

## CHAPTER I

### THE DIVINE ORIGIN AND AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

1. *The first proof that the Bible is of divine origin and possesses divine authority is the testimony of Jesus Christ to this fact.* It is very common for "advanced thinkers" to say that they do not believe the Bible as a whole to be the word of God, but they do accept the authority of Jesus Christ. Now, this statement is utterly illogical. For if we accept the authority of Jesus Christ, we must accept the whole Bible as being the Word of God, of divine origin, and of absolute divine authority. In Mark vii. 13, Jesus calls the law of Moses "the Word of God," and sternly denounces those who set up their speculations against its authoritative proclamation of God's will. Here, then, Jesus sets His seal to the divine origin and authority of the first five books of the Old Testament. This is the very portion of the Bible about which there is the most bit-

ter controversy to-day. If that portion will stand, there need be no concern about the rest. In Matthew v. 18 (R. V.), Jesus says, "Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished." A jot is the Hebrew character "jodh," the smallest character in the Hebrew alphabet, less than half the size of any other character in the Hebrew alphabet, and a "tittle" is the little horn put on a consonant, less in size than the cross we put on a "t." So Jesus says that the law of Moses is of inviolable divine authority, down to its smallest part. In John v. 47, He asks, "If ye believe not his (Moses') writings, how shall ye believe My words?"—thus showing the utter folly of those who say, "We will not accept the authority of the Pentateuch," but claim to accept the authority of Jesus Christ. In Luke xvi. 31, He exposes the hopeless blindness of those who will not yield to the divine authority of the teaching of the law and the prophets by saying, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." In John x. 35, Jesus says, "The Scripture *can-*

*not be broken.*” He has just built an argument on a single word used in the Psalms, and He thus sets His seal to the absolute verbal inerrancy of the Old Testament Scriptures. In Luke xxiv. 27, we read that “beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” It is evident from this that He regarded the testimony of the Old Testament as of divine origin. But still more plainly does he declare their absolute authority and inerrancy in the forty-fourth verse, by saying, “All things *must be fulfilled* which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.”

It is a well-known fact that the Jew divided the books of the Old Testament into three divisions: the Law, the Prophets (the books we call prophetic and some of the historic books), and the Psalms (the remaining books of our Old Testament). Jesus here takes up each of these divisions, and sets His seal to its absolute divine authority, asserting “all things” therein written “*must be fulfilled.*” So it is plain that if we accept the authority of Jesus Christ, we must accept the divine

origin and authority of the entire Old Testament.

But how about the New Testament books? Does Jesus testify to their divine origin and authority? He does. This might appear at the first thought impossible; for not a single one of those books was written until after Jesus had spoken His last word on earth. . . But when we turn to John xiv. 26 (R. V.) we hear Him saying to the apostles, "The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you." Here, then, Jesus testifies to the inspiration and completeness of the apostolic teaching. He sets His seal to its divine origin and authority. Further than that He certifies to the accuracy and completeness of their recollection of what He Himself had said. The question is often asked, "What guarantee have we that in the reports of the apostles we have an accurate record of the words of Jesus? Might they not forget what He said, and thus misreport it?" Undoubtedly they might forget, but Jesus Himself tells us that they should not be left to their own fallible

memories, but that the Holy Spirit should bring to their remembrance all that He had said unto them. So in the gospels we have not the apostles' recollection of what Jesus said, but the Holy Spirit's recollection, and He never forgets. In John xvi. 12, 13 (R. V.), Jesus goes still further in His indorsement of the apostolic teaching. He says, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth." Here Jesus says that the teaching of the apostles would not only be as true as His own, but that it should be even more complete than His own. There were many things to be said which He must keep back in His personal ministry, for they were not yet ready for them, but when the Holy Spirit was come He would lead them "into *all the truth.*" So if we accept the authority of Jesus Christ, we must accept the authority of the apostolic teaching, and that teaching as being a more perfect revelation of the truth than His own, as, indeed, being an absolutely perfect and complete revelation, containing "all the truth." One of the favorite cries to-

day of those who would minify the authority of apostolic teaching is "Back to Christ"; but when we get back to Christ we hear Him crying: "Forward to the apostles! In their teaching you will find a more complete revelation of truth than in the words I uttered while on earth, for I kept back some things because men were not ready for them. But in the Spirit-taught apostles you will find 'all the truth.' "

