

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Objections to the Doctrine of Inspiration

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In connection with a divine-human work like the Bible, insoluble difficulties may be expected to present themselves. So long, however, as its inspiration is sustained by competent and sufficient evidence, these difficulties cannot justly prevent our full acceptance of the doctrine, any more than disorder and mystery in nature warrant us in setting aside the proofs of its divine authorship. These difficulties are lessened with time; some have already disappeared; many may be due to ignorance, and may be removed hereafter; those which are permanent may be intended to stimulate inquiry and to discipline faith.

It is noticeable that the common objections to inspiration are urged, not so much against the religious teaching of the Scriptures, as against certain errors in secular matters which are supposed to be interwoven with it. But if these are proved to be errors indeed, it will not necessarily overthrow the doctrine of inspiration; it will only compel us to give a larger place to the human element in the composition of the Scriptures, and to regard them more exclusively as a text-book of religion. As a rule of religious faith and practice, they will still be the infallible word of God. The Bible is to be judged as a book whose one aim is man's rescue from sin and reconciliation to God, and in these respects it will still be found a record of substantial truth. This will appear more fully as we examine the objections one by one.

“The Scriptures are given to teach us, not how the heavens go, but how to go to heaven.” Their aim is certainly not to teach science or history, except so far as science or history is essential to their moral and religious purpose. Certain of their doctrines, like the virgin-birth of Christ and his bodily resurrection, are historical facts, and certain facts, like that of creation, are also doctrines. With regard to these great facts, we claim that inspiration has given us accounts that are essentially trustworthy, whatever may be their imperfections in detail. To undermine the scientific trustworthiness of the Indian Vedas is to undermine the religion which they teach. But this only because their scientific doctrine is an essential part of their religious teaching. In the Bible, religion is not dependent upon physical science. The Scriptures aim only to declare the creatorship and lordship of the personal

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God. The method of his working may be described pictorially without affecting this substantial truth. The Indian cosmogonies, on the other hand, polytheistic or pantheistic as they are, teach essential untruth, by describing the origin of things as due to a series of senseless transformations without basis of will or wisdom.

So long as the difficulties of Scripture are difficulties of form rather than substance, of its incidental features rather than its main doctrine, we may say of its obscurities as Isocrates said of the work of Heraclitus: "What I understand of it is so excellent that I can draw conclusions from it concerning what I do not understand." "If Bengel finds things in the Bible too hard for his critical faculty, he finds nothing too hard for his believing faculty." With John Smyth, who died at Amsterdam in 1612, we may say: "I profess I have changed, and shall be ready still to change, for the better"; and with John Robinson, in his farewell address to the Pilgrim Fathers: "I am verily persuaded that the Lord hath more truth yet to break forth from his holy word." See Luthardt, *Saving Truths*, 205; Philippi, *Glaubenslehre*, 205 sq.; Bap. Rev., April, 1881: art. by O. P. Eaches; Cardinal Newman, in *19th Century*, Feb. 1884.

1. *Errors in matters of Science*

Upon this objection we remark:

(a) We do not admit the existence of scientific error in the Scripture. What is charged as such is simply truth presented in popular and impressive forms.

The common mind receives a more correct idea of unfamiliar facts when these are narrated in phenomenal language and in summary form than when they are described in the abstract terms and in the exact detail of science.

The Scripture writers unconsciously observe Herbert Spencer's principle of style: Economy of the reader's or hearer's attention,—the more energy is expended upon the form the less there remains to grapple with the substance (Essays, 1–47). Wendt, *Teaching of Jesus*, 1:130, brings out the principle of Jesus' style: "The greatest clearness in the smallest compass." Hence Scripture uses the phrases of common life rather than scientific terminology. Thus the language of appearance is probably used in Gen. 7:19—"all the high mountains that were under the whole heaven were covered"—such would be the appearance, even if the deluge were local instead of universal; in Josh. 10:12, 13—"and the sun stood still"—such would be the appearance, even if the sun's rays were merely refracted so as preternaturally to lengthen the day; in Ps. 93:1—"The world also is established, that it cannot be moved"—such is the appearance, even though the earth turns on its axis and moves round the sun. In narrative, to substitute for "sunset" some scientific description would divert attention from the main subject. Would it be preferable,

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in the O. T., if we should read: "When the revolution of the earth upon its axis caused the rays of the solar luminary to impinge horizontally upon the retina, Isaac went out to meditate" (Gen. 24:63)? "Le secret d'ennuyer est de tout dire." Charles Dickens, in his *American Notes*, 72, describes a prairie sunset: "The decline of day here was very gorgeous, tinging the firmament deeply with red and gold, up to the very keystone of the arch above us" (quoted by Hovey, *Manual of Christian Theology*, 97). Did Dickens therefore believe the firmament to be a piece of solid masonry?

Canon Driver rejects the Bible story of creation because the distinctions made by modern science cannot be found in the primitive Hebrew. He thinks the fluid state of the earth's substance should have been called "surging chaos," instead of "waters" (Gen. 1:2). "An admirable phrase for modern and cultivated minds," replies Mr. Gladstone, "but a phrase that would have left the pupils of the Mosaic writer in exactly the condition out of which it was his purpose to bring them, namely, a state of utter ignorance and darkness, with possibly a little ripple of bewilderment to boot"; see *Sunday School Times*, April 26, 1890. The fallacy of holding that Scripture gives in detail all the facts connected with a historical narrative has led to many curious arguments. The Gregorian Calendar which makes the year begin in January was opposed by representing that Eve was tempted at the outset by an apple, which was possible only in case the year began in September; see Thayer, *Change of Attitude towards the Bible*, 46.

(b) It is not necessary to a proper view of inspiration to suppose that the human authors of Scripture had in mind the proper scientific interpretation of the natural events they recorded.

It is enough that this was in the mind of the inspiring Spirit. Through the comparatively narrow conceptions and inadequate language of the Scripture writers, the Spirit of inspiration may have secured the expression of the truth in such germinal form as to be intelligible to the times in which it was first published, and yet capable of indefinite expansion as science should advance. In the miniature picture of creation in the first chapter of Genesis, and in its power of adjusting itself to every advance of scientific investigation, we have a strong proof of inspiration.

The word "day" in Genesis 1 is an instance of this general mode of expression. It would be absurd to teach early races, that deal only in small numbers, about the myriads of years of creation. The child's object-lesson, with its graphic summary, conveys to his mind more of truth than elaborate and exact statement would convey. Conant (Genesis 2:10) says of the description of Eden and its rivers: "Of course the author's object is not a minute topographical description, but a general and impressive conception as a whole." Yet the progress of science only shows that these accounts are not less but more true than was supposed by those who first received them. Neither the Hindu Shasters nor any heathen cosmogony can bear such comparison with the results of science. Why change our interpretations of Scripture so often? Answer: We do not assume to be original teachers

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of science, but only to interpret Scripture with the new lights we have. See Dana, *Manual of Geology*, 741–746; Guyot, in *Bib. Sac.*, 1855:324; Dawson, *Story of Earth and Man*, 32.

This conception of early Scripture teaching as elementary and suited to the childhood of the race would make it possible, if the facts so required, to interpret the early chapters of Genesis as mythical or legendary. God might condescend to “Kindergarten formulas.” Goethe said that “We should deal with children as God deals with us: we are happiest under the influence of innocent delusions.” Longfellow: “How beautiful is youth! how bright it gleams, With its illusions, aspirations, dreams! Book of beginnings, story without end, Each maid a heroine, and each man a friend!” We might hold with Goethe and with Longfellow, if we only excluded from God’s teaching all essential error. The narratives of Scripture might be addressed to the imagination, and so might take mythical or legendary form, while yet they conveyed substantial truth that could in no other way be so well apprehended by early man; see Robert Browning’s poem, “Development,” in Asolando. The Koran, on the other hand, leaves no room for imagination, but fixes the number of the stars and declares the firmament to be solid. Henry Drummond: “Evolution has given us a new Bible.... The Bible is not a book which has been made,—it has grown.”

Bagehot tells us that “One of the most remarkable of Father Newman’s Oxford sermons explains how science teaches that the earth goes round the sun, and how Scripture teaches that the sun goes round the earth; and it ends by advising the discreet believer to accept both.” This is mental bookkeeping by double entry; see Mackintosh, in *Am. Jour. Theology*, Jan. 1899:41. Lenormant, in *Contemp. Rev.*, Nov. 1879—“While the tradition of the deluge holds so considerable a place in the legendary memories of all branches of the Aryan race, the monuments and original texts of Egypt, with their many cosmogonic speculations, have not afforded any, even distant, allusion to this cataclysm.” Lenormant here wrongly assumed that the language of Scripture is scientific language. If it is the language of appearance, then the deluge may be a local and not a universal catastrophe. G. F. Wright, *Ice Age in North America*, suggests that the numerous traditions of the deluge may have had their origin in the enormous floods of the receding glacier. In South-western Queensland, the standard gauge at the Meteorological Office registered $10\frac{3}{4}$, 20, $35\frac{3}{4}$, $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches of rainfall, in all $77\frac{1}{4}$ inches, in four successive days.

(c) It may be safely said that science has not yet shown any fairly interpreted passage of Scripture to be untrue.

With regard to the antiquity of the race, we may say that owing to the differences of reading between the Septuagint and the Hebrew there is room for doubt whether either of the received chronologies has the sanction of inspiration. Although science has made probable the existence of man upon the earth at a period preceding the dates assigned in these chronologies, no statement of inspired Scripture is thereby proved false.

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Usher's scheme of chronology, on the basis of the Hebrew, puts the creation 4004 years before Christ. Hales's, on the basis of the Septuagint, puts it 5411 B.C. The Fathers followed the LXX. But the genealogies before and after the flood may present us only with the names of "leading and representative men." Some of these names seem to stand, not for individuals, but for tribes, *e. g.*; Gen. 10:16—where Canaan is said to have begotten the Jebusite and the Amorite; 29—Joktan begot Ophir and Havilah. In Gen. 10:6, we read that Mizraim belonged to the sons of Ham. But Mizraim is a dual, coined to designate the two parts, Upper and Lower Egypt. Hence a son of Ham could not bear the name of Mizraim. Gen. 10:13 reads: "And Misraim begat Ludim." But Ludim is a plural form. The word signifies a whole nation, and "begat" is not employed in a literal sense. So in verses 15, 16: "Canaan begat ... the Jebusite," a tribe; the ancestors of which would have been called Jebus. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, however, are names, not of tribes or nations, but of individuals; see Prof. Edward König, of Bonn, in *S. S. Times*, Dec. 14, 1901. E.G. Robinson: "We may pretty safely go back to the time of Abraham, but no further." *Bib. Sac.*, 1899:403—"The lists in Genesis may relate to families and not to individuals."

