongs the life of Methuselah to give them space for repentance, longer and longer—700, 800, 900 years—until at last *righteousness* must assert itself and *grace* must retire, not having been received by the guilty, sin-loving world. Methuselah passes away, the “fountains of the great deep are broken up, and the windows of heaven are opened,” and the first dark page of the history of our race comes to an end.

“As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live” (Ezek. 33. 11).

VI.

Noah's Ark.

MANY Bible critics contend that the stories of the Creation and the Fall, and the laws given by Moses to the Israelites, were taken by the “compilers” of the Pentateuch from the ancient records of other peoples. If this theory be true, these “compilers” have been guilty of gross deception in that they use on fifty-one occasions the phrase, “Then THE LORD said unto MOSES,” and on seventy-two occasions the words, “THE LORD spake unto MOSES, and said.” Truly these “compilers”—who really only exist in the imagination of the Bible critics—have had very little regard for truth. But they are the natural mental offspring of men whose handling

of some of the truths they swore at their ordination to uphold can only be described as unfaithful.

There is strong proof that the story of the Fall and the Flood, and the rough outlines of the sacrificial laws, have been widely known from the most remote periods of this world's history.

Let us inspect Noah's Ark with our microscope.

In the Copenhagen newspaper, *Dagbladet*, under the date of 31st August, 1904, is a remarkable article on that interesting subject as follows:

The Royal Shipbuilding Yard has recently completed the construction of a remarkable vessel. It is 30 feet long, 5 feet wide, and 3 feet high, and with its slanting sides most resembles the roof of a house. It is a new Noah's Ark, constructed after the design of Mr. Vogt, the engineer, the Carlsberg Fund bearing the expense of its production.

The following information concerning the Ark and the object for which it is being constructed has been placed at our disposal by its builder, Mr. Vogt, the well-known engineer and inventor:

"You know that I have for some years been engaged in experiments in navigation. In the course of these experiments, in which it was most important to attain the best proportions in the dimensions of vessels, my attention was directed to some figures found in the Bible, in Genesis 6. 15. The Lord's command to Noah to build an Ark is here recorded, and the dimensions of the vessel are given as 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high. These Hebrew cubits are equivalent to 18 inches, and thus we have the following measurements of the Ark: 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high.

"The remarkable thing about these measurements is that after thousands of years' experience in the art of shipbuilding they must be confessed to be still the ideal proportions for the construction of a large ship. One of the greatest technical difficulties is to determine the correct proportionate dimensions. The greater the length of a vessel the quieter are its movements in the sea, but at the same time its proportionate strength is decreased to an almost incredible extent. If the size of a vessel be increased ten times, the weight of the ends of the ship upon the central part makes the tendency to break in half 10,000 times greater, while the power of the material to withstand the pressure is only 1000 times greater. Without doubt many ships have been lost simply because their proportionate dimensions were inaccurately determined.

"The former Chief Rabbi in Copenhagen, Professor Simonsen, has informed me that he has come to the conclusion by studying the text of the record in Genesis that the transverse section of the Ark was triangular. This supposition clears away at once all the

difficulties as to strength and seaworthiness, for it is impossible to construct a vessel of better shape than the triangular form in order to withstand the tossing about it would receive on the ocean.

"We must bear in mind that the Ark was not intended to sail, but to lie still on the water, and to give the best and quietest conditions for the comfort of its inhabitants, and this is insured by means of the triangular shape.

"I am convinced that in a storm the motion of a vessel like the Ark would be reduced to a minimum. As you know, it is sometimes necessary for a large steamer to stop its engines and to some extent consign itself to the mercy of the waves. Such a ship would be similarly situated as the Ark was, and it is under such conditions that the shape and proportionate dimensions are of essential importance.

"The waves often have a tendency to keep a long-shaped floating body at right angles to themselves, but as the pressure of the wind turns it in the opposite direction, the side of a ship is often turned towards the waves. Modern ships, with their high perpendicular sides and large erections on deck, which offer considerable resistance to the wind, run the greatest risks in such cases on account of the tremendous oscillations. The shape of the Ark, however, would partially nullify the pressure of the wind, and it must therefore have been very still on the sea.

"It is my opinion that the Ark ranks as a masterpiece when we consider its *raison d'être*. I am convinced that if we gave the greatest living engineer in the world such a commission as this, to construct as large and as strong a vessel to lie as still as possible on the sea, and as simply constructed as the Ark, he could not make a better vessel."

Having received the above information, we visited Professor D. Simonsen, the well-known Orientalist, and requested him to give his opinion on the matter from an etymological point of view.

"As you are perhaps aware," said the Professor, "a great number of Assyrian and Babylonian tablets have been discovered from time to time on which the cuneiform inscriptions describe similar occurrences to those in Genesis. There is, for instance, the story of a great flood, in which one of the gods advised a man, who was his friend, to build a vessel in order to save himself from the deluge. It is notably in an epic, 'Gilgamesch,' that we are told of a man called 'Utnapistim,' who saved his family from death by building a large ship to withstand the conflict of the elements.

"In the Bible the same occurrence is described in the story of Noah and the Ark, but whereas the Bible gives the measurements of the vessel—measurements which Mr. Vogt has proved to be ideal—the poetical inscriptions have either omitted the measurements altogether or have given figures which even those entirely ignorant of shipbuilding would perceive to be incorrect—for instance, 400 feet long by 400 feet wide.

"Now, Bible critics have arrived at the conclusion that the poems on the Assyrian and Babylonian tablets are the original stories of the Flood, and that the Jews incorporated these stories at a later date in their story of the Creation. In other words, that

the statements of the latter are not built upon actual facts, but upon the legends of neighbouring peoples. But if it really is a fact that the measurements given in the Bible are the ideal for the proportions of such a large vessel, then we have a proof of great significance in judging of the reliability of the Biblical accounts."

"Mr. Vogt, the engineer, has informed us that you have come to the conclusion, in your study of the text of Scripture, that the Ark was of triangular shape."

"Exactly. It states that the Lord said to Noah: 'In a cubit shalt thou finish it above.' I take these words to signify that the sides slant upwards towards each other to within a cubit of the point where they would meet; in other words, that the shape was triangular, having a bottom and two sides. Of course I am quite ignorant of shipbuilding, but Mr. Vogt states that it is impossible to imagine a more suitable shape for a vessel *intended for that purpose*."

"Can you tell me whether a previous attempt has ever been made to construct vessels of the same proportionate dimensions as the Ark?"

"A few hundred years ago some warships were built in Holland with the same proportions, but as they were of the same shape as ordinary ships and had to carry a great weight of cannon on the deck, the experiments yielded no practical result."

Thus the specialist and the scientist join in acknowledging the inestimable value of the Bible's specification of Noah's Ark. Mr. Vogt declares that he can hardly comprehend how any one in that distant age could be possessed of such great knowledge of the subject and have attained such a brilliant result.