It is perfectly clear, then, that if we accept the authority of Jesus Christ, we must accept the divine origin and authority of all the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. But every candid investigator must accept the authority of Jesus Christ. Why? Because Jesus Christ Himself is accredited to us by five testimonies which are clearly divine. He is accredited to us by the testimony of the divine life He lived; for He lived as never man lived. Any one who will put away all prejudice, and carefully study that unique life, must consent to the judgment of him who knew men so well, and said, "I know men, and Jesus Christ was not a man." Jesus Christ is accredited to us again by the testimony of the divine words He spake; for whoever

studies those words will consent to the verdict of those who were sent to arrest Him and could not, saying, "Never man spake like this man." Jesus Christ is accredited to us again by the divine works He wrought. The gospel stories of Jesus' works have been subjected to the fiercest and ablest attacks, in the vain hope of discrediting them. But the ingenious theories of David Strauss and Ernest Renan and a host of less gifted imitators have gone utterly to pieces. At least the substantial accuracy of the gospel narratives has been established beyond the possibility of candid doubt. That is enough for our present purpose. Jesus, then, not only healed the hopelessly sick, which, it may be said, many others have done, and opened the eyes of those born blind, but He displayed creative power, turning water into wine, feeding to the full more than five thousand people with five loaves and two small fishes, and He raised the dead. These beyond a question are divine works, and He is thus accredited by the divine works He wrought. Jesus Christ is accredited to us again by the divine influence He has exerted upon the whole subsequent history of the

race. Jesus Christ is accredited once more by the divine attestation of His resurrection from the dead. It is not, of course, possible in this place to go into a consideration of the evidence for the resurrection of Christ from the dead. This, however, the writer has done, and he knows that any one who will candidly and fully consider the evidence in the case, without predisposition for or against, will be forced to conclude that the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is one of the best proven facts of history. It is, then, a direct attestation of God to Jesus Christ. So we see Jesus Christ is accredited to us by five testimonies which are clearly divine. We must, then, accept His testimony. But we have already seen that if we accept His testimony, we must accept the divine origin and authority of the whole Bible, for to this He clearly certified. Therefore, the divine origin and authority of the Bible is proven.

*2. The second proof of the divine origin and authority of the Bible is its fulfilled prophecies. Fulfilled prophecy is a fact, and a fact that every honest and intelligent and serious-*



minded person must face and account for. There are many prophecies in the Old Testament of things that were to occur hundreds of years in the future. These prophecies, in many instances, were most plain, minute, and explicit, and they have been fulfilled to the very letter. The average man and woman, and even the average Christian, knows little or nothing about prophecy. When the writer undertook the study of prophecy some years ago, he was amazed at the number and explicitness of the prophecies that had been literally fulfilled. So is every one else that goes into the subject with any thoroughness, fairness, and candor. Many are the skeptics and infidels who have been converted to a faith in the Bible as the Word of God by the study of Bible prophecies. The subject is a very large one, and the fullness of the proof can only be hinted at in a book like this. There are three lines of prophecy in the Old Testament; prophecies about Israel, prophecies about the Gentile nations, and prophecies about the Messiah. We will confine ourselves by way of illustration to prophecies about the Messiah, and to four of the many of these. In Micah v.

2, Jeremiah xxiii. 5, Isaiah liii, Daniel ix. 24-26, we have very explicit predictions as to the place where the Christ should be born, the family of which He should be born, the state of the family at the time of His birth (a state entirely different from that existing at the time of the prophecy), the way He should be received by men and by His own people (a way entirely contrary to all human probability), His death, the precise manner of His death, His burial with its accompanying circumstances minutely given, His resurrection and victory subsequent to His death. These predictions were literally fulfilled with the utmost exactness in Jesus of Nazareth. The attempt has been made over and over again by the rationalists to break the force of the argument by denying that Isaiah liii. refers to the Messiah, but the attempt has broken down utterly. Not only has it been completely proven from their own works that the Jewish rabbis interpreted it of the Messiah, but furthermore, when the question has been asked, if it does not refer to the Messiah, to whom does it refer, the best answer that they can give is, "It refers to suffering Israel." But