G. F. Wright, *Ant. and Origin of Human Race*, lect. II—"When in David's time it is said that 'Shebuel, the son of Gorshom, the son of Moses, was ruler over the treasures' (1 Chron. 23:16; 26:24), Gershom was the immediate son of Moses, but Shebuel was separated by many generations from Gershom. So when Seth is said to have begotten Enosh when he was 105 years old (Gen. 5:6), it is, according to Hebrew usage, capable of meaning that Enosh was descended from the branch of Seth's line which set off at the 105th year, with any number of intermediate links omitted." The appearance of completeness in the text may be due to alteration of the text in the course of centuries; see *Bib. Com.*, 1:30. In the phrase "Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Mat. 1:1) thirty-eight to forty generations are omitted. It may be so in some of the Old Testament genealogies. There is room for a hundred thousand years, if necessary (Conant). W. H. Green, in *Bib. Sac.*, April, 1890:303, and in *Independent*, June 18, 1891—"The Scriptures furnish us with no data for a chronological computation prior to the life of Abraham. The Mosaic records do not fix, and were not intended to fix, the precise date of the Flood or of the Creation ... They give a series of specimen lives, with appropriate numbers attached, to show by selected examples what was the original term of human life. To make them a complete and continuous record, and to deduce from them the antiquity of the race, is to put them to a use they were never intended to serve."

Comparison with secular history also shows that no such length of time as 100,000 years for man's existence upon earth seems necessary. Rawlinson, in *Jour. Christ. Philosophy*, 1883:339-364, dates the beginning of the Chaldean monarchy at 2400 B.C. Lenormant puts the entrance of the Sanskritic Indians into Hindustan at 2500 B.C. The earliest Vedas are between 1200. and 1000 B.C. (Max Müller). Call of Abraham, probably 1945 B.C. Chinese history possibly began as early as 2356 B.C. (Legge). The old Empire in Egypt possibly began as early as 2650 B.C. Rawlinson puts the flood at 3600 B.C., and adds 2000 years between the deluge and the creation, making the age of the world 1886 + 3600 + 2000 = 7486. S. R. Pattison, in *Present Day Tracts*, 3: no. 13, concludes that "a term of about 8000

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years is warranted by deductions from history, geology, and Scripture.” See also Duke of Argyll, *Primeval Man*, 76–128; Cowles on Genesis, 49–80; Dawson, *Fossil Men*, 246; Hicks, in *Bap. Rev.*, July, 1884 (15000 years); Zöckler, *Urgeschichte der Erde und des Menschen*, 137–163. On the critical side, see Crooker, *The New Bible and its Uses*, 80–102.

Evidence of a geological nature seems to be accumulating, which tends to prove man’s advent upon earth at least ten thousand years ago. An arrowhead of tempered copper and a number of human bones were found in the Rocky Point mines, near Gilman, Colorado, 460 feet beneath the surface of the earth, embedded in a vein of silver-bearing ore. More than a hundred dollars worth of ore clung to the bones when they were removed from the mine. On the age of the earth and the antiquity of man, see G. F. Wright, *Man and the Glacial Epoch*, lectures IV and X, and in *McClure’s Magazine*, June, 1901, and *Bib. Sac.*, 1903:31—“Charles Darwin first talked about 300 million years as a mere trifle of geologic time. His son George limits it to 50 or 100 million; Croll and Young to 60 or 70 million; Wallace to 28 million; Lord Kelvin to 24 million; Thompson and Newcomb to only 10 million.” Sir Archibald Geikie, at the British Association at Dover in 1899, said that 100 million years sufficed for that small portion of the earth’s history which is registered in the stratified rocks of the crust.

Shaler, *Interpretation of Nature*, 122, considers vegetable life to have existed on the planet for at least 100 million years. Warren Upham, in *Pop. Science Monthly*, Dec. 1893:153—“How old is the earth? 100 million years.” D. G. Brinton, in *Forum*, Dec. 1893:454, puts the minimum limit of man’s existence on earth at 50,000 years. G. F. Wright does not doubt that man’s presence on this continent was preglacial, say eleven or twelve thousand years ago. He asserts that there has been a subsidence of Central Asia and Southern Russia since man’s advent, and that Arctic seals are still found in lake Baikal in Siberia. While he grants that Egyptian civilization may go back to 5000 B.C. he holds that no more than 6000 or 7000 years before this are needed as preparation for history. Le Conte, *Elements of Geology*, 613—“Men saw the great glaciers of the second glacial epoch, but there is no reliable evidence of their existence before the first glacial epoch. Deltas, implements, lake shores, waterfalls, indicate only 7000 to 10,000 years.” Recent calculations of Prof. Prestwich, the most eminent living geologist of Great Britain, tend to bring the close of the glacial epoch down to within 10,000 or 15,000 years.

(d) Even if error in matters of science were found in Scripture, it would not disprove inspiration, since inspiration concerns itself with science only so far as correct scientific views are necessary to morals and religion.

Great harm results from identifying Christian doctrine with specific theories of the universe. The Roman church held that the revolution of the sun around the earth was taught in Scripture, and that Christian faith required the condemnation of Galileo; John Wesley thought Christianity to be inseparable from a belief in witchcraft; opposers of the higher criticism regard the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch as “*articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*.” We mistake greatly when we link inspiration with scientific doctrine.

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The purpose of Scripture is not to teach science, but to teach religion, and, with the exception of God's creatorship and preserving agency in the universe, no scientific truth is essential to the system of Christian doctrine. Inspiration might leave the Scripture writers in possession of the scientific ideas of their time, while yet they were empowered correctly to declare both ethical and religious truth. A right spirit indeed gains some insight into the meaning of nature, and so the Scripture writers seem to be preserved from incorporating into their productions much of the scientific error of their day. But entire freedom from such error must not be regarded as a necessary accompaniment of inspiration.

2. Errors in matters of History

To this objection we reply:

(a) What are charged as such are often mere mistakes in transcription, and have no force as arguments against inspiration, unless it can first be shown that inspired documents are by the very fact of their inspiration exempt from the operation of those laws which affect the transmission of other ancient documents.

We have no right to expect that the inspiration of the original writer will be followed by a miracle in the case of every copyist. Why believe in infallible copyists, more than in infallible printers? God educates us to care for his word, and for its correct transmission. Reverence has kept the Scriptures more free from various readings than are other ancient manuscripts. None of the existing variations endanger any important article of faith. Yet some mistakes in transcription there probably are. In 1 Chron. 22:14, instead of 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 talents of silver (= \$3,750,000,000), Josephus divides the sum by ten. Dr. Howard Osgood: "A French writer, Revillout, has accounted for the differing numbers in Kings and Chronicles, just as he accounts for the same differences in Egyptian and Assyrian later accounts, by the change in the value of money and debasement of issues. He shows the change all over Western Asia." *Per contra*, see Bacon, *Genesis of Genesis*, 45.

In 2 Chron. 13:3, 17, where the numbers of men in the armies of little Palestine are stated as 400,000 and 800,000, and 500,000 are said to have been slain in a single battle, "some ancient copies of the Vulgate and Latin translations of Josephus have 40,000, 80,000, and 50,000"; see *Annotated Paragraph Bible, in loco*. In 2 Chron. 17:14–19, Jehoshaphat's army aggregates 1,160,000, besides the garrisons of his fortresses. It is possible that by errors in transcription these numbers have been multiplied by ten. Another explanation however, and perhaps a more probable one, is given under (d) below. Similarly, compare 1 Sam 6:19, where 50,070 are slain, with the 70 of Josephus; 2 Sam. 8:4—"1,700 horsemen," with 1 Chron. 18:4—"7,000 horsemen"; Esther 9:16—75,000 slain by the Jews, with LXX—15,000. In Mat. 27:9, we have "Jeremiah" for "Zechariah"—this Calvin allows to be a mistake; and, if a mistake, then one made by the first copyist, for it appears in all the uncials, all the manuscripts and all the versions except the Syriac Peshito where it is

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omitted, evidently on the authority of the individual transcriber and translator. In Acts 7:16—“the tomb that Abraham bought”—Hackett regards “Abraham” as a clerical error for “Jacob” (compare Gen. 33:18, 19). See *Bible Com.*, 3:165, 249, 251, 317.

(b) Other so-called errors are to be explained as a permissible use of round numbers, which cannot be denied to the sacred writers except upon the principle that mathematical accuracy was more important than the general impression to be secured by the narrative.

In Numbers 25:9, we read that there fell in the plague 24,000; 1 Cor. 10:8 says 23,000. The actual number was possibly somewhere between the two. Upon a similar principle, we do not scruple to celebrate the Landing of the Pilgrims on December 22nd and the birth of Christ on December 25th. We speak of the battle of Bunker Hill, although at Bunker Hill no battle was really fought. In Ex. 12:40, 41, the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt is declared to be 430 years. Yet Paul, in Gal. 3:17, says that the giving of the law through Moses was 430 years after the call of Abraham, whereas the call of Abraham took place 215 years before Jacob and his sons went down into Egypt, and Paul should have said 645 years instead of 430. Franz Delitzsch: “The Hebrew Bible counts four centuries of Egyptian sojourn (Gen. 15:13–16), more accurately, 430 years (Ex. 12:40); but according to the LXX (Ex. 12:40) this number comprehends the sojourn in Canaan and Egypt, so that 215 years come to the pilgrimage in Canaan, and 215 to the servitude in Egypt. This kind of calculation is not exclusively Hellenistic; it is also found in the oldest Palestinian Midrash. Paul stands on this side in Gal. 3:17, making, not the immigration into Egypt, but the covenant with Abraham the *terminus a quo* of the 430 years which end in the Exodus from Egypt and in the legislation”; see also Hovey, *Com. on Gal.* 3:17. It was not Paul’s purpose to write chronology,—so he may follow the LXX, and call the time between the promise to Abraham and the giving of the law to Moses 430 years, rather than the actual 600. If he had given the larger number, it might have led to perplexity and discussion about a matter which had nothing to do with the vital question in hand. Inspiration may have employed current though inaccurate statements as to matters of history, because they were the best available means of impressing upon men’s minds truth of a more important sort. In Gen. 15:13 the 430 years is called in round numbers 400 years, and so in Acts 7:6.

