

## The Inspiration of the Bible.

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In separating the inspired from the uninspired writings one condition of the churches in the days of Paul should not be overlooked. This is referred to in the 12th, 13th, and 14th of the 1st Corinthians. The remarkable effusion of the Holy Spirit in and after the days of Christ was the subject of ancient prophecy. After the fulfillment of these prophecies in connection with the work of Christ the same was promised to those who should believe on him. "In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover"; and, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost."

These supernatural manifestations were not confined to any class. They were extended to all ranks—men and women, young and old. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the state of things was in accord with these prophecies. Confusion followed. Paul gives directions with a view to restoring decency and order. In the meetings of the saints, one rose and spoke with uncommon wisdom; another in his address displayed extraordinary knowledge; while a third exhibited faith of the highest degree; others could heal the sick and work other miracles; others prophesied; another could discern spirits; others spoke in foreign tongues; others interpreted these addresses. All these gifts were of the Holy Spirit. They likewise prayed in the Spirit and sang in the Spirit.

Lifted up into spiritual light so intense, and endowed with these supernatural gifts, the Christians of those days were qualified to separate the chaff from the wheat—to know writings dictated by the Holy Spirit from those which were the productions of uninspired men. How long those gifts continued in the churches is not known. By this epistle, it is certain that these miraculous gifts were in full force at this time. Apostolic writings, tried in this holy fire of criticism, would, through the acceptance by these churches, secure to themselves a divine value, of which it would be difficult in after years to rob them. On the other hand, apocryphal writings, rejected by these churches, while enjoying this bright light of the presence of the Holy Spirit, would be stamped as lacking inspiration—a stamp which it would be most difficult to efface. Such tests as the churches, while in this spiritual condition, were able to apply to the sacred writings of their times, had no doubt a great influence in determining the genuine and casting out the spurious.

I have taken a general glance at the origin and collection of the New Testament books, now found in the list accepted as canonical, and also their history down to the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century. It may be of some service to give at this point the history of the English Bible.

Until the Reformation the monopoly of translating the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments, and of fixing the sacred canon as far as the West is concerned, was in the hands of the Roman Catholic church. Accompanying the struggles for reform was a demand for the Bible in the languages spoken by the people. Excepting a version of the gospels by Bishop Eadhelm and Egbert, and the new Testament by Bæda, the Venerable; and King Alfred's version containing the ten commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Psalms and the Gospels, there was no translation until the time of Wycliffe who gave the English the whole Bible translated from the Vulgate by Jerome. Those preceding Wycliffe being before the invention of printing had but a limited circulation.

Altho' the Magna Charta had been obtained; and now the great spiritual Magna Charta was also obtained which has saved England and America to their present position of greatness. A century and a half elapsed before there was another translation into English. Wycliffe's Bible had been doing its work. It was impossible for the church to exterminate the readers of the Bible. "Brethren in Christ" in obscure places encouraged each other, and the good work was perpetuated. In the beginning of the sixteenth century Lollards maintained with vigor the principles of the New Testament. Thomas Mann who was a martyr in 1518 confessed or boasted that he had tormented seven hundred people to God. The Lollards were charged with having portions of Wycliffe's Bible. Peter Luther began his translations into German. Tyndal had resolved on giving the English another translation of the Holy Scriptures. He was born in 1494. He stood high in the Roman church, and was deeply moved by the reformation in Germany, and so resolved to give the English people another version of the Scriptures. This he did, because as he said, "I perceived by experience, how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in the truth, except the Scriptures were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue." The Gloucester clergy with whom he lived were ignorant. "Of them he says, 'And therefore because they are unlearned, thought I, when they come to the ale house which is their preaching place, they affirm that my sayings are heresy.' Tyndale completed his translation in Hanburgh, and first succeeded in giving his countrymen the New Testament Pentateuch. Coverdale's Bible followed. It contained the whole of the Old and

New Testaments. After Henry the Eighth had thrown off the power of Rome, he said, "In God's name let it (Coverdale's Bible) go abroad among the people."