any one can see this is impossible, if he will study the chapter for himself. The sufferer of Isaiah liii. is an innocent victim, suffering for the sins of *another*, to whom the stroke was due (vs. 4-8; see especially Am. R. V.), and this other than himself for whom he was suffering was "my people"—i. e., Israel. So evidently the sufferer cannot be Israel. There are many other reasons why the sufferer cannot be Israel, but this is conclusive and sufficient. By any theory of authorship that any one has ever ventured to propound, these prophecies were made centuries before Jesus of Nazareth. How, then, do we account for their fulfillment in Him? Man can look a few years ahead and predict in *a general way* to what result causes now operant will lead. But no man can look centuries ahead and predict many specific things about a specific individual and have them come true to the letter. Only the all-knowing God can do that, and proven fulfilled prophecies of this sort prove a divine origin of the Book. To quote the words of another: "Whenever we detect a power of foresight which has been able to penetrate the dark centuries that were lying

before it, and to declare with unflinching accuracy the things that should come to pass, we know that such powers must have proceeded from God, and from God alone."

One very suggestive fact about the prophecies is that there would sometimes be two apparently contradictory lines of prophecy, and yet both be literally fulfilled in the outcome. For example, there are two lines of prophecy about the Christ. One line of prophecy set forth an all-conquering Messiah, who should break the nations with a rod of iron and be all-triumphant. (Ps. 2, and many passages.) The other line of prophecy set forth a suffering Messiah, "despised and rejected of men," slain, crucified. (Is. liii., Dan. ix. 24-26, Zech. xii. 10.) So great was this enigma and apparent contradiction that this solution was proposed: that there were to be two Messiahs, one a suffering Messiah of the tribe of Joseph, and the other a conquering Messiah of the tribe of Judah. But in the outcome the enigma is solved in the two comings of the one Messiah, the first coming to suffer and make atonement for sin, the second coming to conquer and to reign. When

the acts which occur centuries after make clear the prophecies uttered centuries before, and fulfill both sides to the letter, must not an honest and candid mind see God back of the prophecies?

There are in the Bible other prophecies about heathen cities which seemed improbable of fulfillment at the time, and in part contradictory and impossible of fulfillment, but they are being literally fulfilled right before our eyes, in our own day. *Was God back of these prophecies, or wasn't He?*

But there is another class of prophecies more remarkable still, the prophecies contained in the types of Scripture. When you ask the superficial student of the Old Testament what portion of the Old Testament is prophetic, he will mention the major and minor prophets, and perhaps some of the other explicit verbal prophecies scattered through the Psalms, the historical books, and the law of Moses. But ask the man who has really gone into the study of the Old Testament thoroughly and profoundly, and he will tell you that the entire Old Testament is prophetic; that its legislation is prophetic, its history is prophetic,

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its personages are prophetic, its institutions are prophetic. Then if you wonder what he means, and will take time to inquire, he will show you how everything about the tabernacle—for example, its threefold division, its furniture, the table of shew-bread, the golden candlestick, the altar of incense, the ark of the covenant, the brazen altar, the laver, the boards of the tabernacle, the coverings of the tabernacle—were prophetic of great facts and truths about Jesus Christ and the plan of salvation and the church and heaven. He will show you how Joseph was a prophetic type of Christ in many marvelous ways. He will show you the same thing about David and Solomon. And so he will go on, and show you wonderful foreshadowings of Christ, and of the church, and of Israel's rejection of the Messiah, and the coming day of atonement for Israel, and the feast of tabernacles that is to follow. And if you follow him closely you will soon see that this is not at all fanciful, but that evidently the real author of these portions of Scripture intended all this. Of course, to fully appreciate the force of this, one must go deeply into it, and the more deeply he goes

into it the more will he be filled with wonder and admiration. Unfortunately the destructive critics never do go into these things. They are so occupied with their ingenious literary speculations and the pursuit of methods of literary analysis and criticism that have been discredited and abandoned in other branches of literary study than the study of the Bible, that they have no time for the study of the actual contents of the literature they are analyzing and of which they are trying to discover "the sources." When the attention of the writer was first called to the types, he thought the things claimed about them fanciful. But study of them has thoroughly convinced him of his mistake. Now, how are we to account for these innumerable minute foreshadowings of facts to come to pass and truths to be revealed centuries later? Is this within the power of man's wisdom? Any candid man knows it is not. As one honestly studies these things he is led to exclaim, "Surely, this is the hand of God." As any man who is not blinded by sin studies the leaf of a tree or the dust of a butterfly's wings beneath the microscope, he sees the wis-

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dom and the hand of God in it, and as any one microscopically studies the types of the Old Testament, ever more and more clearly does he see the hand of God in them.