And now—so many centuries later—Noah's Ark will perhaps be the pattern for an entirely new type of ship. NUMIS.

The foregoing is not only another example of the accuracy of the Scriptures, as seen when properly and scientifically examined by unprejudiced men, but another revelation of the hollowness of the so-called "critical" position.

There is, however, one objection to the story of the Flood that I must not pass by, which is often blindly insisted on by those who know nothing of the thousand and one proofs furnished by geology of the fact of a universal deluge. This objection is that it would be impossible for *the whole earth* to be under water at the same time, as stated in the Scriptures.

A learned scientist, Dr. John Murray, has stated that if the surface of the earth were made level, there

is as much water in the seas, which at some places reach a depth of six miles, as would cover the whole earth at one and the same time to a uniform depth of two miles.

There are several theories of the Flood put forward by geologists, all more or less interesting, which reconcile the record written in the Bible with the record written in the rocks. Each of these theories *might* be the truth—at least there is nothing scientifically to exclude them—so that our infidel friends must disprove each one of them before they can be permitted to say that the Biblical account of the Flood is inconsistent with the facts of geology.

Some who admit the possibility of a partial but not a universal deluge argue that there is no record of the Flood in the traditions of other countries than those situated near Asia Minor. Supposing this were so, it would nevertheless not argue against the universality of the Flood, but be a strong testimony in its favour. For if the Flood were universal, and Noah's family were the only one that escaped to repeople the earth, all knowledge of the Flood would necessarily be more vivid at the headquarters, so to speak, of Noah's new colony (*i.e.*, Asia Minor) than in the more distant parts subsequently occupied by man.

As a matter of fact this is exactly the case. The Chaldeans, Phoenicians, Babylonians, Phrygians, Syrians, Persians, Greeks, and even Armenians had all more or less harmonising stories of the Flood.

For instance, the Phrygian account mentions Enoch as having prophesied the coming flood, and states that he wept and prayed for the callous,

impenitent inhabitants of the antediluvian world. An ancient Phrygian coin has been found with a crude representation of the Ark, *of a triangular* shape, and the letters "N-O" on its side, doubtless referring to Noah.

Farther away we find that India and China, though they have records of the Flood, can furnish no details beyond that there was *a man who, with his family of seven*, was saved from the deluge, while the ancient Mexicans had the bare tradition of a man who made a ship in which to escape the coming catastrophe.

It is remarkable that in Genesis 8. 4 we are told the exact date on which the Ark first rested on terra firma. Who would have dared so audaciously to fix a date like this, unless he had unimpeachable authority for so doing? Nowhere in the Scriptures do we find so much as a hint that this date has any significance, but a closer investigation will reveal the astounding fact that this seventeenth day of the seventh month was exactly the same day of the same month as that on which the Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead! And a careful consideration of 1 Peter 3. 18-22 will show that the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as typified in baptism (Rom. 6. 4), and calling for "newness of life" in the baptised one, is definitely foreshadowed by the landing of the Ark on a "new earth," so to speak, and the life under entirely new conditions of Noah and his family.

The Jewish year began originally with the month Tisri, and the seventh month was named Abib. At the time of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt in the month of Abib it was changed

from the seventh to the first month to commemorate their great deliverance from the hand of Pharaoh (Exod. 12. 1, 2; 23. 15). It was on the fourteenth day of this month every year that the Passover Lamb (a type of Christ, the Lamb of God) was slain (Exod. 12. 6), and we know from the New Testament that it was on this very day that the Lord Jesus was taken and crucified. The Jewish day began and ended always at six o'clock in the evening, and the Scriptures state that Christ and His apostles partook of the Passover as soon as the hour had come (Matt. 26. 20; Mark 14. 16, 17; Luke 22. 14), *i.e.*, directly after six o'clock on the evening which ushered in the Passover day (the fourteenth). We read in John 18 that the high priests would not enter into Pilate's hall of judgment, where Jesus was passing through His mock trial some hours later, "lest they should be defiled," in order "that they might eat the Passover," which shows that it was still early on the Passover day when Jesus was tried. He was hurried away and crucified during the course of this same day, the fourteenth day of Abib. On the third day following He rose from the dead, *i.e.*, on the seventeenth day of Abib, which is identically the same day of the same month as that on which Noah and his family left the waters, speaking of death, for the dry land, and began a new life on a new earth, Noah becoming on that day physically—what Christ on His resurrection became spiritually—the Head of a New Creation.

Now, it is absolutely impossible for the most extreme critic to deny that the records in Genesis and Exodus were written at least some hundreds of years before Christ's death and resurrection. Our

unbelieving friends may object, if they will, that Christ died and rose again on these particular days, simply in order to fulfil the hidden types in Genesis and Exodus. In doing so they would at once concede His Divinity, and the Divine origin of the Mosaic records.

How, then, can we account for this marvellous foreshadowing of His person in these wonderful books if not by Divine inspiration?

VII.

The Pentateuch.

FEW will deny that the chief battleground in regard to the inspiration of the Scriptures is the Pentateuch, or the Five Books of Moses.

Apart from the questions of the Creation and the Flood, and a few other less important difficulties—some of which are mere cavils—there has sprung up of late years a school of criticism which devotes special attention to the Pentateuch, and singularly illustrates how the Almighty “taketh the wise in their own craftiness” and “brings to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” It affords us an object-lesson of how the intellect of man, when pitted deliberately against the revealed truth of God, is judicially allowed by Him to run to such excess of presumptuous conceit and puerile folly that to an evenly balanced and unbiased mind no refutation is needed. The same Divine Hand that suspended Nebuchadnezzar’s reason when he reached the pinnacle of his pride (Dan. 4), and smote Elymas the sorcerer with temporary blindness when he sought to turn one away from the faith (Acts 13), seems to

deprive men, whose brilliant intellect and superb gifts would be invaluable within the limits of legitimate criticism, of the most ordinary common sense when daring to assail the Word of the Most High and to brush aside the testimony of the Son of God. I am convinced that there is no other explanation of the childish nonsense these would-be critics unblushingly put before the public. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1. 22). As it will be in later days, so now: "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; . . . for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. 2. 10, 11).

I have sometimes literally *gasped* at the unparalleled utterances of some of these learned doctors of divinity, who imagine insoluble difficulties in passages which are perfectly and logically explained by other passages of which it is inconceivable that they are ignorant, but which they nevertheless completely ignore. A very simple instance of what I mean—chosen for the sake of brevity, and not taken from the Pentateuch—is as follows: A learned bishop writes several pages of rhetoric, severely criticising the hard things uttered by David in the 109th Psalm, and (can it possibly be intentionally?) quite omits to mention that the Apostle Peter said that in this Psalm (and also the 69th) the Holy Spirit spake by the mouth of David "*concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus*" (Acts 1. 16 and 20), which throws a very different light on the subject. There are the Holy Spirit, King David and the Apostle Peter on the one side, and the bishop and Judas on the other!

