

OUTLINE STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES

by

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CHAPTER ONE

BIBLIOLOGY

TOPIC ONE: REVELATION

I. DEFINITION

Revelation may be defined as a supernatural communication from God to man, either oral or written. The term is usually understood of a written communication. "Revelation is a discovery by God to man of Himself, or of His will over and above what He has made known by the light of nature or reason" (Horne).

II. METHOD

A twofold method of revelation is possible:

1. An immediate revelation to each person.

But to this there are serious objections:

a. *It would interfere with the freedom of the will.* Some persons might not be willing to receive a revelation from God direct, but according to the theory it would have to be forced upon them.

b. *It would have to be repeated to each one.* Even on the part of God this would be, so to speak, a waste of time and effort.

c. *It would open the way for contradiction and imposture.* Human nature being what it is, people would not agree as to the revelation they had received. Moreover, some would not only delude themselves as to what they had received, but would claim to have received what they knew they never had received.

2. A written revelation once given and thoroughly accredited.

This method has marked advantages:

- a. *It is more fair and open than oral tradition.*
- b. *It is more certain than oral tradition.*
- c. *It is more permanent than oral tradition.*
- d. *It is required by the importance of the subject.*
- e. *It is more satisfactory, when properly accredited.*

The credentials of a written revelation are attested miracle and fulfilled prophecy.

NOTE: Some of God's ways of making known His will to man are:

- signs (as Moses' rod),
- symbols (as the pillar of cloud and fire),
- dreams (such as Joseph, Pharaoh, etc. had),
- face-to-face communications (as Moses had),
- the *urim* and *thummin* (probably by the changing of the color of the stones),
- the lot, visions, miracles, prophecy, the incarnation, answered prayer, providential events,
- the voice of the Lord in the heart, etc., etc.

III. SOME REASONS FOR BELIEVING IN A SPECIAL DIVINE REVELATION

1. It is possible.

Granted the omnipotence of God, He is able to make His mind known to man.

2. It is probable.

Granted the wisdom and goodness of God, these would prompt Him to communicate with man. Philosophers of all ages have thought a divine revelation probable, and have expected it.

3. It is credible.

Granted that a special divine revelation is both possible and probable, it is natural and easy to believe that one has been given.

Human nature is more credulous than incredulous. Thus, in all ages mankind has been prone to believe in alleged supernatural revelations. Witness the sacred books of the East, *The Koran*, *Book of Mormons*, *Records of Spiritism*, Mrs. Eddy's "*Science and Health, Key to the Scriptures*," etc.

4. It is necessary.

- a. *The imperfect light of nature calls for the perfect light of revelation.*

Nature throws no light on the Trinity, the atonement, pardon, method of worship, personal existence after death, etc.

“Even the truth to which we arrive by our natural powers needs divine confirmation and authority when it addresses minds and wills perverted by sin. To break this power of sin and to furnish encouragement to moral effort, we need a special divine revelation of the merciful and helpful aspect of the divine nature . . . While conscience gives proof that God is a God of holiness, we have not, from the light of nature, equal evidence that God is a God of love.

“Reason teaches man that, as a sinner, he merits condemnation; but he cannot from reason alone know that God will have mercy upon him and provide salvation. His doubts can be removed only by God’s own voice, assuring him of **redemption . . . the forgiveness of . . . sins** [*trespasses*],’ Ephesians 1:7, and revealing to him the way in which that forgiveness has been rendered possible” (Strong).

b. *The healing power of nature and her delay in meting out justice to the transgressor of her laws is a parable of the divine way of salvation for the sinner: II Peter 3:9.*

c. *The dense ignorance, low morality, and abject helplessness of man in his natural state demand the illumination, righteousness, and power which the Scriptures reveal and provide.*

- The Babylonians worshiped nature;
- The Egyptians, animals; the Greeks and Romans,
- The deified passions of humanity, etc.

d. *Man’s spiritual longings require satisfaction: Job 31:35.*

e. *Man needs a final authority for creed and conduct.*

IV. CERTAINTY OF A SPECIAL DIVINE REVELATION

The above grounds afford strong presumption for the reasonableness of believing in a revelation from God; that is, the Holy Scriptures. But we are not left without absolute certainty that the Bible is such a revelation.

