

## CHAPTER II

### SCRIPTURAL PROOF OF THE DIVINE INSPIRATION.

Let us open the Scriptures. - What do they say of their inspiration?

#### SECTION I.

##### ALL SCRIPTURE IS DIVINELY INSPIRED.

We shall commence by reproducing here that oft-repeated passage, 2 Tim. iii. 16, "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*."<sup>1</sup> that is to say, all parts of it are given by the Spirit or by the breath of God.

This statement admits of no exception and of no restriction. Here there is no exception; it is ALL SCRIPTURE; it is *all that is written* ( $\pi\hat{\alpha}\sigma\alpha \gamma\rho\alpha\phi\eta$ ); meaning thereby the thoughts after they have received the stamp of language. - No restriction; all Scripture is in such wise a work of God, that it is represented to us as uttered by the divine breathing, just as human speech is uttered by the breathing of a man's mouth. The prophet is the mouth of the Lord.

The purport of this declaration of St Paul remains the same in both the constructions that may be put upon his words, whether we place, as our versions do, the affirmation of the phrase on the word θεόπνευστος; (*divinely inspired*), and suppose the verb to be under

stood (*all Scripture is divinely inspired*, profitable . . .); or, making the verb apply to the words that follow, we understand θεόπνευστος (*divinely inspired*) only as a determinative adjective (*all Scripture divinely inspired of God*, is profitable . . .). - This last construction would even give more force than the first to the apostle's declaration. For then, as his statement would necessarily relate to the whole Scripture of the *holy Letters* ( $\tau\alpha \iota\epsilon\rho\alpha \gamma\rho\grave{\alpha}\mu\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ ), of which he had been speaking, would assume, as an admitted and incontestable principle, that the simple mention of the *holy Letters* implies of itself that *Scriptures inspired by God* are meant.

Nevertheless it will be proper to give a farther expression of this same truth, by some other declaration of our holy books.

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<sup>1</sup> See further upon this passage, our Chap. III. question 27.

## SECTION II.

### ALL THE PROPHETIC UTTERANCES ARE GIVEN BY GOD.

St Peter in his second epistle, at the close of the first chapter, thus expresses himself: “Knowing this first, that no Scripture is of any private interpretation. For 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.” - Note on this passage:

1. That it relates to *written* revelations (*προφητεία γραφῆς*);
2. That *never* (*οὐ πότε*) did any of these come through the impulsion or the government of a *will of man*;
3. That it was as *urged* or *moved* by the *Holy Ghost* that those holy men wrote and spoke;
4. Finally, that their writings are called by the name of *prophecy*.

It will be proper then, before we proceed farther, to have the scriptural meaning of these words *prophecy*, *prophesy*, *prophet* (נִבְאָת), precisely determined; because it is indispensable for the investigation with which we

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are occupied, that this be known, and because the knowledge of it will throw much light on the whole question.

Various and often very inaccurate meanings have been given to the biblical term prophet; but an attentive examination of the passages in which it is employed, will soon convince us that it constantly designates, in the Scriptures, “a man whose mouth utters the words of God.”

Among the Greeks, this name was at first given only to the interpreter and the organ of the *vaticinations* pronounced in the temples (*ἐξηγητὴς ἔνθεων μάντειών*). This sense of the word is fully explained by a passage in the *Timaeus* of Plato.<sup>2</sup> The most celebrated prophets of pagan antiquity were those of Delphos. They conducted the Pythoness to the tripod, and were charged with the interpretation of the oracles of the god, or the putting of them into writing. And it was only afterwards, by an extension of this its first meaning, that the name of prophet was given among the Greeks to poets, who, commencing their songs with an invocation of Apollo and the Muses, were deemed to give utterance to the language of the gods, and to speak under their inspiration.

A prophet, in the Bible, is a man, then, in whose mouth God puts the words which he wishes to be heard upon earth; and it was farther by allusion to the fulness of this meaning that God said to Moses,<sup>3</sup> that Aaron should be his prophet unto Pharaoh, according as he had told him

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<sup>2</sup> Tom. IX. ed. Bipont., p. 392.

