**THE FUNDAMENTALS: A TESTIMONY TO THE TRUTH**

**VOLUME 1; CHAPTER 10. THE TESTIMONY OF CHRIST TO THE OLD TESTAMENT**

BY WILLIAM CAVEN, D.D. , LL. D., LATE PRINCIPAL OF KNOX COLLEGE, TORONTO, CANADA

Both Jews and Christians receive the Old Testament as containing a revelation from God, while the latter regard it as standing in close and vital relationship to the New Testament. Everything connected with the Old Testament has, of recent years, been subjected to the closest scrutiny - the authorship of its several books, the time when they were written, their style, their historical value, their religious and ethical teachings. Apart from the veneration with which we regard the Old Testament writings on their own account, the intimate connection which they have with the Christian Scriptures necessarily gives us the deepest interest in the conclusions which may be reached by Old Testament criticism. For us the New Testament Dispensation presupposes and grows out of the Mosaic, so the books of the New Testament touch those of the Old at every point: In vetere testamento novum latet, et in novo vetus patet. (In the Old Testament the New is concealed, and in the New the Old is revealed.)

We propose to take a summary view of the testimony of our Lord to the Old Testament, as it is recorded by the Evangelists. The New Testament writers themselves largely quote and refer to the Old Testament, and the views which they express regarding the old economy and its writings are in harmony with the statements of their Master; but, for various reasons, we here confine ourselves to what is related of the Lord Himself.

Let us refer, first, to what is contained or necessarily implied in the Lord's testimony to the Old Testament Scriptures, and, secondly, to the critical value of His testimony.

**I. THE LORD'S TESTIMONY TO THE OLD TESTAMENT**

Our Lord's authority - though this is rather the argumentum silentio - may be cited in favor of the Old Testament canon as accepted by the Jews in His day. He never charges them with adding to or taking from the Scriptures, or in any way tampering with the text. Had they been guilty of so great a sin it is hardly possible that among the charges brought against them, this matter should not even be alluded to. The Lord reproaches His countrymen with ignorance of the Scriptures, and with making the law void through their traditions, but He never hints that they have foisted any book into the canon, or rejected any which deserved a place in it.

Now, the Old Testament canon of the first century is the same as our own. The evidence for this is complete, and the fact is hardly questioned. The New Testament contains, indeed, no catalogue of the Old Testament books, but the testimony of Josephus, of Melito of Sardis, of Origen, of Jerome, of the Talmud, decisively shows that the Old Testament canon, once fixed, has remained unaltered. Whether the steady Jewish tradition that the canon was finally determined by Ezra and the Great Synagogue is altogether correct or not, it is certain that the Septuagint agrees with the Hebrew as to the canon, thus showing that the subject was not in dispute two centuries before Christ. Nor is the testimony of the Septuagint weakened by the fact that the common Old Testament Apocrypha are appended to the canonical books; for "of no one among the Apocryphal books is it so much as hinted, either by the author, or by any other Jewish writer, that it was worthy of a place among the sacred books" (Kitto's Cyclo., art. "Canon"). The Lord, it is observed, never quotes any of the aprocryphal books, nor refers to them.

**1. NO PART ASSAILED**

If our Lord does not name the writers of the books of the Old Testament in detail, it may at least be said that no word of His calls in question the genuineness of any book, and that he distinctly assigns several parts of Scripture to the writers whose names they pass under. The Law is ascribed to Moses; David's name is connected with the Psalms; the prophecies of Isaiah are attributed to Isaiah, and the prophecies of Daniel to Daniel. We shall afterward inquire whether these references are merely by way of accommodation, or whether more importance should be attached to them; in the meantime, we note that the Lord does not, in any instance, express dissent from the common opinion, and that, as to several parts of Scripture, He distinctly endorses it.

The references to Moses as legislator and writer are such as these: To the cleansed leper He says, "Go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded" (Matt. 8:4). "He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives" (Matt. 19:8). "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31). "For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death" (Mark 7:10). "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27). "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). "There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: For he wrote of Me. But if ye believed not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" (John 5:45-47). "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?" (John 7:19). "Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision. If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken," etc. (John 7:22, 23). The omitted parenthetical words - "not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers" - seem clearly to show, it may be remarked in passing, that the Lord is not unobservant of historical exactness.

The Psalms are quoted by our Lord more than once, but only once is a writer named. The 110th Psalm is ascribed to David; and the validity of the Lord's argument depends on its being Davidic. The reference, therefore, so far as it goes, confirms the inscriptions of the Psalms in relation to authorship.