By the twofold proof of attested miracle and fulfilled prophecy God has certified His Book.

NOTE: “For two reasons God has given us a written revelation: Because He is absent; and ‘Lest we forget’: Joshua 1:13; Malachi 4:4; Jude 17” (Chapell).

TOPIC TWO: CANONICITY

I. DEFINITION OF CANON

Canon (from the Greek *kanon*—*reed or measuring rod*), is a rule of life or doctrine.

Thus, there are canons of music, art, criticism, etc., which are the fundamental principles of these subjects.

II. CANON OF SCRIPTURE

The canon of Scripture comprises the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, which being inspired of God constitute the infallible rule of faith and practice of the Christian Church and the individual believer.

III. DEFINITION OF CANONICITY

The canonicity of any book of the Bible means its right to a place in the sacred canon. Canonicity is used of a single book; canon, of the whole volume.

IV. LAW OF CANONICITY FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT

To have a place in the Old Testament, a book must have been written, edited, or endorsed by a prophet.

Christ, the Great “**Prophet**,” Deuteronomy 18:15, endorsed the Old Testament Scriptures, and thus forever established the right of all the books to a place therein: Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39.

The three recognized divisions of the Old Testament were: the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

NOTE: In the New Testament are 263 direct quotations and about 350 indirect allusions to the Old Testament. All but seven Old Testament books are referred to, viz: Obadiah, Nahum, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Esther, Ezra and Nehemiah. However, as Dr. Schaff says: “The absence of quotation in the New Testament of any Old Testament book argues nothing against its canonicity.”

The Apocrypha—*hidden, covered*—consists of 14 books not found in the Hebrew Old Testament, but in the Septuagint (Greek LXX), and also in the Vulgate (Latin), Versions. It is accepted by the Roman Catholic Church. The Lutheran and the Episcopalian Churches appoint it to be read for “example of life and instruction in manner, but not the establishing of doctrine.”

V. LAW OF CANONICITY FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT

To have a place in the New Testament, a book must have been written or endorsed by an Apostle, or received as divine authority in the Apostolic Age. Thus, Mark was endorsed by Peter; Hebrews, by Paul.

NOTE: I. Luther’s law of canonicity was the power of a book to teach Christ. James, he called “A right straw-y epistle,” because he believed James contradicted Paul on the subject of Faith and Works: Romans 4 and James 2. Jude, Luther called “An unnecessary epistle.” He also rejected Hebrews and Revelation.

NOTE: 2. There is a well-founded tradition that the Old Testament canon was formed by Ezra.

The New Testament canon was not, as many suppose, formed arbitrarily by decree of Church Council. It is true that the Council of Laodicea, A. D. 363 (which was not an Ecumenical Council), did ratify the canon, but only as already accepted by the churches. But the canon of the New Testament was formed gradually under the providence of God, the Holy Spirit in the churches, we believe, giving the needed discernment to accept the genuine and reject the spurious.

The fact that certain books were for some time held in doubt, but later were accepted simply shows what care was exercised.

These books are seven in number and are called "*Antilegomena*," that is, spoken against. They are: Hebrews, James, II Peter, II and III John, Jude, and Revelation. The New Testament books were read in the churches, I Thessalonians 5:27; were circulated among the churches, Colossians 4:16; II Peter 3:15, 16; and the churches were warned against forgeries, II Thessalonians 2:2.

TOPIC THREE: GENUINENESS

I. DEFINITION

The Genuineness of the Scriptures involves two questions, authorship and date. Were the various books of the Bible written by the men to whom they are ascribed? And, were they written at the time, approximately, to which they are assigned?

