THE WONDERFUL WORD

BY GEORGE HENDERSON

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A SERIES OF MESSAGES

on

THE STUDY AND CONTENTS OF THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES

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The Salvation of God, etc., etc.

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INTRODUCTION

A few years ago, in a Toronto book store, an esteemed Bible-teacher friend pointed to some of George Henderson's books and said to me: "Thar's gold in them thar' hills!" That was my introduction to some Christ-exalting literature which has enriched my soul and challenged my life.

"THE WONDERFUL WORD"—what a fitting title to this most helpful book to come from Mr. Henderson's pen. Did not the Psalmist declare: "Thy testimonies are wonderful; therefore doth my soul keep them!" (Ps. 119: 129).

On many occasions I have looked into the face of a young Christian and wished that I could place in his hands something that would start him on the road to a life of a fruitful Bible study and appreciation of this "Bread from heaven". Here is an easy-to-understand little volume to fill that need. You will not find a dry page in it. On the contrary, "THE WONDERFUL WORD" will draw from your heart and soul the praise and worship that is due to Him Whose "Name shall be called WONDERFUL".

ROY W. GUSTAFSON

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CHAPTER I

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

IN the first of the two epistles that bear his honoured name (chap. 3. 15) the apostle Peter counsels his readers to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh them, a reason for the hope that is in them; and, in the studies which we commence today, I desire to enable you to obey that command. After prolonged and careful examination of its contents. I am well satisfied that in the Book which we call the Bible—which is the foundation of all our hopes—we have the full and completed revelation of God to man; and if, as a result of these messages, I shall have the pleasure of leading the beloved of the Lord, especially young preachers, to the adamantine convictions that I myself have reached, I shall not have written in vain. As, however, I want your faith to stand, not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God, we shall turn from books about the Bible, to the Bible itself; for there we shall find teachings that are distinct and definite, authoritative and infallible.

Inspiration Defined

Inspiration is a word that is held very lightly and loosely by men of the world. It is used by them to account for the philosophical speculations of a Browning, the matchless genius of a Shakespeare, the sanctified imaginings of a Bunyan. But between the highest literary creations of the human mind —what Burns calls, sparks from Nature's fire—and the word of the living God, there lies the gulf of infinity.

The English word "inspiration" is derived from two Latin words, in spiro—to breathe into. Professor Birks says that it "denotes that secret action of the Spirit on the

faculties of a living messenger by which he is enabled to receive, utter, or record, the divine message. Scripture is the result of that sacred influence, embodied and recorded in a written form ". "The Bible," says another, "is the divinely inspired volume in which God has revealed to mankind the truths which make for their highest well-being, here and hereafter; which He has not revealed to them otherwise; and which they could not have discovered by their own reason and research."

THE CLAIM OF THE BIBLE

The fundamental claim of the Bible in this matter, is set forth in five passages: "He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began" (Luke 1. 70); "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (I Corinthians 2. 13); "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Timothy 3. 16); "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" (Hebrews 1. 1-2); "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1. 21).

1. The Old Testament

Second Timothy 3. 16 and II Peter 1. 21, already quoted, refer primarily, though not exclusively, to the Old Testament, and set the seal of validity on that section of the sacred Volume. Amplifying them, we find that the phrase "Thus saith the Lord" or its equivalent, occurs there no fewer than two thousand times. Here are seven illustrations: Moses, Exodus 20. 1; David, II Samuel 23. 2; Isaiah, Isaiah 1. 1-2; Jeremiah, Jeremiah 1. 6-9; Ezekiel, Ezekiel 1. 3; Hosea, Hosea 12. 10; Malachi, Malachi 1. 1. Confirming these claims, the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews quotes from the Law, chapter 9. 6-8; the Prophets, chapter 10. 15-17; and

the Psalms, chapter 3. 7; and in each case ascribes authorship to the Spirit of God.

2. The New Testament

The claim for the New Testament is equally strong. In John 14. 26 our Lord says: "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." That covers the four Gospels. But He goes on to say: "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 . . . and He will show you things to come" (John 16. 12-13). That covers the remainder of the New Testament. In II Peter 3. 1-2 the apostle places his own words on a level with those of the prophets of the Old Testament; and in verses 15 and 16 of the same chapter, he does the same with the writings of Paul, classifying them with the other Scriptures. "The Revelation" was given by God: chapter 1. 1-2; it tells us what the Spirit saith unto the Churches: chapter 2. 7; it shows us "things to come".

3. Generally

We have, then, in the Scriptures of truth, the living oracles of the living God (Acts 7. 38 R.V.); and it is clear that the historical portions of the Word were inspired, equally with those which set forth doctrine and ethics. "One of the features of the Scripture revelation is that matters of doctrine, of morality, of faith, are so embedded in the historical, biographical, descriptive parts, that we cannot consistently attribute inspiration to the one element and deny it to the other."

Three things should be noted here. (a) Although Scripture affirms the fact of inspiration, it says little about the mode of inspiration. The sacred writers offer no explanation beyond declaring that the Word of the Lord came unto them; or that

they were borne along by the Spirit of God. More than that we do not know, and cannot ascertain. When, therefore, we undertake to explain how the writers of the Bible were inspired, we enter the realm of theory. (b) While we hold that the Scriptures are plenarily inspired, we do not assert that all parts of the Bible are of equal importance. Manifestly, the epistle to the Romans is of more spiritual value to us than is the Book of Esther. What we do affirm, however, is that while they are not equally important they are equally inspired. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." (c) Inspiration is claimed only for the original autograph manuscripts, and not for translations of them.

THE HUMAN ELEMENT IN THE BIBLE

Careful examination reveals that there is nothing in inspiration that conflicts with the unfettered play of the individuality of the writers of the Book of God. When God made a prophet, He did not unmake the man. The personality, mental traits, and even the forms of literary expression of the divine penmen, were left perfectly free. "The burning sarcasm of Isaiah; the tender, melancholy pathos of Jeremiah; the homeliness of the herdsman's son and the gatherer of figs; the deep philosophy of John; the clear and sharp logic of Paul all these were truly and really their own. As every pipe of the organ is so fashioned that it might give one note and not another—and yet all are filled by the same breath—so, these souls, fashioned by the conditions of humanity and the circumstances of their lives, were made each to give out his own note, yet all were filled by the breath of the Divine Spirit, that has made these human and yet divine utterances ring with a melody unquenched and unquenchable."

DIFFICULTIES REGARDING INSPIRATION

To say that there are difficulties in this view of inspiration is merely to state what is true. But Archbishop Whateley laid down a proposition, which will be of service to us here, when he said that we are not obliged to clear away every difficulty about a doctrine in order to believe it—provided only that the facts on which it rests are true. Equally valuable is the word of Tregelles, the great textual critic: "No difficulty in connection with a proved fact can invalidate the fact itself".

The vast majority of Biblical difficulties are occasioned by inaccurate translations, false interpretations, imperfect understanding of Eastern modes of expression. If, however, we follow Dr. Torrey's advice and face them honestly, humbly, determinedly, fearlessly, patiently, scripturally, and prayerfully, we shall most certainly be led from the labyrinth of doubt into the clear path of certainty. I have space in this book to deal with only three difficulties in connection with our theme; verbal and other difficulties will come under the heading, "Principles of Interpretation".

1. THE LOSS OF THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS

I have said that inspiration is claimed, only for the original manuscripts; but if these have perished or cannot be found, what is the value of the claim? That is not such a great difficulty as at first sight it appears. Although the original documents cannot be found, the correct text can be recovered with accuracy from many sources. Dr. Kemp gives this striking modern parallel: "On January 1st, 1863, President Lincoln set his name and seal to the proclamation which set four million slaves free. It was written on four pages of ordinary foolscap in the President's own handwriting. That document perished in the great Chicago fire of 1871. Suppose some slave-owner should now seize a former slave of his, challenge him to produce Lincoln's proclamation as his charter of liberty, and say that if he did not produce the original, he would hold him still in slavery; what could the ex-slave do? He could not produce the original, for it was destroyed by fire. But although he could not produce the original document, he could recover and produce the original text. How? By copies of it in public documents; newspapers of the period; by translations of it in French, German, and other languages; by quotations from it in speeches, periodicals and books. By comparing and combining all these, he could establish to the satisfaction of a court of law the original message which gave him liberty."

Now, it is a fact that there are manuscripts that take us back to the middle of the fourth century; and that at the time when the first printed copy of the Bible was issued, there existed no fewer than two thousand such manuscripts. the question persists: what about the time between A.D. 100 and A.D. 350? The answer is, that from the death of John until about the fourth century, God raised up certain men who became known as "The Christian Apologists"—defenders of the Faith. In their controversies with the enemies of Christianity, these men made constant use of the Word of God; and in connection with that fact a most interesting story is told in The Lives of Robert and James Haldane—a book published in 1853. A group of friends had gathered in the house of Mr. Abercromby of Tullibody. One of those present raised the question: "Supposing all the New Testaments in the world had been destroyed at the end of the third century, could their contents have been recovered from the writings of the first three centuries?" The question deeply impressed the mind of Lord Hailes, who subsequently remarked: "On returning home, as I knew all the writers of these centuries, I began immediately to collect them, that I might set to work on the arduous task as soon as possible. I have been busy for two months searching for chapters, half-chapters, and sentences of the New Testament, and have marked down what I have found, and where I have found it, so that any person may examine and see for himself. I have actually discovered the whole New Testament except some seven or eleven verses, which satisfies me that I could discover them also. Now, here was a way in which God concealed or hid the treasures of His Word, that Julian, the apostate Emperor, and other enemies

of Christ who wished to extirpate the gospel from the world never would have thought of; and though they had, they never could have effected their destruction."

If it be asked why these manuscripts do not go further back than the fourth century, the answer is found in the historic fact that in A.D. 302 the Emperor Diocletian ordered the wholesale destruction of the sacred Books. When Constantine came to the throne a few years afterwards, he commanded, in A.D. 330, that a large number of copies of the Scriptures be made for use in the churches of his day.

2. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT IS RECORDED AND WHAT IS TAUGHT

For instance: Scripture plainly teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ was God manifested in human form (John 14:9); it inculcates loyalty on the part of all who name the name of Christ; and it expressly condemns untruthfulness. And yet you will find in its pages a statement by the enemies of Christ to the effect that He was demon-possessed (Matthew 12. 24); you will find there the story of the disloyalty of one who truly loved the Master (Matthew 26. 69-70); you will find recounted there the history of the lie by which our first mother was deceived (Genesis 3. 4). These illustrate the difference which I would have you note. The enemies of the Master were not inspired to say of Him what they did say, but the record of their statement is inspired. Peter was not inspired to deny his Lord, but the record of his denial is inspired. Satan was not inspired to tell the falsehood which he uttered, but the record of it is inspired. In each case you have the true account of a false statement: the inspired record of uninspired words.

3. REGARDING THE CANON OF THE BIBLE

When it is remembered that there are sixty-six books in the Bible, and that these came into existence over a period of 1600 years, several important questions arise. When, and how, and by whom, was it determined that the books in our

sacred Volume are authoritative and divine? Why these, and only these? Why no more? Why so many? The answer to such questions is found in what is known as the *canon* of the Bible.

The Greek word kanon originally meant a measuring-rod or line. From this, it came to mean a standard or test of measurement. As applied to a collection of books, the term would indicate, from one point of view, that the books were the expression in a written form of the rule of faith (Galatians 6. 16); or, from another point of view, that they were separated and marked off from other books, owing to their possessing special characteristics (II Corinthians 10. 13). (In these two last-named Scriptures the word kanon is translated rule). The word thus simply means the catalogue or list of the sacred writings.

The Canon of the Old Testament

About the year 270 B.C. the translation of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew into Greek was begun by command of Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt. That translation known as the Septuagint, contains all the books in our Old Testament.

Malachi—400 B.C.—the last of the Old Testament writers, is termed by the Jews "the seal of the prophets", because they considered that his book put the final touch to the *canon*. Josephus says that no book written subsequently to that period, was recognized by his country-men as inspired.

For Christians, the final criterion on this matter is the attitude of the Lord Jesus Christ. How, then, did He regard it? One has only to read the Gospels to learn that He unreservedly accepted the canon as it existed in His time. He quotes from no fewer than nineteen of the books which it contains, and clearly regarded them as divinely authoritative and as historically true. It should be specially noted that the books which have fared worst at the hands of modern criticism are those upon which He emphatically sets His seal: Genesis,

Deuteronomy, Jonah, and Daniel. In Luke 24. 44 He divides the whole of the ancient writings into three sections: the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. (a) The first of these, the Law, includes the first five books of the Bible: Genesis to Deuteronomy. (b) The second division is the Prophets. The work of the prophet was not wholly that of foretelling; it included the ability to deduce lessons from the past, and to bring the Word of God to bear on the circumstances of the hour (II Samuel 12). Thus when our Lord told the Samaritan woman of her past and her present she said: "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet" (John 4. 19). We find, therefore, that the Jews divided their prophetical books into two classes: Historical, from Joshua to Esther; and Predictive, from Isaiah to Malachi. (c) The remaining books, Job to Song of Solomon, are included in the general title, the Psalms.

The Canon of the New Testament

There is evidence to show that the twenty-seven books of the New Testament were in existence at the beginning of the second century. Bearing in mind the fact that some of the epistles of the New Testament were addressed to Churches, in some instances one thousand miles apart, and remembering also that the transcribing of these letters required much time and care, it is remarkable that the *canon* can be traced to such an early date. We shall work backward from the fourth century when the *canon* was finally fixed, to the beginning of the second century.

In A.D. 397, the third council of Carthage published a list of books which were then acknowledged as genuine. That list contained all the writings of the New Testament as we know them. Cyprian (A.D. 250) has more than 700 quotations from the New Testament, and these are from every book except Philemon, and III John. Origen, who died in A.D. 254, has more than 500 quotations; and Clement of Alexandria, who died in A.D. 220, about 800. Tertullian (A.D. 200) has no

fewer than 1,700 quotations; and it is stated that if the New Testament were lost, it could be reconstructed from his writings alone. Iranaeus (A.D. 170) quoted 650 times; Justin Martyr (A.D. 140), seventy-six times. Beyond these, there is the testimony of the post-apostolic fathers, of whom one of the most outstanding is Papias, who flourished about A.D. 112; and beyond even him, there is the witness of Polycarp, Bishop of the Church at Smyrna, who was the personal friend of the Apostle John. These venerable men left behind them certain writings in which there are quotations from the Gospels and the various canonical epistles, and in which they make explicit references to the books of the New Testament, as sacred and authentic.

To go back, then, to the questions with which we began this enquiry, we affirm:

- (a) That the *canon* of the Old Testament was fixed prior to 270 B.C.; and that the *canon* of the New Testament was finally determined in the fourth century A.D.
- (b) That "the real sanction for the canonical books is the witness borne to their inspiration by the experience of devout minds, whose spiritual insight discerned their unique value".
- (c) That the leaders of the Jewish people, and the various Councils of the Christian Church, merely recognized what already existed; that, as has been aptly said, the Bible is not so much an authorized list of books, as the list of authoritative books. You may, therefore, rest assured that the Old and New Testaments are genuine and authoritative productions; that they form one complete and coherent whole; that like thread woven into a strong and beautiful texture, you cannot separate them without ruining the fabric. "If," says Coleridge, "if all this combined proof does not establish their validity, nothing can be proved under the sun; but the world and man must be abandoned, with all its consequence, to one universal scepticism."

CHAPTER II

ESSENTIALS FOR BIBLE STUDY

MR. PRESCOTT reminds us that a Peruvian Prince owed nothing to inheritance from his predecessors. "On the decease of an Inca, his palaces were abandoned; all his treasures, except what were employed in his obsequies, his furniture and apparel were suffered to remain as he left them; and his mansions, save one, were closed up for ever. The new sovereign was to provide himself with everything new for his royal state." With grateful hearts we rejoice that not thus is it with the sons of God—the heavenly princes—when they come into their inheritance. For, just as in science, the accumulated experience of those who went before becomes the heritage of the later men, in order that they may not waste time on rudimentary experiments; so, the treasures, sought out and expounded for us by the men whom God set as teachers in the Church, are at our disposal today. Other men have laboured, and we enter into their labours (John 4. 38). In the following pages we are to examine some of the laws and principles discovered by these beloved pioneers in their search for truth; laws and principles which, rightly used, will give us the key to the inexhaustible wealth that is enshrined in the written Word of God. We begin by setting forth the essentials for Bible study.

Since language is the incarnation of thought, we can get to know the mind of God only through the words of God. There are, however, depths of meaning in these words which only Spirit-anointed eyes can see; and we are now to think of the means by which we pass from the mere literary element in the Bible to its profoundly spiritual content; how, with reverent feet, we may enter into that innermost shrine where God ever

causes fresh light to break from His holy Word. The steps that lead us to that sacred spot, the things that ensure these unveilings, are four in number. We must:

1. Pray

In Luke 24 three "openings" are spoken of: He opened to His disciples the Scriptures, verse 32, as described in verse 27. He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, verse 45. Their eyes were opened and they knew Him, verse 31. Prayer plays a vital part in all these things, as David well knew. "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law" (Psalm 119. 18). "Pray before all things," said his teacher to Justin Martyr, "that the gates of light be opened to you; for the truths for which you seek are not comprehensible by the eye or mind of man, unless God and His Christ give him understanding." The promise of the Lord Jesus is that, when the Spirit would come, He would guide us into all truth (John 16. 13); and, as the Spirit is now here, one of the great requirements on our part is that prayerfulness which creates the mental mood for the reception of divine truth and which produces the reverence and humility that ever accompany it.

2. Search

- "Search the Scriptures" (John 5. 39). Although the Bible differs from other books in that, to master its deeper secrets, you must personally know its Author, it resembles other books in that, to be understood it must be studied, to be known it must be read. The words before us now remind us of this.
- (a) "Search the Scriptures." Dr. Pierson tells us that the word "search" is a strong one. It implies a thorough examination, such as that of the civil engineer who maps out a newly discovered coast line. An old man lay dying. He called his sons to his bedside and said: "I leave you, my sons, all the wealth I possess. There is a great mass of riches

buried underneath in my vineyard, but you must discover it for yourselves." After their father's death the sons dug and raked the soil with all their might, taking care not to injure the roots of the vines. Not a particle of gold did they find, and they were sorely disappointed. But the work they had done caused the vines to produce as they had never produced before. Next year there was an enormous crop of grapes which brought them a great sum of money. Then they understood the meaning of the trick their wise father had played on them. The wealth he had left was in the soil, but their labour was needed to turn it into riches.

(b) "Search the Scriptures." Speaking of the neglect of Napoleon's own words, and of the emphasis which is given to what others say of him, Lord Rosebery says: "People prefer to drink at any source, other than the original." There is a very serious message for us in these words. Manuals of devotion are admirable helps, but may become miserable substitutes. They should never be allowed to displace the Word of God. For it is from ignorance of Scripture that our myriad evils spring; "hence the epidemic of heresies; hence our neglected lives; hence our unfruitful toil".