Isa. 6:9 is quoted thus: "In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand" (Matt. 13:14, 15). Again, chapter 29:13 of Isaiah's prophecy is cited: "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites. This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mark 7:6). When, in the beginning of His ministry, the Lord came to Nazareth, there was delivered unto Him in the synagogue "the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor," etc. (Luke 4:17, 18). The passage read by our Lord is from the 61st chapter of Isaiah, which belongs to the section of the book very often, at present, ascribed to the second, or pseudo, Isaiah; but we do not press this point, as it may be said that the Evangelist, rather than Christ, ascribes the words to Isaiah.

In His great prophecy respecting the downfall of the Jewish state the Lord refers to "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet:" As in Dan. 9:27, we read that "For the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate," and in chapter 12:11, that "the abomination that maketh desolate (shall) be set up."

**2. NARRATIVES AND RECORDS AUTHENTIC**

When Christ makes reference to Old Testament narratives and records, He accepts them as authentic, as historically true. He does not give or suggest in any case a mythical or allegorical interpretation. The accounts of the creation, of the flood, of the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, as well as many incidents and events of later occurrence, are taken as authentic. It may, of course, be alleged that the Lord's references to the creation of man and woman, the flood, the cities of the plain, etc., equally serve His purpose of illustration whether He regards them as historical or not. But on weighing His words it will be seen that they lose much of their force and appropriateness unless the events alluded to had a historical character.

Let us refer more particularly to this matter. When the Pharisees ask Christ whether it is lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause, He answers them: "Have ye not read, that He which made them in the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?" (Matt. 19:4, 5). Again: "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not, until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matt. 24:37, 39). Again: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Matt. 11:23, 24). These utterances, everyone feels, lose their weight and solemnity, if there was no flood such as is described in Genesis, and if the destruction of wicked Sodom may be only a myth. Illustrations and parallels may, for certain purposes, be adduced from fictitious literature, but when the Lord would awaken the conscience of men and alarm their fears by reference to the certainty of divine judgment, He will not confirm His teaching by instances of punishment which are only fabulous. His argument that the Holy and Just God will do as He has done - will make bare His arm as in the days of old - is robbed, in this case, of all validity.

A view frequently urged in the present day is that, as with other nations, so with the Jews, the mythical period precedes the historical, and thus the earlier narratives of the Old Testament must be taken according to their true character. In later periods of the Old Testament we have records which, on the whole, are historical; but in the very earliest times we must not look for authentic history at all. An adequate examination of this theory (which has, of course, momentous exegetical consequences) cannot here be attempted. We merely remark that our Lord's brief references to early Old Testament narrative would not suggest the distinction so often made between earlier and later Old Testament records on the score of trustworthiness.

**3. THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM GOD**

We advance to say that Christ accepts the Old Dispensation and its Scriptures as, in a special sense, from God; as having special, divine authority. Many who recognize no peculiar sacredness or authority in the religion of the Jews above other religions of the world, would readily admit that it is from God. But their contention is that all religions (especially what they are pleased to call the great religions) have elements of truth in them, that they all furnish media through which devout souls have fellowship with the Power which rules the universe, but that none of them should exalt its pretensions much above the others, far less claim exclusive divine sanction; all of them being the product of man's spiritual nature, as molded by his history and environment, in different nations and ages. This is the view under which the study of comparative religion is prosecuted by many eminent scholars. A large and generous study of religions - their characteristics and history - tends, it is held, to bring them into closer fellowship with each other; and only ignorance or prejudice (say these unbiased thinkers) can isolate the religion of the Old Testament or of the New, and refuse to acknowledge in other religions the divine elements which entitle them to take rank with Judaism or Christianity.

The utterances of Jesus Christ on this question of the divinity of the Old Testament religion and cults are unmistakable; and not less clear and decided is His language respecting the writings in which this religion is delivered. God is the source in the directest sense, of both the religion and the records of it. No man can claim Christ's authority for classing Judaism with Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Parseeism. There is nothing, indeed, in the Lord's teaching which forbids us to recognize anything that is good in ethnic religions - any of those elements of spiritual truth which become the common property of the race and which were not completely lost in the night of heathenism; but, on the other hand, it is abundantly evident that the Jewish faith is, to our Lord, the one true faith, and that the Jewish Scriptures have a place of their own - a place which cannot be shared with the sacred books of other peoples. Samaritanism, even though it had appropriated so largely from the religion of Israel, He will not recognize. "For salvation is of the Jews."