(c) Diversities of statement in accounts of the same event, so long as they touch no substantial truth, may be due to the meagreness of the narrative, and might be fully explained if some single fact, now unrecorded, were only known. To explain these apparent discrepancies would not only be beside the purpose of the record, but would destroy one valuable evidence of the independence of the several writers or witnesses.

On the Stokes trial, the judge spoke of two apparently conflicting testimonies as neither of them necessarily false. On the difference between Matthew and Luke as to the scene of the Sermon on the Mount (Mat. 5:1; *cf.* Luke 6:17) see Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, 360. As to one blind man or two (Mat. 20:30; *cf.* Luke 18:35) see Bliss, *Com. on Luke*, 275, and Gardiner, in *Bib. Sac.*, July, 1879:513, 514; Jesus may have healed the blind men during a

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day's excursion from Jericho, and it might be described as "when they went out," or "as they drew nigh to Jericho." Prof. M. B. Riddle: "Luke 18:35 describes the general movement towards Jerusalem and not the precise detail preceding the miracle; Mat. 20:30 intimates that the miracle occurred during an excursion from the city, — Luke afterwards telling of the final departure"; Calvin holds to two meetings; Godet to two cities; if Jesus healed two blind men, he certainly healed one, and Luke did not need to mention more than one, even if he knew of both; see Broadus on Mat. 20:30. In Mat. 8:28, where Matthew has two demoniacs at Gadara and Luke has only one at Gerasa, Broadus supposes that the village of Gerasa belonged to the territory of the city of Gadara, a few miles to the Southeast of the lake, and he quotes the case of Lafayette: "In the year 1824 Lafayette visited the United States and was welcomed with honors and pageants. Some historians will mention only Lafayette, but others will relate the same visit as made and the same honors as enjoyed by two persons, namely, Lafayette and his son. Will not both be right?" On Christ's last Passover, see Robinson, *Harmony*, 212; E. H. Sears, *Fourth Gospel Appendix A*; Edersheim, *Life and Times of the Messiah*, 2:507. Augustine: "Locutiones variæ, sed non contrariæ: diversæ, sed non adversæ."

Bartlett, in *Princeton Rev.*, Jan. 1880:46, 47, gives the following modern illustrations: *Window's Journal (of Plymouth Plantation)* speaks of a ship sent out "by Master Thomas Weston." But Bradford in his far briefer narrative of the matter, mentions it as sent "by Mr. Weston and another." John Adams, in his letters, tells the story of the daughter of Otis about her father's destruction of his own manuscripts. At one time he makes her say: "In one of his unhappy moments he committed them all to the flames"; yet, in the second letter, she is made to say that "he was several days in doing it." One newspaper says: President Hayes attended the Bennington centennial; another newspaper says: the President and Mrs. Hayes; a third: the President and his Cabinet; a fourth: the President, Mrs. Hayes and a majority of his Cabinet. Archibald Forbes, in his account of Napoleon III at Sedan, points out an agreement of narratives as to the salient points, combined with "the hopeless and bewildering discrepancies as to details," even as these are reported by eye-witnesses, including himself, Bismarck, and General Sheridan who was on the ground, as well as others.

Thayer, *Change of Attitude*, 52, speaks of Luke's "plump anachronism in the matter of Theudas" — Acts 5:36 — "For before those days rose up Theudas." Josephus, *Antiquities*, 20:5:1, mentions an insurrectionary Theudas, but the date and other incidents do not agree with those of Luke. Josephus however may have mistaken the date as easily as Luke, or he may refer to another man of the same name. The inscription on the Cross is given in Mark 15:26, as "The King of the Jews"; in Luke 23:38, as "This is the King of the Jews"; in Mat. 27:37, as "This is Jesus the King of the Jews"; and in John 19:19, as "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." The entire superscription, in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, may have contained every word given by the several evangelists combined, and may have read "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," and each separate report may be entirely correct so far as it goes. See, on the general subject, Haley, *Alleged Discrepancies*; Fisher, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 406–412.

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(d) While historical and archaeological discovery in many important particulars goes to sustain the general correctness of the Scripture narratives, and no statement essential to the moral and religious teaching of Scripture has been invalidated, inspiration is still consistent with much imperfection in historical detail and its narratives “do not seem to be exempted from possibilities of error.”

The words last quoted are those of Sanday. In his *Bampton Lectures on Inspiration*, 400, he remarks that “Inspiration belongs to the historical books rather as conveying a religious lesson, than as histories; rather as interpreting, than as narrating plain matter of fact. The crucial issue is that in these last respects they do not seem to be exempted from possibilities of error.” R. V. Foster, *Systematic Theology*, (Cumberland Presbyterian): The Scripture writers “were not inspired to do otherwise than to take these statements as they found them.” Inerrancy is not freedom from misstatements, but from error defined as “that which misleads in any serious or important sense.” When we compare the accounts of 1 and 2 Chronicles with those of 1 and 2 Kings we find in the former an exaggeration of numbers, a suppression of material unfavorable to the writer’s purpose, and an emphasis upon that which is favorable, that contrasts strongly with the method of the latter. These characteristics are so continuous that the theory of mistakes in transcription does not seem sufficient to account for the facts. The author’s aim was to draw out the religious lessons of the story, and historical details are to him of comparative unimportance.

H. P. Smith, *Bib. Scholarship and Inspiration*, 108—“Inspiration did not correct the Chronicler’s historical point of view, more than it corrected his scientific point of view, which no doubt made the earth the centre of the solar system. It therefore left him open to receive documents, and to use them, which idealized the history of the past, and described David and Solomon according to the ideas of later times and the priestly class. David’s sins are omitted, and numbers are multiplied, to give greater dignity to the earlier kingdom.” As Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King* give a nobler picture of King Arthur, and a more definite aspect to his history, than actual records justify, yet the picture teaches great moral and religious lessons, so the Chronicler seems to have manipulated his material in the interest of religion. Matters of arithmetic were minor matters. “Majoribus intentus est.”

E. G. Robinson: “The numbers of the Bible are characteristic of a semi-barbarous age. The writers took care to guess enough. The tendency of such an age is always to exaggerate.” Two Formosan savages divide five pieces between them by taking two apiece and throwing one away. The lowest tribes can count only with the fingers of their hands; when they use their toes as well, it marks an advance in civilization. To the modern child a hundred is just as great a number as a million. So the early Scriptures seem to use numbers with a childlike ignorance as to their meaning. Hundreds of thousands can be substituted for tens of thousands, and the substitution seems only a proper tribute to the dignity of the subject. Gore, in *Lux Mundt*, 353—“This was not conscious perversion, but

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unconscious idealizing of history, the reading back into past records of a ritual development which was really later. Inspiration excludes conscious deception, but it appears to be quite consistent with this sort of idealizing; always supposing that the result read back into the earlier history does represent the real purpose of God and only anticipates the realization.”

There are some who contend that these historical imperfections are due to transcription and that they did not belong to the original documents. Watts, *New Apologetic*, 71, 111, when asked what is gained by contending for infallible original autographs if they have been since corrupted, replies: “Just what we gain by contending for the original perfection of human nature, though man has since corrupted it. We must believe God’s own testimony about his own work. God may permit others to do what, as a holy righteous God, he cannot do himself.” When the objector declares it a matter of little consequence whether a pair of trousers were or were not originally perfect, so long as they are badly rent just now, Watts replies: “The tailor who made them would probably prefer to have it understood that the trousers did not leave his shop in their present forlorn condition. God drops no stitches and sends out no imperfect work.” Watts however seems dominated by an *a priori* theory of inspiration, which blinds him to the actual facts of the Bible.

Evans, *Bib. Scholarship and Inspiration*, 40—“Does the *present* error destroy the inspiration of the Bible as we have it? No. Then why should the *original* error destroy the inspiration of the Bible, as it was first given? There are spots on yonder sun; do they stop its being the sun? Why, the sun is all the more a sun for the spots. So the Bible.” Inspiration seems to have permitted the gathering of such material as was at hand, very much as a modern editor might construct his account of an army movement from the reports of a number of observers; or as a modern historian might combine the records of a past age with all their imperfections of detail. In the case of the Scripture writers, however, we maintain that inspiration has permitted no sacrifice of moral and religious truth in the completed Scripture, but has woven its historical material together into an organic whole which teaches all the facts essential to the knowledge of Christ and of salvation.

When we come to examine in detail what purport to be historical narratives, we must be neither credulous nor sceptical, but simply candid and open-minded. With regard for example to the great age of the Old Testament patriarchs, we are no more warranted in rejecting the Scripture accounts upon the ground that life in later times is so much shorter, than we are to reject the testimony of botanists as to trees of the Sequoia family between four and five hundred feet high, or the testimony of geologists as to Saurians a hundred feet long, upon the ground that the trees and reptiles with which we are acquainted are so much smaller. Every species at its introduction seems to exhibit the maximum of size and vitality. Weismann, *Heredity*, 6, 30—“Whales live some hundreds of years; elephants two hundred—their gestation taking two years. Giants prove that the plan upon which man is constructed can also be carried out on a scale far larger than the normal one.” E. Bay Lankester, *Adv. of Science*, 205–237, 236—agrees with Weismann in his general theory. Sir George Cornewall Lewis long denied centenarism, but at last had to admit it.