### *3. The third proof of the divine origin and authority of the Bible is the unity of the Book.*

It has been often said that the Bible is not merely a book, but a literature. This is true, and a marvelously composite literature it is. There are in it sixty-six books, composed by about forty authors, in three different languages, exhibiting many styles of literary composition—epic poetry, lyric poetry, erotic poetry, elegy, dirge, didactic poetry, rhapsody, and prose, history, prophecy, vision, allegory, parable, proverb. These books extend in the period of their composition over at least fifteen hundred years. They were composed in lands far remote from one another. The writers lived under widely differing forms of civil government, and were from every class of society, from the king upon his throne down to the shepherd, the fisherman, the herdsman, the cheap politician, and the prisoner in his cell. Now, in such a conglom-



erate literature as that what would we naturally expect? The widest diversity, disagreement, and contradiction. In point of fact, what do we find? The most singular harmony and unity from the first verse of the first book to the last verse of the last book. Now here is a fact clamoring to be accounted for. How is it to be accounted for rationally and fairly, except on the ground that back of the human authors was the all-governing and superintending mind of God? And the more one studies, the more evident it becomes that this superintendence of God extended down to phrases, words, and the minutest shadings of a word.

The character of this unity is significant. First of all, it is not a superficial, but a profound unity. On the surface there oftentimes seems to be wide divergence, and even flat contradiction, but the deeper we go below the surface the more the unity appears. It is also an organic unity. It is not a mechanical unity, but the unity of life and growth. In the early books we have the seed, the germinal truth, farther on the young plant, then the bud, the blossom, and the perfect fruit. Can any one question that God is in this?

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Suppose it were proposed to build in our capital city a temple that should represent all the States of the Union. Stones for this building were to be brought from the granite quarries at Quincy, Mass., the marble quarries at Rutland, Vt., the brown stone quarries at Middletown, Conn., the gray sandstone quarries at Berea, Ohio, the malachite quarries of Northern Michigan, the brownstone quarries at Kasota, Minn., the porphyry quarries below Knoxville, Tenn., and so on through all our States. These stones were to be of all conceivable sizes and shapes—cubical, spherical, cylindrical, conical, trapezoidal, rectangular parallelepipeds. Each stone was to be cut into its final shape in the quarry from which it was taken. Now, when the stones are brought together and builded into the temple, every stone fits into its place. There is not a stone too many or a stone too few; not a stone left over, and not an unfilled niche anywhere. And there arises before your vision a temple of splendid proportions, with its side walls, its buttresses, its nave, its choir, its transept, its arches, pillars, domes, and spires, perfect in every outline and in every detail,

every stone just fitted to its place, and yet every stone finished in the quarry from which it was taken. How would you account for this? There is one very simple way of accounting for it, and there is only one rational way of accounting for it at all. That is this: back of the individual stone-cutters in the quarries was the master architect who planned the whole from the beginning and gave to each individual workman his specifications for the work. It is exactly so with this eternal temple of truth which we call the Bible. As we have seen, the stones for it were quarried at places and at times most remote from one another, and yet every stone fits into its place, and there is not one stone too many or one too few, and it has stood throughout the centuries a glorious temple, perfect in every outline and in every detail, and yet every stone hewn into its final shape in the quarry from which it was taken. How shall we account for it? In one way, very simply, and in only one way at all. Back of the human hands that wrought was the Master mind of God that thought and gave to each individual writer his specifications for his work.

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4. *The fourth proof of the divine origin and authority of the Bible is the immeasurable superiority of its teachings to those of any other book or all other books.* The Bible is absolutely unique in its teachings. Many there are who put the Bible in the same class with other sacred books and with the teachings of the great thinkers of the ages—with Buddha, Zoroaster, Mohammed, Confucius, Socrates, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Isocrates, Seneca, Epictetus, etc. Those who do this must be ignorant either of the teachings of the Bible or of the teachings of the others. There are three radical points of difference between the teachings of the Bible and all these others.

