

Lecture on Foundation Truths. No. 1.

# THE BIBLE :

HOW WE KNOW

THAT IT IS

GOD-INSPIRED.



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# THE BIBLE.

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**I**T is our intention, God willing, to have before us some of the great foundation truths of Christianity. Three of these at least, stand or fall together—the Inspiration of the Scriptures, the Deity of Christ, and the Atonement as taught in Scripture. If the Bible is not the God-inspired Book, then Jesus is not Divine, for He treated that part of it which was existent in His day as the irrefragable Word of God. And if Jesus is not Divine there is no Atonement as the Bible teaches it, for who but a Divine Person could make the Atonement which Righteousness demanded.

Then reasoning the obverse way, if Atonement is the glorious truth, then Jesus is God, and if He is God, then the Scriptures are undoubtedly God-inspired.

It is my business this evening to call your attention to certain evidence which should prove undeniably that the Bible is God's revelation to us. I might, in the first place, enlarge upon the external proofs which are well calculated to strike the observant man. One of these proofs is its wonderful vitality, It is hoary with age, but the vigour of youth remains with it ; it has passed through countless vicissitudes, but no mark of decay is upon it ; it is fair as the morning and fragrant as a bed of spices to those whose eyes and hearts have been opened by grace,

for it tells them of the One whom they love most and best.

Since the days when Jehoiakim, King of Judah, slashed the roll with his knife and burnt it with fire, it has sustained many attacks, but the blows of those who smote it have recoiled upon themselves, they have passed into history, while the Bible lives a present and powerful reality.

But there have not only been foes outside but traitors within, some of its professed friends have sought to destroy it, they have laid the gunpowder of reason, sentiment, and science (falsely so called) at the base of it, in order to overthrow its authority, but it remains unharmed in spite of fire, and storm, and battle. It is immovable and divine ; rightly indeed did the late W. E. Gladstone denominate it "the Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture."

I might also call your attention to the universality of its character. Kings have read it with delight, and the poor have found joy through its truths ; the wisest men of all ages have discovered within it depths unfathomable, and even children have rejoiced in its simple pages. Thousands of years ago God gave the decalogue by Moses, and those ten commandments are still the foundation of the laws of civilized nations. David wrote many of his Psalms while hunted as a partridge upon the mountains ; these same Psalms are the joy and comfort of thousands in sorrow and suffering to-day. Surely the Book that suits all ages, climes, and people must be a very remarkable one, different in fact from every other book known to man.

But it is my intention to deal more particularly with the internal proofs of its origin. It shall speak for itself. The main points with this in view shall be—

- (1) The unity of the whole Bible.
- (2) The use our Lord made of Scripture.
- (3) The God whom the Scriptures reveal.
- (4) The evidence of fulfilled prophecy.

There is nothing novel in these points, they are so evident on the surface that even the casual student of the Bible must be impressed by them.

### **The Unity of the Book.**

If I had a beautiful piece of mosaic, an undoubted work of art, and learnt that each separate piece had been made by a different person, that very few of the workmen were known to each other, and that the places in which they lived were widely separated, I should at once conclude that a master-mind had designed the whole and had directed the making of every several part. It is thus with the Bible, many centuries passed between the first writings and the last, the different parts were written by men of different temperaments, in different lands, under different conditions, but we find that all the parts fit together as one beautiful whole—the Book is one.

Now there are those who accept the inspiration of the New Testament but reject the Old, and more particularly the Books of Moses. We shall see first that the Old Testament is woven into the very texture of the New, and that to reject the one is to destroy the other. It is well known that the Hebrew

Scriptures were divided into three parts, Moses (or the law), the Psalms, and the Prophets, and it is interesting and instructive to see that the first chapter of each of the four gospels has a link with each division.

#### MATTHEW.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah, *ch. i, v. 2-3. Moses.*  
 David and the wife of Urias, *v. 6 (Ps. li.). Psalms.*  
 "Behold a virgin shall be with child," *v. 23 (Isa. 7). Prophets.*

#### MARK.

"It is written in the Prophets, 'Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face,'" *v. 2 (Mal. iii. 1). Prophets.*  
 "And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art My beloved Son," *10 (Ps. ii. 7). Psalms.*  
 "Offer for Thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them," *v. 44. Moses.*

#### LUKE.

"The Lord shall give unto Him the throne of His father David," *ch. i, v. 32 (Ps. cxxxii. 11). Psalms.*  
 "And of His Kingdom there shall be no end," *v. 33. (Dan. ii. 44) (Micah iv. 7). Prophets.*  
 "As He spake unto our fathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever," *v. 55 (Gen. xvii. 19). Moses.*