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Charles Dudley Warner, in *Harper's Magazine*, Jan. 1895, gives instances of men 137, 140, and 192 years old. The German Haller asserts that "the ultimate limit of human life does not exceed two centuries: to fix the exact number of years is exceedingly difficult." J. Norman Lockyer, in *Nature*, regards the years of the patriarchs as lunar years. In Egypt, the sun being used, the unit of time was a year; but in Chaldea, the unit of time was a month, for the reason that the standard of time was the moon. Divide the numbers by twelve, and the lives of the patriarchs come out very much the same length with lives at the present day. We may ask, however, how this theory would work in shortening the lives between Noah and Moses. On the genealogies in Matthew and Luke, see Lord Harvey, *Genealogies of our Lord*, and his art. in *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; per contra, see Andrews, *Life of Christ*, 55 sq. On Quirinius and the enrollment for taxation (Luke 2:2), see Pres. Woolsey, in *New Englander*, 1869. On the general subject, see Rawlinson, *Historical Evidences*, and essay in *Modern Scepticism*, published by Christian Evidence Society, 1:265; Crooker, *New Bible and New Uses*, 102–126.

3. Errors in Morality

(a) What are charged as such are sometimes evil acts and words of good men—words and acts not sanctioned by God. These are narrated by the inspired writers as simple matter of history, and subsequent results, or the story itself, is left to point the moral of the tale.

Instances of this sort are Noah's drunkenness (Gen. 9:20–27); Lot's incest (Gen. 19:30–38); Jacob's falsehood (Gen. 27:19–24); David's adultery (2 Sam. 11:1–4); Peter's denial (Mat. 26:69–75). See Lee, *Inspiration*, 265, note. Esther's vindictiveness is not commended, nor are the characters of the Book of Esther said to have acted in obedience to a divine command. Crane, *Religion of To-morrow*, 241—"In law and psalm and prophecy we behold the influence of Jehovah working as leaven among a primitive and barbarous people. Contemplating the Old Scriptures in this light, they become luminous with divinity, and we are furnished with the principle by which to discriminate between the divine and the human in the book. Particularly in David do we see a rugged, half-civilized, kingly man, full of gross errors, fleshly and impetuous, yet permeated with a divine Spirit that lifts him, struggling, weeping, and warring, up to some of the loftiest conceptions of Deity which the mind of man has conceived. As an angelic being, David is a caricature; as a man of God, as an example of God moving upon and raising up a most human man, he is a splendid example. The proof that the church is of God, is not its impeccability, but its progress."

(b) Where evil acts appear at first sight to be sanctioned, it is frequently some right intent or accompanying virtue, rather than the act itself, upon which commendation is bestowed.

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As Rahab's faith, not her duplicity (Josh. 2:1–24: cf. Heb. 11:31 and James 2:25); Jael's patriotism, not her treachery (Judges 4:17–22; cf. 5:24), Or did they cast in their lot with Israel and use the common stratagems of war (see next paragraph)? Herder: "The limitations of the pupil are also limitations of the teacher." While Dean Stanley praises Solomon for tolerating idolatry, James Martineau, *Study*, 2:137, remarks: "It would be a ridiculous pedantry to apply the Protestant pleas of private judgment to such communities as ancient Egypt and Assyria.... It is the survival of coercion, after conscience has been born to supersede it, that shocks and revolts us in persecution."

(c) Certain commands and deeds are sanctioned as relatively just—expressions of justice such as the age could comprehend, and are to be judged as parts of a progressively unfolding system of morality whose key and culmination we have in Jesus Christ.

Ez. 20:25—"I gave them statutes that were not good"—as Moses' permission of divorce and retaliation (Deut. 24:1; cf. Mat. 5:31, 32; 19:7–9. Ex. 21:24; cf. Mat. 5:38, 39). Compare Elijah's calling down fire from heaven (2 K. 1:10–12) with Jesus' refusal to do the same, and his intimation that the spirit of Elijah was not the spirit of Christ (Luke 9:52–56); cf. Mattheson, *Moments on the Mount*, 253–255, on Mat. 17:8—"Jesus only": "The strength of Elias paled before him. To shed the blood of enemies requires less strength than to shed one's own blood, and to conquer by fire is easier than to conquer by love." Hovey: "In divine revelation, it is first starlight, then dawn, finally day." George Washington once gave directions for the transportation to the West Indies and the sale there of a refractory negro who had given him trouble. This was not at variance with the best morality of his time, but it would not suit the improved ethical standards of today. The use of force rather than moral suasion is sometimes needed by children and by barbarians. We may illustrate by the Sunday School scholar's unruliness which was cured by his classmates during the week. "What did you say to him?" asked the teacher. "We did n't say nothing; we just punched his head for him." This was Old Testament righteousness. The appeal in the O. T. to the hope of earthly rewards was suitable to a stage of development not yet instructed as to heaven and hell by the coming and work of Christ; compare Ex. 20:12 with Mat. 5:10; 25:46. The Old Testament aimed to fix in the mind of a selected people the idea of the unity and holiness of God; in order to exterminate idolatry, much other teaching was postponed. See Peabody, *Religion of Nature*, 45; Mozley, *Ruling Ideas of Early Ages*; Green, in *Presb., Quar.*, April, 1877:221–252; McIlvaine, *Wisdom of Holy Scripture*, 328–368; Brit, and For. *Evang. Rev.*, Jan. 1878:1–32; Martineau, *Study*, 2:137.

When therefore we find in the inspired song of Deborah, the prophetess (Judges 5:30), an allusion to the common spoils of war—"a damsel, two damsels to every man" or in Prov. 31:6, 7—"Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto the bitter in soul. Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more"—we do not need to maintain that these passages furnish standards for our modern conduct. Dr. Fisher calls the latter "the worst advice to a person in affliction, or dispirited by the loss of property." They mark past stages in God's providential leading of mankind. A higher

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stage indeed is already intimated in Prov. 31:4—“it is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes to say, Where is strong drink?” We see that God could use very imperfect instruments and could inspire very imperfect men. Many things were permitted for men’s “hardness of heart” (Mat. 19:8). The Sermon on the Mount is a great advance on the law of Moses (Mat. 5:21—“Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time”; cf. 22—“But I say unto you”).

Robert G. Ingersoll would have lost his stock in trade if Christians had generally recognized that revelation is gradual, and is completed only in Christ. This gradualness of revelation is conceded in the common phrase: “the new dispensation.” Abraham Lincoln showed his wisdom by never going far ahead of the common sense of the people. God similarly adapted his legislation to the capacities of each successive age. The command to Abraham to sacrifice his son (Gen. 22:1–19) was a proper test of Abraham’s faith in a day when human sacrifice violated no common ethical standard because the Hebrew, like the Roman, “*patria potestas*” did not regard the child as having a separate individuality, but included the child in the parent and made the child equally responsible for the parent’s sin. But that very command was given *only* as a test of faith, and with the intent to make the intended obedience the occasion of revealing God’s provision of a substitute and so of doing away with human sacrifice for all future time. We may well imitate the gradualness of divine revelation in our treatment of dancing and of the liquor traffic.

(d) God’s righteous sovereignty affords the key to other events. He has the right to do what he will with his own, and to punish the transgressor when and where he will; and he may justly make men the foretellers or executors of his purposes.

Foretellers, as in the imprecatory Psalms (137:9; cf. Is. 13:16–18 and Jer. 50:16, 29); executors, as in the destruction of the Canaanites (Deut. 7:2, 16). In the former case the Psalm was not the ebullition of personal anger, but the expression of judicial indignation against the enemies of God. We must distinguish the substance from the form. The substance was the denunciation of God’s righteous judgments; the form was taken from the ordinary customs of war in the Psalmist’s time. See Park, in *Bib. Sac.*, 1862:165; Cowles, *Com. on Ps. 137*; Perowne on *Psalms*, Introd., 61; Presb. and Ref. Rev., 1897:490–505; cf. 2 Tim. 4:14—“the Lord will render to him according to his works” = a prophecy, not a curse, ἀποδώσει, not ἀποδώη, as in A. V. In the latter case, an exterminating war was only the benevolent surgery that amputated the putrid limb, and so saved the religious life of the Hebrew nation and of the after-world. See Dr. Thomas Arnold, *Essay on the Right Interpretation of Scripture*; Fisher, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 11–24.

Another interpretation of these events has been proposed, which would make them illustrations of the principle indicated in (c) above: E. G. Robinson, *Christian Theology*, 45—“It was not the imprecations of the Psalm that were inspired of God, but his purposes and ideas of which these were by the times the necessary vehicle; just as the adultery of David was not by divine command, though through it the purpose of God as to Christ’s descent

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was accomplished." John Watson (Ian Maclaren), *Cure of Souls*, 143—"When the massacre of the Canaanites and certain proceedings of David are flung in the face of Christians, it is no longer necessary to fall back on evasious or special pleading. It can now be frankly admitted that, from our standpoint in this year of grace, such deeds were atrocious, and that they never could have been according to the mind of God, but that they must be judged by their date, and considered the defects of elementary moral processes. The Bible is vindicated, because it is, on the whole, a steady ascent, and because it culminates in Christ."

Lyman Abbott, *Theology of an Evolutionist*, 56—"Abraham mistook the voice of conscience, calling on him to consecrate his only son to God, and interpreted it as a command to slay his son as a burnt offering. Israel misinterpreted his righteous indignation at the cruel and lustful rites of the Canaanitish religion as a divine summons to destroy the worship by putting the worshipers to death; a people undeveloped in moral judgment could not distinguish between formal regulations respecting camp-life and eternal principles of righteousness, such as, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, but embodied them in the same code, and seemed to regard them as of equal authority." Wilkinson, *Epic of Paul*, 281—"If so be such man, so placed ... did in some part That utterance make his own, profaning it, To be his vehicle for sense not meant By the august supreme inspiring Will"—*i. e.*, putting some of his own sinful anger into God's calm predictions of judgment. Compare the stern last words of "Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, the priest" when stoned to death in the temple court: "Jehovah look upon it and require it" (2 Chron. 24:20–22), with the last words of Jesus: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34) and of Stephen: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60).

(e) Other apparent immoralities are due to unwarranted interpretations. Symbol is sometimes taken for literal fact; the language of irony is understood as sober affirmation; the glow and freedom of Oriental description are judged by the unimpassioned style of Western literature; appeal to lower motives is taken to exclude, instead of preparing for, the higher.