NOTE: Genuineness is opposed to spuriousness. A corrupt text is an altered text.

II. GENUINENESS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

This, like its canonicity, or rather the canonicity of the books, was settled by Christ: Luke 24:27, 44.

Christ's witness to the Old Testament, as a whole or any part thereof, is a sufficient answer to Higher Criticism. For example, take Jonah. See Matthew 12:39, 40; Luke 11:29. Also, the so-called "Deutero-Isaiah": Matthew 8:17; Luke 4:17, 18, etc.

III. GENUINENESS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

If we had Christ's witness to the New Testament, as we have His witness to the Old Testament, this would be sufficient; but in its absence we resort to what is known as external and internal evidence.

1. External proof.

There is satisfactory evidence that the New Testament, as we now have it, was accepted as genuine before A. D. 200. This would necessitate a long-continued previous existence, since the transcription of manuscripts and their circulation were very slow.

NOTE: 1. Irenaeus (A. D. 120-200) refers to the four Gospels. Polycarp (A. D. 80-166) was his teacher and friend. And Polycarp's teacher and friend was John, the Beloved Apostle. See John Urquhart's "*Structure of the Bible.*"

NOTE: 2. A chain of four links binds the 20th to the 1st century:

A. The printed Bible. From the American Standard Version to the Bibles of Coverdale, Tyndale, and Wycliffe of the 15th century.

B. The Greek Manuscripts of the 4th century.

Of these, the greatest are three:

- The Vatican Manuscript, at Rome, under charge of the Roman Catholic Church;
- The Sinaitic, at London, in the British Museum (purchased from Russia, 1933),
- The Alexandrian, at London, under the charge of the Protestant Church.

Including fragments, there are fully 2,000 manuscripts of the Old Testament and 3,000 of the New Testament. Of the Old Testament Manuscripts, there are none older than the sixth or seventh century.

At this time, the Massorites, a school of Jewish Rabbis at Lake Tiberias, having invented a system of vowel points to pronounce the Hebrew text, destroyed all the manuscripts they could find (Of the classic authors, there are sometimes not more than 20 manuscripts, none being older than the 10th century).

C. Quotations found in the writings of the Church and Apostolic Fathers. These are of the 2nd and 3rd centuries, and are sufficient in variety and number to reproduce the entire New Testament.

D. Early Versions, dating, perhaps, as early as A. D. 150.

Of these, the most valuable are:

- The Syriac, of the Eastern Church,
- The Vulgate, or Old Latin, of the Western Church.

The original autographs have been lost. It is improbable, though not impossible, that they will ever be found.

2. Internal proof.

Internal evidence of the genuineness of the Scriptures proceeds upon questions of language, style, history, etc., which cannot properly be discussed here, as they belong to Biblical Introduction.

TOPIC FOUR: AUTHENTICITY

I. DEFINITION

The Authenticity of the Scriptures means their credibility or truthfulness.

II. AUTHENTICITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

This was established by Christ: Luke 24:27, 44.

III. AUTHENTICITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

This is established by proving from the books themselves that the writers were competent, upright, and trustworthy.

1. Competency is proved:

a. *From the common sense and good judgment of the writers* “They do not write like enthusiasts or fanatics.”

b. *From the more-than-average intelligence of the writers.* In this respect, they were superior to men of their time.

c. *From the consideration that the facts they record could be tested by the senses:* I John 1:1. In order to record accurately simple matters of every-day occurrence, a liberal education and a special training are not required.

2. Uprightness is proved:

a. *From the seriousness of tone of the writings.*

A moral earnestness pervades the writings of the New Testament.

b. *From the spirituality of the teaching.*

c. *From the absence of sufficient motive for fraud.*

3. Trustworthiness.

This is proved from competency and uprightiness. As competent, they were able to tell the truth; as upright, they were in duty bound to do so.