#### JOHN.

"The law was given by Moses" (*Ex. xx. 1*), *v. 17;*  
 "Him of whom Moses in the law . . . did write," *v. 45 (Deut. xviii. 18). Moses.*  
 "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness," *v. 23 (Isa. xl. 3). Prophets.*  
 "An Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile," *v. 47 (Ps. xxxii.) Psalms.*

As in the first chapters, so throughout the Books. Matthew has not less than 70 quotations and references from the Old Testament, Mark not less than 35, Luke not less than 40, and John not less than 40.

And in every book in the New Testament, with the possible exception of Paul's Epistle to Philemon and the II. and III. Epistles of John, there are numerous quotations from these three great divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures. So that it is evident that if the Old Testament is to be cast overboard, the New must go as well.

### **The Lord's Use of Scripture.**

It will help us further to see the way in which the Lord used the Old Testament Scriptures. He seems to have made a special point of confirming those very incidents which are most flouted, and which are discarded as mythical and legendary. Let us note some of these incidents.

The creation of Adam and Eve, *Mark x. 6* (quoting *Genesis ii. 24*).

The murder of Abel, *Luke xi. 51* (*Genesis iv.*)

The deluge, *Luke xvii. 26-27* (*Genesis vii.*)

The burning of Sodom, *Luke xvii. 28-32* (*Gen. xix.*)

The burning bush, *Luke xx. 37* (*Ex. iii.*)

The lifting up of the brazen serpent, *John iii. 14*. (*Numbers xxi.*)

The sending of the manna, *John vi. 31* (*Ex. xvi.*)

Elijah's visit to the widow of Zarephath, *Luke iv. 26* (*I. Kings xvii.*)

The cleansing of the leper, Naaman, *Luke iv. 27* (*II. Kings v.*)

The visions of Daniel, *Matt. xxiv. 15 (Dan.)*

Jonah in the belly of the fish, *Matt. xii. 40 (Jonah)*.

The Lord also used the Scripture in meeting the attacks and questionings of men. When the Sadducees—who were the rationalists of His day, rejecting everything which was beyond the range of their understanding—came to Him hoping to entrap Him by what seemed to them a very clever question, He confounded them from the Scriptures. They were in error, fumbling blindly in the darkness, as do their counterparts of to-day, because they knew not the Scriptures nor the power of God. *Matt. xxii. 29*. If they had known and believed the Scriptures they would have known the power of God; if they had known the power of God they would have known and believed the Scriptures.

But it is in John's gospel that we have the record of the most determined opposition on the part of the leaders of the Jews, and it is there also that the Lord speaks more plainly than elsewhere as to the Scriptures.

“ If ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me :  
for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his  
writings, how shall ye believe my words ? ”  
(*ch. v. 46-47*).

Solemn words these for those who would treat Moses and his writings as beneath their credence.

But the critics tell us that the Lord Jesus met the Jews where they were, He did not run counter to their prejudices and superstitions; but this is false, and reveals great ignorance as to the gospels, the Lord never failed to manifest the error of their

superstitions and traditions (*See Matt. xv.*), but He always affirmed and confirmed the Scriptures. For proof of this turn to John x. 35—

“The Scripture cannot be broken,”

also Matt. v. 17-18—

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. Verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all are fulfilled.”

I trust I am not wearying you by referring to so many passages, but you would have every right to challenge my every statement had I not infallible authority on which to base what I say. You will also see that in so important a subject as we have in hand to-night, there is the utmost need of drawing our evidence first hand, and seeing that our witnesses are truly reliable.

But not only did our Lord meet the questionings of men by the Scriptures, He used them also in His conflict with the Devil in the wilderness. See Luke iv.

Of what use would these quotations (*Deut. vi. and vii.*) have been if they had been merely the words of men? In that case they could have had no power over the one who had completely subdued men by his wiles. But being in deed and in truth the word of God, the Devil, who must own God's authority even in his rebellion, gives way before it, and by the Word of God, Jesus as the perfect man foiled every attack and gained the victory.

But more remarkable still is the fact that in prayer to His Father, where we should have thought the Scriptures might have been set aside as useless, the Lord still quotes what had been written.

“None of them is lost but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled,” *John xvii. 12* (quoting *Ps. cix. 8*).