"Search the Scriptures." That is the precept; and the Book itself indicates that there are two ways in which this should be done. It should be done daily (Proverbs 8. 34). The Bereans "received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11). And it should be done diligently (I Peter 1. 10-11). These ancient men of God enquired diligently, searching for the deeper meanings of the words which the Spirit of God inspired them to pen. Failure to do these things—to search the Scriptures daily and diligently—will leave us spiritually poor, and ignorant, and desolate. It is a fact that the original owners of Mount Morgan in Queensland toiled for years on its barren slopes, and all the time, under their feet, lay gold and wealth beyond all reckoning. There died in South Africa some years ago, Mrs. Susana Goosen, widow of the

owner, at one time of numerous diamondiferous properties, out of which huge fortunes have been made. Mrs. Goosen died in poverty, her possessions at the time consisting of three goats and a bag of meal; while millions of pounds worth of diamonds have been extracted from the farm on which she lived. These things are parables. The unsearchable riches are there—in the Book; and the things which correspond to the hard work that the miner puts in to win the gold and diamonds from the earth are represented by four words: Seek: Proverbs 2. 1-5; Search: John 5. 39; Compare: I Corinthians 2. 13; Study: II Timothy 2. 15.

"Lord, Thou art true; and oh the joy To turn from other words to Thine; To dig the gold without alloy, From Truth's unfathomable mine."

3. MEDITATE

On three separate occasions does God speak of the value and blessedness of meditation on His Word:

- (a) In Joshua 1 it is said to be the secret of Prosperity: verse 8.
- (b) In Psalm 1 it is said to be the secret of Fruitfulness: verse 2.
- (c) In James 1 it is said to be the secret of Blessedness: verse 25.

The art of meditation on His Word is thereby affirmed, and must be well worth acquiring.

The broad distinction between study and meditation is, that the one is pre-eminently a thing of the head, and the other, a thing of the heart. Just as it is not what we eat that nourishes us but only what we digest, so it is not what we read that strengthens us spiritually, but only what we assimilate by meditation on it. A simple illustration of the difference between the search for truth, and meditation, is found in Proverbs 12. 27: "The slothful man roasteth not that which

he took in hunting." That is to say, he enjoyed the chase but, although he brought home the quarry, he did nothing further with it, and so failed to appropriate the nourishment which it would have imparted. In like manner we may hunt for truth; our heads may be full of knowledge of the letter of the Word; but unless we meditate on what we thus acquire, it may do us little good. Our note-books may be filled, while our hearts may be empty. As preachers, especially, we must ever remember that it is as we muse that the fires of devotion kindle; and that the words, which are spoken as the result of such musing, will be words of power and blessing (Psalm 39. 3).

The times for meditation are, any part of the day (Psalm 119. 97); or of the night (Psalm 63. 6). The objects of meditation are, the written word (Psalm 119. 15) and the living Word (Psalm 104. 34). The outcome of meditation is gladness of heart (Psalm 104. 34). It should not be forgotten that true meditation involves the use of all our faculties—intellectual, emotional, and volitional. It is not dreamy imagining or delightful raptures. It is attention with intention; and Joshua 1. 8 shows what God expects that intention to be. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein."

4. OBEY

This word represents the "essential" without which all the other essentials will be practically valueless. It cannot be too frequently emphasized that the key to the understanding of the Scriptures is, not scholarship, but obedience. That is not to undervalue scholarship; it is to give obedience its rightful place. The learned Bengel never gave us wiser counsel than when he said: "Apply thyself wholly to the Scriptures, and apply the Scriptures wholly to thyself". Nor did the poet ever communicate a greater truth than when he said:

"Read thou, but first thyself prepare
To read with zeal and mark with care:

And when thou read'st what here is writ, Let thy best practice second it; So twice each precept writ shall be First in the Book and then in thee."

The Bible itself sets forth obedience as one of the secrets of prosperity (Joshua 1. 8); of knowledge (John 7. 17); and of happiness (John 13. 17). God values it above the highest form of service or sacrifice (I Samuel 15. 22). It ensures His companionship (Philippians 4. 9).

De Quincey divides literature into two great sections, namely, the literature of knowledge, and the literature of power. Prayer, searching, and meditation on the Word of God bring us into possession of the first of these—knowledge; obedience brings us into possession of the second—power. Two sentences summarize these things. One is by Monod and reads: "After all, the best commentary on the Bible is obedience—do and you will know." The other is a nautical saying: "He that is slave to the compass has the freedom of the seas."

These, then, are the things that are necessary to our understanding of the Book of God: a prayerful frame; an enquiring mind; a meditative spirit; an obedient heart.

CHAPTER III

THE BIBLE AS A WHOLE

THE most effective way to study Geography is, first, to take a map of the world and, after having examined it, to note the two hemispheres into which it is divided. Thereafter, you would look at the various continents in the hemispheres, and the different countries in each of these continents. Anon, you would study each country separately and get to know its cities, villages, and hamlets.

That is an illustration of how best to study the Word of God. Its two Testaments correspond to the two hemispheres; its sets of books like the Pentateuch, and its individual books, like Philippians, answer to the continents and the countries in them; its chapters and verses resemble the cities and villages in those countries. In each of these illustrations the order is, from the general to the particular; from broad outline to minute detail.

We are now to take a birdseye view of the Bible as a whole, and the first thing we note is:

1. Its Two Great Divisions

These are called the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament speaks of the covenant between Jehovah and Israel; the New Testament, of that between Christ and His Church, which was ratified by His death (Matthew 26. 28; Hebrews 9. 15-17). The transfer of these terms, from the covenants themselves to the writings which gave an account of them, was easy, and soon became established in general usage. There are 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 in the New. The Bible is thus a collection of 66 smaller volumes, and was spoken of by Jerome, the greatest scholar of the fourth

century, as "The Divine Library". One of the first things that a Bible student should do is to memorize the names and order of those books. When we come to examine the hemispheres more closely, we find that each has a threefold division; and that, broadly, their contents correspond. Thus:

Books of	Books of	
Old Testament	New Testament	Contents
Genesis to Esther	Matthew to Acts	Historical
Job to Song of Songs	Romans to Jude	Experimental
Isaiah to Malachi	Book of Revelation	Prophetical

In each case the first of these subdivisions sets forth past history; the second, present duty; the third, future destiny.

The broad distinctions between the two Testaments are:
(a) The Old Testament is the book of Moses and the Prophets; the New, that of Christ and His apostles; (b) The former deals with the covenant of works, and ends with a curse (Malachi 4.6); the latter deals with the covenant of grace, and ends with a blessing (Revelation 22. 21); (c) The keynote of the one is "Thou shalt" (Exodus 20); that of the other is "I will" (Hebrews 10); (d) The Old Testament leads to Christ; the New Testament starts from Christ; (e) The pensive enquiry of the Old Testament is: "O that I knew where I might find Him" (Job 23. 3); the triumphant answer of the New is: "We have found Him" (John 1. 45).

2. THE INTERVAL

I have shown the two Testaments together, because I wished you to see the general similarity that exists between their main teachings; but historically these two main portions of the inspired Word are separated by what has been called "the 400 silent years". Thus:

The Old Testament Genesis to Malachi
The Interval Malachi to Matthew
The New Testament Matthew to Revelation

- (1) The first section—the Old Testament—tells the story of primeval and patriarchal man—Genesis 1 to Genesis 50; and describes in detail the founding and vicissitudes of the nation of Israel—Exodus 1 to Malachi 4. These cover the years 4000 B.C. to 400 B.C.
- (2) The second period—the Interval—covers the years from the close of the Old Testament to the beginning of the New—400 B.C. to A.D. 1. The literature of this period is the Apocrypha, and the historian, Josephus. Although neither of these claims inspiration, they both throw great light on the happenings of these stirring times.
- (3) The third period—the New Testament—describes the earthly history of the Lord Jesus; the rise and development of the Christian Church; and God's dealings with the human race to the end of time.

3. The Connection Between the Old and New Testaments

When the city of Johannesburg was being laid out many years ago, the ministers of the various Christian denominations and the Jewish Rabbi called on Paul Kruger, the President of the Transvaal republic, with the object of securing sites for their respective churches. After thinking the matter over, the President announced that he would give two sites to each of the Christian denominations, and one to the Jews. "But why is this, Mi-jnheer President?" protested the Rabbi, "you give two sites to the Christians, but only one to the Jews." "Well," replied the old Calvinist, "that is quite fair; you only believe half of the Bible, don't you?" The quaint reply of the Boer leader brings out a great truth. For if a man believes the Old Testament but does not believe the New, he is like unto a person who listens to the most wonderful promises that directly affect his well-being, but who rejects their fulfilment; like one who revels in Volume 1 of a great literary work which describes the foundation of a world-wide scheme of beneficence, but who sails to go on to Volume 2 which tells of the completed

superstructure. Lord Beaconssield, himself born into a Jewish home, said that he could not understand how a Jew could not be a Christian; in his eyes, that was to stop half-way, and to renounce the glory of the race. This far-reaching truth has been most strikingly brought out in a wonderful article from the pen of Dr. John Macnicol of the Toronto Bible College which appeared in an American magazine some years ago. Speaking of the Word of the Lord he says: "The Bible is a book of great diversity. Its two main divisions differ from each other in very many respects, and they are also separated from each other by a great historical gap. And yet these two separate parts fit, one into the other, in such a way as to make the Bible a living book, with a single message. The whole Book gathers round one central Figure. The Old Testament is a preparation for Him; the New Testament is a revelation of Him. The key to the Bible is the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Look first at the Old Testament. It starts with the beginning of things, but it seems to end in an unfinished condition. It leads us from the creation of the world by a continuous way through the stories of the patriarchs, down through the history of the chosen people, and on through psalms and prophecies, till the road at last breaks off and disappears. If there were nothing more in the Bible, we should be left at the end of the Old Testament, wondering what it all meant, and where it was leading us. There are three great highways by which we may travel through the Old Testament, and each of them ends in an unfinished way, leaving us apparently in the dark.

Promise and Prophecy

"First, there is the highway of promise and prophecy. At the very beginning, before Adam and Eve were driven from the garden of Eden, the announcement is made that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head (Genesis 3. 15). It is a promise that some one shall arise among men, who shall

destroy the power of Satan, and deliver the race from the tragedy of the Fall. On through the history of Israel this prophecy of a Coming One goes, until it centres at last in the family of David. 'I will set up thy seed after thee' declares the Lord to David, 'and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever' (II Samuel 7. 12-13). The prophets then take up this promise regarding David's son and expand it unto the glorious picture of the Messianic King: 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David ' (Isaiah 9.6-7). The other prophets carry the promise on, adding to the picture a trait here and a trait there, till we reach the end of the Old Testament. But the Coming One has not appeared. We arrive at the end of the road and there is no fulfilment of the prophecy.

Ceremony and Ritual

"We go back to the beginning of the Book again and find another highway which runs through the Old Testament—the highway of ceremony and ritual. In the fourth chapter of Genesis we read of Abel offering in sacrifice to God the lives of members of his flock. From this time on, the ceremony of blood sacrifice, animal victims offered in worship to God, appears again and again throughout the whole Old Testament A tabernacle is prepared and erected, in which these sacrifices are henceforth to be offered; and a whole tribe is set apart to minister in connection with it. The strange ceremony of offering the life of a victim in worship to God has been developed into an elaborate ritual, and yet there is no explanation of its meaning.

"While sacrifice was the only way of approach to God in Old Testament days, yet the devout worshipper knew that it was not the sacrifice, or the blood in itself, which God wanted. Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire (Psalm 40. 6).

There was some other reason for all these ceremonics, some deeper significance in this ritual of blood; but the Old Testament comes to a close without any explanation.

Aspiration and Longing

"There is still a third highway that we can follow through the whole Old Testament—a line of aspiration and longing, Soon after the banishment from Eden men began to call upon the name of the Lord (Genesis 4. 26). Even as early as that, it is found that the world cannot satisfy the desires of the human heart. This longing is seen in Abraham (Hebrews 11. 10); in Jacob (Genesis 32. 26); in Job (chapter 23. 3); in David (Psalm 42. 1). On through the prophets this line can be traced for we find them, as in Isaiah 55. 1, basing some of their most eloquent appeals on the deep longings of the human heart. But again the Old Testament ends, and these aspirations are still unsatisfied. And so the Book leaves us there at the end of its first main part facing a great gap with prophecies still unfulfilled, with ceremonies still unexplained, and with desires of the heart still unrealized. All the roads by which we have come seem to end in the dark.

The New Testament

"But the moment we pass into the New Testament, light begins to break. . . . A babe comes into the world, born of a virgin, and the words of the prophets begin to come to pass (Matthew 1. 18-33). John the Baptist sends from his prison to ask Jesus if He really is the Coming One, . . . and the message Jesus sends back to comfort him is simply this: that in the things Jesus is doing the words of the prophets are being fulfilled (Matthew 11. 2-5). Here then we find the first of the long roads that run through the Old Testament taken up and carried into the New. In the wondrous life of Jesus of Nazareth the promises and prophecies are finding their fulfilment.

"The second road also reappears in the New Testament. There comes a time in the life of Jesus when He tells His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem to suffer, and be put to death (Matthew 16. 21 and 26. 28). . . . When He dies, the veil that hides the innermost sanctuary in the Temple is rent in twain; the ceremonies of that Temple are at last explained. The long line of sacrifice that runs through the Old Testament is ended in the sacrifice of Jesus; for 'the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all '(Isaiah 53). The sin of the world, that has barred the way to God, has been removed.

"And what about the unsatisfied longings of the Old Testament? During His ministry Jesus appealed to the yearnings of men, and claimed to be able to satisfy them, (Matthew 11. 28-30; John 7. 37).

"Christ, therefore, is the key to all the Bible. He is its central Figure. It all speaks of Him Who is at once our Prophet, our Priest, and our King. We can hear His voice in the Old Testament if we read it in the light of the New. The New Testament has a richer meaning when we read it as the completion and the fulfilment of the Old. It is when we see Christ in this way in all the Scriptures that the Bible becomes to us the living voice of the living God."

That is one of the finest articles I have ever read. Various couplets have been used to express what John Macnicol so eloquently expounds, of which I give you illustrations. In the Old Testament, the New lies hid; in the New Testament the Old lies open. In the Old Testament the New lies concealed; in the New Testament, the Old is revealed. What is enfolded in the Old Testament is unfolded in the New. "The New is in the Old contained; the Old is by the New explained." These all indicate that the two principal parts of the Bible are like the two sides of the human body, organically one—the two hands and feet both by their likeness and unlikeness, contributing to mutual efficiency.

4. Genesis and Revelation

If the three opening chapters of the Bible were removed, there would be no starting point; if the closing chapters were deleted there would be no goal. "As we compare the opening of Genesis with the close of Revelation, we find that we have been following the perimeter of a golden ring—the extremities of human history meet. From the Creation and Eden with the Fall, we have at last come to the New Creation and Paradise without a Fall; and so, as the book of God closes, it fixes the last look of the reader upon the Coming One Whose personal presence is to be the signal for the final consummation of victory and blessedness." Genesis and Revelation thus form respectively the prologue, and the epilogue, of a drama as vast as it is unique.

5. Concluding Note

The greater your knowledge of the Bible as a whole, the greater will be your ability to understand any given portion of it. For, since it is an organic whole, the progressive nature of its contents demands, for its correct interpretation, an acquaintance with all that has been written by inspiration of God. It can be read through at an average pace in seventy hours.

CHAPTER IV

THE OLD TESTAMENT AS A WHOLE

Division 1: Genesis to Esther: Historical

1. Primeval History Genesis 1 to 11. 9

2. Patriarchal History Genesis 11. 10 to chapter 50

3. Israelitish History Exodus 1 to Esther 10

In Israelitish history, which is the main theme of the Old Testament, there are four clearly marked divisions:

(a) From Exodus 1 to Deuteronomy 34 The Camp

(b) From Joshua to Ruth The Commonwealth

(c) From I Samuel to II Chronicles The Crown

(d) From Ezra to Esther The Captivity

God's Purpose in Selecting Israel

"From Genesis 11. 10," Dr. Scofield says, "humanity must be thought of as a vast stream from which God, in the call of Abraham and the creation of the nation of Israel, has but drawn off a slender rill, through which He may at last purify the great river itself. Israel was called to be a witness to the unity of God in the midst of universal idolatry (Deuteronomy 6. 4; Isaiah 43. 10-12); to illustrate the blessedness of serving the true God (Deuteronomy 33. 26-29); to receive and preserve the divine revelations (Romans 3. 1-2; Deuteronomy 4. 5-8); and to produce the Messiah (Genesis 3. 15; Romans 9. 5)."

Four Outstanding Men in Israel's History Moses, who gave them Freedom and Law Samuel, who gave them Order and Unity David, who gave them Poetry and Power Ezra, who gave them a collated Literature

DIVISION II: JOB TO SONG OF SOLOMON: EXPERIMENTAL

1. Job. Above this book you may write: "Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling Face." Its keywords are found in two New Testament texts: "Patient in tribulation"; "Thy will be done." The classic utterance on resignation is found in chapter 1. 21. The problem of the book is to reconcile faith in God with the inequalities of His providence. It debates the question that has tormented men and women right down the centuries: what is the use of pain, and loss, and bereavement? It deals with that problem in relation to individual life; just as the book of Esther deals with it in relation to national life. If read in conjunction with Psalm 37, Psalm 73, and Hebrews 12, it will throw light on some of the darkest things in life. It reveals the personality and malice of Satan; the folly of worldly wisdom; the futility of self-righteousness; the need of a Daysman between God and sinners (chapter 9. 33); the perfections of Jehovah; the vileness of the perfect man (chapter 42. 5-6); the end of the Lord (James 5: 11). Of the three friends: Eliphaz reasons on human experience; Bildad, on human tradition; Zophar, on human merit.

"Noble book of Job, that gave to the ancient world the first hint of the solution of the mystery of pain, by detaching from it the hitherto inescapable association of a curse; which teaches man to believe that the divine author of all we suffer and all we enjoy is our ever blessed Lord. For there is no strength without trial, no wisdom without experience of God and evil; no refinement without pain; no progress without self-dissatisfaction; nothing permanent that costs us nothing."

2. Psalms. Every mood of the soul of man is reflected in this book—"The lyrical outburst of his tenderness, the moan of his patience, the pathos of his sorrow, the triumph of his victory, the despair of his defeat, the firmness of his confidence, the rapture of his assured hope." "In the Psalms is painted for all time, in fresh unfading colours, the picture of the moral

warfare of man; often baffled yet never wholly defeated, always aware how far short of the aim falls the attempt; how great is the gulf that severs the wish from the fulfilment." Its messages are composed of

- "Words that have drunk transcendent meaning up, From the best passion of all bygone times; Steeped through with tears of triumph and remorse, Sweet with all sainthood, cleansed with martyr-fires."
- "All the wonders of Greek civilization heaped together," says Mr. Gladstone, "are less wonderful than is the single book of Psalms, the history of the human soul in relation to its Maker." "It embraces nature and history, heaven and earth, the world around and the world within; experiences from the darkest abyss of sorrow and trial, to the summit of celestial gladness and joy."
- 3. Proverbs. Since, as to its literary character, the Bible is an Eastern book, and since, the East is the home of the proverb. it is not surprising that in the divine library there is a collection of wise sayings upon the moral and spiritual life of man. The book of Proverbs contains laws from heaven for life on earth. It begins with a kingly man, and ends with a queenly woman. "It is a full and faithful exhibition of the moral philosophy of the Old Testament, and has these three characteristic marks of a good and a great book: width of sympathy, range of survey, and power of suggestion. There is shrewd counsel on the training of children, on the choice of a wife, on friendship, on keeping a guard of the tongue, on contentment, on acquiring habits of industry, on honesty in trade, on variety in dress, on drunkenness, on manners, on tale-bearing, on boastfulness, and on half a hundred other subjects." It has thirty-one chapters—one for each day of the month—and you will do well to keep a vest pocket copy of it, and read one chapter daily.
- 4. Ecclesiastes. Over this book you may write: "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again." The two

books, Job and Ecclesiastes, deal with the problems lying on each side of the philosophy of life unfolded in Proverbs: on the one side, the problem suggested by the case of the godly man who does not prosper in the world; on the other, the dark questions which arise in the mind of the ungodly man, who seems to have all things richly to enjoy. These three books may be thus summarized:

In Job you have piety without prosperity; In Proverbs you have piety and prosperity;

In *Ecclesiastes* you have prosperity without piety. Ecclesiastes is the history of a man who tried everything at its highest, and records his verdict. He experimented with three things: Wealth (chapter 5. 10; I Kings 10. 21-23); Pleasure (chapter 2. 1-10); Fame (chapter 6. 2; II Chronicles 9. 1); but proved the unsatisfying nature of all three. The poet sums up the whole position:

"He nothing knows, who knows not this,
That earth can yield no settled bliss,
No lasting portion give.
He all things knows, who knows to place
His hopes in Christ's redeeming grace,
Who died that we might live."