In Hosea 1:2, 3, the command to the prophet to marry a harlot was probably received and executed in vision, and was intended only as symbolic: compare Jer. 25:15–18—"Take this cup.... and cause all the nations.... to drink." Literal obedience would have made the prophet contemptible to those whom he would instruct, and would require so long a time as to weaken, if not destroy, the designed effect; see *Ann. Par. Bible, in loco*. In 2 K. 6:19, Elisha's deception, so called, was probably only ironical and benevolent; the enemy dared not resist, because they were completely in his power. In the Song of Solomon, we have, as Jewish writers have always held, a highly-wrought dramatic description of the union between Jehovah and his people, which we must judge by Eastern and not by Western literary standards.

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Francis W. Newman, in his *Phases of Faith*, accused even the New Testament of presenting low motives for human obedience. It is true that all right motives are appealed to, and some of these motives are of a higher sort than are others. Hope of heaven and fear of hell are not the highest motives, but they may be employed as preliminary incitements to action, even though only love for God and for holiness will ensure salvation. Such motives are urged both by Christ and by his apostles: Mat. 6:20—"lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven"; 10:28—"fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"; Jude 23—"some save with fear, snatching them out of the fire." In this respect the N. T. does not differ from the O. T. George Adam Smith has pointed out that the royalists got their texts, "the powers that be" (Rom. 13:1) and "the king as supreme" (1 Pet. 2:13), from the N. T., while the O. T. furnished texts for the defenders of liberty. While the O. T. deals with *national* life, and the discharge of social and political functions, the N. T. deals in the main with *individuals* and with their relations to God. On the whole subject, see Hessey, *Moral Difficulties of the Bible*; Jellett, *Moral Difficulties of the O. T.*; *Faith and Free Thought* (Lect. by Christ. Ev. Soc), 2:173; Rogers, *Eclipse of Faith*; Butler, *Analogy*, part ii, chap. iii; Orr, *Problem of the O. T.*, 465-483.

4. Errors of Reasoning

(a) What are charged as such are generally to be explained as valid argument expressed in highly condensed form. The appearance of error may be due to the suppression of one or more links in the reasoning.

In Mat. 22:32, Christ's argument for the resurrection, drawn from the fact that God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is perfectly and obviously valid, the moment we put in the suppressed premise that the living relation to God which is here implied cannot properly be conceived as something merely spiritual, but necessarily requires a new and restored life of the body. If God is the God of the living, then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob shall rise from the dead. See more full exposition, under Eschatology. Some of the Scripture arguments are enthymemes, and an enthymeme, according to Arbuthnot and Pope, is "a syllogism in which the major is married to the minor, and the marriage is kept secret."

(b) Where we cannot see the propriety of the conclusions drawn from given premises, there is greater reason to attribute our failure to ignorance of divine logic on our part, than to accommodation or *ad hominem* arguments on the part of the Scripture writers.

By divine logic we mean simply a logic whose elements and processes are correct, though not understood by us. In Heb. 7:9, 10 (Levi's paying tithes in Abraham), there is probably a recognition of the organic unity of the family, which in miniature illustrates the organic unity of the race. In Gal. 3:20—"a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one"—the law, with its two contracting parties, is contrasted with the promise, which proceeds from the sole fiat of God and is therefore unchangeable. Paul's argument here rests on Christ's

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divinity as its foundation—otherwise Christ would have been a mediator in the same sense in which Moses was a mediator (see Lightfoot, *in loco*). In Gal. 4:21–31, Hagar and Ishmael on the one hand, and Sarah and Isaac on the other, illustrate the exclusion of the bondmen of the law from the privileges of the spiritual seed of Abraham. Abraham’s two wives, and the two classes of people in the two sons, represent the two covenants (so Calvin). In John 10:34—“I said, Ye are gods,” the implication is that Judaism was not a system of mere monotheism, but of theism tending to theanthropism, a real union of God and man (Westcott, *Bib. Com.*, *in loco*). Godet well remarks that he who doubts Paul’s logic will do well first to suspect his own.

(c) The adoption of Jewish methods of reasoning, where it could be proved, would not indicate error on the part of the Scripture writers, but rather an inspired sanction of the method as applied to that particular case.

In Gal. 3:16—“He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” Here it is intimated that the very form of the expression in Gen. 22:18, which denotes unity, was selected by the Holy Spirit as significant of that one person, Christ, who was the true seed of Abraham and in whom all nations were to be blessed. Argument from the form of a single word is in this case correct, although the Rabbis often made more of single words than the Holy Spirit ever intended. Watts, *New Apologetic*, 69—“F. W. Farrar asserts that the plural of the Hebrew or Greek terms for ‘seed’ is never used by Hebrew or Greek writers as a designation of human offspring. But see Sophocles, *Œdipus at Colonus*, 599, 600— $\gamma\eta\varsigma \epsilon\mu\eta\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\pi\eta\lambda\acute{\alpha}\theta\eta\nu \pi\rho\delta\varsigma \tau\acute{\omega}\nu \epsilon\mu\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon \sigma\pi\epsilon\rho\mu\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\nu$ —“I was driven away from my own country by my own offspring.” In 1 Cor. 10:1–6—“and the rock was Christ”—the Rabbinic tradition that the smitten rock followed the Israelites in their wanderings is declared to be only the absurd literalizing of a spiritual fact—the continual presence of Christ, as preëxistent Logos, with his ancient people. *Per contra*, see Row, *Rev. and Mod. Theories*, 98–128.

(d) If it should appear however upon further investigation that Rabbinical methods have been wrongly employed by the apostles in their argumentation, we might still distinguish between the truth they are seeking to convey and the arguments by which they support it. Inspiration may conceivably make known the truth, yet leave the expression of the truth to human dialectic as well as to human rhetoric.

Johnson, *Quotations of the N. T. from the O. T.*, 137, 138—“In the utter absence of all evidence to the contrary, we ought to suppose that the allegories of the N. T. are like the allegories of literature in general, merely luminous embodiments of the truth.... If these allegories are not presented by their writers as evidences, they are none the less precious, since they illuminate the truth otherwise evinced, and thus render it at once clear to the apprehension and attractive to the taste.” If however the purpose of the writers was to use these allegories for proof, we may still see shining through the rifts of their traditional logic the truth which they were striving to set forth. Inspiration may have put them in

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possession of this truth without altering their ordinary scholastic methods of demonstration and expression. Horton, *Inspiration*, 108—“Discrepancies and illogical reasonings were but inequalities or cracks in the mirrors, which did not materially distort or hide the Person” whose glory they sought to reflect. Luther went even further than this when he said that a certain argument in the epistle was “good enough for the Galatians.”

5. *Errors in quoting or interpreting the Old Testament*

18

(a) What are charged as such are commonly interpretations of the meaning of the original Scripture by the same Spirit who first inspired it.

In Eph. 5:14, “arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee” is an inspired interpretation of Is. 60:1—“Arise, shine; for thy light is come.” Ps. 68:18—“Thou hast received gifts among men”—is quoted in Eph. 4:8 as “gave gifts to men.” The words in Hebrew are probably a concise expression for “thou hast taken spoil which thou mayest distribute as gifts to men.” Eph. 4:8 agrees exactly with the sense, though not with the words, of the Psalm. In Heb. 11:21, “Jacob.... worshiped, leaning upon the top of his staff” (LXX); Gen. 47:31 has “bowed himself upon the bed’s head.” The meaning is the same, for the staff of the chief and the spear of the warrior were set at the bed’s head. Jacob, too feeble to rise, prayed in his bed. Here Calvin says that “the apostle does not hesitate to accommodate to his own purpose what was commonly received,—they were not so scrupulous” as to details. Even Gordon, *Ministry of the Spirit*, 177, speaks of “a reshaping of his own words by the Author of them.” We prefer, with Calvin, to see in these quotations evidence that the sacred writers were insistent upon the substance of the truth rather than upon the form, the spirit rather than the letter.

(b) Where an apparently false translation is quoted from the Septuagint, the sanction of inspiration is given to it, as expressing a part at least of the fulness of meaning contained in the divine original—a fulness of meaning which two varying translations do not in some cases exhaust.

Ps. 4:4—Heb.: “Tremble, and sin not” (= no longer); LXX: “Be ye angry, and sin not.” Eph. 4:26 quotes the LXX. The words may originally have been addressed to David’s comrades, exhorting them to keep their anger within bounds. Both translations together are needed to bring out the meaning of the original. Ps. 40:6–8—“Mine ears hast thou opened” is translated in Heb. 10:5–7—“a body didst thou prepare for me.” Here the Epistle quotes from the LXX. But the Hebrew means literally: “Mine ears hast thou bored”—an allusion to the custom of pinning a slave to the doorpost of his master by an awl driven through his ear, in token of his complete subjection. The sense of the verse is therefore given in the Epistle: “Thou hast made me thine in body and soul—lo, I come to do thy will” A. C. Kendrick: “David, just entering upon his kingdom after persecution, is a type of Christ entering on his earthly mission. Hence David’s words are put into the mouth of Christ. For ‘ears,’ the organs with which we hear and obey and which David conceived to be

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hollowed out for him by God, the author of the Hebrews substitutes the word 'body,' as the *general* instrument of doing God's will" (*Com. on Heb. 10:5-7*).

(c) The freedom of these inspired interpretations, however, does not warrant us in like freedom of interpretation in the case of other passages whose meaning has not been authoritatively made known.

We have no reason to believe that the scarlet thread of Rahab (Josh. 2:18) was a designed prefiguration of the blood of Christ, nor that the three measures of meal in which the woman hid her leaven (Mat. 13:33) symbolized Shem, Ham and Japheth, the three divisions of the human race. C. H. M., in his notes on the tabernacle in Exodus, tells us that "the loops of blue = heavenly grace; the taches of gold = the divine energy of Christ; the rams' skins dyed red—Christ's consecration and devotedness; the badgers' skins—his holy vigilance against temptation"! The tabernacle was indeed a type of Christ (John 1:14—ἐσκήνωσεν. 2:19, 21—"in three days I will raise it up.... but he spake of the temple of his body"); yet it does not follow that every detail of the structure was significant. So each parable teaches some one main lesson,—the particulars may be mere drapery; and while we may use the parables for illustration, we should never ascribe divine authority to our private impressions of their meaning.