The peculiar folly of this new school of criticism is their effort to prove that the Pentateuch is the work of—some said, at first, two authors; others, later, three; now they say four, five and even a greater number of authors. And they profess to be able to tell which part of each chapter and verse is by each author, and sometimes even when it was "inserted," ignoring most of the available data, and working out their theories according to their own individual fancies. It is safe to say that no two critics agree as to how much is by each supposed author; and it is equally safe to say that no critic keeps the same opinions for much more than a few years at a time. When one theory is exploded they abandon it, and turn cheerfully to the next one, until that also falls to pieces, and so on.

A good example is forthcoming of the exceeding folly of the task these would-be critics have set themselves in attempting to correct the Lord Jesus Christ, their Creator and Judge, in the matter of the authorship of the Pentateuch. It is culled from a recent pamphlet:

"A literary man, who had made a lifelong study of Thackeray's writings, believed himself to be so thoroughly acquainted with the novelist's style that he could detect it anywhere. He dived into the old volumes of *Punch*, with the result that he brought to light (that is, he imagined he did) some writings which had never been published in Thackeray's works. The 'discovery' was communicated to one of the first literary organs in America, and their publication was announced with a blast of trumpets befitting so great an occasion. One or two of the papers had appeared, when a communication was received from the treasurer of the *Punch* office. It said that the papers had been written, not by Thackeray, but by others whose names were in the office books, and who had in due course been paid for these very contributions. This ended the matter. The publication of the papers was immediately suspended, and the editor made as dignified a retreat as the humiliating circumstances would permit."

Now, Thackeray lived only a few years ago. Many men of the present day knew him well, and exchanged correspondence with him. His daughter is well known in the literary world, and is an authority on her father's works. Many of his letters are published, the originals being still in existence. His style is unique and easily recognisable. And yet, with all these helps, it is impossible for a gifted literary critic to ascertain with any degree of certitude what the distinguished writer did or did not write.

And now let us look at the so-called "Bible critics." They take five books written about four thousand years ago in a language which no living soul on earth now speaks—ostensibly by a man from whom we have no other writings except a few Psalms—and calmly assure us that the first part of this verse, and the second half of the next verse, the beginning of this chapter and the end of the next, are inserted by a later author, these other verses by another author, and so on and so forth, each individual critic cutting up the books after his own pattern, and no two critics entirely agreeing with each other, and yet foisting this jumble on the Christian public as the "definite results of the latest modern scholarship!"

Is it not evident that this flourish of pens and owlsh show of wisdom is one of the most obnoxious species of "humbug" that infests this troubled earth—"humbug" clothed in cap and gown, and surmounted by gold-rimmed spectacles, but "humbug" all the same?

Space forbids giving more than one example of their brilliance.

In their intense desire to prove the plural author-

ship of Genesis, they "discovered" that the supposed author, who speaks of God as "Elohim," called a certain place "Padan-Aram," but the other supposed author, who refers to the Divinity as "Jehovah," called it "Aram-Naharaim." This they considered absolutely conclusive proof of their case, and added to the scorn with which they looked down upon the "old-fashioned" people, who nevertheless preferred the testimony of Christ and His apostles to that of these "scientific" (!) critics. However, an honest man took the trouble to inquire into the matter, and found that "Aram-Naharaim" is only found *once* in Genesis, and then it is actually found in a passage which the "assured results of the latest critical scholarship" (!) had previously *proved* to be written by *the Elohist* author. Since then it has come to light that "Padan-Aram" and "Aram-Naharaim" are the names of *two different places*, though situated in the same (Aram) district! This is only one of the many hundreds of the Higher Critics' blunders.

Their whole system is pure guesswork, and is carried on chiefly by men who have sworn an oath to preach the truth of the Gospel, and have thereby gained the confidence of others. That their theories are undermining the faith, and consequently the morals of thousands of their fellowmen, seems to be of little consequence to them.

Before leaving the subject of the Pentateuch I would point out that there are innumerable internal marks of its Divine origin besides those touched upon in previous chapters. As an example I will cite one which I think has considerable importance. One of the prominent teachings of the Pentateuch is

36 Moses and Comparative Anatomy.

that the Godhead cannot be represented by any image or similitude. This teaching is condensed in a few words in Deuteronomy 4. 14-18, where Moses reminds the children of Israel that they must not make a "graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth."

Notice the order—man, beasts, birds, reptiles and fishes. The human heart might itself determine that man is more godlike than the animals, but who could tell the relative order of intelligence in the lower creatures? Comparative anatomy has now taught men that the proportion of brain in weight to the spinal cord is in man 33 to 1; in mammals 4 to 1; in birds 3 to 1; in reptiles $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 1; and in fishes 2 to 1. So that the creatures rank exactly as they are classified in the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy. The same exact order is found in 1 Kings 4. 33, referring to the zoological subjects treated of by Solomon. But who taught Moses and Solomon comparative anatomy? Perhaps some one will say that this merely shows that the ancients were advanced in these subjects, but this kind of thing is not found outside the pages of the Bible. In India we find to this day a beast set on a higher platform than man, *i.e.*, the bull or the cow. In Egypt the bird and the reptile were worshipped as gods, and in Philistia it was the fish (*Dagon*). How do we get this absolutely correct physiological order in the ancient books of the Bible if they are not literally inspired by God?

VIII.

**Did the Sun Stand Still in
Joshua's Day?**

THERE are certain people to be met with nowadays who consider it a sign of superior intellect to disbelieve in miracles. If such a one should be among my readers, I hereby challenge him to investigate with me the most incredible miracle that has ever been recorded, viz., the lengthening of a day beyond the usual twenty-four hours, as described in the book of Joshua, chapter 10.

If Dr. Cook had been able to prove conclusively that he had reached the North Pole we should have had no difficulty whatever in believing his statements in regard to the other incidents of the journey. If the most incredible point of any disputed matter is cleared up absolutely satisfactorily, showing that suspicion was unjust and unfounded, it is unreasonable and obstinate to continue to cast suspicion on the less important and less incredible points, of which definite proofs are difficult to obtain.

In the same way it is a fair challenge to the doubter to take what is generally considered to be the most incredible statement in the whole of the Bible as a test case, so to speak. If he find that his intellect, which has hitherto told him that this statement must be a mistake, is itself at fault, then it is reasonable to expect him to mistrust his intellect next time it brings him into conflict with the Word of God,

and wait until he obtains further light on the matter.

The text of the passage in question is as follows:

"And it came to pass, as they (the Amorites) fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died; they were more which died with hail-stones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword. Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, 'Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.' And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel" (Joshua 10. 11-14).

In the first place, let us make it clear that there is no question as to whether God *could* have performed this marvellous work, but rather as to whether He *did* perform it. If I were to show you my watch and tell you that the watchmaker who made it could have constructed it, had he wished to do so, so that the hands would go round the other way, or even, after a certain period, to stop still for a second or two and then go on again, without disorganising the mechanism, you would doubtless agree with me.