We might multiply references, for the Lord made the Word a constant text-book. When He had to break the solemn fact of His rejection and death to His disciples He showed them that only in this way could the Scriptures be fulfilled. He had to suffer and die, not only that we might be saved, and the devil overthrown, and God glorified, but that the Word of God might be fulfilled and established. *Luke xxii. 37*.

In resurrection He also used the same Scriptures, proving from Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms that Christ ought to have suffered these things and entered into His glory, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name amongst all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. *Luke xxiv. 26, 27, 44-47*. And even from His exalted seat in the glory of God our blessed Lord still used the Scriptures, for in His communications to John in Patmos, He quoted from and made allusion to the things written concerning Himself in Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

It is evident then from the use the Lord made of the Scriptures that He held them to be the very word of God; if they are not, then He was not what He claimed to be, greater than Solomon; *Luke*

*xi. 31* ; David's Lord, *Matt. xxii. 43* ; and the Eternally self existent One, *John viii. 58*.

If then we must let the Old Testament go at the bidding of these learned [?] men, we must not only let the New Testament go, but the Christ of the New Testament as well.

### **The God of the Bible.**

Attention has often been called to the character of the God the Bible presents to us as a proof of its origin, and verily we could have no better. His glory is beyond all human conception.

“He is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”—*I. Tim. vi. 16*.

Yet of Him who is so great and glorious we read—

“For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place *with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite one,*” *Isa., lvii. 15*.

And again—

“The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart,” *Ps., xxxiv. 18*.

Who would have imagined that such greatness and majesty, and such condescension and grace, could dwell in the same person.

But further—

“He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain,” *Isa. xl. 22*.

“The heavens are the work of His fingers,” *Ps. viii. 3.*

Yet “out of the mouths of babes and sucklings He has ordained praise,” *Ps. viii. 2.*

“He telleth the number of the stars and calleth them all by their names,” *Ps. cxlvii. 4.*

And no man beneath the stars can do either one or the other. But He who is great enough to do both is the One who has also numbered the very hairs of our heads. *Matt. x. 30.*

We read—

“Our God is a consuming fire,” *Hebrews xii 29.*

And of this same God—

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,” *Rev. xxi. 3.*

“He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,” *Hab. i. 13,* and yet He commendeth His love toward us while we were yet sinners,” *Rom. v. 8.*

“He is the just God,” *Rom. iii. 26,* and yet “Him that justifieth the ungodly,” *Rom, iv. 5.*

Can we find a God in whom, as we should say, such extremes meet amongst all the gods of the heathen? Does the Koran of the Mahomadan, The Vedas of the Hindu, or the writings of Zoroaster or Confucius present anything like this to us? No, this is the God of the Bible, great and glorious, full of splendour and majesty, yet merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. *Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7.*

And this God is further revealed to us in the great love wherewith He has loved us, by the death and blood-shedding of Jesus, and all who believe are

adopted into His family, they receive the Spirit of sonship and are able to call Him "Father."

And could such thoughts as these have found birth in the human mind? Impossible!

"O God, these thoughts are Thine,  
Thine only could they be,  
Fruit of the wisdom, love divine,  
Peculiar unto Thee.  
For sure no other mind  
For thoughts so bold so free,  
Greatness or strength could ever find,  
Thine only could they be."

Now shall we give up the Scriptures and accept instead the vapourings of the vain imaginations of men? If you do, you must give up the Christ of the Scriptures and the God that Christ has revealed.

I venture to say, that if you are truly a child of God, you will not give up anything, for all you have and hope for that is worth anything at all in the light of eternity you owe to Christ and God. These blessed Persons have become the joy and glory of your hearts. Your darkness has been enlightened, your soul redeemed, your burdens taken away, your sins forgiven, you have a sure and blessed hope of heaven at last. And you know the certainty of these things, for you have them on the reliable authority of the inspired word of God.

### **The predictions of the Bible.**

Another great proof of the inspiration of Scripture lies in the accuracy of its forecasts revealing the fact that it originated from One who has Omniscience. If we take first the three great divisions of the

human race, we have their future condition and history predicted.

*Shem*, was to be blessed by knowing God in relationship, which prediction was fulfilled in the Jews.

*Japheth*, was to be greatly enlarged, and from him have sprung the European nations, who now possess or people the greater part of the earth.

*Canaan* was to be a slave to all, and from him have come the African nations.

Then coming to the Jews, we find them to be a living and ever present proof of the truth of Scripture.