Taverner about 1534 brought out a revised version. In 1538 X Tyndale's whole Bible appeared. In 1540 another was published under the superintendence of Cranmer. This was known as Cranmer's Bible. The next translation is called the Geneva Bible. The English in that place produced this version. It became the family Bible of England. The Bishop's Bible came out in the reign of Elizabeth. Then followed the authorized version, known as King James' Bible; and in our days the revision of this translation. Luther, as is well known, gave the Germans the Bible in their mother tongue.

At the reformation the popular demand for the Bible in the vernaculars became so urgent in Great Britain and on the Continent, that the Roman Catholic church thought it expedient that the people should have a version bearing the sanction of the church. At Rheims and Douay translations of the Old and New Testaments were made and are known by the names of the places where the work was done.

I have in a general way examined the appearance and claims of Jesus of Nazareth, and the vindication of his claims by the miracles he wrought—and the labors and teachings of his apostles which were confirmed by the same means—the well-known miracles of the New Testament at and subsequent to Pentecost. We have, therefore, the three parts of the Word of God—the Old Testament, the gospels and the other books of the New Testament given to us, each commended and established by a special series of signs, wonders and miracles. But this is not all. They are bound together as one; first by the adoption of the Old Testament by Christ as the inspired Word of God, and secondly by the entire New Testament which also embraces the Old. In the New Testament two hundred and eighty-six quotations are found from the Old Testament. This union is not one-sided. The Old Testament by its prophecies and types, foreshadowed the New Testament, which in turn unfolds and brings into clear light the doctrines Old. Adolph Safer, a converted Jew, said, "The new Testament is the Holy Ghost's commentary on the Old Testament."

This Bible has come down to us as the revealed Word of God. The evidences of this fact are both within and without the book. First, let us glance at the external proofs that the Bible is the Word of God.

In attempting this it might be expected that the methods adopted by the higher critics should be fairly stated and considered. The view they take is a broad one. The Bible is tested as if had just now appeared claiming inspiration. Of this I make no complaint, as long as the critics give the Holy Book fair play, treat it impartially and thoroughly. The first things done by the modern examiners of the Bible, is to look out upon the whole world and into all time, and take up the literary output of the ages. This general mass is then separated into secular and sacred—a most difficult task to perform. The sacred writings of the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Persians, the Chinese, the Mohammedans, the Greeks and Romans are submitted to a sifting, so as to get the secular from the sacred. How will the Iliad, Odyssey, the Greek Plays, Aeneid and other books of the ancients be classed?

Out of these accumulations of the past, the most sacred literature is elected and the Bible is compared with it. There can be no good reason given why scholars of leisure should not compare the Bible with the writings of the ancients, and give the world the results of their labors. Before doing this they should examine the Bible by the principles laid down by Christ when he said of men, "By their fruits ye shall know them. Hinduism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Zoroastrianism each be subjected to the test by results. China, Burmah, India and Turkey have their fruits on exhibition and by their fruits they are doomed to an overwhelming condemnation. Christianity, too must be tried in the same way. Whenever its principles and doctrines have been advocated, and the character and lives of the people have been moulded and governed by them, there is found ample justification of its claims as a revelation from God, the only true religion given under heaven or found among men.

For Christians generally the comparing of the Bible with the religious literature of the world is impracticable, and its advocacy misleading. A few sabbaths since, Bishop Courtney stated in a lecture given to the Y. M. C. A. in Halifax that as he never compared the Bible with the sacred writings of the ancients, he could not discuss comparative theology. If the Bishop of a large diocese has not found time to explore this field, what chance has the mass of busy, active Christians to overtake this work? This may, therefore, be relegated to the few men of leisure. The people, as a whole, have neither the time nor the learning for such huge labors. Moreover its tendency is to drag the Bible down to the level with human productions. In the passage way to the Hall in Chicago where the Parliament of religions held its meetings in 1893, there appeared on the wall the names Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster and Christ. This was, I suppose, taken as a master stroke of liberalism; but after nearly two thousand years of Christian history, it was a shocking instance of silent blasphemy. "God has given him a name above every name, that unto Him every

knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth." To drag his name down to a level with brilliant heathen, is a daring and God-defying act. The same elements is found in comparative theology, when it is understood that the comparison is made with a view to ascertain the inspiration of the Bible.