In the same way I point to the gigantic watch which God has made, which we call the solar system, and I tell you that I believe that the Creator and Upholder of the sun, moon, earth and stars could make a slight alteration in His own arrangements without any accident ensuing if He wished to. Reason forbids any other conclusion. Thus when anyone tells me that miracles are impossible, he asks me to

accept the theory that the Being who created the whole universe has not the power subsequently to adjust a part of it to suit His own purposes, that is, He who *created* the whole cannot *alter* a part, which is absurd.

Let us now examine the text carefully. It will be noticed that in this passage there are several important points which can be used as data for an investigation from an astronomical point of view, as follows: That at a certain time when, to a man standing on the road leading to Beth-horon, the sun was visible over Gibeon and the moon over the valley of Ajalon, a shower of "great stones" fell from the heavens between the Beth-horon road and Azekah, and the day was prolonged for about twenty-four hours.

We next examine the words used by Joshua in his prayer, and find that his request was literally: "Sun, *be silent* upon Gibeon." The Hebrew word he used was "*damam*," which means "to be silent, or inactive," and is generally translated "to be silent," as, for instance, in Psalm 30. 12, "To the end that my glory may sing praise to Thee, and not *be silent (damam)*." It is this word which is used in the original Hebrew on each of the three occasions in the above passage from the book of Joshua where we have "stand still" or "stood still" in our translation.

Now science has proved that light is vocal, that is to say that the rapid vibrations in the ether waves which constitute light cause a peculiar singing sound, although our ears are not sensitive enough to hear it. It is the opinion of many scientists that it is the

40 **In Accord with Modern Science.**

action of the sun upon the earth that causes the latter to revolve upon its axis.

In order that the day should be prolonged as Joshua desired, it would be necessary, assuming this theory to be correct, for the revolution of the earth on its axis to slow down to a certain extent, and this result could be obtained by suspending, reducing, or counter-acting in some way the action of the sun upon the earth.

Thus it appears that Joshua's words are exactly in accordance with the discoveries of modern science: "Sun, be silent, or inactive."

If, therefore, the influence of the sun was temporarily lessened, the earth would revolve a little slower, and—the day would be longer!

NEWTON, the great astronomer, has demonstrated how quickly the motion of the earth might be slowed down without any of its inhabitants being able to notice the change.

An experienced scientist in Copenhagen once informed me that he had little doubt that the shower of "great stones" which fell and caused so much havoc among the Amorites was the tail or some part of a large comet which came within appreciable distance of the earth; and he stated his conviction that if an exploration were made on the spot indicated the stones would be discovered and be found to be of meteoric origin. We have here a possible explanation of the whole wonderful occurrence.

We know that the heavenly bodies exert a kind of magnetic attraction upon each other, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that the advent of a large comet within the sphere of the earth's influence

might to a considerable extent have rendered the action of the sun on the earth inoperative. Whether this could have been by counter-attraction I suppose no scientist could tell us, but it is at any rate a remarkable thing that this fall of a shower of meteoric stones, which might well be the tail of some vast comet, should synchronise with a disturbance in the revolution of the earth around its axis.

However this may be, astronomy demands that some such thing as that described in the book of Joshua must have happened, and history testifies that it has actually taken place.

Mr. SIDNEY COLLETT in his valuable work, "The Scripture of Truth," says that Professor TOTTEN, of America, has studied this subject very closely from an astronomical point of view, and has published the result in an elaborate mathematical calculation. It appears that the sun, moon and earth cannot on more than *one* occasion have been in the relative positions described in the passage in the book of Joshua, and, working backward from the present time to that date, he finds it impossible to avoid the conclusion that *a whole day of exactly twenty-four hours has been inserted into the world's history.*

Mr. E. W. MAUNDER, F.R.A.S., of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the famous centre of astronomical learning and research, has also written on this subject, fixing the time of day when the wonderful occurrence took place, as well as tracing the exact spot on which Joshua must have been standing at the time.

But this is not all. It will be noticed that the passage runs: "So the sun stood still in the midst

of heaven, and hasted not to go down *about* a whole day." Professor Totten's calculations show that although exactly twenty-four hours have somehow or other been inserted in the world's history, only *twenty-three hours twenty minutes* can be accounted for in the time of Joshua, as the Scripture says, "*about* a whole day."

So that there are forty minutes lacking of the twenty-four hours which astronomical calculations demand should be accounted for. Here, again, we have an example of the accuracy of the sacred Scriptures. In 2 Kings 20. 8-11, we read as follows:

"And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day? And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that He hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees or go back ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord: and He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz."

Here we read of the shadow of the sun going back ten degrees on the sun-dial. Now ten degrees is exactly forty minutes, which with the twenty-three hours twenty minutes of Joshua's day make up to a minute the twenty-four hours which Prof. Totten finds to have been inserted in a mysterious manner in the history of this planet.

The writer, not being trained as an astronomer, is unable to confirm Prof. Totten's calculations, but he mentions his conclusions to show that there is most decidedly a *pro* as well as a *con* in the discussion of this miracle.

We will now hear what history has to say about Joshua's long day.

There were three ancient nations in the East which kept records of their history—the Greeks, the Egyptians and the Chinese. *Each of these nations has a record of an unnaturally long day.* HERODOTUS, 480 B.C., a Greek, who is called “the father of history,” tells us that some priests in Egypt showed him a record telling of the lengthening of a day far beyond the twenty-four hours. In the Chinese ancient writings it is plainly stated that such an occurrence took place in the reign of their Emperor YEO, and their genealogical tables show that an Emperor of this name was reigning in China in the time of Joshua.

Lord Kingsborough, who has made a special study of the aboriginal Indians in America, states that the Mexicans, who reached a high state of civilisation long before America was discovered by Europeans, have a record that the sun “stood still” for a whole day in the year which they call “seven rabbits.” Now, the year “seven rabbits” corresponds exactly with the time that Joshua and the Israelites were conquering Palestine.

Thus we have independent historical testimony to the truth of the Scriptures on the point under consideration from Greece, Egypt, China and Mexico. This chorus of evidence cannot be considered otherwise than as absolutely final.

A man once said to me after I had delivered a lecture on the above subject, “I must submit to the verdict of science with regard to the occurrence of this phenomenon, but I cannot believe that all this happened *just because of one man's prayer.*” Possibly others may have the same difficulty. I take, therefore, the opportunity of pointing out

44 "Because of One Man's Prayer."

that this miracle sheds a remarkable light on the secret of successful prayer, although the scope of this book does not permit me more than merely to touch upon the subject.