TOPIC FIVE: DIVINE AUTHORITY

I. DEFINITION

The Divine Authority of the Scriptures constitutes them the final court of appeal in all matters of Christian faith and practice.

II. SOURCE

The divine authority of the Old Testament rests upon the testimony of Christ: Luke 24:27, 44. But so also does that of the New Testament, as the following facts prove:

- 1. Christ stated plainly that He would leave unfinished the revelation of truth:** John 16:12.
- 2. He promised that the revelation should be completed after His departure:** John 16:12.
- 3. He chose certain persons to receive such additional revelations and to be His witnesses, preachers, and teachers after His departure:** John 15:27; 16:13; Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 9:15-17.
- 4. Knowing beforehand what they would write, He gave to their words precisely the same authority as His own:** Matthew 10:14-15; Luke 10:16; John 13:20; 17:20.

TOPIC SIX: INSPIRATION

I. DEFINITIONS

There are three terms which need to be distinguished, viz: Revelation, Inspiration, and Illumination.

1. Revelation.

Revelation may be defined as that act of God by which He communicates to the mind of man truth not known before and incapable of being discovered by the mind of man unaided.

Revelation is also used of the truth thus communicated.

2. Inspiration.

Inspiration may be defined as the divine influence which renders a speaker or writer infallible in the communication of truth, whether previously known or not. "By the Inspiration of the Scriptures we mean that special divine influence upon the minds of the Scripture writers in virtue of which their productions, apart from errors of transcription and when rightly interpreted, together constitute an infallible rule of faith and practice" (Strong).

3. Illumination.

Illumination may be defined as the divine quickening of the human mind in virtue of which it is enabled to understand truth already revealed. By "truth already revealed" is meant the teachings of the Holy Scriptures.

NOTE: Illumination reveals no new truth, but gives an understanding of old truth: Luke 24:32, 45.

What light is to the eye, illumination is to the mind: Matthew 16:17; I Corinthians 2:10, 14.

- Revelation concerns the discovery of truth— Revelation—Discovery.
- Inspiration, the communication of truth— Inspiration—Communication.
- Illumination, the understanding of truth— Illumination—Understanding

It may help our understanding of terms above employed, if we adduce instances of:

- a. *Inspiration, without Revelation*, as in Luke or Acts: Luke 1:4.
- b. *Inspiration, including Revelation*, as in the Apocalypse: Revelation 1:1-II.
- c. *Inspiration, without Illumination*, as in the Prophets: I Peter 1:1I.
- d. *Inspiration, including Illumination*, as in the case of Paul: I Corinthians 2:12.

II. THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION

The nature of inspiration is brought out in two striking New Testament passages, viz: II Timothy 3:16 and II Peter 1:21.

In the first passage, the Greek word rendered “**inspired of God,**” or “**given by inspiration of God,**” signifies, literally, “*God-breathed*” (*Theopneustos*).

The Authorized Version is more faithful to the Greek than the Revised Version. Says Dr. Wm. Evans:

“If Paul had said, ‘All Scripture that is divinely inspired is also profitable, etc.,’ he would virtually have said, ‘There is some part of the Scripture, some part of the Bible, that is not profitable, etc., and, therefore, not inspired.’ This is what the spirit of rationalism wants, namely, to make human reason the test and judge and measure of what is inspired and what is not. One man says such and such a verse is not profitable to him; another says such and such a verse is not to him. The result is that no Bible is left. Is it possible that anyone need be told the flat and sapless tautology that all divinely inspired Scripture is also profitable? Paul dealt in no such meaningless phrases. The word translated “also” does not mean *also* here. It means *and*. Its position in the sentence shows this. Again, the Revised rendering is shown to be openly false because the revisers refused to render the same Greek construction in the same way, which convicts them of error. In Hebrews 4:13 we have: “All things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

“The form and construction are identical with those of II Timothy 3:16. Were we, however, to translate this passage as the revisers translated the passage in Timothy, it would read: ‘All naked things are also open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.’