5. The Song of Solomon. The Song of Songs is a mystic casket of spiritual truth; like the Parables, it is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. It is called "The Song of Songs" because of the 1,005 which Solomon wrote (I Kings 4. 32), this is the best. Similar expressions occur in the "Holy of Holies"—the most holy place; the "Heaven of Heavens"—the highest Heaven; the "King of Kings"—the greatest King. The Jewish Talmud regarded this book as an allegory of the dealings of Jehovah with Israel; and devout Christians, taking Ephesians 5. 25-32 as their warrant, have viewed it as a picture of the relationship that exists between Christ and His Church. Its mystic character has appealed to the most spiritually-minded men and women the world has

ever known. Of these, Samuel Rutherford is the outstanding representative.

"O, I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine; He brings a poor vile sinner into His house of wine."

If Ecclesiastes shows how poor a rich man can be, the Song of Solomon shows how rich a poor man may be.

Spiritually these five books present in broad outline the experiences of the renewed heart from the hour when self is revealed in all its unattractiveness (Job 42. 5-6), till the glad time is reached when Christ becomes all in all (Song of Solomon 5. 16).

Division III: Isaiah to Malachi: Prophetical

Study of these books may be ranged most profitably around the Exile.

- (a) Before the Exile: Obadiah, Jonah, Joel, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk.
- (b) During the Exile: Ezekiel, Daniel.
- (c) After the Exile: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

NOTE CAREFULLY: The books, Isaiah to Malachi, deal with the times and experiences of people who were contemporary with many of the kings and other personages mentioned in the historical section of the Old Testament.

For example: Isaiah. The first verse of his prophecy tells us that it is "the vision of Isaiah, the son of Amos, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah". To understand Isaiah, therefore, you must be familiar with the history of these four kings as it is set forth in II Kings 14 to 20; II Chronicles 26 to 32. Internal evidence will reveal the period to which each belongs.

CHAPTER V

THE NEW TESTAMENT AS A WHOLE

THERE are twenty-seven books in the New Testament, and these were written by eight men over a period of seventy-five years. The Church as a whole has never recognized as authoritative any books other than these—together, of course, with those of the Old Testament.

The New Testament, like the Old, has broadly a threefold division. As Bishop Westcott puts it: "In the Gospels and Acts we see the historical foundation; in the Epistles, the logical construction; and in the Revelation, the spiritual completion. Truths found in germ in the Gospels are historically illustrated in the Acts, doctrinally applied in the Epistles, and symbolically presented in the Revelation." In Matthew, the first book, and Revelation, the last, we have the King at His first coming, and at His second coming. In the first book He is rejected; in the last, He is enthroned. The book which lies almost at the centre of the New Testament—the Epistle to the Philippians—presents Him in both characters. It looks back to the first Coming and His obedience unto death, (chapter 2. 5-8); and forward to the second Coming, even the exaltation wherewith God hath highly exalted Him (chapter 2. 9-11).

Division I: Matthew to Acts: Historical

(a) Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, describe the Birth, Life, Teachings, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ: one Gospel, from four points of view.

Keynotes of the Gospels

In Matthew: He is come to fulfil (5. 17)
In Mark: He is come to minister (10. 45)

In Luke: He is come to save (19. 10) In John: He is come to reveal (5. 43)

Last Named Fact in Each Gospel

In Matthew: The Resurrection (28.6)

In Mark: The Ascension (16. 19)

In Luke: Promise of the Spirit (24. 49)
In John: The Second Coming (21. 22)

(b) The book of Acts gives the history of the first thirty years of the Christian church: from the ascension of our Lord to Paul's imprisonment at Rome. It is supplementary to the Gospels, and introductory to the Epistles. Two outstanding ministries appear in its pages: the ministry of Peter (chapters 1 to 12); the ministry of Paul (chapters 13 to 28). In Acts 1, the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven; in Acts 2, the Holy Spirit descended to earth. These two facts characterize the days in which we live: the session of our Lord at the right hand of God; and the presence of the Spirit of God on earth.

The Epistles

Division II: Romans to Jude: Experimental: The Epistles

- Group 1: Soteriological—relating to the doctrine of Salvation: Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians. The Epistles of the Cross.
- Group 2: Christological—relating to the Person of Christ: Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. The Epistles of the Throne.
- Group 3: Eschatological—relating to the questions of Death and the Future Life: I and II Thessalonians. The Epistles of the Tribunal.
- Group 4: Ecclesiastical—the Pastoral Epistles: I and II Timothy, Titus, Philemon. The Epistles of the Congregation.

- Group 5: The Hebrew-Christian Epistles: Hebrews, James, I and II Peter. The Epistles of Anti-typical Fulfilment.
- Group 6: The Johannine Epistles: I, II and III John. The Epistles of Fellowship.
 - (a) I John: Fellowship; Its Nature and Blessedness.
 - (b) II John: Fellowship; Its Limits: whom to exclude.
 - (c) III John: Fellowship; Its Extent: whom to receive.

Group 7: Jude's Epistle: The Epistle of Warning.

Note: Of the writers of the Epistles, it may be said that Paul's leading theme is Faith; Peter's, Hope; John's, Love; and James', Works. Jude warns of apostasy which destroys faith, hope, love, and good works.

DIVISION III: THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION: PROPHETICAL

Just as Genesis describes the origin of things, and the other books of Scripture, the processes, so, Revelation portrays the consummation. It sets forth God's purpose for Israel, the Church and the World; and looks on to the time when sin shall have forever passed away, and when God shall be all in all. It tells of the future of the unbeliever (chapter 20); and of that of the people of God (chapters 21 and 22).

THE BIBLE: A TEMPLE

At the close of our outline studies of the Sacred Volume, I must pass on to you a lovely thing from the writings of Miss Grace Saxe. She tells of a young man in America who thought of the Bible as a beautiful temple; and of its different books as different rooms. Before his conversion, it seemed cold and lifeless to him, as though it had no tenant; but one day he was awakened by the voice of the King Who lived within, and he resolved to explore its contents. With the Holy Spirit as his guide, he entered the portico of Genesis,

passed on through the art gallery of the Old Testament historical books, reached the music room of Psalms and the business office of Proverbs, and went on into the chapel of Ecclesiastes, and the conservatory of the Song of Solomon. In the observatory of the Prophetic Books were telescopes, some pointing to far-off stars, and some to stars near by, but all were brought to bear upon the bright and Morning Star, which was soon to arise. Passing into the New Testament, he entered the audience room of the King, and heard and saw the King from four different standpoints in the fourfold Gospel. Next was the executive chamber of the Acts, then the correspondence room of the Epistles, and at last the throne room itself with all its glittering splendours in the Revelation.

CHAPTER VI

THE UNITY OF THE BIBLE

OUR theme is the unity of the Bible, and at the outset it may be well to note that there are two kinds of unity. There is a unity that is merely mechanical, such as that of a watch or a building, and there is a unity that is organic, such as that of a plant or a flower. The former are put together from without; the latter grow together from within.

The laws of organic unity have been expounded by Cuvier, the great comparative anatomist, and, summarized, are three in number: (1) That each and every part is essential to the whole. (2) That each part is related to, and corresponds with, all other parts, as in the human body, hand corresponds to hand, and eye to eye. (3) That all the parts of such an organism must be pervaded by the spirit of life. Tested by these criteria, the Bible must stand confessed, as a miracle of literary unity.

This unity becomes the more amazing when we recall the wonder of its formation. Parts of it were written by kings, statesmen, soldiers, philosophers, priests, scholars, poets, physicians, prophets, tentmakers, herdsmen, and fishermen. Sections of it were written in the desert of Sinai, in the wilderness of Judaea, by the river of Babylon, in a dungeon at Rome, and on the rock-bound isle of Patmos. Between Moses, its first writer, and John, its last, lies a period of 1600 years. Its contents include history, biography, legislation, poetry philosophy, doctrine, ethics, and perfect guidance for personal, civic, and national life. And yet, amid all this diversity of authorship, places of composition, and contents, there is a harmony which is the fruit of perfect unity, and which can be accounted for only by the explanation given by Peter:

"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1. 21).

We shall now examine these things a little in detail. Of the many lines of evidence which lie open to us, I shall briefly touch on three: the Historical, Doctrinal, and Prophetical.

1. THERE IS HISTORICAL UNITY

Strictly speaking, the Bible is not a history of the human race but rather the story of the Kingdom of God among men. The first eleven chapters of Genesis do indeed speak of the creation and fall of man, of the flood, and of the appearance of man on the regenerated earth, but, from the twelfth chapter, the Book ceases to be the history of humanity as a whole, and becomes the story of a chosen man and his descendants.

This explains much. Events, which secular historians such as Herodotus and Gibbon describe in large volumes, Scripture passes over in a few words; while conversely—to take a concrete example—the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, of which so much is spoken in the Old Testament, is a mere incident in the annals of that great Empire.

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel " (Deuteronomy 32. 8). That is to say: Israel was the centre of God's purposes on the earth, and other nations come into view only as they affect, or are affected by, these purposes. The story of the Israelites is followed until they become apostate. After that the thread is dropped and is not resumed until it is caught up prophetically in the predicted restoration of Israel. The long interval, covering the times of the Gentiles, has no proper record in God's book, for, during those times, He is taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name (Acts 15. 14). For nineteen centuries this new company —the Church—has been on the main line of God's purposes, and Israel has been on a siding. When the Church is complete, God's purposes with His ancient people will be resumed (Acts

15. 16); their long expected Messiah will be recognized (Zechariah 12. 10); and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ (Revelation 11. 15). The continuity of the Biblical history and the unity of the two great sections of the Word of God are seen in the fact that over three hundred predictions in the Old Testament are recorded as historical events in the New. Fundamentally, and in its last analysis, history is *His* story.

2. THERE IS DOCTRINAL UNITY

The doctrinal teaching of the Bible is a harmonious whole. All that men need to know of the great questions of life and destiny is here revealed; and in no single instance are the ethical or doctrinal teachings in conflict. We are now to think of its doctrine of God, of Man, and of Redemption.

(a) Its Doctrine of God

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1. 1). In the Hebrew language, there are three numbers: the singular, the dual, and the plural. The word for "God" in the above is "Elohim" which is a plural noun, indicating at least three. But the verb "created" to which it is joined is in the singular; so that here at the outset of revelation is the disclosure of the Trinity acting in unity. The same thing occurs again in verses 26 and 27: "And God said, let us make man in our image after our likeness . . . so God created man in His own image." See also Genesis 11.7: "Let us go down"; Isaiah 6.8: "Whom shall I send and who will go for us." The word "one" in Deuteronomy 6.4: "The Lord our God is one Lord" is a word which indicates a compound unity, such as one bunch of grapes. In the 110th Psalm, David sees One exalted at the right hand of God. He is a Second on God's throne, and the Psalmist worships Him, calling Him "my Lord" (verse 1). Then Psalm 139. 7: "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?"—again indicating Personality.

Passing into the New Testament, we find these three divine Persons spoken of together for the first time in Matthew 3. 16-17: Jesus, the Spirit of God, and the voice of One from heaven Who declared: "This is My beloved Son." The full disclosure of this great truth is found in II Corinthians 13. 14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." Thus Moses, David, Isaiah, Matthew, and Paul are in complete agreement. "The God of the Old Testament, and the God of the New Testament, and the God of every separate part of both Old and New Testaments, is the same God and is one God."

(b) Its Doctrine of Man

The origin of man is clearly described in the Bible. He is said to have been created in the image of God (Genesis 1.27), and to have been originally endowed with kingly power (Psalm 8. 6). But while emphasizing his wondrous origin, the Scriptures, with equal fidelity, affirm that he is a ruin because of sin. I adduce a fourfold testimony given at intervals down the centuries: Genesis 6.5; Psalm 14. 2-3; Jeremiah 17. 9; Romans 3. 10-18. Whilst, therefore, Genesis 1 and Psalm 8 bear witness to the royalty with which he was primarily blessed, the facts of life show how tragically he has failed; and any philosophy which leaves either of these out of account is incomplete. These things explain alike his noblest aspirations and his saddest falls.

The future for man, redeemed in Christ, is inconceivably glorious. He is predestined to be conformed to the image of God's Son (Romans 8. 29; I John 3. 2). Although discrowned by sin, he will one day be gifted with far-reaching sovereignties; and that is why, while in the Bible there is revealed the fullest knowledge of human nature, there is also in its pages the deepest veneration for man.

(c) Its Doctrine of Redemption

Travellers tell us that no one need be lost in Venice, although the streets are narrow, and the canals intricate. There is, in the walls beside the canals and on the pavement of the streets, a thin line of red stone, by following which, the traveller will come to St. Mark's Church. In like manner, the red line of Redemption stretches in Scripture from cover to cover, and no pilgrim to eternity need miss his way. Standing by that rude altar erected outside Eden's gates, we see a man who was accepted because of the spotless victim which was offered upon it (Genesis 4; Hebrews 11. 4); one of the first clear indications that without shedding of blood is no remission (Hebrews 9. 22). The same truth is taught in Exodus 12, Leviticus 16, Isaiah 53, Matthew 26, John 1, Acts 20, I Corinthians 5, Ephesians 1, I Peter 1 and Revelation 7.

3. There is Prophetical Unity

Peter tells us that the theme of the prophets was twofold: "The Spirit of Christ which was in them testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory that should follow" (I Peter 1. 11); and the Master Himself, rebuking the unbelieving believers of Luke 24 said: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory" (verse 26). In keeping with these utterances, we find that through the Old Testament there are two sets of prophecies: one of which speaks of the humiliation of Christ; and the other, of His exaltation.

(a) His Sufferings

The prophecies concerning His first appearance among men extend over a period of 4,000 years. He was to be the Seed of the woman (Genesis 3. 15); of the line of Abraham (Genesis 12. 3); of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49. 10); and of the family of David (Psalm 132. 11). He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7); and in Bethlehem of Judaea (Micah 5). Daniel foretold the time of His appearance (chapter 9. 26); Zechariah, the manner of His betrayal (chapter 11. 12); Isaiah, that He would intercede for the transgressors, and occupy a rich man's grave (chapter 53. 9-12); and David, that

He would be crucified (Psalm 22. 16). It was on the principle of here a little, there a little until, by the time that the Old Testament was complete, we have a full-length portrait of the Redeemer that was to come. You will find it an interesting task to trace the fulfilment of these in the New Testament.

(b) His Glory

Isaiah 9. 6-7 Isaiah 11. 1, 2, 10, 11, 12 Isaiah 24. 21-23 Isaiah 40. 9-11 Ieremiah 23. 5-8 Daniel 7. 13-14

NOTE: In Luke 1. 31-33 these two sets of prophecies are linked. Verse 31 has been fulfilled; verses 32-33 await fulfilment.

Now, we ask with Dryden:

"Whence but from heaven could men unskilled in arts, In different ages born; in different parts, Weave such agreeing truths?"

Blot out the supernatural, and there is no answer to that question. If God actually superintended the production of this Book the problem is solved; if not, it is insoluble.

CHAPTER VII

A RIGHTLY-DIVIDED WORD

In the New Testament, the sacred volume is called by various names, and attached to each of these is an exhortation. It is called "the engrafted word" and we are asked to receive it with meekness (James 1. 21); it is "the faithful word" and we are exhorted to hold it fast (Titus 1. 9); it is "the word of life" and we are counselled to hold it forth (Philippians 2. 16); it is "the word of truth" and we must rightly divide it (II Timothy 2. 15). In the R.V. the last named verse is translated: "handling aright the word of of truth", and that implies that it may be handled wrongly.

Two considerations will make this clear, namely (1) that although all the Bible is for us, it is not all about us. Thus, for example, the Levitical economy with its innumerable sacrifices, while valid and commanded for the Jewish people, is not binding on us today. For the sacrifice of Christ—one for all, and once for all—has been offered, and has rendered these others unnecessary. (2) Since the death and resurrection of Christ, the human race, in the eyes of God, is in three divisions, namely, (a) the Jew-whose history is recorded in the Old Testament; (b) the Gentile—whose history, till the times of the Gentiles shall have been fulfilled, is outlined in the image of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel chapter 2, and Luke 21. 24); and (c) the Church of God, to which institution belong all who, from among Jews and Gentiles, are saved by grace divine (I Corinthians 10. 32). The history and destiny of the Church are set forth in the book of Acts, the Epistles, and the book of the Revelation.

These three companies co-exist today; and by rightly dividing the Word of truth we shall apportion to each the

Scriptures that belong to them. For the one who labours in the Word and doctrine, the ability to do this is of paramount importance. If II Timothy 3. 16-17 tells us what to study and Proverbs 2. 1-5 how to study, II Timothy 2. 15 explains why we study. Only by obeying the last-named injunction can we win the divine approval.

In regard to the central theme of Scripture—the appearance in this world of the Son of God—the Old Testament says, *He is coming*; the Gospels say, *He has come*; the remainder of the New Testament says, *He is coming again*. And, based on these facts, William G. Carr, of America, describes the position broadly as follows:

The School of God

Divisions	Old Testament	Gospels	Epistles
Teachers	Moses	Jesus	Paul
Revelation	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
Person	Jehovah	Jesus	Christ
People	Jew	Jew and Gentile	Church
Subjects	Nation	Kingdom	Body

Careful examination of that chart will guide you regarding the main divisions of the Bible, and the peoples whom they primarily concern. For ourselves today, we learn that, while the Old Testament was written for our learning and comfort (Romans 15. 4), and while it contains divine principles that will guide us in many a dilemma (Psalm 119. 105), it is in the New Testament—and more particularly in the Epistles—that the Church, and the individuals who compose it, receive their instructions for life and godliness. Besides these main divisions, there are many themes and doctrines that necessitate the application of the principle laid down in II Timothy 2. 15. I name three:

1. SALVATION

The word "salvation" is used in the New Testament in three senses. (a) It is used to describe our deliverance from

the penalty of sin, which is spoken of as an accomplished fact (Ephesians 2. 8 R.V.). (b) It is used to describe our emancipation from the tyranny of sin, which it speaks of as going on now (Philippians 2. 12-13). (c) It is used to indicate what will take place when our Lord shall return to remove us from this world, when salvation will be complete (Romans 13. 11). It is the last-named sense of the word that the apostle has in mind when he says: "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." The theological words for these three aspects of salvation are: Justification, which is something which we possess (Romans 5. 1); Sanctification, which is something that we experience (John 17. 17); and Glorification, which is something that we anticipate (Colossians 3. 4).