Almost any reference of our Lord to the Old Testament will support the statement that He regards the Dispensation and its Scriptures as from God. He shows, e.g., that Old Testament prophecy is fulfilled in Himself, or He vindicates His teaching and His claims by Scripture, or He enjoins obedience to the law (as in the case of the cleansed lepers), or He asserts the inviolability of the law till its complete fulfillment, or He accuses a blinded and self-righteous generation of superseding and vacating a law which they were bound to observe. A few instances of explicit recognition of the Old Testament Scriptures as proceeding from God and having divine authority, may be here adduced. In His Sermon on the Mount the Lord makes this strong and comprehensive statement: "Verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:18).

In the context the law is distinguished from the prophets and designates, therefore, the Pentateuch; and surely the divine origin of this part of Scripture is unquestionably implied. No such inviolability could be claimed for any merely human institution or production. When the hypocritical and heartless son pretended to devote to God what should have gone to support his indigent parents, he "made the commandment of God of none effect," "for God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother" (Matt. 15:4). In purging the temple the Lord justifies His action in these words: "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer" (Matt. 21:13). Again: "As touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" (Matt. 22:32). Again: "Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do" (Mark 7:8). So many passages of the Old Testament are quoted or alluded to by the Lord as having received, or as awaiting fulfillment, that it is scarcely necessary to make citations of this class. These all most certainly imply the divinity of Scripture; for no man, no creature, can tell what is hidden in the remote future.

We are not forgetting that the Lord fully recognizes the imperfect and provisional character of the Mosaic law and of the Old Dispensation. Were the Old faultless, no place would have been found for the New. Had grace and truth come by Moses, the advent of Jesus Christ would have been unnecessary. So when the Pharisees put the question to Christ why Moses commanded to give to a wife who has found no favor with her husband a writing of divorcement and to put her away, He replied: "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:8). The Mosaic legislation was not in every part absolutely the best that could be given, but it was such as the divine wisdom saw best for the time being and under the special circumstances of the Hebrew people. Not only did the Old Testament set forth a typical economy, which must give place to another, but it embodied ethical elements of a provisional kind which must pass away when the incarnate Son had fully revealed the Father. The Old Testament is conscious of its own imperfections, for Jeremiah thus writes: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." But in all this there is nothing to modify the proposition which we are illustrating, viz., that our Lord accepts the Old Testament economy and its Scriptures as from God, as stamped with divine authority, and as truly making known the divine mind and will.

Marcion and the Gnostics did not receive any part of the Old Testament Scriptures, and the Old Dispensation itself they held to be of evil origin. So decided were they against the Old Testament that they would not admit into their New Testament canon the books which especially bear witness to the Old. But the Christian Church has followed its Master in regarding the Old Testament as the Word of God, as the Bible of the ages before the Advent, and as still part of the Bible for the Christian Church. Not until the days of developed rationalism was this position called in question, except among unbelievers. But it is obvious that the style of criticism which, in our own time, is frequently applied to the Old Testament (not to say anything about the New), touching its histories, its laws, its morality, is quite inconsistent with the recognition of any special divine characteristics or authority as belonging to it. The very maxim so often repeated, that criticism must deal with these writings precisely as it deals with other writings is a refusal to Scripture, in limine, of the peculiar character which it claims, and which the Church has ever recognized in it. If a special divine authority can be vindicated for these books, or for any of them, this fact, it is clear, ought to be taken into account by the linguistic and historical critic. Logically, we should begin our study of them by investigating their title to such authority, and, should their claim prove well founded, it should never be forgotten in the subsequent critical processes. The establishment of this high claim will imply in these writings moral characteristics (not to mention others) which should exempt them from a certain suspicion which the critic may not unwarrantably allow to be present when he begins to examine documents of an ordinary kind. It is not, therefore, correct to say that criticism, in commencing its inquiries, should know nothing of the alleged divine origin or sacred character of a book. If the book has no good vouchers for its claims to possess a sacred character, criticism must proceed unhindered; but correct conceptions of critical methods demand that every important fact already ascertained as to any writings should be kept faithfully before the mind in the examination of them. Science must here unite with reverential feeling in requiring right treatment of a book which claims special divine sanction, and is willing to have its claims duly investigated. The examination of a witness of established veracity and rectitude would not be conducted in precisely the same manner as that of a witness whose character is unknown or under suspicion. Wellhausen's style of treating the history of Israel can have no justification unless he should first show that the claim so often advanced in "Thus saith the Lord" is entirely baseless. So far from admitting the validity of the axiom referred to, we distinctly hold that it is unscientific. A just and true criticism must have respect to everything already known and settled regarding the productions to which it is applied, and assuredly so momentous a claim as that of divine authority demands careful preliminary examination.

