

It will not be questioned by Christians that the books of the New Testament may claim equal rank, at least, with those of the Old ; and thus we can regard our whole Bible as "inspired" and "profitable." The later scriptures, indeed, contain the record of things which many prophets and righteous men desired to see, but did not see them, and in the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ shine as noonday compared with the light of the early morning.

We have here, then, two statements regarding "all scripture," viz., that it is "given by inspiration of God," and that it is "profitable." And these are not independent statements, but closely related to each other; for the profitableness of scripture is guaranteed and immeasurably enhanced by its inspiration. If scripture is inspired of God, its value must exceed that of all human productions, even the holiest and best.

I. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God.* It is "God-breathed," for this is the literal meaning of the term. When the risen Lord would communicate authority and power to the apostles to execute their office, He "*breathed* on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." In this symbolical act He did, as it were, convey the Spirit, so that they should become qualified to teach and govern the church ; though not till Pentecost was the blessing thus signified fully bestowed upon them. So, in the vision of the valley of bones, the Lord says, "Behold, I will cause *breath* to enter into you, and ye shall live." The Psalmist says, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the *breath* of his mouth." "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the *breath* of the Almighty hath given me life," are the words of Elihu. In all which, and similar passages, we have clear allusions to the creative act, when "the Lord *breathed* into man's nostrils, and he became a living soul"; when God did, as it were, impart of Himself to His creature, who was made in His "image" and "likeness." All scripture is thus "God-breathed," and hence possesses attributes which are directly from God, and which distinguish it from all ordinary human compositions.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to give an adequate definition of inspiration. We cannot tell how, in bestowing this gift, the divine Spirit acted on man's spirit, nor can we describe what was peculiar in the consciousness of the person endowed with