

command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."

## REVIEW.

EVIDENCES OF REVEALED RELIGION, BY A NUMBER OF  
THE MINISTERS OF GLASGOW.

### LECTURE III.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BOOKS OF SCRIPTURE.

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Inspiration is an attribute of the record in which revelation is communicated to us, rather than a direct element for proving its truth.

It is quite conceivable, that the original history of revelation might have been written by uninspired men; but, they who rightly estimate the pride of the natural mind, and its reluctance in submitting to Divine truth, will at once see, that, such a record of revelation would have been in a great measure useless. An uninspired Bible would have been destitute of all authority; though treating of God, it would have been only the word of man.

We may infer how such a book would have been received from the treatment which the Bible has actually met with from those who deny its inspiration: such are the most of Unitarians. Dr. Priestley, for example, thought that "the Scriptures were written without any particular inspiration, by men who wrote according to the best of their knowledge, and who from their circumstances, could not be mistaken with respect to the greater facts of which they were witnesses, but, like other men, subject to prejudice, might be liable to adopt a hasty and ill grounded opinion concerning things which did not fall within the compass of their own knowledge, and which had no connexion with any thing that was so." Need we wonder that with such an opinion of the writers of the Scriptures, Unitarians should speak of them as being inconclusive reasoners—as falling into mistakes from slips of memory, and recording as facts what were only vulgar errors? It is easy for the German Neologists to deny the very existence of Satan, the reality of demoniacal possession, and even the miracles of our Lord and his apostles, when they have brought themselves to regard the evangelists and

apostles as illiterate, prejudiced, and enthusiastic men.\* The comparative general orthodoxy of British theology may in part be ascribed to the tenacity with which the doctrine of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures has been held by the British Churches.

Those who have agreed in holding the doctrine of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, have yet differed in regard to the extent of the divine influence which operated on the minds of the sacred writers. Some maintain that they were under a plenary inspiration in every sentiment and every word which they wrote; others again hold that the influence of the spirit terminated in directing them to the truth they were to write, but left them at liberty to embody it in their own language. Some who incline to the former opinion admit of various degrees in the influence which operated on the inspired writers; they suppose that they were under an influence which sometimes suggested new truths, at other times aided them in the remembrance of what they had before known, and always superintended them and preserved them from errors.

But the true theory of inspiration has not yet, we are inclined to think, been clearly unfolded. It partakes of the difficulties which attach to all inquiries respecting the subordination of the moral agency of man to the all-controlling agency of God. Scripture is not altogether silent on the mode and extent of the divine agency in inspiration, and yet, it furnishes us only with a few hints on this subject. These, together with the obvious facts which are presented to us in the composition of the sacred volume, are the elements on which

\* The Rev. Mr. Rose, Christian Advocate in the University of Cambridge, in a volume of Sermons published a few years ago, gives the following sad account of German Theology. "The rationalizing Divines of Germany are bound by no law but their own fancies; some are more and some are less extravagant, but I do them no injustice after this declaration in saying that the general inclination and tendency of their opinions (more or less forcibly acted on) is this—that in the New Testament we shall find only the opinions of Christ and the apostles, adapted to the age in which they lived, and not eternal truths; that Christ himself had neither the design, nor the power of teaching any system which was to endure; that when he taught any enduring truth, as he occasionally did, it was without being aware of its nature; that the Apostles understood still less of real religion; that the whole doctrine, both of Christ and his apostles, as it is directed to the Jews alone, so it was gathered in fact from no other source than the Jewish philosophy; that Christ himself erred and his apostles spread his errors, and that, consequently, no one of his doctrines is to be received on their authority; but that, without regard to the authority of the books of Scripture, and their asserted divine origin, each doctrine is to be examined according to the principles of right reason, before it is allowed to be divine."