Mat. 25:1-13—the parable of the five wise and the five foolish virgins—has been made to teach that the number of the saved precisely equals the number of the lost. Augustine defended persecution from the words in Luke 14:23—"constrain them to come in." The Inquisition was justified by Mat. 13:30—"bind them in bundles to burn them." Innocent III denied the Scriptures to the laity, quoting Heb. 12:20—"If even a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned." A Plymouth Brother held that he would be safe on an evangelizing journey because he read in John 19:36—"A bone of him shall not be broken." Mat. 17:8—"they saw no one, save Jesus only"—has been held to mean that we should trust only Jesus. The Epistle of Barnabas discovered in Abraham's 318 servants a prediction of the crucified Jesus, and others have seen in Abraham's three days' journey to Mount Moriah the three stages in the development of the soul. Clement of Alexandria finds the four natural elements in the four colors of the Jewish Tabernacle. All this is to make a parable "run on all fours." While we call a hero a lion, we do not need to find in the man something' to correspond to the lion's mane and claws. See Toy, *Quotations in the N. T.*; Franklin Johnson, *Quotations of the N. T. from the O. T.*; Crooker, *The New Bible and its New Uses*, 126-136.

(d) While we do not grant that the New Testament writers in any proper sense misquoted or misinterpreted the Old Testament, we do not regard absolute correctness in these respects as essential to their inspiration. The inspiring Spirit may have communicated truth, and may have secured in the Scriptures as a whole a record of that truth sufficient for men's moral and religious needs, without imparting perfect gifts of scholarship or exegesis.

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In answer to Toy, *Quotations in the N. T.*, who takes a generally unfavorable view of the correctness of the N. T. writers, Johnson, *Quotations of the N. T. from the O. T.*, maintains their correctness. On pages x, xi, of his Introduction, Johnson remarks: "I think it just to regard the writers of the Bible as the creators of a great literature, and to judge and interpret them by the laws of literature. They have produced all the chief forms of literature, as history, biography, anecdote, proverb, oratory, allegory, poetry, fiction. They have needed therefore all the resources of human speech, its sobriety and scientific precision on one page, its rainbow hues of fancy and imagination on another, its fires of passion on yet another. They could not have moved and guided men in the best manner had they denied themselves the utmost force and freedom of language; had they refused to employ its wide range of expressions, whether exact or poetic; had they not borrowed without stint its many forms of reason, of terror, of rapture, of hope, of joy, of peace. So also, they have needed the usual freedom of literary allusion and citation, in order to commend the gospel to the judgment, the tastes, and the feelings of their readers."

6. Errors in Prophecy

(a) What are charged as such may frequently be explained by remembering that much of prophecy is yet unfulfilled.

It is sometimes taken for granted that the book of Revelation, for example, refers entirely to events already past. Moses Stuart, in his *Commentary*, and Warren's *Parousia*, represent this preterist interpretation. Thus judged, however, many of the predictions of the book might seem to have failed.

(b) The personal surmises of the prophets as to the meaning of the prophecies they recorded may have been incorrect, while yet the prophecies themselves are inspired.

In 1 Pet. 1:10, 11, the apostle declares that the prophets searched "what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them." So Paul, although he does not announce it as certain, seems to have had some hope that he might live to witness Christ's second coming. See 2 Cor. 5:4—"not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon" (*ἐπενδύσασθαι*—put on the spiritual body, as over the present one, without the intervention of death); 1 Thess. 4:15, 17—"we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord." So Mat. 2:15 quotes from Hosea 11:1—"Out of Egypt did I call my son," and applies the prophecy to Christ, although Hosea was doubtless thinking only of the exodus of the people of Israel.

(c) The prophet's earlier utterances are not to be severed from the later utterances which elucidate them, nor from the whole revelation of which they form a part. It is unjust to forbid the prophet to explain his own meaning.

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2 Thessalonians was written expressly to correct wrong inferences as to the apostle's teaching drawn from his peculiar mode of speaking in the first epistle. In 2 Thess. 2:2-5 he removes the impression "that the day of the Lord is now present" or "just at hand"; declares that "it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed"; reminds the Thessalonians: "when I was yet with you, I told you these things." Yet still, in verse 1, he speaks of "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *our* gathering together unto him."

These passages, taken together, show: (1) that the two epistles are one in their teaching; (2) that in neither epistle is there any prediction of the immediate coming of the Lord; (3) that in the second epistle great events are foretold as intervening before that coming; (4) that while Paul never taught that Christ would come during his own lifetime, he hoped at least during the earlier part of his life that it might be so—a hope that seems to have been dissipated in his later years. (See 2 Tim. 4:6—"I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come.") We must remember, however, that there was a "coming of the Lord" in the destruction of Jerusalem within three or four years of Paul's death. Henry Van Dyke: "The point of Paul's teaching in 1 and 2 Thess. is not that Christ is coming to-morrow, but that he is surely coming." The absence of perspective in prophecy may explain Paul's not at first defining the precise time of the end, and so leaving it to be misunderstood.

The second Epistle to the Thessalonians, therefore, only makes more plain the meaning of the first, and adds new items of prediction. It is important to recognize in Paul's epistles a progress in prophecy, in doctrine, in church polity. The full statement of the truth was gradually drawn out, under the influence of the Spirit, upon occasion of successive outward demands and inward experiences. Much is to be learned by studying the chronological order of Paul's epistles, as well as of the other N. T. books. For evidence of similar progress in the epistles of Peter, compare 1 Pet. 4:7 with 2 Pet. 3:4 *sq.*

(d) The character of prophecy as a rough general sketch of the future, in highly figurative language, and without historical perspective, renders it peculiarly probable that what at first sight seem to be errors are due to a misinterpretation on our part, which confounds the drapery with the substance, or applies its language to events to which it had no reference.

James 5:9 and Phil 4:5 are instances of that large prophetic speech which regards the distant future as near at hand, because so certain to the faith and hope of the church. Sanday, *Inspiration*, 376-378—"No doubt the Christians of the Apostolic age did live in immediate expectation of the Second Coming, and that expectation culminated at the crisis in which the Apocalypse was written. In the Apocalypse, as in every predictive prophecy, there is a double element, one part derived from the circumstances of the present and another pointing forwards to the future.... All these things, in an exact and literal sense have fallen through with the postponement of that great event in which they

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centre. From the first they were but meant as the imaginative pictorial and symbolical clothing of that event. What measure of real fulfilment the Apocalypse may yet be destined to receive we cannot tell. But in predictive prophecy, even when most closely verified, the essence lies less in the prediction than in the eternal laws of moral and religious truth which the fact predicted reveals or exemplifies." Thus we recognize both the divinity and the freedom of prophecy, and reject the rationalistic theory which would relate the fall of the Beaconsfield government in Matthew's way: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Cromwell, saying: 'Get you gone, and make room for honest men!' " See the more full statement of the nature of prophecy, on pages 132–141. Also Bernard, *Progress of Doctrine in the N. T.*

7. Certain books unworthy of a place in inspired Scripture

(a) This charge may be shown, in each single case, to rest upon a misapprehension of the aim and method of the book, and its connection with the remainder of the Bible, together with a narrowness of nature or of doctrinal view, which prevents the critic from appreciating the wants of the peculiar class of men to which the book is especially serviceable.

Luther called James "a right strawy epistle." His constant pondering of the doctrine of justification by faith alone made it difficult for him to grasp the complementary truth that we are justified only by such faith as brings forth good works, or to perceive the essential agreement of James and Paul. Prof. R. E. Thompson, in *S. S. Times*, Dec. 3, 1898:803, 804— "Luther refused canonical authority to books not actually written by apostles or composed (as Mark and Luke) under their direction. So he rejected from the rank of canonical authority Hebrews, James, Jude, 2 Peter, Revelation. Even Calvin doubted the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter, excluded the book of Revelation from the Scripture on which he wrote Commentaries, and also thus ignored 2 and 3 John." G. P. Fisher in *S. S. Times*, Aug. 29, 1891—"Luther, in his preface to the N. T. (Edition of 1522), gives a list of what he considers as the principal books of the N. T. These are John's Gospel and First Epistle, Paul's Epistles, especially Romans and Galatians, and Peter's First Epistle. Then he adds that 'St. James' Epistle is a right strawy Epistle *compared with them*'—'ein recht strohern Epistel gegen sie,' thus characterizing it not absolutely but only relatively." Zwingle even said of the Apocalypse: "It is not a Biblical book." So Thomas Arnold, with his exaggerated love for historical accuracy and definite outline, found the Oriental imagery and sweeping visions of the book of Revelation so bizarre and distasteful that he doubted their divine authority.

(b) The testimony of church history and general Christian experience to the profitableness and divinity of the disputed books is of greater weight than the personal impressions of the few who criticize them.

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Instance the testimonies of the ages of persecution to the worth of the prophecies, which assure God's people that his cause shall surely triumph. Denney, *Studies in Theology*, 226—“It is at least as likely that the individual should be insensible to the divine message in a book, as that the church should have judged it to contain such a message if it did not do so.” Milton, *Areopagitica*: “The Bible brings in holiest men passionately murmuring against Providence through all the arguments of Epicurus.” Bruce, *Apologetics*, 329—“O. T. religion was querulous, vindictive, philolevitical, hostile toward foreigners, morbidly self-conscious, and tending to self-righteousness. Ecclesiastes shows us how we ought *not* to feel. To go about crying *Vanitas!* is to miss the lesson it was meant to teach, namely, that the Old Covenant was vanity—proved to be vanity by allowing a son of the Covenant to get into so despairing a mood.” Chadwick says that Ecclesiastes got into the Canon only after it had received an orthodox postscript.

Pfleiderer, *Philos. Religion*, 1:193—“Slavish fear and self-righteous reckoning with God are the unlovely features of this Jewish religion of law to which the ethical idealism of the prophets had degenerated, and these traits strike us most visibly in Pharsiaism.... It was this side of the O. T. religion to which Christianity took a critical and destroying attitude, while it revealed a new and higher knowledge of God. For, says Paul, ‘ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption’ (Rom. 8:15). In unity with God man does not lose his soul but preserves it. God not only commands but gives.” Ian Maclaren (John Watson), *Cure of Souls*, 144—“When the book of Ecclesiastes is referred to the days of the third century B.C., then its note is caught, and any man who has been wronged and embittered by political tyranny and social corruption has his bitter cry included in the book of God.”