*First*, the Bible contains nothing but truth. These others contain truth, but truth mixed with error. They have jewels, indeed, in them, but they are "jewels picked out of the mud." Take, for example, Socrates, for whom so much is claimed. This great philosopher did, indeed, teach most beautifully how a philosopher ought to die, but his admirers often forget to tell us that he also taught a woman of the town how to conduct her

infamous business. "Did not Marcus Aurelius Antoninus teach beautiful things about clemency?" we are asked. Yes, and he also taught that it was right to fiercely persecute people for no other crime than that of being Christians; and being emperor and having the power to do it, he practiced what he preached.

*Second*, these other teachings contain part of the truth, but the Bible contains *all* truth. There is not a single truth on moral or spiritual subjects that cannot be found for substance within this one book. Often when lecturing on this subject the writer has challenged any one to bring one truth on moral or spiritual subjects that he could not find in the Bible. No one has ever succeeded in doing it. I have taken pains to compare some of the better teachings of those who have attacked the Bible with those of the book they have attacked. I found in the infidels some jewels of thought, but in every case, whether they knew it or not, they were stolen jewels, and stolen from the very book they ridiculed. If all the books besides the Bible that were ever written were destroyed, there would not be a single moral or spiritual truth lost, if we had

the one book, the Bible, left. Is not that a deeply significant fact?

*Third*, the Bible contains more truth than all other books taken together. Bring together from all the literature of ancient and modern times, the literature of Persia, India, China, Greece, Rome, all lands, all that is good, sift out all that is bad or worthless, bring the result together into a book, and you will not have then a book that will take the place of the Bible. Burn up all books but the Bible; you do not suffer loss of a single moral or spiritual truth. Burn up the Bible, and have all other books left, and you suffer irreparable loss. How does this come to be? It is a fact that demands accounting for by honest and thoughtful men, that man in all the centuries of his thinking has not thought out as much truth as is contained in this one book that is now more than eighteen centuries old. The Bible is not such a large book. Copies of it are common that one can carry in his vest pocket, and I have seen one that I could hold in the palm of my hand and hide completely by closing my fingers; and yet in this small compass there was more of the wisdom that is

real and eternal than in all the thinking that *man* has done in centuries. How will you account for it? Rationally and fairly in only one way: this book does not contain man's thinking, but God's.

5. *The fifth proof of the divine origin and authority of the Bible is the history of the book, its omnipotence against all man's attacks upon it.* The Bible is not only the most intensely loved book in the world; it is also the most bitterly hated. Scarcely had the Bible been given to the world before men discovered that it condemned sin, laid human pride in the dust, and demanded the renunciation of sin, of the world, and of self, and so man hated the Bible. Man's hatred of the Bible has been of a most persistent, determined, relentless, and bitter character. It has led to eighteen centuries of repeated attempt to undermine faith in the Bible, and to consign the Bible itself to oblivion. These attempts have utterly failed. Celsus tried it with the brilliancy of his genius, and he failed. Porphyry tried it with the depth and subtlety of his philosophy, and he failed. Lucien tried it with the keen-

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ness of his satire, and he failed. Then other weapons were used. Diocletian, the mightiest ruler of the mightiest empire of the world, brought to bear against the Bible all the power of Rome. He issued edicts that every Bible should be burned, but that failed. Then he issued the edict that all who possessed a Bible should be put to death. But even that failed. So for eighteen centuries the assault upon the Bible has continued. Every engine of destruction that human philosophy, human science, human reason, human art, human cunning, human force, and human brutality could bring to bear against a book has been brought to bear against this book, and yet the Bible stands absolutely unshaken to-day. At times almost all the wise and great of earth have been pitted against the Bible, and only an obscure few for it. Yet it has stood. At times men have fancied the Bible had gone down, but when the smoke has cleared away from the field of battle there it stood, not one stone shaken, and the fierceness of the assault only serving to illustrate again the impregnability of the citadel. Why is it that the Bible has proved omnipotent against all the centu-



ries of attack that man has been able to make? There is but one candid answer. Because it is God's book. If the Bible had been man's book it would have gone down and have been forgotten centuries ago; but because in this book there is the hiding not only of God's wisdom, but also of His power, it stands and wonderfully fulfills the deeper meaning of Christ's words, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away."