2. FAITH AND WORKS

Divine truth is full-orbed; of half-truths beware. This aphorism is peculiarly applicable to the subject before us now; for, on the question of Justification, Paul and James seem to contradict each other. Careful examination shows, however, that it is their united testimony that gives us the full circle of truth. Paul shows how a sinner is justified before God (Romans 3. 24; 5. 1; 5. 9). James, on the other hand, shows how a saint is justified before man (James 2. 14-17). "It is faith alone that saves," says Paul; "the faith that saves is never alone, but is ever accompanied by works," says James. For, Christian works are but animate faith and love, as flowers are the animate springtide. Faithless work God never rewards, says the apostle to the Gentiles (Hebrew 11. 6); workless faith God never regards, says the writer who addresses the twelve tribes (James 2. 26). There are two incidents in the life of the Lord Tesus that explain these two aspects of divine teaching. (a) In Mark, chapter 2, when the men brought the paralytic to our Lord, their confidence in Him was so great that they broke up the roof of the house where He was staying in order that they might get the sick man into His presence (verses 3 and 4). And the next verse says that Jesus saw their faith (verse 5). That is the kind of faith for which James pleads: faith evidenced by works. (b) In John 8. 11 our Lord said to the woman taken in sin: "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." The grace that shines in the first part of that sentence—"neither do I condemn thee"—illustrates the doctrine of Paul. The holiness that is imperatively demanded in the second part of it—"go and sin no more"—sets forth the teaching of James. You can neither transpose, nor separate these words; and, taken as they stand, they place before us the provisions of the gospel and the requirements of the gospel. They make it clear that Paul and James are not face to face fighting with each other, but back to back beating off common foes. They will save us from legalism on the one hand, and carelessness on the other.

3. Salvation and Rewards

These two things are, in Scripture, carefully distinguished. Salvation is a gift (Ephesians 2. 8); and to ensure it we must look to God (Isaiah 45. 22). Rewards are earned (Revelation 22. 12); and to secure them we must look to ourselves—our ways, and our service for the Lord (II John, verse 8).

The simplest way to illustrate the difference between these two things will be to place before you three of the gifts of God with their corresponding rewards:

Gifts		Rewards	
Life	Romans 6. 23	Crown of Life	Rev. 2. 10
Righteousness	Romans 5. 17	Crown of Righteousness	
_			II Tim. 4. 6-8
Glory	John 17. 24	Crown of Glory	I Pet. 5. 4

The message to the church at Smyrna was: "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee"—not life, for that they already possessed (John 5. 24)—but "a crown of life."

Paul received the gift of righteousness (Romans 5. 17); he earned the crown of righteousness. Glory is ours by gift divine (Psalm 84. 11); the crown of glory is the reward of service rendered to the flock of God.

This little study may teach us to distinguish between things that differ.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BIBLICAL DIVISIONS OF TIME

A NOTHER valuable help to the correct understanding of the Bible is the recognition of the fact that God has divided the history of mankind into great spiritual sections. A geologist measures the centuries by the various stages in the formation of the earth's crust; an historian, by the rise and fall of great empires; an astronomer, by the epoch-making discoveries in his science. God has divided the long years into what Bible students call "dispensations"—a word which the Twentieth Century Dictionary defines as "the various methods or stages of God's dealings with His creatures". Augustine held this truth to be of such supreme importance that he saw in it an explanation of the seeming contradictions of the Bible. "Distinguish the Dispensations," he says, "and the Scriptures harmonize."

From the creation of man to the end of time there are five broadly-marked divisions or dispensations:

1. Innocence: Genesis 1 and 2

In ideal conditions, the first pair was placed in Eden, with everything that could minister to their happiness, and with only one restriction (Genesis 2. 16-17). They knew neither good nor evil (verse 17); they were there in innocence. By the enemy of man, Eve was deceived into disobedience to God's command; Adam disobeyed deliberately (I Timothy 2. 14). Both of them were driven into exile (chapter 3. 24); and were henceforth separated from God by the distance of death (Romans 5. 12).

2. Conscience: Genesis 3 to Exodus 19

It would seem that it is to this period of time that Paul refers in Romans 2. 14-15, when the divinely implanted knowledge of right and wrong was the criterion by which men were tested: "their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." The outstanding illustration of it is Joseph. Confronted by a terrible temptation (Genesis 39. 7-9), this noble youth said: "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"—even before the divine Law which forbade it was promulgated (Exodus 20. 14).

3. Law: Exodus 20 to John 21

This was the age of written and revealed Law, and lasted until the death of our Lord (John 1. 17). Although "the ten words of Sinai" were spoken to a relatively obscure people at an early stage of man's history, they form, to this day, the basis of the jurisprudence of the world, and the groundwork of every lofty and stable civilization. The people of Israel failed to keep the Law; the penalty and curse of it fell on our Lord (Galatians 3. 13), Who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes" (Romans 10. 4).

4. Grace: Acts 1 to Revelation 4

The death of the Redeemer met the claims of the throne of God in righteousness, and the needs of the hearts of men in grace; and grace now reigns (Romans 5. 21). This era was formally introduced by the ascent of Christ (Acts 1) and the descent of the Spirit (Acts 2). The message now is to every creature which is under heaven. God is today calling out from all kindreds and nations and races and tongues a people for His name (Acts 15. 14-17); that company which, in the Epistles, is called "The Church". At the second coming of our Lord, this innumerable company of redeemed ones will

be translated to the heavenly land, as described in I Thessalonians 4. 13 to 15. The difference between "law" and "grace" is well illustrated in John Bunyan's quaint words:

"Run, John, run, the Law commands, But gives me neither legs nor hands; Far grander news the Gospel brings, It bids me fly, and gives me wings."

5. Righteousness: Revelation 4 to 22

These chapters show God's judgments abroad in the earth. "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" (Revelation 11. 15); and Heaven's anointed King now reigns in righteousness (Isaiah 32. 1). Evil is finally dealt with (Revelation 20); and the new heavens and the new earth are described in their sevenfold perfection (Revelation 22. 3-5):

No More Curse
Throne of God and Lamb
His Servants Serve Him
They See His Face
His Name on Foreheads
No Night There
Reign for Ever and Ever

Perfect Righteousness Perfect Government Perfect Service Perfect Vision Perfect Resemblance Perfect Blessedness Perfect Glory

It is to this glorious time that Ephesians 1. 10 and Philippians 2. 9-11 refer. For "then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power; for He must reign" (I Corinthians 15. 24-25).

It should be carefully noted that while, during any given period of time, men are tested by some specific revelation of the will of God, there are certain things which abide through all dispensations. The holy character of God; His relation to the contrite heart; His exhortation to His people to do justly,

love mercy, and walk humbly with their God: these remain the same in every age.

Note: Knowing that some of my brethren differ from me in what I have here set down, I send it forth with deep humility of heart. Nevertheless I believe that what I have written does broadly indicate the ways of God with men, from the beginning of time to its end.

CHAPTER IX

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

THE meaning of all language, whether written or spoken, is ascertained by the use of certain general principles. These principles are called Hermeneutics; and the application of them to Scripture is called Exegesis. Two things are needed for such work, namely, a supreme regard for truth, and a sound judgment.

THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN SIDE

"There is," says Professor Barrows, "a human and a divine side to biblical interpretation: a human side, because the Scriptures address men in human language and according to human modes of thinking and speaking; a divine side, because they contain a true revelation from God to men, and differ in this respect from all other writings. The neglect of the human side leads to visionary schemes of interpretation in which the writer's fancy is substituted for the sober rules of criticism, and the Word of God accommodated to his preconceived opinions. The rejection of the divine side manifests itself in a cold sceptical criticism which denies, or explains away, the supernatural in the Bible. It is only by keeping in view these two sides of revelation that we can attain to a true knowledge of the inspired word."

As with reverence, we turn to our sacred task, let me remind you of what an old stone-breaker said, as he sat by the roadside during the lunch hour, reading his much worn New Testament. A party of tourists came by, and one of them said: "How can an old fool like you understand that Book?" With the grace of a Christian gentleman, the old man replied: "It would not be possible, sir, in the ordinary way; but you see I happen to

know the Author." In dependence upon Him, therefore, Who ever makes His home in the humble heart, we now examine some of the rules that govern the interpretation of His Word.

VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE

Remembering that our noble English Bible is a translation from other languages, and that lawyers reckon that a document loses ten per cent on translation, it behoves those of us who are not Hebrew and Greek scholars to enquire very carefully regarding the values of the various versions of the Scriptures that are now within our reach. The three most famous of these are the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the English Authorized Version of 1611.

The Septuagint

This version was a translation of the Old Testament into Greek. It was begun at Alexandria in 280 B.C., during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and was prepared primarily for the Jews living outside Palestine, to whom Greek had become a more familiar language than Hebrew. In the days of our Lord and His apostles, it was read by Jews throughout the Roman Empire. The word "septuagint"—usually written LXX—means "seventy"; and it was so named because it was made by seventy-two chosen men, six out of each of the tribes of Israel; in round numbers, seventy.

The Vulgate

The Vulgate, or Latin translation of the whole Bible, was the work of one man—Jerome, who was born in A.D. 340. He was a scholar such as the Church did not again possess until Holland gave her Erasmus. In the second century of our era, Latin superseded Greek and remained for many years the diplomatic language of Europe. Vulgate means common or current. This translation of the Bible was the one on which the whole western Church depended for a thousand years. By competent judges it is most highly esteemed.

The English Version

Like the Septuagint, the Authorized Version is the work of many men. At the Hampton Court Conference, held at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Dr. Reynolds suggested that there should be a new and thorough revision of the English Bible. The idea immediately laid hold of the mind of King James the First; decision was quickly taken; and his majesty named for the task forty-seven pious and scholarly men, giving them power to communicate "with all the principal learned men within this our kingdom." The scholarship of the whole realm was thus consecrated to the noblest task that could engage human minds; and the result is an edition of the Word of God which, for beauty and diction, felicity of expression, and fidelity of spirit to the original, has, authorities declare, never been equalled. It was issued in 1611.

I advise all preachers in their *public* reading of the Bible to adhere to the A.V., substituting a modern word here and there where necessary to bring out more clearly the meaning of the text. For this purpose you will find Dr. Weymouth's volume *The New Testament In Modern Speech* invaluable. Thus, the "presently" of 1611 is replaced by the "immediately" of today (Matthew 21. 19); "except," by "unless" (John 3. 3); "let," by "hinder" (II Thessalonians 2. 7); "quick," by "living" (II Timothy 4. 1); "conversation," by "conduct" (I Timothy 4. 12); "charity," by "love" (I Corinthians 13).

The Revised Version

Since English is a living language, and has changed and developed considerably since 1611, and since the critical facilities within reach of translators have increased greatly since that date, it was felt that a Revised Version of the A.V. was needed; and in 1881 the newer version appeared. It lacks the literary charm of the A.V., but has many advantages over that translation. It is well to have a copy of *The Parallel*

New Testament in which the A.V. and the R.V. appear side by side, for, by comparing the renderings, much light is thrown on the sacred words. Many other translations are available.

ON LEARNING HEBREW AND GREEK

While it is very desirable that you should have a knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, if you can afford the time to devote to them, preachers who have to give the most of their days to business must not be downhearted if they cannot fit this into their time-table. For fifteen or twenty guineas you can obtain the books that hold the results of the life-work of the great scholars who devoted their days to the study of these two languages. Thus, as John Ruskin points out, all that is necessary to be well-informed regarding the real meaning of any original word is to learn the Greek alphabet, which you can do in a few days, and then to trace it by means of your lexicons. By devoting to the study of the English Bible itself the years which would be necessary for the mastery of other tongues, you will be making a far more profitable investment of your time. The two older books which I recommend to you to begin with are: Analytical Concordance of the Bible by Dr. Robert Young; and The Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament by George V. Wigram. Of more recent works those of W. E. Vine, and K. S. Wuest of the Moody Bible Institute are outstanding.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCURACY

At a meeting of the Christian Evidence Society, the story was told of a man whose chief difficulty in believing the Bible concerned Noah's Ark. "I do not like," he said, "to refuse to believe in its size, or its build, or in the number of animals it contained. This is all quite conceivable, and doubtless correct. But when I am asked to believe that the Children of Israel carried it for forty years in the wilderness, my faith breaks down". So would mine, if I did not see that two sets of measurements refer to two different Arks: that of Genesis 6

to Noah's Ark; that of Exodus 25 to the Ark of the Covenant. The outstanding instance of the want of accuracy in quoting Scripture is found in Genesis 3. It is a warning that in dealing with the Word of the Lord, we should take nothing from it, add nothing to it, change nothing in it. Eve did all three. She took from the word of God. He had said: " of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat " save one; but Eve omitted the word "freely" making God to appear less bountiful than He was (Genesis 2. 16; Deuteronomy 4. 2). She added to the word of God. He had said of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "Thou shalt not eat of it." But in her reply to Satan Eve declares that God had also said: "Neither shall ye touch it "which He had not (Genesis 2. 17; 3. 3; Proverbs 30. 6). She changed the word of God. He had said: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," but when our first mother quoted the words of warning she said: "neither shall ye touch it lest ye die" (Genesis 2. 17; 3. 3); and by so doing changed an absolute certainty into a mere possibility (Matthew 4. 4). She thus misquoted the terms of the divine permission, overstated the prohibition, and underrated the penalty.

THE ANALOGY OF SCRIPTURE

"Analogy" is defined as "that general rule of doctrine which is deduced, not from two or three parallel passages, but from the harmony of all parts of Scripture in the fundamental points of faith and practice." It is based upon two great principles: (1) that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and therefore constitutes a self-consistent whole—no part of which may be interpreted in contradiction with the rest; and (2) that the truths to which God gives the greatest prominence must be those of primary importance. Thus understood, the analogy of faith is a sure guide to the meaning of the inspired volume. The rule of evidence as practised in the Law-Courts will help us here. It affirms that the strict rule of evidence in any enquiry is that all the facts must be

studied; and that no theory will be accepted as final while any of the evidence remains unaccounted for. The danger of ignoring this law is, not so much that of mistaking falsehood for truth, as that of mistaking part of the truth for the whole. "No investigation of Scripture in its various parts and separate texts, however important, must impair the sense of the supreme value of its united witness. There is not a form of evil doctrine or practice that may not claim apparent sanction and support from isolated passages; but nothing erroneous or vicious can ever find countenance from the Word of God when the whole united testimony of Scripture is weighed against it. Partial examination will result in partial views of truth, which are necessarily imperfect; only careful comparison will show the complete mind of God. The Bible is its own lexicon defining its terms; its own expositor explaining its meaning; its own interpreter unlocking its mysteries." (Dr. Pierson).

THE LAW OF CONTEXT

"As in an organism, no member or part, however minute, can be fully understood apart from its relation to the whole; so, in Scripture, every paragraph and sentence is part of its totality, and must be studied in relation to all the rest. The text will be illuminated by the context, or Scripture immediately preceding and following." Here I would have you note three things: (1) The chapter and verse divisions of the Bible are not part of the original text. The chapter divisions were made by Cardinal Hugo, who died in A.D. 1263: the verses for the Old Testament were done by Rabbi Mordecai Nathan, about A.D. 1430; and those of the New Testament, by Robert Stephen in 1551. Although indispensable in locating any given portion of the Word, they must be ignored in all serious Bible study, for occasionally the divisions are unfortunate. One illustration: In the last verse of the Gospel of John, chapter 7, we read: "Every man went unto his own house" (verse 53); and there, if the chapter divisions

are adhered to, the reading of the Scripture will end. But the next verse (chapter 8. 1) says: " Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives." While every man had a house to go to, the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head, and spent the night under the stars: but the striking contrast is lost sight of by reason of the imperfect division of the chapter. (2) Single statements and commands are lit up by the context. One illutrsation: In Ephesians 5. 18 we have the command, "Be filled with the Spirit "; and many are the answers as to what constitutes the evidence of being so filled. But here the law of context comes to our aid. For verses 18, 19, 20, and 21 form one sentence; and if verse 18 gives us the command to be filled, the remaining part of the sentence describes the threefold effect of being thus filled. The person who enjoys this blessing will be a joyful man (verse 19); a grateful man (verse 20); a humble man (verse 21). (3) Many Bible difficulties are solved in this way. One illustration: In I Corinthians 8.6 it is stated that "there is but one God" and in Psalm 14. 1 that "there is no God". But the complete statement in Psalm 14. 1 tells us that it is the fool that says in his heart that there is no God.

The affirmation that the Bible can be made to prove anything is, therefore, true, only if texts are separated from their contexts. The great lesson for us here is to bring all our statements to the test of the contextual touchstone; that will never fail you.

ORIENTALISMS AND METAPHORS

The Bible is an Eastern book, written by Eastern men, primarily for Eastern people. It follows, therefore, that a knowledge of the idioms of the languages in which it was written—that is, the modes of expression peculiar to those languages, and of the customs of those countries—is essential to the understanding of many of its sayings.

ORIENTALISMS

For example: (Luke 5.37) "No man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be

spilled, and the bottles shall perish." Here the English version employs an idiom based on an Eastern custom. Bottles are made from complete skins of animals, the limbs of which have been cut off and the holes sewn up. New skins will stretch as new wine put into them ferments, but old skins, already stretched to capacity, would burst if wine yet to ferment is placed in them. Our bottles are made of entirely different material. Again: (Acts 26. 14) "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Saul's conduct in persecuting Christ's disciples is represented under the form of an ox kicking against the ploughman's goad, only to make deeper the wounds which it inflicts.

METAPHORS

The most frequently used figure of speech in the Bible is the metaphor. A metaphor means that one thing is used to describe another. For instance: Venice has been described as a city half belonging to the land and half to the sea; but how much more forcefully Washington Irving puts it, when he exclaims: "Venice, that mermaid of a city." When our Lord said: "I am the door," He meant that just as a door is a means of entrance, so He is the One through Whom we enter into blessing. When he said, "This is My body", He meant that it represented His body. The Psalms are full of metaphors. They speak of God as a sun and a shield, as a refuge and a fortress, as a tower and a defence. The danger here is that of taking literally what is figurative, and of taking figuratively what should be taken literally.

THE OBSCURE AND THE PLAIN

The great principle which applies to all literature is this: If the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense. Since the writers of the Bible wrote to be understood we must, therefore, interpret their language as we interpret the language of common life. If; then, we find in the Word of the Lord dark and difficult sayings, these must be explained, not in contra-

diction to what is plainly revealed, but in harmony with it. What is obscure must be interpreted by what is clear; what is briefly hinted, by what is distinctly expressed. For practical purposes the value of this principle is set forth in the saying of one of the philosophers: "Never allow yourself to be robbed of the value of what you do understand by something which you do not understand; because the one is founded upon your knowledge, and the other upon your ignorance."

Interpretation—Application

In his translation of the Bible, Myles Coverdale says: "It shall greatly help you to understand Scripture if you mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom, and to whom; with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances; considering what goeth before and what followeth." Mark, in that comprehensive statement, the words which I have emphasised; for obedience here will reveal the distinction between the interpretation of a passage and its application. There can be only one interpretation; there may be many applications. The interpretation belongs to the occasion when, and the persons to whom, or of whom the words were originally spoken; the application is to ourselves, provided this does not come into conflict with any other passages. A wise application will never, in any way, impair the true interpretation. Perhaps nowhere should this principle be so carefully observed as in relation to the Old Testament prophecies of blessing which concern the literal Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem. These have been carried off bodily into the camp of the Church, and the poor Jew left with only the curses! Sheer robbery!