But criticism, it may be urged, is the very instrument by which we must test the pretensions of these writings to a special divine origin and character, and, hence, it cannot stand aside till this question has been considered. In requiring criticism to be silent till the verdict has been rendered, we are putting it under restrictions inconsistent with its functions and prerogatives. The reply, however, is that the principal external and internal evidences for the divine origin of the Scriptures can be weighed with sufficient accuracy to determine the general character and authority of these writings before criticism, either higher or lower, requires to apply its hand. "The heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellences, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evince itself to be the word of God" (Conf. of Faith 1:5). But all of these considerations can, in all that is material, be weighed and estimated before technical criticism begins its labors, as they have been estimated to the entire conviction of the divinity of Scripture on the part of thousands who had no acquaintance with criticism. Should the fair application of criticism, when its proper time comes, tend to beget doubt as to the general conclusion already reached regarding the Bible, it will doubtless be right to review carefully the evidence on which our conclusion depends; but the substantive and direct proofs of the Scriptures being from God should first be handled, and the decision arrived at should be kept in mind, while criticism is occupied with its proper task. This seems to us the true order of the procedure.

**4. GOD SPEAKS**

Our Lord certainly attributes to the Old Testament a far higher character than many have supposed. God speaks in it throughout; and while He will more perfectly reveal Himself in His Son, not anything contained in the older revelation shall fail of its end or be convicted of error. Christ does not use the term "inspiration" in speaking of the Old Testament, but when we have adduced His words regarding the origin and authority of these writings, it will be evident that to Him they are God-given in every part. It will be seen that His testimony falls not behind that of His Apostles who say: "Every Scripture inspired of God" (2 Tim. 3:16), and "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21).

**5. WORDS AND COMMANDS OF GOD**

In speaking of Christ as teaching that the Old Testament is from God we have referred to passages in which He says that its words and commands are the words and commands of God; e.g., "God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and thy mother: and He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death" (Matt. 15:4). Again: "Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?"

In a comprehensive way the laws of the Pentateuch, or of the Old Testament, are called "the commandments of God." "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men. Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mark 7:8, 9); and in the context of this last quotation the commandment of God is identified with what "Moses spake," showing that the words of Moses are also the words of God.

Passages like these do more than prove that the Old Testament Scriptures express on the whole the mind of God, and, therefore, possess very high authority. If it can certainly be said that God spake certain words, or that certain words and commandments are the words and commandments of God, we have more than a general endorsement; as when, e.g., the editor of a periodical states that he is responsible for the general character and tendency of articles which he admits, but not for every sentiment or expression of opinion contained in them.

It needs, of course, no proof that the words quoted in the New Testament as spoken by God are not the only parts of the Old which have direct divine authority. The same thing might evidently be said of other parts of the book. The impression left, we think, on every unprejudiced mind is that such quotations as the Lord made are only specimens of a book in which God speaks throughout. There is not encouragement certainly to attempt any analysis of Scripture into its divine and its human parts or elements - to apportion the authorship between God and the human penman, for, as we have seen, the same words are ascribed to God and to His servant Moses. The whole is spoken by God and by Moses also. All is divine and at the same time all is human. The divine and the human are so related that separation is impossible.

**6. ABSOLUTE INFALLIBILITY OF SCRIPTURE**

Attention may be specially called to three passages in which the Lord refers to the origin and the absolute infallibility of Scripture. Jesus asked the Pharisees, "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord?" The reference is to Psalm 110, which the Lord says David spake or wrote "in spirit;" i.e., David was completely under the Spirit's influence in the production of the Psalm, so that when he calls the Messiah his "Lord" the word has absolute authority. Such is clearly the Lord's meaning, and the Pharisees have no reply to His argument. The Lord does not say that the entire Old Testament was written "in the Spirit," nor even that all the Psalms were so produced; He makes no direct statement of this nature; yet the plain reader would certainly regard this as implied. His hearers understood their Scriptures to have been all written by immediate inspiration of God, and to be the word of God; and He merely refers to Psalm 110 as having the character which belonged to Scripture at large.

