

count at a period a comparatively long time subsequent to the time of Moses. But aside from this there are unmistakable evidences that the writer, or writers, of the Pentateuch wrote a long time after the events described therein. Suppose that a document should be discovered which gives a history of Moses, and in the history we should find expressions like these: "All this was before Cæsar occupied the Roman throne," or "This was before there were any cities in England." Would it not be unmistakable proof that the document was written after Cæsar occupied the Roman throne, and after there were cities in England? What, then, shall we say of statements such as follows? "These are the Kings that reigned in the land of Edom, *before there reigned any King over the children of Israel.*" (Gen. xxxvi., 31). Since there was no King over Israel before Saul, five hundred years after the time of Moses, how could Moses have written it? Gen. xii., 6, says, in connection with Abram's coming to Shechem, "And the Canaanites was there in the land." Since the Canaanite was not driven out of the land till a long time after Moses' death, how could he refer to such a period in history? Similar indications that the time when the Pentateuch was written, at least part of it, must have been after Moses' death, may be found in almost all the books. Evidence of another character that someone other than Moses must have written these early records, we may find in Exod. xi., 3, which says, "Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of all the people," and in Numbers xiii., 3, "Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which are on the face of the earth." It is not at all probable that Moses wrote these sentences, certainly not by inspiration.

These instances, with many others that might be put in evidence, show that the opinion that Moses, or any other one writer, wrote the first five

books of the Bible is not founded upon the internal evidence of the books. My purpose, however, is not to enter into a discussion of this matter of authorship but to show rather that Bible commentators are not sustained in their theory that the Bible was written and preserved by methods different from those under which other books are written and preserved, and that the Bible is holy in any other sense than that it is the record of the religious *growth* of a religious people.

The writings are sacred in the sense that they contain a more distinct revelation of God's message to mankind than do the Bibles of any other people. They show a *progressive* realization of God's will in the souls of men. Their theme is the operation of the Divine Spirit upon the lives of men who put their trust in their God.

The great value of the book is that to a great extent it is a reliable record of the moral and spiritual advancement of an ancient people. It is a history of human beings, with all the moral imperfections of humanity in an uncivilized period, struggling to reach a higher civilization. Says Prof. Ladd: "The authors of the Hebrew Sacred Scriptures stand for the best moral and religious consciousness of the time, but their ideas and feelings on moral and religious subjects were not by any means necessarily true and faultless, when judged by the Christian standard." It is only when we realize that there are imperfections in the Scriptures, that they are fallible, that they are a record in many instances of immoral acts, that we do not have to attribute to God the inspiration of all the deeds of even the best of the prophets, do we find ourselves in the proper mental attitude to glean the richest treasures from them. For it is when we understand the limitations of the Bible writers that we can appreciate the reason of their actions which may seem to us immoral. When we look upon them as men "strongly influenced by