God knew, of course, from the beginning that this event would take place, but then He also knew that Joshua would make that prayer. Joshua, being in touch with God, a "co-worker with Him" (2 Cor. 6. 1), was led to pray and make his own plans in accordance with God's plans. Prayer was the link between Joshua and the mighty event God was just going to bring about. Had Joshua not been in touch with God he might have arranged his troops for a night attack to surprise the Amorites, and the lengthened day would have been disastrous to him.

The works of God are going on all around us, and God can make *some one* of His innumerable resources fit in with *each* of our needs (Phil. 4. 19), and He does it, not by altering His all-wise plans, but by leading us ("as many as are led by the Spirit of God," Rom. 8. 14) to adapt our erring selves and to alter our foolish plans to fit in with His preconceived and divinely perfect designs. Then we receive answers to our prayers. Experience shows that it is those who submit themselves most completely to God, and who joyfully discard their own plans for His, who are continually receiving answers to prayer which are nothing short of miraculous.

IX.

Jonah and the Whale.

IN several of the later Old Testament books there are difficulties which critics and infidels are very fond of pointing out. They are all, however, very easily explained when prejudice is put on one side, and cannot be dealt with in such a short work as the present. But in the book of Jonah there is much against which objections have been raised, which must not be passed over.

Superficial and unbelieving critics find great difficulty in believing that Jonah was in reality swallowed by a whale, remained for three days and three nights inside the animal, and was then vomited up on dry land.

In the first place, no one who really believes in Christ can doubt the story of Jonah, for Christ puts His own seal upon this disputed subject when He says: "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12. 40). Here He disposes—at least as far as His disciples are concerned—of the idea that the book of Jonah is an allegory, as some critics like to think. For if it is only in an allegorical sense that Jonah was in the belly of the whale, then it follows that it is only in an allegorical sense that Christ was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. This is an example of how the rejection of the Old

Testament paves the way for the rejection of Christ Himself and His words.

Let it be noticed that the word our Lord uses ("*keetos*"), which is translated "whale," is more correctly translated "sea-monster." It is nowhere stated in the book of Jonah that it was a *whale* that swallowed the prophet. So that we have no authority for either asserting or denying that it was a whale, and the conjectures made by some ignorant infidel lecturers as to the size of a whale's throat, etc., are quite beside the mark.

Again, we must notice the words in Jonah 1. 17: "Now the Lord had *prepared* a great fish to swallow up Jonah." The word for "prepared" ("*manah*") means "to appoint," or mark out for a certain purpose, so that this passage means that the God of all creation had chosen a certain fish fitted in size and all other qualifications to suit His own purposes in teaching His servant Jonah and in giving the Jews a "sign" of the resurrection of Christ.

At the same time it is most probable that the fish chosen was, after all, some sort of whale, for there is nothing in the constitution of a whale to prevent him swallowing two or even three men for that matter.

The late Mr. FRANK BULLEN, F.R.G.S., the well-known author of "The Cruise of the 'Cachalot'," and a reliable witness, testified that he had himself helped to catch whales about seventy feet in length and correspondingly broad. The captain of the "Cachalot" estimated one whale to weigh fifteen tons. On one occasion a shark fifteen feet in length was found in the stomach of a sperm whale. I suppose Jonah was not bigger than that shark! Mr. Bullen

also states that the sperm whale often *vomits up the contents of its stomach when dying*, which is exactly what the great fish that swallowed Jonah did. Once a huge whale vomited up large masses of food, about 8 ft. by 6 ft. by 6 ft. And yet the credulous infidel would like us to believe that such a creature could not swallow a man! No, we are not so gullible as the average unbeliever. Like the whales of their own imagination—which strain at a man and swallow huge sharks—they strain at a gnat and swallow a camel (Matt. 23. 24) in rejecting the miracles of the Bible and accepting the most absurd theories to support their unbelief.

The only thing that is at first sight really difficult to understand is that Jonah should have been able to live for any length of time in such a prison. However, a well-accredited instance has occurred in recent times of a man being swallowed by a whale and being nevertheless rescued alive after remaining some time in its stomach.

At least two accounts have been given of the event, agreeing in every particular, and the whole subject has been sifted carefully by M. de Parville, editor of the famous *Journal des Debats*, whose name and reputation as a scientist are a sufficient answer to those who call the story of Jonah into question from a scientific standpoint. The detailed report is as follows:

"Last February the whaling ship, 'Star of the East,' was in the vicinity of the Falkland Islands searching for whales, which were very scarce. One morning the lookout sighted a whale about three miles away on the starboard quarter. Two boats were manned. In a short time one of the boats was near enough to enable the harpooner to send a spear into the whale, which proved to be an exceedingly large one. With the shaft in his side the animal

sounded and then sped away, dragging the boat after him with terrible speed. He swam straight away about five miles, when he turned and came back almost directly towards the spot where he had been harpooned. The second boat waited for him, and when but a short distance away from it he rose to the surface. As soon as his back showed above the surface of the water the harpooner in the second boat drove another spear into him. The pain apparently crazed the whale, for it threshed about fearfully, and it was feared that the boats would be swamped and the crews drowned. Finally the whale swam away, dragging the two boats after him. He went about three miles and sounded or sank, and his whereabouts could not be exactly told. The lines attached to the harpoons were slack, and the harpooners began slowly to draw them in and coil them in the tubs. As soon as they were tautened, the whale arose to the surface and beat about with its tail in the maddest fashion. The boats attempted to get beyond the reach of the animal, which was apparently in its death agonies, and one of them succeeded, but the other was less fortunate. The whale struck it with his nose and upset it. The men were thrown into the water, and before the crew of the other boat could pick them up one man was drowned, and James Bartley had disappeared. When the whale became quiet from exhaustion the waters were searched for Bartley, but he could not be found. and, under the impression that he had been struck by the whale's tail and sunk to the bottom, the survivors rowed back to the ship. The whale was dead, and in a few hours the great body was lying by the ship's side, and the men were busy with axes and spades cutting through the flesh to secure the fat. They worked all day and part of the night. They resumed operations the next forenoon, and were soon down to the stomach, which was to be hoisted to the deck. The workmen were startled while labouring to clear it and to fasten the chain about it to discover something doubled up in it that gave spasmodic signs of life. The vast pouch was hoisted to the deck and cut open, and inside was found the missing sailor, doubled up and unconscious. He was laid out on deck and treated to a bath of sea-water, which soon revived him, but his mind was not clear, and he was placed in the captain's quarters, where he remained two weeks a raving lunatic. He was carefully treated by the captain and officers of the ship, and he finally began to get possession of his senses. At the end of the third week he had entirely recovered from the shock, and resumed his duties. During the brief sojourn in the whale's belly Bartley's skin, where it was exposed to the action of the gastric juices, underwent a striking change. His face and hands were bleached to a deathly whiteness, and the skin was wrinkled, giving the man the appearance of having been parboiled. Bartley affirms that he would probably have lived inside his house of flesh until he starved, for he lost his senses through fright, and not from lack of air. He says that he remembers the sensation of being lifted into the air by the nose of the whale and of dropping into the water. Then there was a frightful rushing sound, which he believed to be the beating of the water by the whale's tail, then he