In John 10:34-36 Christ vindicates Himself from the charge of blasphemy in claiming to be the Son of God: "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods. If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of Him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" The Scripture cannot be broken - ou dunatai luthenai. The verb signifies to loose, unbind, dissolve, and as applied to Scripture means to subvert or deprive of authority. The authority of Scripture is then so complete - so pervasive - as to extend to its individual terms. "Gods" is the proper word because it is used to designate the Jewish rulers. If this is not verbal inspiration, it comes very near it. One may, of course, allege that the Lord's statement of inerrancy implies only that the principal words of Scripture must be taken precisely as they are, but that He does not claim the like authority for all its words. Without arguing this point, we merely say that it is not certain or obvious that the way is left open for this distinction. In face of Christ's utterances it devolves on those who hold that inspiration extends to the thought of Scripture only, but not to the words, or to the leading words but not to the words in general, to adduce very cogent arguments in support of their position. The onus probandi, it seems to us, is here made to rest on them. The theory that inspiration may be affirmed only of the main views or positions of Scripture, but neither of the words nor of the development of the thoughts, cannot, it seems clear, be harmonized with the Lord's teaching. Before adverting to a third text we may be allowed to set down these words of Augustine in writing to Jerome: "For I acknowledge with high esteem for thee, I have learned to ascribe such reverence and honor to those books of the Scriptures alone, which are now called canonical, that I believe most firmly that not one of their authors has made a mistake in writing them. And should I light upon anything in those writings, which may seem opposed to truth, I shall contend for nothing else, than either that the manuscript was full of errors, or that the translator had not comprehended what was said, or that I had not understood it in the least degree."

In His sermon on the Mount our Lord thus refers to His own relation to the Old Testament economy and its Scriptures: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5:17, 18). No stronger words could be employed to affirm the divine authority of every part of the Old Testament; for the law and the prophets mean the entire Old Testament Scriptures. If this declaration contemplates the moral element of these Scriptures, it means that no part of them shall be set aside by the New Dispensation, but "fulfilled" - i.e., filled up and completed by Jesus Christ as a sketch is filled up and completed by the painter. If, as others naturally interpret, the typical features of the Old Testament are included in the statement, the term "fulfilled," as regards this clement, will be taken in the more usual meaning. In either case the inviolability and, by implication, the divine origin of the Old Testament could not be more impressively declared. Mark how comprehensive and absolute the words are: "One jot or one tittle." "Jot" (iota) is yod, the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet; "tittle," literally little horn or apex, designates the little lines or projections by which Hebrew letters, similar in other respects, differ from each other. We have here, one might say, the inspiration of letters of the Old Testament. Everything contained in it has divine authority, and must, therefore, be divine in origin; for it is unnecessary to show that no such authority could be ascribed to writings merely human, or to writings in which the divine and the human interests could be separated analytically.

Should it be said that the "law," every jot and tittle of which must be fulfilled, means here the economy itself, the ordinances of Judaism, but not the record of them in writing, the reply is that we know nothing of these ordinances except through the record, so that what is affirmed must apply to the Scriptures as well as to the Dispensation.

The only questions which can be well raised are, first, whether the "law and the prophets" designate the entire Scriptures or two great divisions of them only; and, secondly, whether the words of Jesus can be taken at their full meaning, or, for some reason or other, must be discounted. The first question it is hardly worthwhile to discuss, for, if neither jot nor tittle of the "law and the prophets" shall fail, it will hardly be contended that the Psalms, or whatever parts of the Old Testament are not included, have a less stable character. The latter question, of momentous import, we shall consider presently.

**7. FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY**

The inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures is clearly implied in the many declarations of our Lord respecting the fulfilment of prophecies contained in them. It is God's prerogative to know, and to make known, the future. Human presage cannot go beyond what is foreshadowed in events which have transpired, or is wrapped up in causes which we plainly see in operation. If, therefore, the Old Testament reveals, hundreds of years in advance, what is coming to pass, omniscience must have directed the pen of the writer; i.e., these Scriptures, or at least their predictive parts, must be inspired.

The passage already quoted from the Sermon on the Mount may be noticed as regards its bearing on prophecy: "I am not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil." While plerosai, as referring to the law, has the special meaning above pointed out; as referring to the prophets, it has its more common import. We have here, then, a general statement as to the Old Testament containing prophecies which were fulfilled by Christ and in Him. Here are examples. The rejection of Messiah by the Jewish authorities, as well as the ultimate triumph of His cause, is announced in the 118th Psalm, in words which Christ applies to Himself: "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner." The desertion of Jesus by His disciples when He was apprehended fulfils the prediction of Zechariah: "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall all be scattered" (Matt. 26:31). Should angelic intervention rescue Jesus from death, "how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" All that related to His betrayal, apprehension, and death took place, "that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled" (Matt. 26:56). "Had ye believed Moses," said our Lord, "ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me" (John 5:46). The 41st Psalm preannounces the treachery of Judas in these words: "He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his heel against Me;" and the defection of the son of perdition takes place, "that the Scriptures may be fulfilled" (John 17:12). The persistent and malignant opposition of His enemies fulfils that which is written: "They hated Me without a cause" (John 15:25). Finally, in discoursing to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, the Lord, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. "And He said unto them: These are the words which I spake unto you", while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day" (Luke 24:44-46).

