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The ascription of suffering to the will of God produces a fatalism inconsistent with the true genius of Christianity.
It also produces an asceticism founded on the idea that the endurance of suffering is to be sought as a means of mere personal improvement; whereas the only justification for self-denial, and the ample field for effort, is the advance of the kingdom.
The essential difference between both fatalism and asceticism and the doctrine of Jesus discussed.

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Prophets and apostles were men of their age, whose inspiration is seen in their lives, and may be gauged by the life they implanted in others.
If Jesus was in any sense divine, his interpretation of God could not have been conditioned by the mind of his age.
The divine authority and infallibility of Jesus is an intuitive assurance of the Christian, but may be buttressed by reason.
Thus (1) the unique joy which was the early effect of his message to the world goes to prove that he is himself unique.
(2) So does the fact that his message was transmitted by men obviously incapable of completely understanding it, in a form which meets the needs of successive generations and enables Jesus himself to be increasingly understood.
Many of our conclusions are based on the assumption that the life and words of Jesus have only an inspiration which the interpretations of his forerunners and followers also possess. We need to revise such conclusions, for we do not now believe that the writers of the Bible either possessed the insight of Jesus or were mechanically inspired.

CHAPTER VI

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We do not use Scripture reverently if we base opinions on texts contradicted in their context.
We find two contradictory theories running through the old Testament and the Epistles concerning God's relation to physical evil. The only consistent doctrine is in the words and acts of Jesus.