“All uncovered things are also exposed things! All naked things are also open things! Again, I Timothy 4:4, ‘Every creature of God is good and nothing is to be rejected.’ According to the principles the revisers adopted in rendering II Timothy 3:16, this passage would read, ‘Every good creature of God is also nothing to be rejected.’ The Greek language has no such meaningless syntax. The place of the verb is, which must be supplied, is directly before the word inspired, and not after it. The great rationalistic scholar, DeWette, confessed candidly that the rendering the revisers adopted here cannot be defended. In his German version of the text, he gave the sense thus: ‘Every sacred writing, i. e., of the canonical Scriptures, is inspired of God and is useful for doctrine,’ etc. Bishops Moberly and Wordsworth, Archbishop Trench and others of the Revision Committee disclaimed any responsibility for the rendering. Dean Burgon pronounced it, ‘The most astonishing as well as calamitous literary blunder of the age.’ It was condemned by Dr. Tregelles.”

In the other passage, II Peter 1:21, the Greek verb rendered **“moved”** (Revised Version, “being moved”) signifies, literally, to be moved upon, or to be borne along, i. e., as by a strong current or mighty influence. The verb-form is the passive participle, and may be rendered “when moved upon or borne along by,” etc. This distinctly teaches that the Scripture was not written by mere men, or at their suggestion, but by men moved upon, prompted, yea indeed, driven by the promptings of the Holy Spirit Dr. Evans continues:

“The statements of the Scripture (viz: in II Timothy and II Peter) may be summed up as follows: Holy men of God, qualified by the infusion of the breath of God, wrote in obedience to the divine command, and were kept from all error, whether they revealed truths previously unknown or recorded truths already familiar.”

NOTE: Inspiration comes from two Latin words, *in* and *spiro*, signifying “*to breathe in.*” So *aspire (ad)* means “*to breathe to*”; *transpire*, “*to breathe across*”; *expire*, “*to breathe out,*” etc.

III. THE EXTENT OF INSPIRATION

What is the extent of inspiration? Is it confined to the essential ideas, the “concept,” so called, or does it include the language of Scripture?

Shall we say, the Bible *contains* the Word of God, or, the Bible *is* the Word of God?

If we are to have accuracy and authority, there can be no such thing as inspired thoughts apart from inspired words; for language is the expression of thought—its embodiment and vehicle. The Bible is the Word of God.

The very words of Scripture are inspired. This is called plenary (i. e., full), verbal inspiration.

A. Testimony of the Old Testament Writers.

1. Balaam: Numbers 22:38; 23:12.

2. Moses: Exodus 4:10-17; Numbers 17:2-3; Deuteronomy 4:2; 6:1; 29:1.

3. **Joshua:** Joshua 1:1-8.
4. **David:** II Samuel 23:2.
5. **Solomon:** Proverbs 30:5-6.
6. **Isaiah:** Isaiah 5:24; 8:1.
7. **Jeremiah:** Jeremiah 1:7-9; 7-27; 13:12; 30:1-2; 36:1, 2, 4, 11,27-32.
8. **Ezekiel:** Ezekiel 2:7; 3:10, 11; 24:2.
9. **Daniel:** Daniel 12:8, 9.
10. **Micah:** Micah 3:8.
11. **Habakkuk:** Habakkuk 2:2.
12. **Zechariah:** Zechariah 7:8-12.

B. Testimony of the New Testament Writers.

1. **Paul:** I Corinthians 2:13; 14:37; I Thessalonians 2:13.
2. **Peter:** I Peter 1:10-11; II Peter 1:20-21; 3:1-2.
3. See also Matthew 10:20; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:12; 21:14-15; Acts 2:4; 4:31; Jude 17; Revelation 2:7.

IV. THEORIES OF INSPIRATION

Nowhere in Scripture is the nature of inspiration fully explained — the *modus operandi*, so to speak. In every work of the Holy Spirit, there is a profoundly mysterious element, else it would not be a work of the Spirit.