It is not denied that in some instances the word "fulfil" is used in the New Testament merely as signifying that some event or condition of things corresponds with or realizes something that is written in the Old Testament; as when the words in Isaiah, "By hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand," are said to be fulfilled in the blind obduracy of the Pharisees. Nor, again, is it denied that "fulfil" has the meaning of filling, or expanding, or completing. But clearly our Lord, in the passages here cited, employs the term in another acceptation. He means nothing less than this: that the Scriptures which He says were "fulfilled" were intended by the Spirit of God to have the very application which He makes of them; they were predictions in the sense ordinarily meant by that term. If the Messiah of the Old Testament were merely an ideal personage, there would be little force in saying that the Lord "opened the understanding" of the disciples that they might see His death and resurrection to be set forth in the prophecies. But to teach that the Old Testament contains authentic predictions is, as we have said, to teach that it is inspired. The challenge to heathen deities is, "Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods" (Isa. 41:23).

We thus find that our Lord recognizes the same Old Testament canon as we have, that so far as He makes reference to particular books of the canon He ascribes them to the writers whose names they bear, that He regards the Jewish religion and its sacred books as in a special sense - a sense not to be affirmed of any other religion - from God, that the writers of Scripture, in His view, spake in the Spirit, that their words are so properly chosen that an argument may rest on the exactness of a term, that no part of Scripture shall fail of its end or be convicted of error, and that the predictions of Scripture are genuine predictions, which must all in their time receive fulfilment.

We cannot here discuss the doctrine of inspiration; but on the ground of the Lord's testimony to the Old Testament, as above summarized, we may surely affirm that He claims for it throughout all that is meant by inspiration when we use that term in the most definite sense. No higher authority could well be ascribed to apostolic teaching, or to any part of the New Testament Scriptures, than the Lord attributes to the more ancient Scriptures when He declares that "jot or tittle shall not pass from them till all be fulfilled," and that if men "hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

**II. THE VALUE OF CHRIST'S TESTIMONY**

It remains that we should briefly advert to the value, for the scientific student of the Bible, of Christ's testimony to the Old Testament. The very announcement of such a topic may not be heard without pain, but in view of theories with which Biblical students are familiar, it becomes necessary to look into the question. Can we, then, accept the utterances of Christ on the matters referred to as having value - as of authority - in relation to the Biblical scholarship? Can we take them at their face value, or must they be discounted? Or again, are these words of Jesus valid for criticism on some questions, but not on others?

There are two ways in which it is sought to invalidate Christ's testimony to the Old Testament.

**1. IGNORANCE OF JESUS ALLEGED**

It is alleged that Jesus had no knowledge beyond that of His contemporaries as to the origin and literary characteristics of the Scriptures. The Jews believed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, that the narratives of the Old Testament are all authentic history, and that the words of Scripture are all inspired. Christ shared the opinions of His countrymen on these topics, even when they were in error. To hold this view, it is maintained, does not detract from the Lord's qualifications for His proper work, which was religious and spiritual, not literary; for in relation to the religious value of the Old Testament and its spiritual uses and applications He may confidently be accepted as our guide. His knowledge was adequate to the delivery of the doctrines of His kingdom, but did not necessarily extend to questions of scholarship and criticism. Of these He speaks as any other man; and to seek to arrest, or direct, criticism by appeal to His authority, is procedure which can only recoil upon those who adopt it. This view is advanced, not only by critics who reject the divinity of Christ, but by many who profess to believe that doctrine. In the preface to his first volume on the Pentateuch and Joshua, Colenso thus writes: "It is perfectly consistent with the most entire and sincere belief in our Lord's divinity to hold, as many do, that when He vouchsafed to become a 'Son of man' He took our nature fully, and voluntarily entered into all the conditions of humanity, and, among others, into that which makes our growth in all ordinary knowledge gradual and limited. It is not supposed that, in His human nature, He was acquainted more than any Jew of His age with the mysteries of all modern sciences, nor can it be seriously maintained that, as an infant or young child, He possessed a knowledge surpassing that of the most pious and learned adults of His nation, upon the subject of the authorship and age of the different portions of the Pentateuch. At what period, then, of His life on earth, is it to be supposed that He had granted to Him as the Son of man, supernaturally, full and accurate information on these points?" etc. (vol. i., p. 32). "It should also be observed," says Dr. S. Davidson, "that historical and critical questions could only belong to His human culture, a culture stamped with the characteristics of His age and country."