OBJECTIVE—SUBJECTIVE

The objective side of truth is that which is presented to faith; which gives faith an object outside itself. The subjective side is the effect which objective truth has upon heart and life. To present the objective side only is to have a

foundation without a house; to preach only the subjective side is to have a house without a foundation. This may perhaps be more clearly seen if one differentiates between:

STANDING AND STATE

On the left hand are the Scriptures which tell us what we are in Christ—our position; on the right hand, are those which tell us what we should be—our condition.

Blessings	Responsibilities
 Blessed in Christ (Eph. 1. 3) Accepted in Beloved (Eph. 1. 6) 	Blessed in Deed (James 1. 25) Acceptable in Life (II Cor. 5.9, R.V.)
3. Called Sons (I John 3. 1) 4. We Are Forgiven (Eph. 1. 7)	Walk as Such (I Thess. 2. 12) Let Us Be Forgiving (Eph. 4. 32)
5. Justified without Works (Rom. 3. 28)	Justified by Works (James 2. 24)
6. We are Kept (I Pet. 1. 5)	Let Us Keep Ourselves (Jude 21)
7. Meetness—Heavenly (Col. 1. 12)	Meetness—Earthly (II Tim. 2. 21)
8. Ordained Eternal Life (Acts 13. 48)	Ordained Good Works (Eph. 2. 10)
9. Redeemed to God (Rev. 5. 9)	Redeemed from Sin (Titus 2. 14)

A wise teacher will always hold the balance between these two sides of truth. Properly presented, they will produce Christians who will be deeply spiritual, and eminently practical.

SECOND COMING TEACHING

The truth connected with the return of our Lord can be presented in a way that will make the Lord's people so heavenly-minded that they will be of no earthly use. I knew

of an editor who, about seventy years ago, announced that he would not take subscriptions to his magazine for the whole of the ensuing year, because he was convinced that the Master would return before its close. That viewpoint would cut the nerve of effort completely. The opposite attitude is that expressed in the words: "My Lord delayeth His coming." Both of these are wrong; and they will be corrected only if we observe the Saviour's promise and His command. His promise is: "I will come again," which we most surely believe. His command is: "Occupy till I come," which we should implicitly obey. Live as if He were coming today; plan and work as if He were not to come in your life-time.

Laws

There are a number of Laws embedded in the Bible which have been discovered by devout students, and which go far to elucidate its meaning. We shall glance briefly at four of these:

1. The Law of First Mention

This means that the first mention of a word, or thing in Scripture is the key to the subsequent use of that word or thing. Examples:

(a) The first time we meet the number seven is in connection with the seventh day (Genesis 2. 3); and there it stands for completion, cessation, rest, finished work. It is found hundreds of times in the Book, and it always has, substantially, one of these meanings. (b) The word "sanctified" is found in the same verse, where it means, to set apart from a common and ordinary use to some other use and purpose. It is applied in Scripture to persons, and things, and always, fundamentally, bears that meaning. (c) In Genesis 3. 1 we read that the serpent was more subtle than any other beast; and from that time, the great characteristic of that old serpent, the devil, is subtlety (II Corinthians 11. 3). In the light of this law, the book of Genesis becomes an exceedingly important part of the Word of God.

2. The Law of Proportionate Mention

Two principles will guide us here: (a) The amount of space devoted in Scripture to the exposition of any given theme is the criterion of its importance in the mind of God. (b) Truth out of proportion is error. If you test such subjects as Atonement, Faith, Prayer, the Second Coming, and Holiness of Life by this law, and give them their due place in your ministry, you cannot go wrong.

3. The Law of Repeated Mention

This law has been defined by Dr. Gray as "that peculiarity of the Holy Spirit as an Author, by which He gives first the outline of a subject, and then recurs to it, again and again, for the purpose of adding details." One illustration (Genesis chapters 1 and 2). These chapters are not contradictory, but complementary. In Genesis 1 (verse 27) the fact of the creation of man is announced; in chapter 2, the Spirit returns to the theme, and describes separately and in detail the creation of man (verse 7) and of woman (verses 21 and 22). Genesis 1 resembles the map of Palestine which you find at the end of your Bibles; Genesis 2 corresponds to the inset which describes in detail a portion of that country—Jerusalem and its environs.

4. The Law of Full Mention

Study reveals that all subjects necessary for life and duty have one comprehensive treatment somewhere in the oracles of God. Here are seven illustrations: Faith (Hebrews 11); Love (I Corinthians 13); Trouble (John 14); Godly Repentance (II Corinthians 7); Giving (II Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9); Christian Character (II Peter 1); Rest of Faith (Hebrews, chapters 3 and 4).

This law also applies to the great doctrines of the Bible: Creation (Genesis 1); the Fall (Genesis 3); the Decalogue (Exodus 20); Vicarious Sacrifice (Isaiah 53); God's Love for the Lost (Luke 15); Regeneration (John 3); Perfection of God's Word (Psalm 119); Human Destiny (Revelation, chapters 21 and 22).

CHAPTER X

METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

THE secret of success in any line of study, it has been said, lies in the discovery of a right method. Where this essential is neglected, plodding industry and brilliant genius are equally doomed to failure. Without method, we may plunge into the vast forest of truth, wander aimlessly, and get nowhere.

There are many methods of studying the Bible, all of them more or less helpful; and I now explain to you those which experience has shown to be the most useful.

1. THE DEVOTIONAL STUDY OF THE BIBLE

At the foot of a cliff under the windows of the Castle at Miramar, at a depth of eighty feet below the surface of the clear waters of the Adriatic, is a cage fashioned by divers in the face of the rock. In that cage are some of the most magnificent pearls in existence. They belong to the Archduchess Rainer. The gems had become "sick" and had been losing their colour; and experts were unanimous in declaring that the only way to restore their original brilliancy was to submit them to a prolonged immersion in the depths of the sea. They lay there for a number of years; and, when I last read of them, they were gradually regaining their former unrivalled oriency. Which things are a parable. Although the children of God are not of the world, they are in the world; and the constant tendency of the influences, by which they are surrounded there, is to make them lose touch with the Unseen and Eternal. The consequence is that the fine gold is apt to become dimmed; and the Christian life, to be robbed of its fragrance and bloom. To counteract this tendency is one of

the supreme purposes of the devotional reading of the Bible. That sacred exercise is as necessary to the well-being of the soul, as is the daily supply of water and nutriment to the plant or the flower; and Christian biography attests how great is the value of it. "It has pleased the Lord," says George Muller, "to teach me a truth, the benefit of which I have not lost for more than fourteen years. The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever that the first great and primary business to which I ought to give my attention every day was to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not how much I might serve the Lord, but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished." He goes on to say that the means that secure this end are the reading of the Word of God and prayer.

No one should be in bondage regarding the hour of the day, or the amount of time, which should be set aside for this purpose; for these vary with individuals. Mothers, nurses, and many others have duties in the morning hours which they may not neglect; but experience shows that for Christians generally, and young preachers in particular, the morning hour is the most helpful one. The daybreak blessing is the daylong gain.

Recognizing, then, the absolute necessity for daily communion with our Heavenly Father through His Word and in prayer, let me now speak to you of how we may make the most of the time at our disposal.

Begin by an act of faith, realizing that you are in the presence of God. "For he that cometh to God must believe that He is" (Hebrews 11. 6). Repeat audibly, Psalm 119. 18: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." In this connection, I know nothing more helpful than Bishop Moule's Morning Act of Faith. Here it is: "I believe on the Name of the Son of God, therefore I am in Him, having redemption through His blood, and life by His Spirit, and He is in me, and all fulness is in Him. To Him I belong by

purchase, conquest, and self-surrender; to me He belongs for all my hourly need. There is no cloud between my Lord and me; there is no difficulty, inward or outward, that He is not ready to meet in me today. The Lord is my Keeper. Amen." I would have every young Christian memorize these beautiful words. The aim of the devotional study of the Bible is not so much to acquire information; it is rather to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; to listen to His voice; to be equipped by heart peace, and abounding joy for the tasks of life; and to build up character. The truest, healthiest and strongest Christian life is that which is built up by patient, regular, devotional reading of the Sacred Book, and prayer.

Remember that in the Bible God is speaking to you. Here I give you the testimony of Principal Forsyth. He says: "We never do the Bible more honour than when we forget that we are reading a Book, and find that we are communing with a Person"; and the reply, given by a young lady who was asked to explain what was meant by the devotional reading of the Bible, illustrates that statement. "Yesterday morning," she said, "I received a letter from one to whom I have given my heart and devoted my life. I freely confess to you that I have read that letter five times; not because I did not understand it at first reading, nor because I expected to commend myself to the author by frequent reading of his epistle. It was not with me a question of duty, but simply one of pleasure. I read it because I am devoted to the one who wrote it." To read the Bible with the same motive is to read it devotionally; and to one who reads it in that spirit it is indeed a love letter.

Seeing, then, that in the Sacred Volume our Father speaks to us personally and directly, with what reverence should we listen to His words? Sometimes He will gladden our hearts by the fresh application to them of some ancient promise; at other times He will thrust the scalpel remorselessly into our shrinking flesh. But whatever He says to us in rebuke or encouragement, in warning or in counsel, let ours be the attentive mind, the chastened heart, the responsive life.

"The sacred page

With calm attention scan. If on thy soul
As thou dost read, a ray of purer light
Break in, O, check it not: give it full scope.
Admitted, it will break the clouds which long
Have dimmed thy sight, and lead thee till at last
Convictions, like the sun's meridian beams,
Illuminate thy mind."

See carefully: Joshua 1.8; Ezra 7.10; Psalm 119; Colossians 3.16.

Examine the portion for the day with attention and care. It is wise to read the Scriptures methodically instead of haphazardly for, with method, one does not waste time asking: "Where shall I read today?" There are several Unions and Associations which promote the daily reading of the Word, the Secretary of any one of which would give any necessary guidance in this matter. These readings, in easy stages, cover the whole Bible within a given time.

Of almost equal importance with the reading of the Word is meditation on the Word. For purposeful meditation is no mere idle dreaming; it involves the use of the three parts of personality—intellect, emotion and will. By the intellect we reverently apprehend the truth (Psalm 119. 130); by our emotional nature we love it (Psalm 119. 97); and the will is the determining factor in obedience (Psalm 119. 32). According to these last three quotations from the 119th Psalm, the course of true love for the Bible is, therefore, in at the head, down to the heart, out at the feet. At the morning hour, prayer will generally take the form of asking that the words, which you have been reading and on which you have been meditating, will become part of your very life.

This is the most important habit you will ever form. In it lie the secrets of safety, of certainty, and of enjoyment. By means of it alone can we maintain the spiritual glow, and bear uninterrupted witness for our Lord. To acquire it, you will need purpose of heart; to maintain it throughout your life, you will have definitely to make up your mind to rise each morning in good time; for blankets quench more things than fire I It is a psychological law that in forming a new habit you must allow no exceptions. Once this one is formed, however, it will yield you such enormous returns of joy and gladness of spirit that you will go forth to your daily work with a heart fortified by the peace of God. This is the most helpful of all forms of Bible study, and is the Christian's secret of a happy life. I counsel my beloved young sisters and brothers to keep the morning watch (Psalm 130. 6); and, at all costs, to

"Get alone with Jesus, in the silence of the morn,
And in heavenly sweet communion let your duty day be born.
In the quietness that blesses with a prelude of repose,
Let your soul be soothed and softened, as the dew revives
the rose."

2. The Book Method

We have already examined the Bible as a whole, and are now to think of the sixty-six books of which it is composed. Before making some suggestions regarding this line of study, however, I quote the testimony of Dr. James Gray, of Chicago, who tells a story of his early life. "At that time," he says, "I did not know my Bible as I should, the effect of which was seen in my spiritual life, and in the character of my preaching. My heart was greatly burdened in prayer about it for more than a year, when God answered me through the lips of a Christian who described the blessing he had got through reading the Epistle to the Ephesians. I asked him how he had read it. 'One afternoon,' he said, 'I lay down under a tree, and read it through. Then I read it again in the same way, and again and again, as many as twelve or fifteen times; and when I arose to go into the house, I was not only in possession of Ephesians, but Ephesians was in possession of me.' I at once began the application of this simple principle, beginning at Genesis. I kept at each book till it was mastered, before I

began work on the next. I cannot tell the effect on me—strengthening my faith in the infallibility of the Bible and deepening my spiritual life."

After you have selected the particular book which you wish to study, there are certain things for which you will have to be on the look out. These have been pithily expressed in two lines:

"The author, scope, occasion, theme, time, place, and next The form: these seven let him attend that reads the text."

Dr. Campbell Morgan gives four rules for this form of study: "Read and gain an impression. Think and gain an outline. Meditate and gain an analysis. Sweat and gain an understanding."

SPECIMEN OUTLINES

After repeated readings of any book of the Bible you will catch the aim of the writer, and the contents will take orderly shape in your mind. Tabulation of the results of your study will aid materially in your mastery of the book; for in this way you will be able to think your way through it. Take, for example,

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

This book has been divided in various ways; but, for us who are students of the English Bible, the divisions which give the clearest view of it and the most practical help in mastering its contents are as follows:

	1. Primev	AL	2. Patriarchal		
	(Chapters 1 to	o 11)	(Chapters 12 to 50)		
(a)	Creation:	1-2	(a) Abraham:	12-25	
(b)	Fall:	3-6	(b) Isaac:	21-28	
(c)	Flood:	7- 9	(c) Jacob:	27-37	
(d)	Nations:	10-11	(d) Joseph:	37-50	

These ten words will enable you to think through Genesis.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

This book is in three great divisions:

- 1. The Person of the King (Chapters 1 to 4. 16)
 - (a) His relation to earth: true, but sinless man (Chapters 1 and 2)
 - (b) His relation to heaven: beloved of the Father (Chapter 3)
 - (c) His relation to *hell*: conqueror of the devil (Chapter 4)
- 2. The Preaching of the King (Chapters 4. 17 to 16. 20). From that time Jesus began to preach (Chapter 4. 17).
- 3. The Passion of the King (Chapter 16. 21 to chapter 28). "From that time forth Jesus began to shew unto His disciples how that He must be killed" (Chapter 16. 21).

THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Chapter 1: Christ the Believer's Life

Chapter 2: Christ the Believer's Pattern

Chapter 3: Christ the Believer's Object

Chapter 4: Christ the Believer's Strength

COMPLEMENTARY BOOKS

GENESIS

The Book of Beginnings Paradise Lost Man Driven Forth

LEVITICUS

Essence of Judaism The Many Sacrifices Shadow and Type REVELATION

The Book of Endings
Paradise Regained
Man Welcomed Home

HEBREWS

Essence of Christianity
The One Sacrifice
Substance and Antitype

JOSHUA

National Blessings
Earthly Places
In Canaan

Romans

The Finished Picture Christ a Sufficient Saviour Truth Put Systematically

JOHN'S GOSPEL

That ye might believe: (20. 31)

Speaks of the Son of God Mainly historical **Ephesians**

Spiritual Blessings Heavenly Places In Christ

GALATIANS

The Outline Christ an Exclusive Saviour Truth Put Controversially

JOHN'S FIRST EPISTLE
That ye might know: (5.13)

Speaks of the sons of God Mainly experimental

3. The Chapter Method

This is perhaps the simplest yet one of the most effective methods of studying the book of God—especially for beginners.

What it is

It is the study of the English Bible by chapters, in conformity to a simple plan, whereby their contents may be gleaned and appropriated. It requires no text-books, but only the reading of the chapter in hand carefully, repeatedly, and prayerfully.

Chapter Names

As you muse on the chapter which you may be studying, you will find that its principal topic and leading lesson will lay hold of your mind; and that a word, or a phrase, may summarize its contents. In this way, for example, I can think my way quite easily through the twenty-one chapters of the Gospel according to John. As you become familiar with the contents of the Bible, you will find that certain important chapters stand out conspicuously in your mind. Thus we have:

Genesis 1	•••	•••	•••	The Creation Chapter
Exodus 12		•••	• • •	The Passover Chapter
Leviticus 16	• • •	***	•••	The Atonement Chapter
Psalm 51		•••	•••	The Penitent's Psalm
Isaiah 53	• • •	•••	•••	The Messiah Chapter
Matthew 27		•••	•••	The Crucifixion Chapter
I Corinthians		•••	The Love Chapter	
Ephesians 6		•••		The Soldier's Chapter
James 2	•••	•••	•••	The Works Chapter
Genesis 3	•••	•••	•••	The Fall Chapter
Exodus 20	•••	•••	•••	The Decalogue Chapter
Psalm 23	•••	***		The Shepherd Psalm
Psalm 121	•••		•••	The Traveller's Psalm
Matthew 13	•••		•••	The Parable Chapter
John 15	•••		•••	The Vine Chapter
I Corinthians	•••	•••	The Resurrection Chapter	
Hebrews 11	•••	•••	•••	The Faith Chapter
Revelation 22	•••	•••	•••	The Heaven Chapter

A preacher would find that a series of addresses on such themes would be of absorbing interest.

Three Chapters Analysed

Deuteronomy 33

"Happy art thou O Israel: who is like unto thee O people saved by the Lord" (verse 29). Wherein did that happiness consist? Deuteronomy 33 gives a sevenfold answer. They were happy because they were:

- (1) On His heart—the place of affection (verse 3). "Yea, He loved the people" (Ephesians 5. 25; Galatians 2. 20).
- (2) In His hand—the place of security (verse 3). "All His saints are in His hand" (John 10. 28-29).
- (3) At His feet—the place of instruction (verse 3). "They sat down at Thy feet" (Luke 10. 38-42).
- (4) By His side—the place of fellowship (verse 12). "The beloved shall dwell by Him" (Psalm 91. 1).

- (5) On His shoulders—the place of strength (verse 12). "He shall dwell between His shoulders" (Luke 15. 5).
- (6) In His arms—the place of rest (verse 27). "Underneath are the everlasting arms" (Isaiah 40. 11).
- (7) Satisfied—the place beyond which it is impossible to go (verse 23). Satisfaction and fulness (Psalm 107. 9; Ephesians 3. 14-21).

John 15

This chapter has a threefold division:

- (1) The Christian's Relation to Christ (verses 1 to 11), as the branch to the vine. Abiding is the essential condition (verse 4); asking the wondrous privilege (verse 7); fruitbearing, the great result (verse 5). In this section we are called disciples (verse 8). Known by what we are.
- (2) The Christian's Relation to His Fellow Christians (verses 12 to 17). This section begins and ends with exhortations to love one another. Here we are called *friends* (verse 14). Known by what we do.
- (3) The Christian's Relation to the World (verses 18 to 27). In this section we are called witnesses (verse 27). Known by what we say.

John 17

- (1) Our Lord's Prayer for Himself (verses 1 to 5).
- (2) Our Lord's Prayer for the Apostles (verses 6 to 19).
- (3) Our Lord's Prayer for the Church (verses 20 to 26). His prayer for the people of God is threefold:

That they might be sanctified (verse 17). That they might be unified (verse 21). That they might be glorified (verse 24).