6. *The sixth proof of the divine origin and authority of the Bible is the character of those who accept it and the character of those who reject it.* Sometimes when a man says to me, "I believe the Bible is the word of God," I feel like replying: "I am glad that you do. The fact that a man who lives so near God, and knows God so well, believes that He is the author of this book, is a confirmation of my own faith." And when some other men say to me, "I do not believe the Bible is the word of God," I almost feel like replying: "On the whole, I am glad that you do not. The fact that a man who lives so far away from God, and knows so little of God, doubts

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that the Bible is His word, rather confirms my faith that it is." Of course, it is not meant by this that every man who professes to believe in the Bible is better than every man who doubts it. But this much is meant: Find a man who has entirely surrendered his will to God, who is leading a life of self-renunciation, of devotion to God and his fellow-man, of humility and prayer, and in every instance you will find a man who is fully convinced that the Bible is God's word. An exception to this cannot be found. On the other hand, find a man who denies or continuously doubts that the Bible is the word of God, and in every instance you will find a man who is leading either a life of lust, or greed for money, or self-will, or pride. In other words, those who live nearest God and know God best, with absolute unanimity say the Bible is God's word; those who deny it are those who live farthest from Him. Which shall we believe? Suppose a manuscript were found purporting to be by Oliver Wendell Holmes, and there was much discussion and difference of opinion as to whether Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote it or not. But when

it was taken to the critics to decide, every one of them who had lived nearest to Oliver Wendell Holmes, had known him best, and were most in sympathy with his life and thought, said that it was by him. Those who doubted it were those who had lived farthest from him in life and thought, and knew him least. Which would you believe? This is the exact case with the Bible: those who live nearest to God, who are most in sympathy with His life and thought, who know Him best, with one voice proclaim that the Bible is God's work; those who deny or doubt it are those who live farthest from Him. Which will you believe? But that is not all. The nearer men get to God the stronger becomes their faith that the Bible is the word of God; the more they drift away from God, the more full they become of doubts. This is a common experience, that men who are both skeptics and sinners, by the simple fact of giving up their sins, lose their doubts. Did any one ever know an instance of the opposite sort, where a man was a believer and a sinner, and by giving up his sins lost his faith. On the other hand, instances are of constant occurrence of men

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who once had a firm and serene faith in the Bible as the word of God, who, by becoming entangled in sin and worldliness, begin also to be filled with doubts. Indeed, my experience of late years with skeptics has led me, when men tell me that they are getting skeptical, to ask them what they have been doing, and a confession of sin often follows a profession of skepticism. Where is the stronghold of the Bible? The pure, happy, loving, holy home. Where is the stronghold of skepticism and infidelity? The saloon, the gambling-den, the race-course, and the brothel. If a man should go into a saloon and lay a Bible on the bar and call for a glass of whisky, it would occasion wonder and remark; there would be such incongruity in his actions. But if a man should go into a saloon and lay any skeptical or infidel book on the bar and call for a glass of whisky, it would excite no comment nor wonder; there would be no incongruity. It would be exactly what men expect. The Bible and whisky do not go well together; infidelity and whisky do go well together.

7. *The seventh proof that the Bible is of divine origin and authority is the influence of the Book.* The Bible, as every observant man knows, has more power to save men, more power to gladden, beautify, and ennoble human lives, more power to lift men up to God than any other or all other books. Now a stream can rise no higher than its source, and a book that possesses a power to lift man up to God that no other book possesses must have come down from God in a way no other book has. I recall a man of brilliant gifts, but who had become stupefied and brutalized and demonized by drink, and he was an infidel. He was persuaded to receive the Bible as the Word of God, and by the power of this book he was set free and transformed into a humble, gentle, pure, unselfish lover of God and man. Could any other book, or all other books, do that? What other book or books have the power to elevate not only individuals, but communities and nations, that this book possesses? Why this unique divine power? Because it is in an unique sense of divine origin.

8. *The eighth proof that the Bible is of divine origin and authority is its inexhaustible depth.* All that is finite is fathomable. The Bible is unfathomable. Whatever man has produced, man can exhaust; but no man, no generation of men, not all the tens of thousands of men together that have devoted their best abilities and the best years of their lives to the study of this book, have been able to exhaust this book. Men of the best minds that the world has ever known, men of widest culture, men of rarest intellectual grasp, men of keenest insight and profoundest ability have dug into the book for years and years, and the more they have dug, the deeper they saw the depths still below them to be and the richer the golden ore. Vast libraries have been devoted to the exposition of this book, and still it is unexhausted. Why cannot men exhaust this book in eighteen centuries of digging? There can be but one fair answer. What man has produced man can exhaust, and the only reason why the whole race is unable to exhaust this book is because it is not man's book, but God's, and in it are hidden the infinite and inexhaustible treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