The doctrine of the Kenosis is invoked to explain the imperfection of our Lord's knowledge on critical questions, as evidenced by the way in which He speaks of the Pentateuch and of various Old Testament problems. The general subject of the limitation of Christ's knowledge during His life on earth is, of course, a very difficult one, but we do not need here to consider it. The Gospel of Mark does speak of the day and hour when the heaven and earth shall pass away as being known to the Father only, and not to the Son; but without venturing any opinion on a subject so mysterious, we may, at least, affirm that the Lord's knowledge was entirely adequate to the perfect discharge of His prophetical office. To impute imperfection to Him as the Teacher of the Church were indeed impious. Now the case stands thus: By a certain class of critics we are assured that, in the interests of truth, in order to an apologetic such as the present time absolutely requires, the traditional opinions regarding the authorship of the Old Testament books and the degree of authority which attaches to several, if not all of them, must be revised. In order to save the ship, we must throw overboard this cumbrous and antiquated tackling. Much more, we are assured, than points of scholarship are involved; for intelligent and truth-loving men cannot retain their confidence in the Bible and its religion, unless we discard the opinions which have prevailed as to the Old Testament, even though these opinions can apparently plead in their favor the authority of Jesus Christ.

Now mark the position in which the Lord, as our Teacher, is thus placed. We have followed Him in holding opinions which turn out to be unscientific, untrue; and so necessary is it to relinquish these opinions that neither the Jewish nor the Christian faith can be satisfactorily defended if we cling to them. Is it not, therefore, quite clear that the Lord's teaching is, in something material, found in error - that His prophetical office is assailed? For the allegation is that, in holding fast to what He is freely allowed to have taught, we are imperiling the interests of religion. The critics whom we have in view must admit either that the points in question are of no importance, or that the Lord was imperfectly qualified for His prophetical work. Those who have reverence for the Bible will not admit either position. For why should scholarship so magnify the necessity to apologetics of correcting the traditional opinion as to the age and authorship of the Pentateuch, and other questions of Old Testament criticism, unless it means to show that the Old Testament requires more exact, more enlightened, handling than the Lord gave it? Should it be replied that the Lord, had He been on earth now, would have spoken otherwise on the topics concerned, the obvious answer is, that the Lord's teaching is for all ages, and that His word "cannot be broken."

**2. THEORY OF ACCOMMODATION**

The theory of accommodation is brought forward in explanation of those references of Christ to the Old Testament which endorse what are regarded as inaccuracies or popular errors. He spake, it is said, regarding the Old Testament, after the current opinion or belief. This belief would be sometimes right and sometimes wrong; but where no interest of religion or morality was affected - where spiritual truth was not involved - He allowed Himself, even where the common belief was erroneous, to speak in accordance with it. Some extend the principle of accommodation to the interpretation of the Old Testament as well as to questions of canon and authorship; and in following it the Lord is declared to have acted prudently, for no good end could have been served, it is alleged, by crossing the vulgar opinion upon matters of little importance, and thus awakening or strengthening suspicion as to His teaching in general.

As to the accommodation thus supposed to have been practiced by our Lord, we observe that if it implies, as the propriety of the term requires, a more accurate knowledge on His part than His language reveals, it becomes difficult, in many instances, to vindicate His perfect integrity. In some cases where accommodation is alleged, it might, indeed, be innocent enough, but in others it would be inconsistent with due regard to truth; and most of the statements of the Lord touching the Old Testament to which attention has been directed in this discussion seem to be of this latter kind. Davidson himself says: "Agreeing as we do in the sentiment that our Savior and His Apostles accommodated their mode of reasoning to the habitual notions of the Jews, no authority can be attributed to that reasoning except when it takes the form of an independent declaration or statement, and so rests on the speaker's credit." Now the statements of Christ respecting the Old Testament Scriptures to which we desire specially to direct attention are precisely of this nature. Are not these "independent declarations"? "One jot or one tittle shall not pass," etc.; "The Scripture cannot be broken;" "David in spirit calls him Lord;" "All things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning Me."