4. THE TOPICAL METHOD

"To examine the Scriptures topically is very fruitful in results. Taking great leading subjects or themes, we should

seek to find the total testimony of the inspired Word upon each, gathering up and arranging scattered or fragmentary hints in an orderly and complete form." Just as in Nature, man is left to explore, discovering more and more of its wonders with the passing of the centuries; so in the Bible, there are thousands of facts about the Trinity, the way of redemption, the problems of life and destiny waiting to be collated and classified by lovers and students of it. All that is needed is a good concordance; and if your work with it is thorough and exact, you will have a rich collection of God's thoughts upon any of the themes which you choose to trace through the sacred Book.

I will now give you three illustrations of topical study:

The Blood

By means of it: (1) Atonement was effected (Leviticus 17. 11); (2) Peace was made (Colossians 1. 20); (3) Forgiveness is possible (Ephesians 1. 7); (4) Justification is secured (Romans 5. 9); (5) Redemption was accomplished (I Peter 1. 18-19); (6) Cleansing is provided (I John 1. 7); (7) Victory is achieved (Revelation 12. 11).

The Lord's Second Coming in I Thessalonians

- (1) It is the great incentive to service (chapter 1).
- (2) It is the time of reward for soul-winning (chapter 2).
- (3) It establishes the heart in holiness (chapter 3).
- (4) It is the bereaved Christian's supreme comfort (chapter 4).
- (5) It is the consecrated Christian's glad hope (chapter 5).

The Relation of Christians to the World

Dr. Pierson points out that this can be fully seen only by a comparison of at least seven conspicuous passages of Scripture, where different phases of the subject are presented.

(1) Matthew 6. 19-34: Worldly avarice and anxiety, foes to faith.

- (2) John 15. 18-24; John chapter 17: Worldly hatred of our Lord and of His disciples.
- (3) Romans 12: 1-2: Duty of non-conformity to the world and its standards.
- (4) Ephesians 2. 1-7: The connection of the world with the flesh and the devil.
- (5) James 4. 4-5: The friendship of the world, enmity with God.
- (6) I John 2. 15-17; 5. 19: The love of the world forbidden, as not of God.
- (7) Revelation, chapters 16 to 18: The greatness, and glory, and doom of the world.

In this connection there is nothing more helpful than the system of references in the Scofield Bible. The first mention of the various topics is given, and then the theme is traced through to its final mention, where it is summarized. For preachers, the index to the references in this Bible, is invaluable.

5. THE CHRONOLOGICAL METHOD

Many years ago Mary Petrie, B.A., issued a volume called "Clews to Holy Writ." In that volume, the whole Bible has been excellently arranged for chronological study, in a course which covers three years. In her preface to that valuable book, Miss Petrie says: "Surely the most intelligent and profitable method of studying the Bible is to read it in the chronological order of the events it relates, and the books it contains, so far as that can be ascertained. Thus we can illustrate the story of what was done, by the poetry and other literature which explains the motives, and sets forth the results of those deeds 'in order'; (Luke 1. 3; Acts 11. 4). This re-arrangement will produce fresh interest in the narratives; fresh proof of their power and irresistible evidence of their authenticity as history; fresh light on the will of God, when we see the truths He has revealed, not as isolated things,

but as part of the whole, set forth in regular progression, from the dim dawn of the first promise in Eden to that bright noontide when the Eternal Son came in the Father's name to reveal God to man perfectly." The chronological study of the Bible, therefore, is the study of its various books in the order in which they came from the divinely inspired penmen; and since revelation is progressive, there is manifestly great advantages in studying it thus. In our English Bibles, the books are arranged with reference to their contents; but while this arrangement is helpful in many ways, it completely destroys chronological sequence.

For example: We pass from the history of Esther to that of Job who lived more than a thousand years earlier; from the end of Judah's captivity in Daniel, to the latter days of the kingdom of Israel in Hosea; from Obadiah's denunciation of Edom's exultation over the fall of Jerusalem, to Jonah's message to Nineveh, 200 years earlier. A clue to the correct position which the books of the Old Testament should occupy will generally be found in their opening verses: See Isaiah, Hosea, Micah, and others. Studied together in this way, the prophetical writings reveal the moral and spiritual conditions which obtained during the times described in the historical books.

Although I do not go into this matter in detail, I heartily commend Miss Petrie's volume to you. It is out of print, but you may procure a copy at any of the second-hand book shops. A study of the maps at the end of your Bibles will be of great service to you here.

6. THE BIOGRAPHICAL METHOD

Miss Petrie says that the Bible is Literature in its four most attractive forms: Biography—that is, portraits of the outstanding men who made history; Letters, which are the spontaneous utterances of the human heart; Poetry, the loftiest conceptions of the human mind; and History, which

is philosophy teaching by example. We are now to think of the first of these—The Biographies of the Bible.

If it be true, as Pope has declared, that the proper study of mankind is man, then there is no place where the study can be more effectively pursued than in the Book of God. The characters of the Bible taken together tell the whole story of the heart of man.

No Flattery in Bible Portraits

Bible biographies are intensely human. There, you have set before you, not flawless saints, not sinners without a redeering quality, but creatures of clay like ourselves. It tells of men who could scale the highest heights of devotional aspiration on the one hand but who, at other times, fell into the depths of sin. For this reason we shall find, as we examine them, warnings as well as example, admonition as well as instruction. Thus we have the story of the duplicity of the upright man, Abraham; of the weakness of the most powerful man, Samson; of the cowardice of the bravest man, Elijah; of the sensuality of the most devoted man, David; of the folly of the wisest man, Solomon; of the vindictiveness of the loving-hearted man, John; and of the instability of the rock-like man, Peter. Verily, Scripture is Nature's sternest painter, and its best.

Themes for Preaching

In the introduction to his volume on Jacob, Dr. F. B. Meyer says that its pages may show "some of my fellowworkers, weary with the incessant demands of their congregations, how they may find a constant well-spring of freshness, variety, and interest, in the glorious biographies of Scripture. . . . To awaken new devotion to the Bible, and to touch the many chords of human life, there is nothing to be compared with a reverent re-telling of the stories of the Bible heroes and saints."

Three Illustrations

Moses

We read in Deuteronomy 34. 7 that "Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died", and by comparing that statement with Stephen's speech in the seventh chapter of Acts we learn that that noble life breaks up into three periods, of exactly forty years each. He spent forty years at the Court of Pharaoh learning to be "something" (Acts 7. 23); forty years in the desert of Midian learning to be "nothing" (Acts 7. 30); and forty years on the way to Canaan proving God to be "everything" (Acts 7. 36). The first of these produced self-confidence; the second, self-diffidence; and the third, self-abandonment. Under these three general headings, you may group all the facts of this great man's life.

Mary of Bethany

This woman is mentioned three times in the New Testament, and on each occasion she is found at the same place—at Jesus' feet. We find her there:

As a Learner: Luke 10, verse 39 As a Mourner: John 11, verse 32 As a Worshipper: John 12, verse 3

Abraham

He has been called the Columbus of faith. Taking the three outstanding events of his life we find that (1) he believed when he knew not where—" He went out, not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews 11. 8). (2) He believed when he knew not how. He received the promise that his wife should have a son—an event which, because of Sarah's age, was a physiological impossibility; but he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief (Romans 4. 19-21). (3) He believed when he knew not why. Isaac was the sole link between him and the future blessing of the world of which God had spoken. But unhesitatingly, "by faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac" (Hebrews 11. 17-19).

7. THE CHRISTOLOGICAL METHOD

"It cannot be too often repeated," says Dr. Dods, "that the element in the Bible, which differentiates it, is not the supreme and unrivalled excellence of all its constituent parts, nor that in it alone God speaks to man but that it is the record of His supreme manifestation in Jesus Christ." "Let this," said Archbishop Leighton, "commend the Scriptures much to our diligence and affection, that their great theme is our Redeemer, and the redemption wrought by Him; that they contain the doctrine of His excellencies and the lively picture of His matchless beauty." Our Lord confirms these statements for, of Moses who wrote the first five books of the Bible, He said: "He wrote of Me" (John 5. 46); of the Scriptures generally He affirmed that they testify of Him (John 5. 39); and on the way to Emmaus with His bewildered disciples, "He said unto them; these are the words which I spake unto you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me" (Luke 24. 44). The Bible is a sunflower, all of whose leaves turn to Christ, the Light.

The Clue to the Labyrinth

Take, for example, the Levitical economy. Apart from Him, the whole of that system presents a labyrinth without a clue, a set of hieroglyphics minus their key. Joseph Rabinovitch, the Russian Jew, trained in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Talmud and, at the age of forty, brought to the revelation of the Son of God, says: "I was like a man living in a house furnished with every article of furniture that money could by; and yet the shutters of that house were closed, and the curtains all drawn, so that I was in the dark, and knew not the meaning of my own learning, till Jesus the Light of the world came in, and illumined all as in a flash."

He is in All the Scriptures

He is prefigured and typified in the *historical* portions of the Old Testament, as comparison of Genesis 14 and Hebrews 7

reveals. He is embedded in the ceremonial portions of the Bible, as comparison of Leviticus 16 and Hebrews 9 makes clear. In the prophetical books we find the details of His birth (Isaiah 7); of His life (Isaiah 61); and of His death (Isaiah 53). The doctrinal teaching clusters around Him; for He is the Liberator Who sets us free from the Law by forgiving all our iniquities; the Great Physician Who healeth all our diseases; the Redeemer Who redeems our life from destruction; the Benefactor Who crowns us with loving kindness and tender mercies; the Royal King Who leads us into the banqueting hall, and satisfieth our mouth with good things (Psalm 103). He is the incentive to the exemplification in our lives of the practical teachings of the Book (II Corinthians 5. 14-15). And as for the promises of the Bible, they are all yea and amen in Him (II Corinthians 1. 20). "What the notes are to music, what the egg is to the shell, what the kernel is to the nut, what the diamond is to the ring, what the heart is to the body, what the life is to the tree, what the sun is to the moon—so is Christ to the Scriptures." As Dr. Thomas puts it: "Christ in indicated in type and prophecy in the first five books; prepared for, in the historical books of the Old Testament; aspired after in the poetical books; anticipated in the prophetical books; manifested in the Gospels; realized as to His person and work in the Epistles; and crowned in the Revelation."

Full Length Portrait of the Redeemer

One illustration is worth many definitions; and I will now give you a full length portrait of our Lord. On the left hand are the Old Testament predictions; on the right hand, the historical fulfilments:

Ancestry	Prophecy	Fulfilment
The seed of the woman	Genesis 3. 15	Matthew 1. 16
Of the line of Abraham	Genesis 22. 18	Matthew 1. 1
Of the tribe of Judah	Genesis 49. 10	Hebrews 7. 14
Of the family of David	Jer. 23. 5-6	Luke 2. 4

Birth	Prophecy	Fulfilment
Of a virgin	Isaiah 7. 14	Mat. 1. 21-22
In Bethlehem, Judaea	Micah 5. 2	Matthew 2. 4-6
Life	Prophecy	Fulfilment
The prophet like Moses	Deuter. 18. 15	Acts 3. 22
The Spirit-anointed Preacher	Isaiah 61. 1	Luke 4. 17-18
Death	Prophecy	Fulfilment
Lamb led to slaughter	Isaiah 53	Acts 8
Divinely forsaken Sufferer	Psalm 22	Matthew 27. 46
Resurrection	Prophecy	Fulfilment
First begotten from dead	Psalm 2. 7	Acts 13. 33
Did not see corruption	Psalm 16. 10	Acts 2. 31
Ascension	Prophecy	Fulfilment
The exalted Lord	Psalm 110	Acts 2. 34-36
Reign	Prophecy	Fulfilment
Millennial days	Isaiah 11	Revelation 19

This is the supreme reason why we love our Bibles: the written Word is a picture of the living Word. The schoolboy cherishes his mother's portrait. He keeps it ever hanging on the wall of his room for he likes the visible representation of her who, to him, is the symbol of love and tenderness; and it may save him in moments of temptation and trial. But when the time comes for him to go home and be welcomed by her, he no longer needs her portrait, for he has herself. Even so is it with us. We have the portrait of Him in this wonderful Book, but when we go home to our Father's House, we shall see Him, be with Him, be like Him forevermore. Blessed be His name!

8. The Microscopic Method

The telescope reveals the wonder of the immensity of Nature; the microscope displays the marvel of its minuteness. "Take the most insignificent insect," says Pascal, "and, however small its body, it is yet smaller in its limbs; there are

joints in these limbs, veins in these joints, and blood in these veins." It is even so in the Scriptures; and I give you now a few simple illustrations of the study of a word, a phrase, a verse, and of the light that comes from the Bible in detail.

A Word

The Eight "Togethers": Crucified (Galatians 2. 20); Quickened (Colossians 2. 13); Raised (Ephesians 2. 6); Seated (Ephesians 2. 6); Sufferers (Romans 8. 17); Heirs (Romans 8. 17); Glorified (Romans 8. 17); Live together (I Thessalonians 5. 10).

Five "Precious" Things: Trial (I Peter 1. 7); Redemption (I Peter 1. 19); Foundation Stone (I Peter 2. 6); Faith (II Peter 1. 1); Promises (II Peter 1. 4).

"Abundant": Mercy (I Peter 1.3); Pardon (Isaiah 55.7); Grace (II Corinthians 4. 15); Consolation (II Corinthians 1. 5); Joy (II Corinthians 8. 2); Peace (Psalm 37. 11); Entrance (II Peter 1. 11).

A Phrase

"The Lord Knoweth": Them that are His (II Timothy 2.19); His own sheep (John 10.14); them that trust in Him (Nahum 1.7); what we need (Matthew 6.32); the way I take (Job 23.10); our frame (Psalm 103.14); how to deliver (II Peter 2.9).

"We Know": That the Son of God is come (I John 5. 20); that our Redeemer lives (Job 19. 25); Whom we have believed (II Timothy 1. 12); that we have eternal life (I John 5. 13); that all things work together for good (Romans 8. 28); that we have an eternal Home (II Corinthians 5. 1); that we shall be like Him (I John 3. 2).

Three Mottoes

Even Now (John 11. 22). An appeal to the power of God.

Even There (Ps. 139. 10). Assurance of the companionship of God.

Even So (Matt. 11. 26). Acquiescence in the will of God.

A Verse

I Thessalonians 1. 10: Examine that verse carefully and you will find that it tells us seven things about the Lord Jesus: His highest title; His sweetest name; His abode; His death; His resurrection; His redemptive work; His coming again.

Philippians 4. 19: The Christian's Illimitable Wealth: The source of it: "my God"; The certainty of it: "shall supply"; The measure of it: "all your need"; The standard of it: "according to His riches in glory"; The channel of it: "Christ Jesus."

Luke 2. 52 reveals that the Lord Jesus was true Man. He grew intellectually: "Jesus increased in wisdom"; He grew physically: "and in stature"; He grew spiritually: "in favour with God"; He grew socially: "in favour with man."

Comparison of Scripture with Scripture

In microscopic study, comparison of Scripture with Scripture is essential. For example: On the surface, the dreadful treachery of Ahithophel, David's trusted friend (II Samuel 15. 12; 16. 20-23) is incomprehensible. But by comparing II Samuel 23. 34 with 11. 3, we learn that that wise but wicked man was the grandfather of Bathsheba, whose husband, Uriah the Hittite, David caused to be slain. God forgave David, but Ahithophel did not.

Numbers 25. 9 and I Corinthians 10. 8 refer to one and the same thing; but while Moses gives the total number of the slain as 24,000, Paul gives the figure 23,000. The seeming contradiction is explained by the words in I Corinthians 10. 8 "in one day". The former gives the total number of deaths, the latter, the number who died in one day.

Compare the accounts of the parable of the Sower in the first three Gospels and note the progression of thought:

Matthew: They that hear and understand (chapter 13. 23).

Mark: They that hear and receive (chapter 4. 20). Luke: They that hear and keep it (chapter 8. 15).

The first describes the understanding mind; the second, the receptive heart; the third, the responsive life.

9. The Study of the Types

The writers of the New Testament clearly indicate that some portions of the Old Testament history have typical significance. We shall see that typical teaching pervades the ancient Scriptures like a golden thread running through a string of pearls; that

"Truth through the sacred Volume hidden lies, And spreads from end to end her secret wing, Through ritual, type, and storied mysteries:"

It is equally clear, however, that the history itself has a true significance of its own, apart altogether from its symbolical meaning; and it would be a serious mistake to destroy the historical sense in order to establish the spiritual. The writers simply mean that the historical events were so shaped by God's providence as to prefigure, and foreshadow, something higher in the Christian Dispensation.

What is a Type?

The word "tupos" whence our word "type" occurs sixteen times in the New Testament, and is variously rendered "print" (John 20. 25); "pattern" (Titus 2. 7); "example" (I Timothy 4. 12). It means a pattern to be copied; an example to be followed; an impression; and thus we see that beneath the historical interpretation of the Scriptures where the word is used, there lies the spiritual; and behind the local, the universal. A type, therefore, is a divinely inspired means of communicating truth in an illustrative form: the shepherd

and his flock in the natural world, for instance, are an illustration of Christ and His flock in the spiritual world. In some cases Scripture itself supplies the key to the interpretation of the types; as in I Corinthians 10. 4; Hebrews 10. 20; and also in the use of such phrases as "like unto", "better than", "greater than", and, "as" and "so".

Reasons for Studying the Types

One very cogent reason is that they were designed by the Holy Spirit. Referring to the fifteen square feet of embroidery that separated "the holy place" in the tabernacle of old from "the Holiest of all", we read that the Holy Ghost thus signified that there was no way into the innermost shrine, until the Lord Jesus opened up the way there for us: see carefully Exodus 26. 33; Mark 15. 38; Hebrews 9. 6-9; Hebrews 10. 19-22. A second reason is that our Lord Himself constantly referred to them, as the Gospel according to John shows. In Chapter 1 He is presented as the antitype of the Tabernacle (verse 14, R.V.); and as the fulfilment of the Old Testament sacrifices (verse 29). In chapter 2, He compares Himself to the Temple; in chapter 3, to the brazen serpent; in chapter 6, to the manna; in chapter 10, as the antitype of the shepherds of the Old Testament; in chapter 12, as the corn of wheat that brought forth the sheaf of the first-fruits; in chapter 13, as the antitype of the laver; in chapter 15, as the true Vine in contrast to Israel; in chapter 17 as the Great High Priest. A third reason is that, after recounting the history of Israel over a period of forty years, the apostle specifically states that "all these things happened unto them for types" and that the record of them is for our instruction (I Corinthians 10. 11). A final reason for studying the types is that, by means of them, the Old and the New Testaments are indissolubly united. The marvellous prefigurings of the Person and the work of the Redeemer prove that both parts of the Bible are on the same plan, are from the same mind, are adapted to the same great ends. The typical teaching of the

Bible is to the written Word what a set of magnificent relevant pictures are to a beautifully printed volume. It imparts an altogether new interest to the study of the sacred Book.

Two Cautions

- 1. Nowhere is sanctified commonsense more needed than in the study of the Types. Fancifulness and farfetched analogies have brought this entrancing method of Bible study into disrepute. So seriously has it been abused that it is regarded by many with distrust, and by others with aversion. One writer describes it as "a riot of undisciplined thinking". Another says that it is "the appropriate territory of theological quacks, to be shunned by all reasonable men". But these teachers represent a position which is as extreme as the evil against which they protest. There is such a thing as typical teaching in the Bible; and my aim in this writing is to show how you can be an enthusiast, without being a faddist; how, by means of it, your own faith will be mightily strengthened; and how those to whom you minister may be abidingly enriched and blessed.
- 2. Doctrines are not founded on Types, but are illustrated by them. Our doctrinal positions must be built up on clear statements of God's Word.