A brilliant Unitarian writer, in trying to disprove the divine origin of the Bible, says: "How irreligious to charge an infinite God with having written His whole word in so small a book." That is one of the keenest arguments ever uttered from the side of unbelief. But the writer did not see how his Damascus blade could be wrenched from his hand and its keen edge turned against himself. What a conclusive testimony it is to the divine origin of this book that such infinite wisdom has been packed in so small a compass! Man could never do it. Only God can put infinite treasures in so small a space that you can carry them in your vest pocket.

9. *The ninth proof of the divine origin and authority of the Bible is the fact that as we grow in wisdom and holiness we grow toward the Bible.* In other words, as we grow toward God we grow toward the Bible. Every thoughtful student of the Bible has had this experience with it. When he began the study of the Bible he found many things in it that were difficult to accept. But as he went on studying and growing in wisdom and holiness of character,

the differences between himself and the Bible kept growing fewer and fewer. The nearer he got to God, the nearer he got to the Bible; the nearer he got to God, the nearer he got to the Bible. Now, what is the inevitable mathematical conclusion? The nearer he gets to God the nearer he gets to the Bible, the nearer he gets to God the nearer he gets to the Bible. It is clear, then, that when he and God meet, he and the Bible will meet also. That is, the Bible was written from God's standpoint.

Suppose, that you are traveling through a forest under the leadership of an experienced guide. The way is all new to you, but before starting, this guide had been brought to you by those whom you have every reason to trust, and they tell you how he has conducted them and many a party safely through the forest, and that there has never been a mishap to those who have followed his leadership. After a while you come to a place where two paths diverge. The guide tells you that the path to the right is the one to take. But your reason and common sense, judging by all



the indications, tell you that the path to the left is the one to take. So you turn to the guide and say, "You have been through this forest often, and have been highly recommended to me, and therefore I have great confidence in you. But in this instance my reason and common sense tell me that you are wrong. I know that my reason and common sense are not infallible, but they are the best guides I have, and so I must follow them." So you go down the path to the left. But you do not get far before you run into a morass, and have to come back and go the way the guide said. After a while you come again to a place where two paths diverge. This time the guide says, "The path to the left is the one to take." But your reason and common sense say, "The path to the right is the one to take." Again you turn to the guide and say, "I have great confidence in you. You have been highly recommended to me, and you were right in the former instance and I was wrong; but my reason and common sense tell me that the path to the right is the one to take. I know my reason and com-

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mon sense are not infallible, and that they were wrong in the former instance, but they are the best guides I have, and I cannot be untrue to them; so I must take the path to the right." So you go down that path, and in a little while you come to an impassable barrier of rock, and are obliged to go back and take the path the guide said. Now, suppose this occurred fifty times, and in every instance the guide proved right and your reason and common sense proved wrong. Would you not, by the fifty-first time, have sense enough to throw your "reason and common sense" overboard and go the way the guide said? Indeed, would not your reason and common sense themselves take the guide's decision into account as the most important factor in deciding which path to take? This is just my experience with the Bible. I have come to the fork in the road more than fifty times, and in every instance where my reason and common sense differed from the Bible, the Bible has proved right and my reason wrong; and from this time on I trust I have sense enough, when a difference occurs, to throw my reason to the winds and go the way the Bible says.

10. *The tenth proof of the divine origin and authority of the Bible is the direct testimony of the Holy Spirit.* What we mean by that is this: One can put himself into such an attitude toward God and His truth that the Holy Spirit will bear direct testimony to him that the voice that speaks to him from the Bible is the voice of God. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice." (John x. 27.) This is true. A real sheep of Christ has a power of discernment whereby he can distinguish the voice of Christ and the voice of God from other voices. Jesus said again, "He that is of God heareth God's words." (John viii. 47.) This also is true. The one born of God has an ear for the voice of God, and can tell it when it speaks, and he knows that the voice that speaks to him from the Bible is the voice of his Father. Any one can get into that position where he obtains this power of spiritual discernment, or rather where the Holy Spirit testifies to him that the voice that speaks to him from the Bible is the voice of God. The way into this position is very simple, and one that commends itself to every honest man's conscience. Jesus points it out in John vii. 17: "If any