Added to the proof that the Bible is the word of God, proof accumulated through the ages by the influence the Bible has had in promoting man's welfare, in producing a true and unique civilization, and in the progress of all departments of enterprise, also in securing man's material, intellectual, moral and religious welfare—is the phenomenal history of the Jews.

To all these proofs that of the brotherhood of the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ may be added. Here is evidence partaking of the nature of miracles. It is in perfect accord with the genuineness of Christ's character, doctrines and claims. Societies have been gathered together in every age of the world. But the members of all such brotherhoods have been brought to fellowship by qualifications easily understood. Rank and culture have been essential to their fraternal union and intercourse. Not so the societies who come together as followers of Christ.

Never in the world's history were the divisions of races, nations and religions greater than at the time Christ appeared. To break down these walls and neutralize these divisive forces and bring men together on an equality and in sweet and lasting union, was an undertaking beyond the dream of the wildest enthusiasts. But during Christ's life, there were instances indicative of what was about to come to pass. Roman soldiers lost their contempt for Jews; and Jews lost their hatred of Roman soldiers. He whose servant is sought to be healed is worthy, "for he has built us a synagogue." But after the coming of the Holy Spirit, the power was so increased that "the middle wall of partition" fell down as did the walls of Jericho. Converts came from all nations and all classes. The learned, cultured Paul has for his companion a Roman slave; and Onesimus is sent back to his master, Philemon—a "brother beloved"—more than a slave. There was a fraternal union of all classes and all conditions of the people, so that there was neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, but they were all one in Christ. No less supernatural was the great joy they had in each other's fellowship. "Whence doth this union arise?" This brotherhood has stood the test of about two thousand years. All possible devices of men and demons have been laid under tribute to break up this unique society; but all have failed. It has survived ten thousand persecutors. Today it is fresh and pure.

At the meeting of the World's Evangelical Alliance in 1873, men and women of scores of languages from the ends of the earth, sang, prayed, wept and rejoiced together, as the children of one father and mother might have done. The deepest, fullest and sweetest joy now known on earth is found in the depths of the hearts of men, women and children of all colours and classes when in Christian fellowship. Here is evidence, proof that the Bible, the Christian Bible, is from God, that it is a revelation of the great Father's heart, and is a solvent of all alienations and antagonism, and the secret by which divine union can be effected even here on earth.

In the next article I shall call attention to the essential qualification for ascertaining the knowledge that the Bible is the inspired Word and will of our Father in Heaven.

P. S. Number 5, existing in two copies, somewhat varied, through no fault of the editor, got two insertions, and may be regarded as a sermon repeated in a slightly changed form.

## Distinctive Baptist Principles.

BY E. H. CARROLL.

1. The New Testament the Law of Christianity.  
Doubtless many of my fellow Christians of other denominations may be disposed to smile at the announcement of this as a distinctive Baptist principle. But let us not smile too soon. Patiently await the development of the thought. To expand the statement: All the New Testament is the Law of Christianity. The New Testament will always be all the Law of Christianity. This does not deny the inspiration or profit of the Old Testament, nor that the New is a development of the Old. It affirms, however, that the Old Testament, as a typical, educational, and transitory system, was fulfilled in Christ, and as a standard of law and way of life was nailed to the cross of Christ and so taken out of the way. The principle teaches that we should not go to the Old Testament to find Christian law or Christian institutions. Not there do we find the true idea of the Christian church, or its members, or its ordinances, or its government, or its officers, or its sacrifices, or its worship, or its mission, or its ritual, or its priesthood. Now, when we consider the fact that the overwhelming majority of Christendom to-day, whether Greek, Romanist, or Protestant, borrow from the Old Testament so much of their doctrine of the church, including its members, officers, ritual, ordinances, government, liturgy, and mission, we may well call this a distinctive Baptist principle. This is not a question of what is the Bible. If it were, Baptists would not be distinguished from many Protestants in rejecting the apocryphal addition incorporated by Romanists in their Old Testament. Nor is it a stand with