Three Kinds of Types

The Types of the Bible may be placed under three heads: Personal, Ritual, and Historical. It would seem, however, that each section of the Old Testament presents its types in keeping with that which forms the main theme of its contents. Thus we have the *Dispensational* types of Genesis; the *Redemption* types of Exodus; the *Sacrificial* types of Leviticus; the *Wilderness* types of Numbers; the *Canaan* types of Joshua; the *Kingdom* types of the Historical books; the *Prophetic* types of the Prophets.

Personal Types

Adam: "In Adam we have a type of Him Whose coming was still future" (Romans 5. 14, Weymouth). Adam was a

type of Christ in His threefold headship: (1) Of Creation: (Genesis 1. 26; 2. 19-20; Psalm 8. 3-6; Hebrews 2. 5-9). (2) Of the Race: compare Romans 5. 12 and 5. 17. Adam was the head of fallen humanity; Christ is the head of redeemed humanity. (3) Of Eve: (Genesis 2. 21-24; Ephesians 5. 25-32). The first Adam and his bride were one flesh, the second Adam and His bride are one spirit (Genesis 2. 24; I Corinthians 6. 17).

Abel: (Genesis 4). Abel's blood cried for vengeance (verse 10); the blood of Christ pleads for pardon (Hebrews 12. 24).

Melchisedek: (Genesis 14). This man is mentioned three times in holy writ: historically, in Genesis 14; prophetically, in Psalm 110; doctrinally, in Hebrews 6 and 7. He held the double office of priest and king (Genesis 14. 18); and fore-shadows Him Who shall one day be a priest upon His throne (Zechariah 6. 9-13). He was made like unto the Son of God (Hebrews 7. 3). "Wherein does the likeness consist?" asks Chrysostom. "In this, that we know of no beginning and no end of either; in the one case, because they have found no record (Hebrews 7. 3); in the other, because they have no existence."

Prophet: Priest: King: Moses is the type of Christ as prophet (Deut. 18. 15-19; Acts. 3. 19-23); Aaron, as priest (Exodus 28. 1; Hebrews 2. 17; 5. 1-5); David as king, (Isaiah 55. 3; Acts 13. 26-37). The Lord Jesus came as a prophet to reveal God to man; He has gone as a priest to represent man before God; He is coming as a king to rule over man for God. Broadly, it may be said that the Gospel of John sets Him forth in the first of these characters (chapter 4. 19); the epistle to the Hebrews, in the second (chapter 9. 24); and the book of Revelation, in the third (chapters 1. 5 and 11. 15).

Kitual Types

The Passover: (Exodus 12; John 19. 32-36; I Corinthians 5. 7; I Peter 1. 18-19).

The Tabernacle: Hebrews 9. 1-12 illumines the subject of the Tabernacle of old. Eight doctrines of Christianity are illustrated in this structure: Justification at the Altar; Sanctification at the Laver; Incarnation in the hanging Veil; Intercession at the Golden Altar; Worship in the holiest of all; Communion at the Table; Reconciliation at the Mercy Seat; The Second Coming in the re-appearance of the Great High Priest for Israel's blessings (Hebrews 9. 24-28).

The Cleansing of the Leper: (Leviticus, chapter 14). Note these four points: (1) The leprous man was isolated (verses 1 to 3). Leprosy is God's supreme type of sin, and the man in whom it was found had to "dwell alone, without the camp shall his habitation be" (Leviticus 13. 46). Moreover, his cry was to be "Unclean, unclean" (verse 45). It is a picture of the isolating effect of sin, and of the cry which is elicited from the contrite heart that is conscious of it (Job 42. 5-6; Luke 15. 18). (2) The isolated man was cleansed (verses 4-9). Two birds were to be taken. One of these was slain in an earthen vessel over running water (verse 5). The living bird was dipped in the blood of the bird that was killed, and was let loose in the open field (verses 6 and 7). An inherent defect in the types lay in the inability of the slain bird to picture resurrection; and herein lies the significance of the second bird. Bearing the blood of the slain bird on its body, it rose on the wing of resurrection in the open field. Behold Calvary and the empty tomb! "Christ died for our sins"—dead bird; "and rose again the third day"—living bird (I Corinthians 15. 3-4). "When He had by Himself purged our sins"—dead bird: "He sat down on the right hand of God"—living bird (Hebrews 1. 3). "If the blood of bulls and of goats . . . sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ "-the dead bird; "Who through the eternal Spirit "—the running water; "offered Himself"—the earthen vessel; "without blemish"—the clean bird; "unto God, cleanse "-the sprinkled blood; "your conscience"the leper pronounced clean (Hebrews 9. 13-14; Leviticus 14. 9). (3) The cleansed man was anointed (verses 10-16). Cleansing blood: Anointing oil (I John 1. 7 and 2. 27). "Of sin the double cure." The next step is inevitable: (4) The anointed man was consecrated (verse 17). The priest took of the oil and put it on the tip of the right ear of the cleansed man, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot. Why? The ear was blood-sprinkled and oil-anointed in order that he might listen to God; the hand, in order that he might work for God; the foot, in order that he might walk with God. It is Romans 12. 1 anticipated. The picture is complete.

Historical Types

The outstanding illustration here is Israel's journey from Egypt to Canaan; from the place of bondage to the land of fulfilled promises. This is set forth in Hebrews 3. 7 to 4. 11 as a picture of the disciple's advance, from the moment he comes under the shelter of the Blood, till he enters by faith into the present rest that remains for the people of God. It should be noted that I Corinthians 10. 11 declares the literalness of the miraculous experiences of the children of Israel. "All these things happened unto them." The closer your acquaintance with the recorded facts, therefore, the greater will be your apprehension of the typical teaching which they enshrine. I touch briefly on the seven outstanding things in the journey.

- (a) The Passover: Redemption by Blood (Exodus 12; Ephesians 1. 7). The Passover was the beginning of a new life for Israel (Exodus 12. 2): Redemption constitutes the first step in real life for a Christian (II Corinthians 5. 17).
- (b) The Red Sea: Deliverance from the World (Exodus 14). The Red Sea opened in front of them to let them out, and closed behind them to keep them out. Antitypically, the Cross, which delivers us from the world, stands between us and the world (Galatians 1. 4 and 6. 14).
- (c) The Tabernacle: Access to God (Exodus 25; Hebrews 10). What the high priest alone could do, and he only once a

- year, we may do any moment of our lives (Hebrews 10. 19-22).
- (d) Manna and the Water: Provision for the Way (Exodus 16 and 17). The manna is interpreted in John 6; the water from the smitten rock in John 7, verses 37-39. It is from the Rock of Ages, cleft for us, that the streams of refreshing flow, for that Rock was Christ (I Corinthians 10. 4).
- (e) Snares and Pitfalls: Dangers by the Way. The outstanding ones are: Unbelief (Numbers 13. 31-33); Backsliding (Numbers 14. 4); Sensuality (Numbers 25. 1); Compromise (Joshua 9).
- (f) Present Privileges: Comfort on the Way (Exodus 33). The companionship of God (Exodus 33. 14); Rest (Exodus 33. 14).
- (g) Secrets of Victory (Joshua 1). These are: 1. The law of appropriation. God gave, but they had to appropriate (verse 3). The land was theirs, but it was theirs to conquer (verse 11). 2. Obedience to the Word of the Lord (verse 8). 3. The divine commission and the divine presence. "Have not I commanded thee?": there is our commission (verse 9). "The Lord thy God is with thee": there is the divine presence (verse 9). (See also Moses, Exodus 3. 10, 12; Gideon, Judges 6. 14, 16; Jeremiah, chapter 1. 7, 8; Disciples, Matthew 28. 19-20). 4. Courage and Confidence (Joshua 1. 6, 7, 9).
 - "Fear not, I am with thee, Oh be not dismayed,
 For I am thy God, I will still give thee aid;
 I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
 Upheld by My gracious omnipotent Hand."

CHAPTER XI

THE MARVELS OF PROPHECY

THAT God intended fulfilled prediction to be a potent argument for the Bible is evident from what He says about it: (Isaiah 41. 21-23; Isaiah 46. 9-10). These are God's challenges to the idol-gods of Babylon to predict future events; and our Lord in John 14. 29 claims that fulfilled prophecy elicits and produces faith. Christianity thus challenges the severest test to which it can be subjected. A man may have a mathematical mind, or a scientific mind, or a philosophical mind; but no man ever had a prophetical mind. We know not what a day may bring forth (Proverbs 27. 1)—far less a year, a decade, a century, a millennium.

THE DEFINITION OF PROPHECY

Prophecy is divine intervention in word, just as Miracle is divine intervention in deed. The first reveals God's omniscience; the second, His omnipotence. In the nature of things the evidence of miracle is strongest in the age in which it is wrought; the evidence of prophecy is strongest in the age most remote from its utterance. History has been called the interpreter of prophecy. The prophet looks forward and says: "It shall be." The historian looks backward and says: "It was." Prophecy, therefore, is history pre-written.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPHECY

It is an accepted canon in the interpretation of the Bible that the amount of space which it devotes to the exposition of any given theme is a criterion of the importance of that theme. Judged by that standard, the subject of prophecy is one of the most important in the Word of God. The Old and New Testaments contain nearly one thousand predictions; of which between seven and eight hundred are found in the older portion of the Bible, and the remainder in the New. Sixteen books in the Old Testament, and one in the New Testament are wholly prophetic in character. From these facts it is clear that all Biblical interpretation that omits the study of prophecy is necessarily incomplete. Moreover, the continuity of the Biblical revelation is more clearly demonstrated by fulfilled prophecy than by anything else.

THE CRITERIA OF PROPHECY

The two great standards by which prophetic claims are tested are remoteness of time, and minuteness of detail. The Biblical prophecies were recorded from four hundred to twenty-four hundred years before the events; and the particulars given in connection with one set of them—those referring to the Person and work of the Redeemer—go into hundreds. The possibility of a chance coincidence between prediction and fulfilment in that case is so incalculably small that it would be like one to many hundreds of millions.

THE MAJOR THEMES OF PROPHECY

These are three in number, namely, those concerning the Lord Jesus Christ; those concerning the Jewish people; and those concerning the Gentile nations. We are now briefly to examine these:

1. Prophecies Concerning Christ

In his great lectures on *The Divinity of our Lord*, Canon Liddon points out that there are no fewer than three hundred and thirty-three predictions in the Old Testament relating to Christ, and that these appear in the New Testament as having been fulfilled in Him. Just think what that means. If, in January, I were to predict that rain would fall in Glasgow during the month of May, the prophecy is so general that, even if it came to pass, it would be regarded as nothing wonderful. But if I went into detail and affirmed that in May, Glasgow

would have one shower of rain; that the shower would begin begin at 10.13 a.m. and finish at 1.23 p.m. on the thirteenth of that month, the ability to give the added particulars would be regarded as uncanny. But when, as in the case of the Lord Jesus, the predicted particulars go into hundreds, the supernatural character of the prophecies concerning Him becomes immediately apparent. They attest Him to be the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel, the Saviour of the world. So numerous are the given details of the human life of the Master that His biography could be written from prophecy alone. Let me illustrate that statement.

- (a) His forerunner was predicted: (Isaiah 40. 3; Malachi 3. 1; Luke 7. 27).
- (b) The place of His birth was foretold: (Micah 5. 2; Luke 2. 1-11; John 7. 42).
- (c) The time of His coming was disclosed: (Daniel 9. 24-27). "Here," says Dr. Pierson, "we have an exact forecast of the time—seventy times seven—for this is the exact statement in the Hebrew. From the time that the commandment went forth to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem (Ezra 7. 11-26) it was 457 years to the birth of Christ; add the 33 years of His public ministry and you come to the time when Messiah should be cut off—490 years."
- (d) The activities of His life are set forth: (Isaiah 61. 1-2; Luke 4. 16-21).
- (e) The effects of His ministry are described: (Isaiah 53. 1; John 12. 37-41).
- (f) His triumphal entry into Jerusalem is narrated: (Zechariah 9. 9; Matthew 21. 1-10).
- (g) The manner of His betrayal was described: (Zechariah 11. 11-12; Matthew 26. 15 and 27. 9). "Spoken" by Jeremiah; recorded by Zechariah.
- (h) His desertion by His friends was foretold: (Zechariah 13. 7; Matthew 26. 31).
- (i) His silence in the presence of His persecutors was predicted: (Isaiah 53. 7; Matthew 26. 62-63).

(j) His death is described in great detail. Notice these points:

He would be pierced with nails: (Psalm 22. 16; John 20. 25).

His garments would be distributed: (Psalm 22. 18; John 19. 23-24).

He would be numbered with transgressors: (Isaiah 53. 12; Luke 23. 32-33).

No bone of His should be broken: (Exodus 12. 46; John 19. 33-36).

His death would be substitutionary: (Isaiah 53. 5; II Corinthians 5. 21).

He suffered without the gate of the city: (Hebrews 13. 12). This was the fulfilment of the Levitical type of the sin-offering (Leviticus 4. 12).

He would be buried in a rich man's grave: (see Hebrew of Isaiah 53. 9; Matthew 27. 57-60).

These are the broad outlines of the earthly history of Messiah. They represent only a full dozen of the three hundred and thirty-three predictions concerning Him; but they are sufficient to demonstrate that only the omniscient God could have prewritten that which so marvellously and so accurately came to pass.

2. Prophecies Concerning the Jews

Napoleon once asked the Archbishop of Milan for the briefest possible argument in support of revealed religion; and the Archbishop pointed silently to Marshal Massena, a Jew. The silent answer was a most effective one; for the prophecies concerning that wonderful people are so numerous and varied, and the fulfilment of them so detailed and specific that, literally, every Jew is a miracle. I summarize their history as it is set forth in Deuteronomy 28 and in other portions of holy writ:

(a) They were to be scattered: (Deuteronomy 28. 63-64; Leviticus 26. 33). The Jew is found in every land.

- (b) They were to be separate: (Numbers 23. 9; Exodus 33. 16). They possess a racial self-consciousness unequalled in history; and, like the Gulf Stream which is in the Atlantic Ocean but is separate from it in defiance of all laws, they remain separate and alone.
- (c) They were to be money lenders: (Deuteronomy 15. 6; 28. 12). Although written 3,500 years ago, when they had neither country nor wealth, this prediction has become the outstanding characteristic of their race. The money markets of the world today are largely in Jewish hands; no international loan is possible without their consent.
- (d) They were to be persecuted: (Deuteronomy 28. 64-67; Leviticus 26. 33). One has only to read history to learn how literally these words have been fulfilled. It was of these verses, doubtless, that Byron was thinking when he wrote:
 - "Tribe of the wandering foot and weary breast, Where shall ye fly away and be at rest? Birds of the air have nests, the fox his cave, Mankind his home—Israel but the grave."
- (e) They were to be preserved: (Leviticus 26. 44; Jeremiah 30. 11). As the historian Milman puts it: "Exiles from their own land, without central government, without ruler, scattered over the whole earth, they have nevertheless been preserved. Massacred by thousands, yet springing again from their undying stock, the Jews appear at all times, and in all regions. Their perpetuity, their national immortality is at once the most curious problem to the political enquirer; to the religious man, a subject of profound and awful admiration."
- (f) They will be restored: (Deuteronomy 30. 1-5; Isaiah 11. 11-12; 25. 8-9; Jeremiah 23. 3-8; Ezekiel 37. 21-25; Hosea 3. 4-5; Amos 9. 14-15). To these must be added the prophetic words spoken by our Lord. He distinctly foretold the destruction of the Temple, and the siege of Jerusalem, forty years before these events took place (Matthew 24. 1-2; Luke 21. 20-24). He also declared that there would be fresh

dispersals of the Jews among all nations (Luke 21.24); but He definitely set a time limit to these judgments and dispersals. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The times of the Gentiles began with the captivity of Judah under Nebuchadnezzar (II Chronicles 36. 1-21); and in the next section of our subject we shall get light on when they will end.

3. Prophecies Concerning the Gentiles

During the reign of Jehoiakim (II Chronicles 36) Judah was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, the monarch of Babylon; and among the prisoners of war was Daniel who, first an exile, eventually became a statesman in the court of that great empire (Daniel 1). Shortly after Daniel's arrival in Babylon, the king dreamed a dream; and as, on waking from sleep, he was unable to recall it (chapter 2. 5) he commanded his astrologers to bring back to him the message of the dream. They were unable to do so; and so, in providential ways, Daniel was brought into touch with Nebuchadnezzar (chapter 2. 1-16).

In response to earnest prayer, the dream was revealed to Daniel; and when he was brought before the king, Daniel revealed the whole story to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar, and unfolded the secrets which lay locked within it (verses 31-45). That dream and its interpretation describe the transference of empire from the Israelites to Babylon; and sketches the course of human history for 2,500 years—from 600 B.C. to the present day. It sets forth the course and end of "the times of the Gentiles," which began with Nebuchadnezzar, and will terminate at the return of our Lord. (Note: there is a parallel vision in chapter 7.)

Here read carefully and repeatedly Daniel 2. 31-45. Let us examine these verses a little in detail:

(a) Of the colossal image of Daniel 2, the Babylonian empire was represented by the head of gold. "Thou art this head of gold" (verses 37-38).

- (b) "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee" (verse 39). In another vision, this is identified with the Medo-Persian empire (chapter 8. 20). Babylon fell in 538 B.C. when it was conquered by Cyrus, king of the dual empire.
- (c) "And another third kingdom of brass . . . shall bear rule over all the earth" (verse 39). This is identified with Greece (chapter 8. 21). History records that at Arbela, 331 B.C., world empire was wrested from Medo-Persia by Alexander of Greece. Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that when, on his way of conquest, Alexander drew near to Jerusalem, the gates of the city were thrown open to him, and that the priests bore in their hands the scroll of the prophet Daniel. The historian adds: "And when the book of Daniel was shown him, wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended; and as he was then glad, he bade them ask what favours they pleased of him." (Antiquities: Book 2, chapter 8).
- (d) "And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron" etc. (verses 40-43). When Alexander died, his empire was divided among his four generals; but world power was taken from them finally by the Roman victory at Pydna in 168 B.C., from which year dates the establishment of the universal empire of Rome.

Thus in 600 years, four universal empires came into existence; and although down the centuries several attempts have been made to establish a fifth, every such attempt has failed. "This dream," says Dr. Wylie, the Scottish historian, "photographed twenty-five centuries at a stroke. The great future is put before us in miniature, and when we take the microscope of history and examine the picture, each individual event stands out in full body before us. Every kingdom and throne and battle is seen to be embraced in the dream, and comes vividly into view. The pages of Herodotus and Xenophon, of Livy, and Tacitus, of Gibbon, and Niebuhr are but the reproduction on a magnified scale of what was first of

all exhibited by Daniel. What have all ages since been but an unrolling of the prophetic scroll? The thousands of volumes of history which the world contains, what are they but interpretations of the dream! What a proof that none but Omniscience could have constructed this dream!" (The great Exodus, page 90.)

The fourth empire, although furthest removed from the prophet's time, is more clearly depicted than any of the others. To a student of history, comparison of Daniel's words with historical facts of the nineteen Christian centuries forms a fascinating study.