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man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God," etc. (R. V.). Absolute surrender to the will of God is the path that leads into the place where one knows that the voice that speaks to him from the Bible is the voice of God. Many have taken this path, and all have come out at the same place, the place where they know the Bible is the Word of God. It has been the path out of skepticism to faith for countless men and women of all classes of society. I was once speaking to a man of wide reading and wide experience. He had been through Unitarianism, Theosophy, Spiritualism, and much besides, and was now a thoroughgoing agnostic. He was a graduate of a British university. He had been present at a lecture upon "How to Deal with Skeptics and Infidels," in which I offered to lead any honest skeptic, infidel, or agnostic into the light of faith in the Bible as the Word of God and Jesus as the Son of God. At the close of the lecture he came to me, and said: "I do not wish to be discourteous, sir, but really my experience contradicts everything you have said to-day." I replied, "Have you taken

the steps that I have mentioned, and do you still remain a skeptic?" "Yes." "Let us be sure of this," I said, and called out my secretary and dictated something like this: "I believe there is an absolute difference between right and wrong, and I hereby take my stand upon the right, to follow it wherever it carries me. I promise to make an honest search to find if Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and if I find that He is, I promise to accept Him as my Saviour and confess Him as such before the world." When this was written out I handed it to the gentleman and asked him if he would sign it. He read it carefully, and said that he was perfectly willing to sign it, but that there was "nothing in it," as his case was "very peculiar." He signed it, however. I then said, "Do you know that there is no God?" "No," he answered; "no man *knows* that there is no God. I am an agnostic, I neither affirm nor deny." "Do you know God does not answer prayer?" "No. I don't know that God does not answer prayer, but I do not believe He does." "Well, I know that He does," I replied, "but my knowledge will do you no good. But here is a possible clew.

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Now, you are a university graduate, and you know that the method of modern science is to follow out a possible clew to discover what there is in it. Will you adopt this method of science in the matter of religion? Will you follow out this possible clew? Will you pray this prayer, 'O God, if there is any God, show me if Jesus Christ is Thy Son, and if you show me that He is, I promise to accept Him as my Saviour and confess Him as such before the world?'" "Yes," he said, "I will do that, but there is nothing in it. My case is very peculiar." "Now, one thing more: John tells us in his gospel, 'These things are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye may have life in His name.' (John xx. 31, R. V.) Now, you have promised to make an honest search to find if Jesus Christ is the Son of God. This book was written for the very purpose of convincing men of this. Will you take it and read it thoughtfully and honestly, only a few verses at a time, meditating upon what you read, and asking God each time you read to give you light, and promising Him to follow as much light as He gives you? Don't

try to force belief, but be willing to believe if it is true. Will you do it?" "I have read that book again and again already," he replied. "Yes, but I am asking you to read it in a new way. If you are an honest skeptic, you will. Will you?" "Yes, but there is nothing in it; my case is very peculiar." In a short time we met again. Almost his first words were, "There is something in that." "I knew that before," I replied. "Ever since I did what I promised you I would do, it is as if I had been caught up by the Niagara River and was being carried along, and the first I know I shall be a shouting Methodist." A few months later I met him again. His agnosticism had all gone, and things to which he had formerly listened, he said, "are all foolishness to me now." Any one can test the efficacy of this method by trying it for themselves. It never fails. One evening I was speaking with another gentleman, who was a professed agnostic. Suddenly he turned to me and said: "I am sixty-six years old. I can't live long, and I have no children to leave my property to, and I can't take it with me. I would give every penny of it if I could

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believe as you do." "I can tell you how," I answered. "I wish you would." "Let us go into the house." We went in and I asked the gentleman's wife for a sheet of paper, and wrote out a pledge similar to that given above. Then I handed it to the gentleman, and asked him if he would sign it. He read it, and replied: "Why, any man ought to be willing to sign that. You only ask me to agree to do what my own conscience tells me I ought to do." "Will *you* sign it?" "Why, anybody ought to be willing to sign that." "Will *YOU* sign it?" "I will think about it." He never signed it. He died as he had lived, without God and without hope. He told the truth about one thing; he did not take a penny of his money with him. He went to a Christless grave and a Christless eternity. But whose fault was it? He had been shown a way out of darkness into light, out of skepticism into faith, which he admitted his own conscience told him he ought to take, and he would not take it. Will you take it?