Balaam was compelled to prophesy against his will in regard to them, and as he saw with the vision of the Almighty, he said, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned amongst the nations," *Numbers* xxiii. 9. And is not this as we see it to-day? I merely cite this marvellous thing to which attention has often been called, as one of the proofs of the truth of Scripture. The Jews are in every country, and yet distinct from all nations. They have outlived all their contemporaries, the mighty nations that oppressed them have passed into complete oblivion, but they remain, and indeed will remain, for they are God's earthly people, and the day is coming when He will restore them to the chief place in the earth and establish them in the land of promise, according to all prophecy.

But the most important of all prediction is in connection with the coming of the Lord to earth. It will be impossible, limited as we are by time to

refer to many of these predictions, suffice it to say, as has been pointed out by others, a complete life of Jesus might be written from the Old Testament. We will, however, refer to some of the main prophecies.

His forerunner—

“Behold I send my messenger before Thy face,”  
*Mal. iii. 1.*

“Saying prepare ye the way of the Lord,” *Isa. xl. 3.*

The manner of His birth—

“The seed of the woman,” *Gen. iii. 15.*

“Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and thou shall call His name Emanuel,” *Isa. vii. 14.*

The place of His birth—

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from [the days of eternity] (marg.) *Micah. v. 2.*

The flight to Egypt—

“Out of Egypt have I called my Son,” *Hosea xi. 1.*

His home at Nazareth—

“He shall be called a Nazarene” (a reproach),  
*Ps. xxii. Isa. liii.*

His Mission.

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath annointed me to preach Good Tidings to the meek,” *Isa. lxi. 1.*

His character and entry in Jerusalem.

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass,” *Zechariah ix. 9.*

His rejection by the people.

“The stone refused by the builders,” *Ps. cxviii. 22.*

“Despised and rejected of men,” *Isa. liii. 3.*

“Cut off” [and shall have nothing] (marg.) *Daniel ix. 25.*

The price of His betrayal.

“They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver—  
a goodly price that I was prized at of them,” *Zech. xi. 12, 13.*

His death by Crucifixion.

“And they shall look upon me whom they have  
pierced,” *Zech. xii. 10.*

“And one shall say what are these wounds in Thy  
hands,” *Zech. xiii. 6.*

The object of His death.

“For the transgression of my people was He  
stricken,” *Isa. liii, 9.*

His glorious resurrection.

“For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades; neither  
wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption.  
Thou wilt show me the path of life.” *Ps. xvi. 10-11.*

His ascension to glory.

“Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led cap-  
tivity captive : Thou hast received gifts for men.”  
*Ps. lxxviii. 18.*

These are but a few of the formidable array of  
texts that might be marshalled to prove the fact that  
the Book came from One who is omniscient, but  
surely they will be sufficient for our purpose to-night.

### **Objections Raised.**

But if the Old Testament has come to us from  
God, and if the words of our Lord are also the words  
of God, what can we say about Paul's writings ?

We have been told that "Paul is without authority," and that in many important matters he was quite at fault. Let us see what Paul has to say for himself.

"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that *the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*" *I. Cor. xiv. 37.*

It would be well for all who pose as prophets to-day to dwell a little upon that statement. But it may be further contended that Paul is there speaking for himself. Then let us see what Peter has to say of Paul's writings.

"And account that the longsuffering of the Lord is salvation ; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given him hath written unto you ; As in *all his epistles*, speaking in them of these things ; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." *II. Peter iii. 15-16.*

You see the Book makes everything clear, and puts every person and thing in his and its true place. So here Paul's writings are put on the same level as the other Scriptures, while those who seek to wrest and deny them are classified as *unlearned and unstable*, and are warned that in dealing thus with Scripture they do so to their own hurt. We do well to remember that the word of God is the sword of the Spirit, that it is sharper than any two-edged sword.

We are also told that there are many things recorded in the Bible that are unfit for reading, and

for this reason it cannot have come from God ; and some who thus object have no fault to find with the vulgar immoralities which may be found in Shakespeare, Byron, and Burns.

But is not the record of sin and failure so plainly given rather a proof of inspiration than otherwise ? We know that all the penmen of the Old Testament were Israelites, and that they are the most patriotic of all people, holding their forefathers in great veneration. Is it likely that these men would have recorded the terrible sins of their glorious king David, if they had been left to themselves, and would they have told so graphically the trickery and lying schemes of their father Jacob, or recorded so fully the failures of their own people ?