The details of the *fifth* empire point us on to the time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ: (Psalm 2. 8-9; Daniel 2. 44-45; Matthew 21. 42, 44; Revelation 19. 11, 15, 16); but of these I do not now speak particularly. It is, however, a comfort to know that all attempts by dictators to establish a fifth empire now are doomed to failure.

PRACTICAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY OF PROPHECY Summarized, these are four in number:

Prophecy sheds light on the times in which we live: (II Peter 1. 19). We read that on the eve of a terrible judgment, God said: "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" (Genesis 18. 17). Friends are admitted to inner knowledge (Isaiah 41. 8; John 15. 14-15); and study of the prophetic Word will make the Master's friends like the children of Issachar who had understanding of the times (I Chronicles 12. 32).

It confirms faith. Simple-hearted Christians do not need confirmatory evidences; but preachers, who may be called upon to give valid reasons for their belief, should be well versed in this section of Bible study. Dr. Keith's monumental work on Prophecy, published many years ago, was mightily used of God in convincing infidels of the truth of the

Bible; John Urquhart's volume, "The Wonders of Prophecy" has taken its place today.

It obviates discouragement. When we look at the world and see the inequalities that there exist, we are apt to get disheartened and to feel that our work is in vain. Alongside the developments that are taking place around us, however, runs the one increasing purpose of God, prophetically described in Acts 15. 14-17; and our wisdom is to fall in line with that age-long purpose, and to bring the good news to every creature under heaven.

It deepens spiritual life. The future that lies ahead for the Christian is clearly foretold in the Epistles; and connected with the unveiling is usually an appeal for holiness of life. "We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him" (I John 3. 2). What follows? "Every man that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself" (verse 3). "When Christ Who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory" (Colossians 3. 4). What follows? "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth" (verse 4). In the light of His coming (II Peter 3. 10) we are to be blameless (verse 14); steadfast (verse 17); and full of radiant hope (verse 12-13).

CHAPTER XII

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORD

YOU have all read of the seven wonders of the world. A few years ago I stood at the foot of the greatest of them—the Pyramids of Egypt, and, as I think of that marvellous sight, I recall Lord Houghton's words:

"Before me rose in wonderful array;
Those works where man has rivalled Nature most:
Those Pyramids that fear no more decay
Than waves inflict upon the rockiest coast,
Or winds on mountain steeps, and like endurance boast."

I want now, however, to speak to you of the seven wonders of the Word. The Book of God is, indeed, altogether wonderful; but I select the following as they are outstanding. We begin with the wonder of

ITS AUTHENTICITY

The Testimony of Christ. A reader of the four Gospels will have no difficulty in ascertaining how the Master viewed the Old Testament. He regarded the ancient records as divinely authoritative, and as historically true. He affirmed that they were written by the Spirit of God, (Mark 12. 36); and He claimed to be received as the Messiah on the authority of their prophecies (John 5. 39, 46; Luke 24. 27, 44). Before these testimonies can be invalidated, Christ must be dethroned.

The Evidence of a Completed Canon. The Septuagint contained all the books of the Old Testament. As regards the New Testament, an unbroken chain of testimony exists from our own age to the very age of the Apostles, as we have already seen. "By A.D. 393, the date of the Council of Hippo, after

centuries of the most rigid and searching scrutiny, the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 of the New were accepted in all the Churches from Syria, Asia Minor, and Alexandria, to Greece, Rome, and Gaul. This is what has been termed, the miracle of the acceptance of the canon: that by the marvellous providence of God, the rival Churches of Christendom accepted the same Scriptural books, the same Bible."

The Witness of the Enemies of the Gospel. Paley has said that "Neither Celsus in the second, Porphyry in the third, nor Julian in the fourth century, suspected the authenticity of these books, nor even insinuated that Christians were mistaken in the authors to whom they ascribed them. . . . When we consider how much it would have availed them to cast a doubt upon this point if they could, and how ready they showed themselves to take every advantage in their power, and that they were men of learning and enquiry, their suffrage upon the subject is extremely valuable." We may, therefore, rest assured that both the Old and New Testaments are genuine and authoritative productions; that they form one complete whole; that, like threads woven into a strong and beautiful texture, you cannot separate them without ruining the fabric.

ITS INDESTRUCTIBILITY

"The empire of Cæsar is gone," says Dr. John Cumming, "the legions of Rome are mouldering in the dust; the avalanches that Napoleon hurled upon Europe have melted away; the pride of the Pharaohs is fallen; Tyre is a rock for bleaching fishermen's nets; Sidon has scarcely left a wreck behind; but the Word of God still survives. All things that threatened to extinguish it, have only aided it; and it proves every day how transient is the noblest monument that man can build, how enduring is the least word God has spoken." The old simile of the hammers and the anvil is one of the truest and best:

- "One day I passed beside a smithy's door, And heard the anvil sound the vesper chime; Then, looking in, I saw upon the floor, Old hammers worn with beating years of time.
 - 'How many anvils have you here,' said I,
 - 'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'
 - ' Just one,' the blacksmith said, with twinkling eye;
 - 'The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.'
- 'And so,' said I, 'the anvil of God's Word,
 For ages sceptic blows have beat upon;
 Yet, though the sound of hammers thus was heard,
 The anvil yet remains; the hammers—gone!'"

Its Translatability

Literary men affirm that the test of a classic is its translatability; and in this regard, the wonder of the Bible is unique. Although in origin, thought, and expression, it belongs to the East, it has exerted untold influence on the life and destiny of the great nations of the West. It has been translated into a thousand different tongues, including all the major languages of the world; and each man who reads it thinks that his version of it is the finest in existence.

Of our own incomparable Authorized Version, the tribute of F. W. Faber can hardly be excelled. "It lives on the ear," he says, "like music that can never be forgotten; like the sound of church bells which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities often seem to be almost things, rather than mere words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its phrases. The power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words. It is the representative of his best moments; and all that there has been about him of soft, and gentle, and pure, and penitent, and good, speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible. It is his sacred thing, which doubt has never dimmed, and controversy never soiled."

ITS INEXHAUSTIBILITY

Here I will let others speak. "This Book," says an unknown writer, "contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the reward of saints, and the doom of sinners. Its histories are true, its doctrines holy, its precepts binding. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, comfort to cheer you. It is the traveller's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. It is a river of pleasure, a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practise it to be holy." "Eighteen centuries of study on the part of tens of thousands of the ablest minds have been unable to exhaust the Bible. Many men of strongest intellect, of marvellous powers of penetration, of broadest culture, have given a lifetime to the study of the Bible; and no man who has really studied it has ever dreamed of saying that he had gotten to the bottom of the Book. New light is constantly breaking forth from the Word of God. The fact that it has proved itself unfathomable for eighteen centuries is positive proof that in it are hidden the infinite treasures of the wisdom of God," says Dr. Torrey.

Get that last thought deeply engraved on your heart. However closely you may study the sacred writings, you will never exhaust them. The more deeply you work the mine, the richer and more abundant you will find the ore; and at the end of a lifetime of investigation, you will find that the words which most accurately describe your feelings will be those of the Apostle in Romans 11: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to Whom be glory for ever. Amen."

"A glory gilds the sacred page, Majestic like the sun; It gives a light to every age, It gives, but borrows none."

ITS ADAPTABILITY

It is as much at home by the Ganges as by the Mississippi; in the palace of the king, as in the cottage of the labourer. Although it sprang from the Hebrew nation, its appeal is to universal man. Its stories fascinate children; its counsels guide the youths and maidens in the slippery places of life; its benedictions are the comfort of age. The historian finds in the book of Genesis the earliest records of the human race; the logician finds in the Epistle to the Romans a masterpiece of inspired reasonings; the philosopher and the poet find that portions like the book of Job and the fortieth chapter of Isaiah touch the highest levels of literature; the joyful and the sorrowful turn to its pages to find, in the one case what enhances their joy, and, in the other, what assuages their grief. No wonder that the learned Joseph Cook of Boston said: "If an inhabitant of another planet were to visit our sphere, and should ask to see the most significant, victorious, and precious object now known to man, I, for one, should unhesitatingly show him the Bible."

ITS IMPARTIALITY

Like a faithful mirror, the Bible has no flattery in its portraits. "With an unflinching adherence to truth the whole story is told, whoever may be unpleasantly involved therein. Such is the undaunted boldness, sterling integrity, and resolute independence of the scribes. They do not pause to inquire whose faults they are recording. So we read of the drunkenness of Noah, the falsehood of Abraham, the deception of Jacob, the anger of Moses, the adultery of David, the disobedience of Jonah, and the cowardice of Peter."

In this connection, however, as John Urquhart has pointed

out, while in the Bible you find the fullest knowledge of humanity, you also find there the deepest veneration for man. "Amid all this littleness and worse than littleness, there is a greatness in man before which the Bible stands in awe. It sees the image of God in man. There are possibilities there of a glory and majesty, of a splendour of being, of a more than kingly sway, limitless and endless. Man is great enough for God to clothe Himself with clay, and to suffer and die that He may save him. We know in our hearts that this twofold witness is true. It is the full truth. We know what we are, and we also know it is not what we were meant to be." If only the antagonists of the Bible could see the twofold message which it thus presents, how different would be their attitude toward it. The physician is not the author of the disease which he diagnoses; neither is God's Word the creator of the evil which it describes. The doctor probes the wound, only that he may effectively deal with it; the Scriptures do the same.

ITS FINALITY

"The Bible begins by telling whence we and all things have come; it ends, by telling whither we and all things tend. It tells of the entering in of sin and woe; it gives a promise of redemption and of triumph over sin; it shows us how the way was prepared for the Deliverer; He comes; we see His salvation; we are gathered about Him; and then, just as the veil is lifted from the past in Genesis to let us see the beginning, so the veil is lifted from the future in Revelation to let us see the end. Can we say whence the Bible has this strange completeness? Say that God is the Author of the Book, that His plan thus spanned the ages, and I quite understand the matter. But apart from that there is no explanation."

When we reach "the final harmony" described in Revelation 22. 3-5, we feel instinctively that we have come to a condition of felicity beyond which it is impossible to go. Then the vision of the poet shall have become an accomplished fact:

"Every tiger madness muzzled, every serpent passion killed, Every grim ravine a garden, every blazing desert tilled, Robed in universal harvest, up to either pole she smiles, Universal ocean softly washing all her warless isles."

CHAPTER XIII

THE LITERARY SUPREMACY OF THE BIBLE

THE supreme purpose for which the Bible was given is well described in words which form the keynote of one of its outstanding books—the Gospel of John. "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name" (chapter 20. 31). But, just as in Nature, we have not only what meets our absolute necessities, but also the lovely colours of the rainbow to fascinate the eye, the songs of birds to enchant the ear, and the perfume of flowers to regale the sense of smell: so is it in the Word of the Lord. For there we find not only that which meets our profoundest needs as erring men and women, but also that which stimulates the intellect, stirs the emotions, and brings joy and gladness to the heart. It abounds in every form of literary excellence; and we are now to think of two of these, namely, (1) the incomparable magnificence of its style; and (2) the infinite variety of its contents.

1. Its Style

Here I shall quote from the experts, men who are eminently qualified to speak on this subject. "Consider," says Huxley, the great scientist, "consider the great historical fact that, for three centuries, this Book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history; that it has become the national epic of Britain, and is as familiar to noble and simple, from John O'Groats to Land's End, as Dante and Tasso once were to Italians; that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of pure

literary form; and finally, that it forbids the man who never left his village to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a great past stretching back to the farthest limits of the oldest civilizations in the world." "It is hard," says Mark Twain in one of his serious moods, "to make a choice of the most beautiful passage, in a book which is so gemmed with beautiful passages as the Bible. Who taught these ancient writers their simplicity of language, their felicity of expression, their pathos; above all, their faculty of sinking themselves entirely out of sight of the reader, and of making the narrative stand out alone and seem to tell itself?" "The Authorized Version," says Sir Arthur Quiller Couch, "set a seal on our national style. It has cadences homely and sublime, yet so harmonizes them that the voice is always one. Simple men, holy and humble of heart, like Izaak Walton and John Bunyan, have their lips touched and speak to the holier tune. Proud men, scholars, like Milton and Sir Thomas Browne, practise the rolling Latin sentence; but upon the rhythms of our Bible they, too, fall back. . . . It is in everything we see, hear, feel, because it is in us, in our blood." These quotations give point to the saying that to remove from our literature what it owes to the Bible would be like removing the sun from the universe, and leaving us with a starlit world.

But now let me give you illustrations of its style. It contains the noblest thoughts of the greatest men, in their choicest words; and, as we shall see, ranges from the charming simplicity that fascinates childhood to the matchless sublimity that comforts age. To save space, I cite the Scriptures, but do not quote them. If, however, my reader is to get the benefit of these citations, which have been carefully made, it will be necessary for him to meditate carefully, and long, on the sacred words.

Take, for example, as an expression of life's hope and gladness:

Song of Solomon 2. 11-12.

It would be difficult, surely, to find words so expressive of true friendship as Ruth's to Naomi:

Ruth 1. 16-17.

Is it possible to find anywhere else such pathetic words as David uses in his lament for Absalom?

II Samuel 18. 33.

Or, to face possible poverty with such language as the old prophet uses?

Habakkuk 3. 17-18.

The challenge which Paul throws out to seen and unseen foes is couched in language of true eloquence;

Romans 8. 35-39.

When the people offered their gifts for the Temple, David blessed the Lord before all the congregation in the following majestic words:

I Chronicles 29. 10-13.

The Aaronic benediction contains, in the choicest language, all that one could wish for one's friends:

Numbers 6. 24-26.

Coming now to larger portions of the sacred volume which illustrate its style we have

John 14,

whose deathless words tell of the Saviour's provision for His people as they journey to the heavenly land;

Isaiah 40,

which touches the highest level of sacred oratory;

Luke 15.

the reading of which has reclaimed countless prodigals from lives of shame;

I Corinthians 13,

of which, Dean Alford says, that it is a pure and perfect gem; perhaps the noblest assemblage of beautiful thoughts, in beautiful words, extant in this our world;

Philippians 4,

which presents, in the simplest language, a whole philosophy of Christian living;

Revelation 7,

where the lonely seer of Patmos describes the song that shall engage the lips of countless multitudes through endless years; and

Revelation 22,

where the same writer describes the eternal home of the redeemed.

It may indeed be truthfully affirmed that in the Book of God there are supreme examples of every form of great literature: Historical narrative—Genesis to Esther; dramatic poetry—the book of Job; lyric poetry—the Psalms; practical wisdom—Proverbs; philosophical reflections—Ecclesiastes; impassioned oratory—Isaiah; short stories—the Gospels; letters—the Epistles; unveilings of eternity—the book of Revelation.

2. Its Contents

But in literature, as in speech, you cannot separate style from subject matter. When the value of a book, or an oration is discussed, the great question is: What is said—not so much, how it is said. For it does not help much to have a thing well said if it is not worth saying. That criterion brings out once more the matchless supremacy of the Bible.

By universal consent, Shakespeare is acknowledged to be the mastermind of the world. Lawyers, like Lord Campbell, have spoken of his extraordinary knowledge of law; naturalists, like Harting, have written of his wonderful knowledge of birds, fishes, insects, and flowers; philosophers, like Birch, have said that there is as much ethics and philosophy in his writings, as in any three of the greatest philosophers that ever lived. So also with theologians, doctors, navigators, historians, all acclaim him as peerless:

"A man so various that he seemed to be Not one, but all mankind's epitome."

But between Shakespeare at his highest, and the Word of the Lord lies an unbridgeable gulf. "In this little Book," said a great continental scholar holding up a New Testament to a number of Oxford students, "is contained the wisdom of the world." In addition to that, inspired men describe there the secrets of eternity, and lay bare the mind and heart of God. Flavel has a line somewhere in which he says that "the Scriptures teach us the best way of living, the noblest way of suffering, and the most comfortable way of dying"; and that word suggests what, perhaps, for us mortals, are the greatest gifts the Bible brings.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Here it may be useful to look at the book of Psalms—that limpid lake which reflects every mood of man's changeful sky. For, "as long as the career of mortal man is what it is in life, chequered by trial, danger, and bereavement; as long as the human heart is what it is, full of want and sin, and ever liable to sorrow; so long will the Psalms of David find their echo there, and not fail of earnest and anxious readers. They deal more especially with those aspects of human life in which all men are reduced to a common level, imminent danger, heart-rending grief, and the passionate longing for Divine assistance."

SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS

Psalm 1, which sets forth the felicity of the godly man, and the infelicity of the wicked; Psalm 23, which has charmed more griefs to rest than all the philosophy of the world; Psalm 27, which is a psalm for the storms of life; Psalm 42, which shows that the heart of man is restless till it rests in God; Psalm 51, with its liturgy for the penitent backslider; Psalm 103, in which David selects a few of the choicest pearls from the casket of divine love, threads them on the string of

memory, and hangs them about the neck of gratitude; Psalm 121, which assures us of the sleepless vigilance of heaven; and Psalm 139, which shows us how "to practise the presence of God".

Let me now summarize under three heads what the Bible can do for men:

It imparts guidance amid the perplexities of life. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God . . . that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3. 16-17). "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119. 105). The phrase "throughly furnished" is a nautical term. Before the captain of a ship puts out to sea, he makes sure that he has on board everything that is needed for the voyage; so that, come fair weather or foul, he is prepared—throughly furnished. The modern equivalent of the phrase is: "A-1 at Lloyds".

The modern equivalent of the phrase is: "A-1 at Lloyds". It presents a remedy for the sorrows of life. Heine speaks of it as the medicine chest of suffering humanity; and Ernest Renan, although sceptic and critic, once said: "After all, the Bible is the one great book of consolation for humanity." When the withered phantom of anxiety sits silent by your hearthstone; when you are beset by distressing care; when you are harassed by some heavy burden that is slowly crushing you; some calamity dogging the heels of past transgression; in circumstances like these, where do you instinctively turn? There can be but one answer.

It unveils a Saviour and Friend Who makes us conquerors in death as in life. In the solemn crises of the soul when man asks the great questions of destiny, the Bible is the only Book that can give assured and satisfactory answers. Beyond its literary supremacy, besides the guidance and comfort it gives to men and women everywhere, it tells of One Who has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

With what reverence should we treat this sacred Volume? "It comes, stained with the tears of a million contritions; steeped in the prayers of myriads of saints; breathing the

blessings of untold souls recreated by the Holy Ghost; expounded by giant intellects, and fragrant with the faith of little children; worn by the fingers of agony and death; wet with the fresh blood from the Colosseum's sands, or saints torn limb from limb. It is a Book more steeped in the Divine even than when it left the fingers of Apostles and Prophets."

The only words that I can think of as suitable to close our studies of the Word of God are those of Heinrich Heine: "What a Book! Vast and wide as the world; rooted in the abysses of Creation; towering up beyond the blue secrets of Heaven. Sunrise and sunset, promise and fulfilment, birth and death! The whole drama of humanity is in this Book. Its eclipse would be the return to chaos; its extinction, the epitaph of history."

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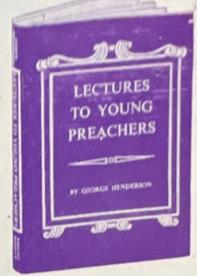
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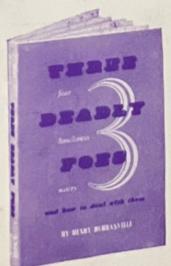
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