(c) Such testimony can be adduced in favor of the value of each one of the books to which exception is taken, such as Esther, Job, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Jonah, James, Revelation.

Esther is the book, next to the Pentateuch, held in highest reverence by the Jews. “Job was the discoverer of infinity, and the first to see the bearing of infinity on righteousness. It was the return of religion to nature. Job heard the voice beyond the Sinai-voice” (Shadow-Cross, 89). Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 43—“As to the Song of Solomon, its influence upon Christian Mysticism has been simply deplorable. A graceful romance in honor of true love has been distorted into a precedent and sanction for giving way to hysterical emotions in which sexual imagery has been freely used to symbolize the relation between the soul and its Lord.” Chadwick says that the Song of Solomon got into the Canon only after it had received an allegorical interpretation. Gladden, *Seven Puzzling Bible Books*, 165, thinks it impossible that “the addition of one more inmate to the harem of that royal rake, King Solomon, should have been made the type of the spiritual affection between Christ and his church. Instead of this, the book is a glorification of pure love. The Shulamite, transported to the court of Solomon, remains faithful to her shepherd lover, and is restored to him.”

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Bruce, *Apologetics*, 321—“The Song of Solomon, literally interpreted as a story of true love, proof against the blandishments of the royal harem, is rightfully in the Canon as a buttress to the true religion; for whatever made for purity in the relations of the sexes made for the worship of Jehovah—Baal worship and impurity being closely associated.” Rutherford, McCheyne, and Spurgeon have taken more texts from the Song of Solomon than from any other portion of Scripture of like extent. Charles G. Finney, *Autobiography*, 378—“At this time it seemed as if my soul was wedded to Christ in a sense which I never had any thought or conception of before. The language of the Song of Solomon was as natural to me as my breath. I thought I could understand well the state he was in when he wrote that Song, and concluded then, as I have ever thought since, that that Song was written by him after he had been reclaimed from his great backsliding. I not only had all the fulness of my first love, but a vast accession to it. Indeed, the Lord lifted me up so much above anything that I had experienced before, and taught me so much of the meaning of the Bible, of Christ’s relations and power and willingness, that I found myself saying to him: I had not known or conceived that any such thing was true.” On Jonah, see R. W. Dale, in *Expositor*, July, 1892, advocating the non-historical and allegorical character of the book. *Bib. Sac.*, 10:737–764—“Jonah represents the nation of Israel as emerging through a miracle from the exile, in order to carry out its mission to the world at large. It teaches that God is the God of the whole earth; that the Ninevites as well as the Israelites are dear to him; that his threatenings of penalty are conditional.”

8. Portions of the Scripture books written by others than the persons to whom they are ascribed

The objection rests upon a misunderstanding of the nature and object of inspiration. It may be removed by considering that

(a) In the case of books made up from preëxisting documents, inspiration simply preserved the compilers of them from selecting inadequate or improper material. The fact of such compilation does not impugn their value as records of a divine revelation, since these books supplement each other’s deficiencies and together are sufficient for man’s religious needs.

Luke distinctly informs us that he secured the materials for his gospel from the reports of others who were eye-witnesses of the events he recorded (Luke 1:1–4). The book of Genesis bears marks of having incorporated documents of earlier times. The account of creation which begins with Gen. 2:4 is evidently written by a different hand from that which penned 1:1–31 and 2:1–30. Instances of the same sort may be found in the books of Chronicles. In like manner, Marshall’s *Life of Washington* incorporates documents by other writers. By thus incorporating them, Marshall vouches for their truth. See *Bible Com.*, 1:2, 22.

Dorner, *Hist. Prot. Theology*, 1:243—“Luther ascribes to faith critical authority with reference to the Canon. He denies the canonicity of James, without regarding it as

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spurious. So of Hebrews and Revelation, though later, in 1545, he passed a more favorable judgment upon the latter. He even says of a proof adduced by Paul in Galatians that it is too weak to hold. He allows that in external matters not only Stephen but even the sacred authors contain inaccuracies. The authority of the O. T. does not seem to him invalidated by the admission that several of its writings have passed through revising hands. What would it matter, he asks, if Moses did not write the Pentateuch? The prophets studied Moses and one another. If they built in much wood, hay and stubble along with the rest, still the foundation abides; the fire of the great day shall consume the former; for in this manner do we treat the writings of Augustine and others. Kings is far more to be believed than Chronicles. Ecclesiastes is forged and cannot come from Solomon. Esther is not canonical. The church may have erred in adopting a book into the Canon. Faith first requires proof. Hence he ejects the Apocryphal books of the O. T. from the Canon. So some parts of the N. T. receive only a secondary, deutero-canonical position. There is a difference between the word of God and the holy Scriptures, not merely in reference to the form, but also in reference to the subject matter."

H. P. Smith, *Bib. Scholarship and Inspiration*, 94—"The Editor of the Minor Prophets united in one roll the prophetic fragments which were in circulation in his time. Finding a fragment without an author's name he inserted it in the series. It would not have been distinguished from the work of the author immediately preceding. So Zech. 9:1-4 came to go under the name of Zechariah, and Is. 40-66 under the name of Isaiah. Reuss called these 'anatomical studies.' " On the authorship of the book of Daniel, see W. C. Wilkinson, in *Homiletical Review*, March, 1902:208, and Oct. 1902:305; on Paul, see *Hom. Rev.*, June, 1902:501; on 110th Psalm, *Hom. Rev.*, April, 1902:309.

(b) In the case of additions to Scripture books by later writers, it is reasonable to suppose that the additions, as well as the originals, were made by inspiration, and no essential truth is sacrificed by allowing the whole to go under the name of the chief author.

Mark 16:9-20 appears to have been added by a later hand (see English Revised Version). The Eng. Rev. Vers. also brackets or segregates a part of verse 3 and the whole of verse 4 in John 5 (the moving of the water by the angel), and the whole passage John 7:53-8:11 (the woman taken in adultery). Westcott and Hort regard the latter passage as an interpolation, probably "Western" in its origin (so also Mark 16:9-20). Others regard it as authentic, though not written by John. The closing chapter of Deuteronomy was apparently added after Moses' death—perhaps by Joshua. If criticism should prove other portions of the Pentateuch to have been composed after Moses' time, the inspiration of the Pentateuch would not be invalidated, so long as Moses was its chief author or even the original source and founder of its legislation (John 5:46—"he wrote of me"). Gore, in *Lux Mundi*, 355—"Deuteronomy may be a republication of the law, in the spirit and power of Moses, and put dramatically into his mouth."

At a spot near the Pool of Siloam, Manasseh is said to have ordered that Isaiah should be sawn asunder with a wooden saw. The prophet is again sawn asunder by the recent

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criticism. But his prophecy opens (Is. 1:1) with the statement that it was composed during a period which covered the reigns of four kings—Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah—nearly forty years. In so long a time the style of a writer greatly changes. Chapters 40–66 may have been written in Isaiah’s later age, after he had retired from public life. Compare the change in the style of Zechariah, John and Paul, with that in Thomas Carlyle and George William Curtis. On Isaiah, see Smyth, *Prophecy a Preparation for Christ; Bib. Sac.*, Apr. 1881:230–253; also July, 1881; Stanley, *Jewish Ch.*, 2:646, 647; Nägelsbach, *Int. to Lange’s Isaiah*.

For the view that there were two Isaiahs, see George Adam Smith, *Com. on Isaiah*, 2:1–25: Isaiah flourished B.C. 740–700. The last 27 chapters deal with the captivity (598–538) and with Cyrus (550), whom they name. The book is not one continuous prophecy, but a number of separate orations. Some of these claim to be Isaiah’s own, and have titles, such as “The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz” (1:1); “The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw” (2:1). But such titles describe only the individual prophecies they head. Other portions of the book, on other subjects and in different styles, have no titles at all. Chapters 40–66 do not claim to be his. There are nine citations in the N. T. from the disputed chapters, but none by our Lord. None of these citations were given in answer to the question: Did Isaiah write chapters 44–66? Isaiah’s name is mentioned only for the sake of reference. Chapters 44–66 set forth the exile and captivity as already having taken place. Israel is addressed as ready for deliverance. Cyrus is named as deliverer. There is no grammar of the future like Jeremiah’s. Cyrus is pointed out as proof that *former* prophecies of deliverance are at last coming to pass. He is not presented as a prediction, but as a proof that prediction is being fulfilled. The prophet could not have referred the heathen to Cyrus as proof that prophecy had been fulfilled, had he not been visible to them in all his weight of war. Babylon has still to fall before the exiles can go free. But chapters 40–66 speak of the coining of Cyrus as past, and of the fall of Babylon as yet to come. Why not use the prophetic perfect of both, if both were yet future? Local color, language and thought are all consistent with exilic authorship. All suits the exile, but all is foreign to the subjects and methods of Isaiah, for example, the use of the terms *righteous* and *righteousness*. Calvin admits exilic authorship (on Is. 55:3). The passage 56:9–57, however, is an exception and is preëxilic. 40–48 are certainly by one hand, and may be dated 555–538. 2nd Isaiah is not a unity, but consists of a number of pieces written before, during, and after the exile, to comfort the people of God.

(c) It is unjust to deny to inspired Scripture the right exercised by all historians of introducing certain documents and sayings as simply historical, while their complete truthfulness is neither vouched for nor denied.

An instance in point is the letter of Claudius Lysias in Acts 23:26–30—a letter which represents his conduct in a more favorable light than the facts would justify—for he had not learned that Paul was a Roman when he rescued him in the temple (Acts 21:31–33; 22:26–29). An incorrect statement may be correctly reported. A set of pamphlets printed

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in the time of the French Revolution might be made an appendix to some history of France without implying that the historian vouched for their truth. The sacred historians may similarly have been inspired to use only the material within their reach, leaving their readers by comparison with other Scriptures to judge of its truthfulness and value. This seems to have been the method adopted by the compiler of 1 and 2 Chronicles. The moral and religious lessons of the history are patent, even though there is inaccuracy in reporting some of the facts. So the assertions of the authors of the Psalms cannot be taken for absolute truth. The authors were not sinless models for the Christian, — only Christ is that. But the Psalms present us with a record of the actual experience of believers in the past. It has its human weakness, but we can profit by it, even though it expresses itself at times in imprecations. Jeremiah 20:7 — “O Lord, thou hast deceived me” — may possibly be thus explained.