was encompassed by a fearful darkness, and he felt himself slipping along a smooth passage of some sort that seemed to move and carry him forward. This sensation lasted but an instant, then he felt that he had more room. He felt about him, and his hands came in contact with a yielding slimy substance that seemed to shrink from his touch. It finally dawned upon him that he had been swallowed by the whale, and he was overcome by horror at the situation. He could breathe easily, but the heat was terrible. It was not of a scorching, stifling nature, but it seemed to open the pores of his skin and to draw out his vitality. He became very weak, and grew sick at the stomach. He knew that there was no hope of escape from his strange prison. Death stared him in the face, and he tried to look at it bravely, but the awful quiet, the fearful darkness, the horrible knowledge of his environments, and the terrible heat finally overcame him, and he must have fainted, for the next he remembered was being in the captain's cabin. Bartley is not a man of a timid nature, but he says that it was many weeks before he could pass a night without having his sleep disturbed with harrowing dreams of angry whales and the horrors of his fearful prison. The skin on the face and hands of Bartley has never recovered its natural appearance. It is yellow and wrinkled, and looks like old parchment. The health of the man does not seem to have been affected by his terrible experience. He is in splendid spirits, and apparently fully enjoys all the blessings of life that come his way. The whaling captains say that they never remember a parallel case to this before. They say that it frequently happens that men are swallowed by whales who become infuriated by the pain of the harpoon and attack the boats, but they have never known a man to go through the ordeal that Bartley did and come out alive."

This story has received the support of one of the most careful and painstaking scientists in Europe, M. de Parville, editor of the *Journal des Debats*, who remarks that the accounts given "by the captain and the crew of the English whaler are worthy of belief. There are many cases reported where whales in the fury of their dying agony have swallowed human beings, but this is the first modern case where the victim has come forth safe and sound. After this modern illustration I end by believing that Jonah really did come out from the whale alive as the Bible records."

If such a clever scientist finds reason to accept the story of Jonah and the whale, in spite of all its difficulties, it is presumptuous for less learned persons to pretend to the superior knowledge they assume by calling it into question.

But the testimony of Christ is greater than that of M. de Parville. Who will dare to give the lie to the Son of God?

X.

The New Testament.

THE New Testament being generally better known and understood, one meets with fewer objections to its authenticity than is the case with the Old Testament. I feel it my duty, however, to touch upon a few points which might seem at first sight to disagree with the view that the New Testament is inspired by the Spirit of God.

I have pointed out that Christ set the seal of His authority on the Old Testament writings. Some have thought that this could not have been possible in the case of the New Testament, seeing that none of it was written until after Christ had ascended into Heaven. But our blessed Lord, knowing how deeply mankind would need a record of His life and teachings, made perfect arrangements for writing what was necessary, shortly before He was crucified. In John 14. 26 His words to His apostles are recorded: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My Name, *He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*" So that we have His definite promise that the Holy Spirit would enable those who heard Him speak to remember accurately what He said. He promises also that the Holy Spirit shall "teach them all things," and in John 16. 12, 13 we read: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the

Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." This gives us plainly to understand that the Holy Spirit would eventually reveal to the apostles truths that Christ did not reveal to them because they were not then "able to bear them."

This displays at once the folly of the objection of some critics that this or that doctrine "originated with Paul, and was not even referred to by Christ."

The passage just quoted also states that the Holy Spirit would reveal to the apostles "things to come." John was actually commanded to "write the things which he saw" in prophetic vision (Rev. 1. 19; 21. 5).

So that we have the authority of Christ for trusting implicitly (1) the Gospel records, (2) the teachings of the Epistles and (3) the New Testament prophecies.

It is really remarkable to observe the short-sighted way in which learned men reason concerning what they consider to be the inconsistencies of the Gospels.

I suppose every doctor with a large practice could furnish us with scores—nay, hundreds—of examples of two patients suffering from the same disease and being cured in the same way, the illness taking much the same course in them both, only differing in some unimportant details. If a certain doctor were to deliver a lecture before some medical society and refer to one of these cases, and in another lecture refer to another very similar, what would you say of the man who went about trying to prove that the doctor was a liar, and that he never made the cures at all, because in one lecture he spoke of a man of

thirty-five and in the other of a woman of thirty? And yet this is a close parallel with the attempts of certain critics to refute the miracles of the Lord Jesus. Because Matthew tells of the healing of a madman who was dumb and blind, and Luke tells of one who was only dumb in the same district, this is supposed to be a proof of the inaccuracy and unreliability of the Gospel record, the critics being unable to conceive that there might have been another madman in the same district who was dumb, but not blind.

Again, Matthew tells us that Jesus healed two blind men as He departed from Jericho (Matt. 20), and Mark only mentions one, who was called Bartimaeus (Mark 10). This is exultantly pointed out as a discrepancy. I should like to know what power on earth would have kept the second blind man from following Bartimaeus' example if he thought he would be able also to obtain his sight! I doubt not that Christ cured many other blind men on that same journey. We read in Luke's Gospel of one cured *on the way into* Jericho in very similar circumstances. We have every reason to believe that such cases were continually recurring.

Some critics compare the sermons recorded in Matthew's Gospel with those given by Luke, and tell us that the comparison proves that there was no attempt at a correct representation of the sermon, that the various matters treated of are given in different order, that Matthew says that one sermon was delivered on a mount, but Luke says it was on a plain, and so on. But how unreasonable and thoughtless it is to suppose that Christ never uttered

the same truth more than once. His Divine message had to be repeated over and over again as He came to different towns and spoke to entirely new audiences, and in His wisdom He doubtless put the message in different form, according to the understanding and the special needs of those before Him.

I will cite two examples to show that this is a perfectly reasonable explanation of the apparent discrepancies between the Gospels. We have all read of Christ feeding the five thousand in the desert, which is recorded in all the Gospels. Each evangelist mentions the five loaves and two fishes and the twelve basketfuls gathered after the meal was over, all details agreeing, for the simple reason that all four describe the same miracle. But there was also a similar miracle mentioned only by Matthew and Mark. In this case there were *seven* loaves and a *few* small fishes, only *four* thousand men were fed, and *seven* baskets of fragments were gathered. Now, supposing Matthew and Mark had mentioned this latter miracle and not the former. We should then have been told by the critics that this was conclusive proof of the inaccuracy of the Gospel stories. "Matthew and Mark say there were four thousand men, seven loaves and seven baskets" would be the cry; "but Luke and John say it was five thousand men, five loaves and twelve baskets; absolutely impossible to reconcile the contradictions!" Doubtless the suggestion that there might have been *two* miracles would have been laughed to scorn.

As a matter of fact, our Lord on one occasion (Mark 8. 19, 20) refers to *both* these miracles at the same time.