However, Bible students have not been content to accept the fact of inspiration and such hints of its nature as we have found recorded in II Timothy 3:16 and II Peter 1:21. They have insisted on formulating theories of inspiration. Of such, the principal ones are the following:

1. Intuitional Theory.

This consists in a so-called “exaltation of intuitional consciousness.” It may be called natural inspiration.

The view admits little more than a preeminent degree of genius, such as Shakespeare, Milton, etc., possessed. This theory is held by Unitarians, at least by many of them.

2. Illuminational Theory.

This consists in a preeminent degree of spiritual illumination, such as may be possessed by all believers.

“If this be the true view, there seems to be no plausible reason why a new Bible should not be possible today. And yet no individual, however extreme his claims to inspiration may be, has ever ventured such a task” (Evans).

3. Mechanical Theory.

This view holds that the writers of the Bible were mere tools, passive instruments, automatons, or unconscious penmen of the divine Spirit.

It is the *Dictation Theory*, ignoring the human element, and giving the writers no scope for the free play of personality, and allowing nothing for differences of language, style, etc.

This view is disproved, for example, by the varied wording of the superscription over the Cross:

- “**This is Jesus, the King of the Jews**”: Matthew 27:37;
- “**The King of the Jews**”: Mark 15:36;
- “**This is the King of the Jews**”: Luke 23:38;
- “**Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews**”: John 19:19.

4. Dynamical Theory.

This view, as the name suggests, concedes power sufficient for all the facts.

While it maintains the superintendence of the Holy Spirit, rendering the writers of Scripture infallible in their communications of truth and thus making their writings inerrant, yet it leaves room for the freest and fullest play of personality, style, etc.

This theory accords with the verbal, plenary view of inspiration.

V. PROOFS OF INSPIRATION

These are twofold, viz: Internal and External.

A. Internal.

These are Direct and Indirect.

1. Direct.

a. Second Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21.

b. “**Thus saith the Lord,**” occurring over 2,000 times.

c. The way Old Testament quotations are introduced into the New Testament. See Matthew 1:22; Acts 2:16, 17; Hebrews 3:7.

d. The way Christ and the Apostles treat the Old Testament. See Matthew 8:16-17; John 10:35.

e. The expression: “**It is written.**” See Matthew 4:7; Luke 4:10; Galatians 3:10; Hebrews 10:7; II Peter 3:2, 15-16; Revelation 2:7.

f. The claim of Old Testament and New Testament writers (considered above).

2. Indirect.

- a. *Supernatural character of the Bible.*
- b. *Supernatural character of Christ.*
- c. *Unity of Scripture.*
- d. *Number of Scripture.*
- e. *Chronology of Scripture.*
- f. *Wonderful knowledge of Scripture:*

- (1) *Light before sun:* Genesis 1:4;
- (2) *Firmament, (expanse):* Genesis 1:7;
- (3) *Music of spheres:* Job 38:7; Psalm 65-8;
- (4) *Circulation of the blood:* Ecclesiastes 12:6;
- (5) *Gravitation:* Job 26:7;
- (6) *Number of the stars:* Jeremiah 33:22;
- (7) *Order of creation in accord with science:* Genesis 1;
- (8) *Revolution of the earth on its axis:* Job 38:13, 14;
- (9) *Weight of atmosphere:* Job 28:25.

See “*Many Infallible Proofs,*” by A. T. Pierson, Chapters 5-7.

B. External.

- 1. Questions of introduction.**
- 2. Attested miracle.**
- 3. Fulfilled prophecy.**
- 4. Spread of the Gospel.**
- 5. Preservation of the Bible.**
- 6. Character of Christ.**
- 7. Existence of the Christian Church.**
- 8. Testimony of Christian experience.**

“Whatever finds me bears witness that it has proceeded from a Holy Spirit; in the Bible, there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together” (S. T. Coleridge).

