

The Perfect

TEMPLE OF TRUTH

Being a demonstration of the divine construction of the Canon of the Old and New Testament Scriptures

By CHARLES H. WELCH

WHAT IS IMPLIED BY `INSPIRATION'?

`All Scripture is given by inspiration of God' (2 Tim. 3:16).

The word so translated is the Greek *Theopneustos*, made up of *Theos* `God' and a part of the verb *pneo* `to breathe'. From this word we get *pneuma* `spirit', which appears in English in such terms as pneumatic and pneumonia, where the primitive root meaning `to breathe' is evident, and the connexion between `inspiration' and `breathing' is apparent in such words as `respire' and `transpire'. From these items we can conclude that Scripture *graphie* `what is written' is inspired by God, *Theopneustos* or `God breathed'. The Scriptures abound with similar statements.

`God ... spake in time past by the prophets' (Heb. 1:1).

`This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the HOLY GHOST BY THE MOUTH of David spake concerning Judas' (Acts 1:16).

The Gospel of Luke records that on two occasions, after the Lord had been raised from the dead, He endorsed the canon of the Old Testament Scripture:

`And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself'.

`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' (Luke 24:27. 44).

The Old Testament Scriptures are divided into three parts (1). The Law (*Torah*), (2). The Prophets (*Nebiim*), (3). The Psalms (*Kethubim*).

The third title *Kethubim* means, literally `The writings', but as the book of the Psalms heads the list, that title is often used instead. A passage in the Talmud (a work which preserves the traditions of the Elders) says `This is the order of the prophets. The book of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah and the Twelve'. They recognized that Isaiah actually comes before Jeremiah, but in their quaint way, they say they `Joined destruction with destruction, and comfort with comfort'. On the inset page of this leaflet we have set out the books of the Bible as they were associated together, and without losing one book from the Holy Scriptures, we discover that there are 49 in all, and that they can be so assembled as to present to the eye a very `Temple of Truth', which while it leaves the `How' of inspiration unexplained, makes it evident that ONE MIND, like that of the Architect of a building, conceived and supervised the work from start to finish, so that when Moses wrote `In the beginning' (Gen. 1:1) God was already visualising the words of 1 Corinthians 15:24 `Then cometh the end'. Whatever other charges may be justly laid against the people of Israel (and there are many, culminating in the rejection of their Messiah), they have always been fanatically jealous of the Scriptures entrusted to them, counting letters and phrases with such meticulous care, that whole books could be put together from their notes (The Massorah, or marginal directory).

THE WITNESS OF JOSEPHUS

Flavius Josephus, a Jew of distinguished priestly line, was born in A.D. 37. He wrote `The Wars of the Jews'. `The Antiquities of the Jews', an autobiography, and `A Treatise against Apion'. The following is the weighty opinion of Bishop Porteous and Bishop Scaliger with regard to the character of Josephus:

`The fidelity, the veracity and the probity of Josephus are universally allowed, and Scaliger in particular declares that, not only in the affairs of the Jews, but even of foreign nations, he deserves more than all the Greek and Roman writers put together'.

Here is the testimony of Josephus concerning the Old Testament Scriptures:

`For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine; and of them, five belong to Moses ... The prophets who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their time in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life.

`How firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them or take anything from them; but it becomes natural to all Jews, immediately, and from their birth, to esteem those books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and if occasion be, willingly to die for them' (Apion, Bk. i. Par. 8).

This is the testimony of a man who most evidently expresses his deep conviction, and not his own only, but that of the national mind as well. We draw attention, moreover, to the fact that this man, who would sooner die than add to or take away from the sacred Scriptures, declares that the Hebrew Canon consists of TWENTY-TWO BOOKS only. Most readers are aware that the English Old Testament contains THIRTY-NINE BOOKS, but this is because the twelve minor prophets are reckoned separately, and double books such as 1 and 2 Chronicles are counted as two. In the Hebrew Canon, Ruth is reckoned with Judges, Nehemiah with Ezra, Lamentations with Jeremiah, this with the twelve minor prophets that are treated as one, reduces the number of scrolls, without altering the number of separate books.

A TESTIMONY 232 YEARS BEFORE CHRIST

The Book of Ecclesiasticus was written in Syro-Chaldaic about A.M. 3772, or two hundred and thirty years before Christ, and was translated by the author's grandson into Greek. In the prologue he speaks of his grandfather giving himself to the reading of `the law, and the prophets, and the other books of our fathers', which is sufficient proof that such a recognised collection of sacred books then existed.

THE TESTIMONY OF TRANSLATIONS

As Paul had used the term `Old Covenant' in 2 Corinthians 3:14 it was quite natural that the writings of the apostles should be known as the `New Covenant' (Eusebius H.E., vi. 25) or `The Gospels and the Prophets' (Clement of Alexandria, Ignatius, Justyn Martyr and others). Before the close of the second century, translations of the New Testament began to be made, and this effectively prevented any alteration, addition or subtraction, for such a fraud would immediately become known and exposed - unless, indeed, we are credulous enough to believe that friends and foes, of different nations, languages and opinions, should all without exception have agreed to countenance such a fraud.

In the third edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* we read:

`This argument is so strong, that, if we deny the authenticity of the New Testament we may with a thousand times greater propriety reject all the other writings in the world'.

The following facts must be borne in mind by any who would raise objections to the canonicity of the books of the New Testament:

- (1).It cannot be shown that any one doubted the authenticity of any book of the New Testament in the period when such books appeared.
- (2).No account is on record that would lead one to reject any such book as spurious.
- (3).No great length of time elapsed after the death of the writers before the New Testament was widely known.
- (4).The books of the New Testament are actually mentioned by writers living at the same time as the apostles.
- (5).No facts are recorded which actually happened after the deaths of the writers, apart, of course, from prophecy.

THE PERFECT TEMPLE OF TRUTH

The importance of the fact that the Hebrew Canon contains twenty-two books may now be seen. The number of books in the New Testament is 27, in the Old Testament 22. Adding these together, we have 49 (7x7), the perfect number for the complete Canon. Moreover, of the 27 New Testament books there are seven catholic epistles, seven Pauline epistles written before Acts 28, and seven Pauline epistles written after Acts 28. The Book of Revelation also contains epistles sent to the seven churches in Asia. We have, therefore, the great basis of Law, Prophets, Psalms, Gospels and Acts, supporting the seven columns of Epistles, crowned with the sevenfold cornice of the Apocalypse - a temple of truth, complete, perfect and divine.

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