This confirms what I have pointed out—that similar miracles must continually have been happening during the three busy years of healing the sick, the blind, the lame, and raising the dead.

Take another instance, the words of Christ: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." Jesus said these words on two distinct occasions, once as described in Matthew 12. 39, and again as recorded in Matthew 16. 4. Now, if the words had been recorded as being spoken on only one of these occasions in Matthew's Gospel, and they were mentioned in connection with the other occasion in Luke's Gospel, we should then, if we took the position the critics take, have to regard it as a mistake on the part of one of the evangelists. But it is ourselves who would have been mistaken, for the critical position is manifestly a false one when it insists on binding Christ to only one form of expression for each truth He preached, and on limiting Him to the performance of only one miracle of each kind in each place he visited.

There were two well-known men in America in the eighteenth century, father and son, both named Jonathan Edwards. Both were clergymen, and the grandsons of clergymen. Both were pious men, famous scholars, and tutors for equal periods in their respective colleges. Both took up the pastoral work before carried on by their maternal grandfathers, and both were dismissed on account of peculiar religious opinions. Both were again settled over congregations much attached to them, and both published in their leisure time works of

considerable literary value. Both left their parishes in order to be presidents of a college, and both died shortly after the change. There was but one year's difference in the respective ages at which they died, one being fifty-six, the other fifty-seven. Strangely enough, both preached on the first Sunday of the year in which they died from the same text of Scripture: "This year thou shalt die" (Jer. 28. 16).

This shows what wonderful coincidences happen in real life. If the methods of the Higher Critics be applied to the case of the two Jonathan Edwards, there will doubtless arise some years hence a "critic" who will be able to prove (to his own satisfaction) that there was after all only *one* Jonathan Edwards, and that there is a contradiction on the part of historians as to the age at which he died, some saying fifty-six years and others fifty-seven!

It is interesting to note that the New Testament can stand the test of the microscope as well as the Old Testament, and it can be applied in a great many places with equally surprising and successful results.

An interesting case in point is the apparently casual remark in John's Gospel, that its author was "known to the High Priest." John's consistent humility causes him to refer to himself here simply as "another disciple." Wherever possible, he hid his own name, and spoke of himself as "another disciple," or, with a wistful touch, as "the disciple whom Jesus loved;" but there is no question as to the reference being to himself. (See also John 21. 20, 24.)

Now, if John was at all intimate with the High Priest, which apparently the other evangelists were not, we should expect to see traces of this intimacy

in his Gospel if it be genuine. Let us see if this is so.

1. His companion, Peter, cuts off the ear of one of the High Priest's servants, when Christ is arrested in the Garden. All four evangelists tell us this, but none of them tells us the name of the wounded man, except John. *He knows the name of the High Priest's servant.*

2. In the accounts of the Passion given by the four evangelists, all of them tell us what the High Priest said and did, but only in John's account is his name given. *He knew the High Priest by name.*

3. Only in John's Gospel do we learn that Annas was Caiaphas' father-in-law. *John was familiar with the family relationships of the High Priest.*

4. Peter is kept waiting outside the High Priest's door, but John obtains admittance (John 18. 15). Afterwards he goes back, speaks a few words to the door-keeper and immediately obtains permission to bring in Peter. *He was known to the High Priest's household.*

5. All the evangelists tell us that Peter was interrogated as to his connection with the Prisoner. Only John tells us that the last questioner was a servant of the High Priest, and that he was, moreover, a relation to Malchus, whose ear had been cut off (John 18. 26). *He was intimate even with the relationships of the High Priest's servants.*

6. John is the only evangelist who mentions that the priests would not go into the Judgment Hall, lest they should be defiled and thus prevented from eating the Passover. *He is acquainted with the motives and reasonings of the priests.*

7. He is the only one of the evangelists who mentions

Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, who naturally moved in the same circles as the High Priest.

8. He is the only one of the evangelists who gives descriptions of private meetings of the chief priests (chap. 7. 45-53; 11. 47-53).

These details help us to discern the hand of the "beloved disciple" in the Gospel bearing his name.

Its glorious testimony to the Lord Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of seeking sinners has caused it to be assailed, even more than the other Gospels, by enemies of the truth. But the humble, retiring apostle has nevertheless left his signature on it, in these and other circumstantial details.

XI.

The Superscription on the Cross.*

FOR many years the art of printing in colours presented serious difficulties, and good results were obtainable only by means of costly and tedious processes. At last, however, a method came into vogue called the "three-colour process," which made colour-printing a simpler and much more satisfactory task.

Three blocks are used, printing yellow, red and blue respectively. The first, with *yellow* ink, makes an impression on the paper only where yellow, or any colour produced by yellow in combination with either of the other colours, is desired in the final picture.

*The writer acknowledges his indebtedness to an excellent article by D. Anderson-Berry, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S., in *The Witness*, which dealt briefly with this subject.

The second block, printed in *red* ink exactly over the impression made by the first one, produces the various shades of red required in the picture, at the same time uniting with the yellow to form any tints produced by the combination of varying shades of yellow and red. The third block, printed in *blue* accurately over the impressions made by the other two, fills in all that is required in blue, at the same time making various shades in combination with the yellow and the red as determined by the skill of the artist.

Each block thus contributes that which the others could not possibly supply, and the combination of all three makes a picture which could never be produced by any one block.

This is just the case with the Gospel stories given by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. There is one Gospel, not four, but in order to give us a perfect picture of Christ each evangelist furnishes an impression, so to speak, in his own colour, or from his own point of view.

Matthew uses the royal purple, and tells us how the *King* was rejected and crucified. Mark has a milder hue, and speaks of the *Servant* of the Almighty God who came to do His will. Luke sketches for us the perfect *Man*, and John gilds his brush with heavenly glory and shows us the *Son of God*. In some parts of the picture their colours are combined to give us a united testimony, while on the other hand, each of the records contains particulars which are not found in any of the others.

None of the Gospels is intended to stand alone. We can only obtain a perfect impression of Christ

when the testimonies of the four evangelists are imprinted, one after another, on our hearts.

It is, therefore, quite as illogical to find fault with the variations, for instance, between Matthew's Gospel and Luke's, as it is to find fault with the variations between the red and the blue plates used in colour-printing. Truly there are variations, but the inner harmony of the Gospel records becomes apparent when we gaze upon the completed picture and behold the sublime Person of our Lord Jesus Christ—of the kingly Servant (cf. Matthew), of the serving King (cf. Mark), of the Man who was God (cf. Luke), and of the God who became man (cf. John).

In order to prove that this principle is well founded, we will place under our microscope the superscription that Pilate put up over the head of our Saviour on the Cross.

Some have contended that the differing descriptions given of this superscription by the evangelists prove that the Gospels are inaccurate. A few words are given as being inscribed on a tablet on a most solemn occasion, the occasion to which the whole of the preceding narrative has been heading. Here, at least, we should expect to find absolute accuracy, but the versions given do not agree. How can this be explained? We shall see.