Further, we may say as before, that if our Lord's statements- His obiter dicta, if you will - about the authorship of parts of Scripture give a measure of countenance to opinions which are standing in the way of both genuine scholarship and of faith, it is hard to see how they can be regarded as instances of a justifiable accommodation. It seems to us (may we reverently use the words) that in this case you cannot vindicate the Lord's absolute truthfulness except by imputing to Him a degree of ignorance which would unfit Him for His office as permanent Teacher of the Church. Here is the dilemma for the radical critic - either he is agitating the Church about trifles, or, if his views have the apologetical importance which he usually attributes to them, he is censuring the Lord's discharge of His prophetic office; for the allegation is that Christ's words prove perplexing and misleading in regard to weighty issues which the progress of knowledge has obliged us to face. Surely we should be apprehensive of danger if we discover that views which claim our adhesion, on any grounds whatever, tend to depreciate the wisdom of Him whom we call "Lord and Master," upon whom the Spirit was bestowed "without measure," and who "spake as never man spake." It is a great thing in this controversy to have the Lord on our side.

Are, then, the Lord's references to Moses and the law to be regarded as evidence that He believed the Pentateuch to be written by Moses, or should they be classed as instances of accommodation? When we take in cumulo all the passages in which the legislation of the Pentateuch and the writing of it are connected with Moses, a very strong case is made out against mere accommodation. The obvious accuracy of speech observed in some of these references cannot be overlooked; e.g., "Moses, therefore, gave you circumcision (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers)." Again, "There is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust; for had ye believed Moses ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me; but if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" This is not the style of one who does not wish his words to be taken strictly!

**TWO POSITIONS CLEAR**

Two positions may, I think, be affirmed: **1.** The legislation of the Pentateuch is actually ascribed to Moses by the Lord. If this legislation is, in the main, long subsequent to Moses, and a good deal of it later than the exile, the Lord's language is positively misleading, and endorses an error which vitiates the entire construction of Old Testament history and the development of religion in Israel. **2.** Moses is to such extent the writer of the law that it may, with propriety, be spoken of as "his writings." All admit that there are passages in the Books of Moses which were written by another hand or other hands, and should even additions other than certain brief explanatory interpolations and the last chapter of Deuteronomy have to be recognized (which has not yet been demonstrated) the Pentateuch would remain Mosaic. Should Moses have dictated much of his writings, as Paul did, they would, it is unnecessary to say, be not the less his. The words of Jesus we consider as evidence that He regarded Moses as, substantially, the writer of the books which bear his name. Less than this robs several of our Lord's statements of their point and propriety.

It is hardly necessary to say that we have no desire to see a true and reverent criticism of the Old Testament, and of the New as well, arrested in its progress, or in the least hindered. Criticism must accomplish its task, and every lover of truth is more than willing that it should do so. Reluctance to see truth fully investigated, fully ascertained and established, in any department of thought and inquiry, and most of all in those departments which are highest, is lamentable evidence of moral weakness, of imperfect confidence in Him who is the God of truth. But criticism must proceed by legitimate methods and in a true spirit. It must steadfastly keep before it all the facts essential to be taken into account. In the case of its application to the Bible and religion, it is most reasonable to demand that full weight should be allowed to all the teachings, all the words of Him who only knows the Father, and who came to reveal Him to the world, and who is Himself the Truth. If all Scripture bears testimony to Christ, we cannot refuse to hear Him when He speaks of its characteristics. It is folly, it is unutterable impiety, to decide differently from the Lord any question regarding the Bible on which we have His verdict; nor does it improve the case to say that we shall listen to Him when He speaks of spiritual truth, but shall count ourselves free when the question is one of scholarship. Alas for our scholarship when it brings us into controversy with Him who is the Prophet, as He is the Priest and King of the Church, and by whose Spirit both Prophets and Apostles spake!

Nothing has been said in this paper respecting the proper method of interpreting the different books and parts of the Old Testament, nor the way of dealing with specific difficulties.

Our object has been to show that the Lord regards the entire book, or collection of books, as divine, authoritative, infallible. But in the wide variety of these writings there are many forms of composition, and every part, it is obvious to say, must be understood and explained in accordance with the rules of interpretation which apply to literature of its kind. We have not been trying in advance to bind up the interpreter to an unintelligent literalism in exegesis, which should take no account of what is peculiar to different species of writing, treating poetry and prose, history and allegory, the symbolical and the literal, as if all were the same. The consideration of this most important subject of interpretation with which apologetical interests are, indeed, closely connected, has not been before us. But nothing which we could be called upon to advance regarding the interpretation of the Old Testament could modify the results here reached in relation to the subject of which we have spoken. Our Lord's testimony to the character of the Old Testament must remain unimpaired.