The Book has come from God, and in it the truth as to the sinfulness of the hearts of men under the best circumstances must be laid bare, as well as the goodness of God's heart told out, so that when He saves all the glory shall be His.

Take the defeats that the nation suffered, most of them given in striking detail. Would the writing of these have been a congenial task to an Israelite ? As a rule historians are more or less biassed, and minimise defeat and make most of victory. For proof of this see the different accounts of the battle of Waterloo given by British and German writers, or the different accounts given of the War of Independence by British and American writers.

But the Bible records are God-inspired, and so true in every part, for holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. *1. Peter i. 21.*

“And all these things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”  
*I. Cor. x. 11.*

There are two great forces in Christendom which are the very antithesis of each other, and yet both alike more or less antagonistic to the Bible. They are Romanism and Rationalism. The former has for centuries withheld the Bible from the common people, though let us speak with justice, has never denied it to be the Word of God.

In Romanism the Church claims authority which has never been vested in it, and were it but subject to the Scriptures it would drop the cry, “Hear the Church.” For we find that the Church, instead of being the spokesman, must listen to the Spirit-given word. *Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 29; iii. 6, 13, 21.*

Rationalism is the setting up of reason and the wisdom of man as the standard, and all that does not pass muster at this bar must be rejected.

But the wisdom of man is dealt with by the Spirit of God in trenchant fashion in I. Corinthians, chapters 1 and 2, to which let us turn.

“For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nought the understanding of the prudent.” *I. Cor. i. 19.*

But why should that be? Because—

“By wisdom the world knew not God,” *verse 21.*

“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. . . . That no flesh should glory in His presence,” *verse 29.*

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto

him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." *ii. 14.*

"But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." *ii. 10.*

Now the question may arise, is the Bible then an unreasonable Book? far from it; it is the reason of men that is unreasonable, if I may be permitted to use a seeming contradiction. To illustrate: here is a little fellow who is compelled by his father to attend school, but to him it seemed the most unreasonable thing on earth, for he hates the lessons, arithmetic to his mind is nothing but a nuisance, and a game at marbles better than all the learning in the world, and he will reason the matter out with you entirely to his own satisfaction if you will allow him. Ah, but poor boy, his reason needs to be enlightened, and when he comes at last to look at things from his father's standpoint, he will hold very different views.

It is precisely the same with the reasonings of unregenerate men, the understanding is darkened by sin, it is alienated from God, warped and biased by enmity against Him. The natural man cannot focus divine things aright, for his vision is faulty, his eyes are blinded, and he needs to be enlightened by God's Spirit. But let us have God's verdict in the matter in His own solemn words.

"Walking in the vanity of their minds, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts."  
*Ephesians iv. 18.*

Do you ask how you are to understand the Scriptures? My answer is—Go to the Writer of them. The Holy Ghost took possession of the minds of holy men of old and guided their thoughts and words. They themselves did not always understand what they wrote. *I. Peter* x. 11. And how can you, unless you are taught by the Spirit that indited them.

If you will take the teachable place, the place of the child before God, you will become learned in His things, but never forget that God must interpret that which He has inspired.

Having travelled thus far, it must be clear to us all that Christ Jesus is the great subject of the Book, to Him and His blessed mission to earth all the prophets give witness, *Acts* x. 43; and you may be sure that the devil is behind every attack that was ever made upon it, and his object is to obscure the glory of Christ, and to blind the minds of men as to the truth of God's salvation in Him.

The skilful lawyer seeks by every means in his power to discredit the evidence of the witnesses called by his opponent, he knows that if he can prove these witnesses to be unreliable men their evidence will be at a discount, and these are the tactics the devil employs, he would undermine the testimony of the Old Testament Prophets to Christ, and, alas, he is finding ready tools in many who stand in the place of God's servants.

But all these efforts will prove forever futile, for God has magnified His Word above all His name, and heaven and earth will pass away, but not one jot or tittle of this Word shall fail.

Fear not, believer in Jesus, this Book is part of your precious heritage, and no weapon formed against it shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise up against it shall be condemned. From its pages you have learnt the way of salvation, it has been a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path. You have tested and proved many of its precious promises, and its truths have comforted you greatly in hours of trial and temptation. There are still depths within it which you have not fathomed, for, indeed, the best of us are but as children paddling on the verge of a mighty ocean, but it is here for us, God-given and God-preserved, by God's Spirit we can understand it, and we shall always find blessing in it if we remember the great subject of it is

C-H-R-I-S-T.