9. *Sceptical or fictitious Narratives*

(a) Descriptions of human experience may be embraced in Scripture, not as models for imitation, but as illustrations of the doubts, struggles, and needs of the soul. In these cases inspiration may vouch, not for the correctness of the views expressed by those who thus describe their mental history, but only for the correspondence of the description with actual fact, and for its usefulness as indirectly teaching important moral lessons.

The book of Ecclesiastes, for example, is the record of the mental struggles of a soul seeking satisfaction without God. If written by Solomon during the time of his religious declension, or near the close of it, it would constitute a most valuable commentary upon the inspired history. Yet it might be equally valuable, though composed by some later writer under divine direction and inspiration. H. P. Smith, *Bib. Scholarship and Inspiration*, 97 — “To suppose Solomon the author of Ecclesiastes is like supposing Spenser to have written *In Memoriam*.” Luther, Keil, Delitzsch, Ginsburg, Hengstenberg all declare it to be a production of later times (330 B.C.). The book shows experience of misgovernment. An earlier writer cannot write in the style of a later one, though the later can imitate the earlier. The early Latin and Greek Fathers quoted the Apocryphal Wisdom of Solomon as by Solomon; see Plumptre, *Introd. to Ecclesiastes*, in *Cambridge Bible. Gore*, in *Lux Mundi*, 355 — “Ecclesiastes, though like the book of Wisdom purporting to be by Solomon, may be by another author.... ‘A pious fraud’ cannot be inspired; an idealizing personification, as a normal type of literature, can be inspired.” Yet Bernhard Schäfer, *Das Buch Koheleth*, ably maintains the Solomonic authorship.

(b) Moral truth may be put by Scripture writers into parabolic or dramatic form, and the sayings of Satan and of perverse men may form parts of such production. In such cases, inspiration may vouch, not for the historical truth, much less for the moral truth of each separate statement, but only for the correspondence of the whole with ideal fact; in other words, inspiration may guarantee that the story is true to nature, and is valuable as conveying divine instruction.

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It is not necessary to suppose that the poetical speeches of Job's friends were actually delivered in the words that have come down to us. Though Job never had a historical existence, the book would still be of the utmost value, and would convey to us a vast amount of true teaching with regard to the dealings of God and the problem of evil. Fact is local; truth is universal. Some novels contain more truth can be found in some histories. Other books of Scripture, however, assure us that Job was an actual historical character (Ex. 14:14; James 5:11). Nor is it necessary to suppose that our Lord, in telling the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11–32) or that of the Unjust Steward (16:1–8), had in mind actual persons of whom each parable was an exact description.

Fiction is not an unworthy vehicle of spiritual truth. Parable, and even fable, may convey valuable lessons. In Judges 9:14, 15, the trees, the vine, the bramble, all talk. If truth can be transmitted in myth and legend, surely God may make use of these methods of communicating it, and even though Gen. 1–3 were mythical it might still be inspired. Aristotle said that poetry is truer than history. The latter only tells us that certain things happened. Poetry presents to us the permanent passions, aspirations and deeds of men which are behind all history and which make it what it is; see Dewey, *Psychology*, 197. Though Job were a drama and Jonah an apologue, both might be inspired. David Copperfield, the *Apology of Socrates*, Fra Lippo Lippi, were not the authors of the productions which bear their names, but Dickens, Plato and Browning, rather. Impersonation is a proper method in literature. The speeches of Herodotus and Thucydides might be analogues to those in Deuteronomy and in the Acts, and yet these last might be inspired.

The book of Job could not have been written in patriarchal times. Walled cities, kings, courts, lawsuits, prisons, stocks, mining enterprises, are found in it. Judges are bribed by the rich to decide against the poor. All this belongs to the latter years of the Jewish Kingdom. Is then the book of Job all a lie? No more than Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and the parable of the Good Samaritan are all a lie. The book of Job is a dramatic poem. Like Macbeth or the Ring and the Book, it is founded in fact. H. P. Smith, *Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration*, 101—"The value of the book of Job lies in the spectacle of a human soul in its direst affliction working through its doubts, and at last humbly confessing its weakness and sinfulness in the presence of its Maker. The inerrancy is not in Job's words or in those of his friends, but in the truth of the picture presented. If Jehovah's words at the end of the book are true, then the first thirty-five chapters are not infallible teaching."

Gore, in *Lux Mundi*, 355, suggests in a similar manner that the books of Jonah and of Daniel may be dramatic compositions worked up upon a basis of history. George Adam Smith, in the *Expositors' Bible*, tells us that Jonah flourished 780 B.C., in the reign of Jeroboam II. Nineveh fell in 606. The book implies that it was written after this (3:3—"Nineveh was an exceeding great city"). The book does not claim to be written by Jonah, by an eye-witness, or by a contemporary. The language has Aramaic forms. The date is probably 300 B.C., There is an absence of precise data, such as the sin of Nineveh, the journey of the prophet thither, the place where he was cast out on land, the name of the

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Assyrian king. The book illustrates God's mission of prophecy to the Gentiles, his care for them, their susceptibility to his word. Israel flies from duty, but is delivered to carry salvation to the heathen. Jeremiah had represented Israel as swallowed up and cast out (Jer. 51:34, 44 sq.—“Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon hath devoured me.... he hath, like a monster, swallowed me up, he hath filled his maw with my delicacies; he hath cast me out.... I will bring forth out of his month that which he hath swallowed up.” Some tradition of Jonah's proclaiming doom to Nineveh may have furnished the basis of the apologue. Our Lord uses the story as a mere illustration, like the homiletic use of Shakespeare's dramas. “As Macbeth did,” “As Hamlet said,” do not commit us to the historical reality of Macbeth or of Hamlet. Jesus may say as to questions of criticism: “Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?” “I came not to judge the world, but to save the world” (Luke 12:14; John 12:47). He had no thought of confirming, or of not confirming, the historic character of the story. It is hard to conceive the compilation of a psalm by a man in Jonah's position. It is not the prayer of one inside the fish, but of one already saved. More than forty years ago President Woolsey of Yale conceded that the book of Jonah was probably an apologue.

(c) In none of these cases ought the difficulty of distinguishing man's words from God's words, or ideal truth from actual truth, to prevent our acceptance of the fact of inspiration; for in this very variety of the Bible, combined with the stimulus it gives to inquiry and the general plainness of its lessons, we have the very characteristics we should expect in a book whose authorship was divine.

The Scripture is a stream in which “the lamb may wade and the elephant may swim.” There is need both of literary sense and of spiritual insight to interpret it. This sense and this insight can be given only by the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, who inspired the various writings to witness of him in various ways, and who is present in the world to take of the things of Christ and show them to us (Mat. 28:20; John 16:13, 14). In a subordinate sense the Holy Spirit inspires us to recognize inspiration in the Bible. In the sense here suggested we may assent to the words of Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst at the inauguration of William Adams Brown as Professor of Systematic Theology in the Union Theological Seminary, November 1, 1898—“Unfortunately we have condemned the word ‘inspiration’ to a particular and isolated field of divine operation, and it is a trespass upon current usage to employ it in the full urgency of its Scriptural intent in connection with work like your own or mine. But the word voices a reality that lies so close to the heart of the entire Christian matter that we can ill afford to relegate it to any single or technical function. Just as much to-day as back at the first beginnings of Christianity, those who would *declare* the truths of God must be inspired to *behold* the truths of God.... The only irresistible persuasiveness is that which is born of vision, and it is *not* vision to be able merely to describe what some seer has seen, though it were Moses or Paul that was the seer.”

10. *Acknowledgment of the non-inspiration of Scripture teachers and their writings*

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This charge rests mainly upon the misinterpretation of two particular passages:

(a) Acts 23:5 (“I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest”) may be explained either as the language of indignant irony: “I would not recognize such a man as high priest”; or, more naturally, an actual confession of personal ignorance and fallibility, which does not affect the inspiration of any of Paul’s final teachings or writings.

Of a more reprehensible sort was Peter’s dissimulation at Antioch, or practical disavowal of his convictions by separating or withdrawing himself from the Gentile Christians (Gal. 2:11–13). Here was no public teaching, but the Influence of private example. But neither in this case, nor in that mentioned above, did God suffer the error to be a final one. Through the agency of Paul, the Holy Spirit set the matter right.

(b) 1 Cor. 7:12, 10 (“I, not the Lord”; “not I, but the Lord”). Here the contrast is not between the apostle inspired and the apostle uninspired, but between the apostle’s words and an actual saying of our Lord, as in Mat. 5:32; 19:3–10; 19:3–10; Luke 16:18 (Stanley on Corinthians). The expressions may be paraphrased:—“With regard to this matter no express command was given by Christ before his ascension. As one inspired by Christ, however, I give you my command.”

Meyer on 1 Cor. 7:10—“Paul distinguishes, therefore, here and in verses 12, 25, not between *his own* and *inspired* commands, but between those which proceeded from his own (God-inspired) subjectivity and those which Christ himself supplied by his objective word.” “Paul knew from the living voice of tradition what commands Christ had given concerning divorce.” Or if it should be maintained that Paul here disclaims inspiration,—a supposition contradicted by the following $\delta\omicron\kappa\omega$ —“I think that I also have the Spirit of God” (verse 40),—it only proves a single exception to his inspiration, and since it is expressly mentioned, and mentioned only once, it implies the inspiration of all the rest of his writings. We might illustrate Paul’s method, if this were the case, by the course of the *New York Herald* when it was first published. Other journals had stood by their own mistakes and had never been willing to acknowledge error. The *Herald* gained the confidence of the public by correcting every mistake of its reporters. The result was that, when there was no confession of error, the paper was regarded as absolutely trustworthy. So Paul’s one acknowledgment of non-inspiration might imply that in all other cases his words had divine authority. On Authority in Religion, see Wilfred Ward, in *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1903:677–692.¹

¹ Strong, A. H. (1907). *Systematic theology* (pp. 222–243). Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society.