“**O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in him**”: Psalm 34:8.

TOPIC SEVEN: ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

There are three, and three only, possible source of ultimate authority in Christianity, viz: the Church, the Reason and the Bible. There are those who make a fourth source of final authority, namely, Jesus Christ.

But inasmuch as our historic and doctrinal knowledge of Christ and the entirety of His teachings rest upon the Scriptures, this is not a source distinct from and independent of the Bible.

I. THE CHURCH AS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

This is the position of the Roman Catholic Church which exalts tradition to a plane of equality with the Scriptures and claims to be the infallible interpreter of both. Moreover, that Church claims the power of special authoritative revelation in addition to the Scriptures, and it has used this power. See the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, and the Infallibility of the Pope. But the Bible was before the Church, certainly before the Roman Catholic Church, enfolding its mystery in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament unfolding its history in the Present and its destiny in the Coming Age. Moreover, the Bible is the authority of the Christian Church, its divine constitution and charter.

II. THE REASON AS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

This is the position of Rationalism. By Reason is meant not the logical faculty or “Pure Reason,” but the “Moral Reason” (intellect plus conscience); Reason “conditioned in its activity by holy affection and enlightened by the Spirit of God.”

The view held is that the Scripture is authoritative only so far as its revelations are agreeable to the conclusions of reason or can be rationally demonstrated. But the Bible is higher than man, revealing what he originally was—perfect; what he is now—a sinner; and what he shall be hereafter—glorified, in Heaven or damned, in Hell, according as he accepts or rejects the Word of God.

Instead of man being the judge of the Scriptures, the Scriptures are the judge of man: Hebrews 4:12-13.

Among rationalists, the reason means the unaided reason, the natural (psychic or soulish) man who receiveth not nor comprehendeth spiritual things: I Corinthians 2:14. Moreover, even man moral reason, illuminated by the Holy Spirit is variable, differing in each one according to temperament, training and doctrinal predilection. Of this, the Protestant denominations are witness.

Again, the carnal mind is enmity against God, Romans 8:7, and would tear from the Bible its supernatural and miraculous elements. Of this, Destructive Criticism is witness.

III. THE BIBLE AS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

This is the position of Protestantism. The view held is that the Holy Scriptures are the ultimate authority, the Supreme Court, so to speak, whose decisions are final in all matters pertaining to Christian faith and practice. Yet to the moral reason, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Scriptures make frequent appeal: I Samuel 12:7; Job 13:3; Isaiah 1:18; Acts 17:2 18:4, 19; 24:25; Romans 12:1. Indeed, the reason has an important function. With reference to the Scriptures, this is threefold:

- 1. To judge of man's need of a divine revelation.**
- 2. To examine the credentials of Scripture.**
- 3. To comprehend and interpret the Scriptures.**

Having done these things, reason stands aside, and makes room for faith.

“Thus, reason prepares the way for a revelation above reason and warrants implicit faith in a divine revelation once given and properly attested” (Strong).

The externals of revelation are for criticism; its internals are for faith. When we know God's will, we must do it. **“If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them”**: John 13-17.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Define Revelation.
2. What are the possible methods of Revelation?
3. Give reasons for believing in a special Divine Revelation.
4. Define Canon and Canonicity.
5. Give the law of Canonicity for the Old Testament; for the New Testament.
6. What is meant by Genuineness?
7. How is the Genuineness of the Old Testament settled? Of the New Testament?
8. What is meant by Authenticity?
9. How is Authenticity of a book established?
10. Discuss the Divine Authority of the Scriptures.
11. Distinguish between Revelation, Inspiration, and Illumination.
12. Describe the nature of Inspiration.
13. What is the extent of Inspiration?
14. Give the theories of Inspiration.
15. What are the proofs of Inspiration?
16. Name three possible sources of Ultimate Authority in Christianity.
17. Describe each position.

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