Matthew records the words as follows: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews;" Mark has: "The King of the Jews;" Luke: "This is the King of the Jews;" and John: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

There is no difficulty with Mark's record, for it harmonises with all the others as far as it goes. He wrote his Gospel, as is generally acknowledged,

for Roman readers, and uses the simplest and most direct language, making his Gospel the shortest of them all. He only mentions the gist of what was on the tablet, *i.e.*, the reason why Pilate crucified Jesus.

The chief difficulty is found in the records of Matthew, Luke and John.

It is noteworthy that the inscription was written, as Luke tells us, *in three languages*: "Greek, Latin and Hebrew." Now, considering that there were three inscriptions to the same effect in different languages on one tablet, which must necessarily have been of limited size, is there any valid reason for insisting that they must have been, word for word exact translations of the same sentence? On the contrary, there is good reason to suppose that for convenience' sake they would not have been, seeing that translations from one language to another rarely take the same space in writing.

John also tells us that the inscription was in three languages, but he mentions them in a different order: "Hebrew, Latin and Greek." Why does Luke mention "Greek" first, while John mentions "Hebrew" first? It is only natural to suppose that both these evangelists gave the pre-eminence to the language that they read and understood best, and in which the words they saw remained on their memories. Now Luke was a physician (Col. 4. 14), had doubtless studied with the help of Greek text-books, and had probably practised most of his time in Europe. Moreover, as he is mentioned apart from Paul's fellow-workers, who were "of the circumcision," *i.e.*, Jews (Col. 4. 11), there is probably truth in the tradition that he was a Greek by birth;

he wrote his Gospel in Greek, and it bears evidence of a very accurate knowledge of that tongue. From this we consider it most probable that Luke described the inscription as it appeared in *Greek*.

John was, on the other hand, a Galilean fisherman, and better acquainted with Hebrew, or the Aramaic dialect, than either Greek or Latin. The diction of some of his writings is considered to be that of a man who thinks in Hebrew and writes in Greek. It seems therefore most probable that his report of the inscription over the Cross gives it as it was in the language of the common people, which he mentions first in his Gospel. It is quite natural that the words "of Nazareth" should be inserted in the *Aramaic* inscription (John's version), though they might not be necessary in the Greek and Latin versions. This is actually the case, John being the only one to report them.

Matthew was a tax-gatherer (Matt. 9. 9) under the Roman Government, and had probably served for some years under Roman superiors before he came into contact with Christ. His accounts would have been rendered in Latin, and he would have had an ever-increasing knowledge of that tongue. It is therefore only natural, when Matthew sees an inscription from the Roman Governor with the same matter in three languages, that he fastens upon the *Latin* version and chronicles it in preference to the others.

It seems then exceedingly probable that Matthew gives the inscription that appeared in Latin, Luke that which was in Greek, and John that which was in Hebrew.

62 The Actual Words of the Inscription.

This alone suffices to dispose of all criticism of the accuracy of the evangelists on this score, for it must first be *proved* that the inscriptions in the three languages were literal translations of each other before the evangelists can be reasonably charged with inaccuracy.

But there are stronger reasons for supposing that the inscriptions were made as we have indicated above. The actual words which would have appeared on the tablet, if our suggestion be correct, are as follows:

In Latin, according to Matthew:

HIC EST JESUS REX JUDOEORUM;

in Greek, according to Luke:

HOUTOS ESTIN HO BASILEUS TON
JOUDAION;

and in the Aramaic dialect ("Hebrew"), according to John:

JESHU HAN-NOTSRI MALKA DIHUDAEY.

In the Latin inscription there are twenty-two characters, while the other inscriptions, written in Greek and Aramaic, both contain twenty characters. When the inscriptions are written in their native characters *they take about an equal amount of space, so that even if Pilate had desired to have literal translations of the same sentence it would not have been possible to crowd all the words on the tablet in the case of the Greek and Latin inscriptions.*

We draw the conclusion, therefore, that the inscriptions were just as we have shown, and that the Gospel records are entirely unimpeachable on this point, inasmuch as Matthew gives the Latin inscription, Luke the Greek and John the Hebrew.

In considering how easily and naturally this "difficulty" is to be explained, the thought asserts itself: "How many other difficulties in the Bible

could be explained in an equally satisfactory way *if only we had a little more knowledge.*"

I trust the reader will admit that our colour-printing process has given us a true picture of the inscription which Pilate ordered to be set up on the Cross. Taking the records of it given in the Gospels one by one, there seems to be a lack of harmony, but taken together they give us the tablet as it left the hand of Pilate's secretary.

Conclusion.

DR. J. W. MENDENHALL, D.D., LL.D., has in a valuable work of his counted up the various theories which Bible critics have advanced since the year 1850 to explain the origin of the Bible. They number 747. Six hundred and three of them have been abandoned, and the remaining 144 are fast approaching a similar fate. Hardly two of them agree, and most of them are absolutely contradictory.

Suppose we were travelling through a wilderness, where there was a good road, and five or six men overtake us and journey with us. They profess to be well acquainted with the district, and after a short time point out that many difficulties await us if we pursue our course along the road. They advise us to leave the road—it is so "old-fashioned"—and they will show us a much better way, which, they say, their superior "scientific" knowledge has revealed to them.

Acting on this advice, we leave the main road. Under their leadership we soon arrive at cross-roads where there are five or six paths to choose from, radiating in different directions. At this point no two of our companions can agree. Each favours a different path, and advises us to accompany him. Each can quote the "latest science" to support his contention that his path is the right one, and none of them can understand our "narrow-mindedness" in not going *his* way.

What is the best thing to do in these circumstances? I think every sensible man would forsake these false guides and make straight for the old road he had left, notwithstanding any sarcastic remarks they may make about those who refuse to accept what they term "the assured results of modern scholarship."

How much more, then, when there are seven hundred and forty-seven guides contending for seven hundred and forty-seven paths!

Hear the Word of the Lord:

"See, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. . . . Behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto My words, nor to My law, but rejected it" (Jer. 6. 16 and 19).

APPEAL.

And now I leave the reader—with his Bible and with his God. A sincere appeal to God will lead him to a living faith in the Bible; and a sincere appeal to the Bible will lead him to a living faith in God and in Christ. In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ I therefore call upon the reader to surrender his whole will, his whole being, to the Son of God, who will forgive his sin and cleanse him from all unrighteousness, as the Scriptures declare.

By a definite act of will lay your unbelief at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ, if you are not yet a true child of God by the New Birth. He does not call you in vain, but will receive you, save you, teach you and lead you, until in Heaven you are safe beyond the reach of sin and unbelief.

With the earnest prayer that he may meet you there, the writer lays down his pen, commending this little work to the blessing of the God of Truth and Love.

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