<sup>3</sup> Exod. vii. 1.

(at chap. iv. ver. 16): “He shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.”

Mark, in Scripture, how the prophets testify of the Spirit that makes them speak, and of the wholly divine authority of their words: you will ever find in their language one uniform definition of their office, and of their inspiration. They speak; it is, no doubt, their

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voice that makes itself heard; it is their person that is agitated; it is, no doubt, their soul also that often is moved; - but their words are not only theirs; they are, at the same time, the words of Jehovah.

“The mouth of the Lord hath spoken;” - “the Lord hath spoken,” they say unceasingly.<sup>4</sup> - “I will open my mouth in the midst of them,” saith the Lord to his servant Ezekiel. - “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue,” said the royal psalmist.<sup>5</sup> - “Hear the word of the Lord!” It is thus that the prophets announce what they are about to say.<sup>6</sup> - “Then was the word of the Lord upon me,” is what they often say. - “The word of God came unto Shemaiah;” - “the word of God came to Nathan;” - “the word of God came unto John in the wilderness;”<sup>7</sup> - “the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord;”<sup>8</sup> - “the burden of the word of the Lord by Malachi;”<sup>9</sup> - “the word of the Lord that came unto Hosea;”<sup>10</sup> “In the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord by Haggai, the prophet.”<sup>11</sup>

This word came down upon the men of God when it pleased, and often in the most unlooked-for manner.

It is thus that God, when he sent Moses, said to him, “I will be with thy mouth;”<sup>12</sup> and that, when he made Balaam speak, “he put a word in Balaam’s mouth.”<sup>13</sup> The apostles, too, quoting a passage from David in their prayer, express themselves in these words: “Thou, Lord, hast said by the mouth of thy servant David.”<sup>14</sup> And St Peter, addressing the multitude of the disciples: “Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the HOLY

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GHOST, BY THE MOUTH OF DAVID, spake before concerning Judas.”<sup>15</sup> The same apostle also, in the holy place, under Solomon’s porch, cried to the people of Jerusalem, “But those

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<sup>4</sup> Micah iv. 4; Jer. ix. 12, xiii. 15, xxx. 4, 1. 1, ii. 12; Isa. viii. II; Amos iii. 1; Exod. iv. 30; Deut. xviii. 21, 22; Josh. xxiv. 2.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.

<sup>6</sup> Isa. xxviii. 14; Jer. xix. 20, x. 1, xvii. 20.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Kings xii. 22; 1 Chron. xvii. 3; Luke iii. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Jer. xi. 1, vii. 1, xviii. 1, xxi. 1, xxvi. 1, xxvii. 1, xxx. 1; and in many other places. See Ezek. i. 2; Jer. i. 1, 2, 9, 14; Ezek. iii. 4, 10, 11; Hos. i. 1, 2, &c.

<sup>9</sup> Mal. i. 1

<sup>10</sup> Hos. 1. 1, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Hag. 1. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Exod. iv. 12, 13.

<sup>13</sup> ἐνέβαλεν (οἵ ó); Num. xxiii. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Acts iv. 25.

<sup>15</sup> Acts i. 16.

things which God before HAD SHOWED BY THE MOUTH OF ALL HIS PROPHETS, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.”<sup>16</sup>

In the view of the apostles, then, David in his psalms, and all the prophets in their writings, whatever might be the pious emotions of their souls, were only the mouth of the Holy Ghost. It was David who SPOKE; it was the prophets WHO SHOWED; but it was also God THAT SPARE BY THE MOUTH of David, his servant; it was God WHO SHOWED BY THE MOUTH of all his prophets. - (Acts i. 16, iii. 18-21, iv. 25.)

And, yet again, let the reader be so good as carefully to examine, as it stands in the Greek, that expression which recurs so often in the Gospel, and which is so conclusive, “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken BY THE PROPHET, - (and even) which was spoken OF THE LORD BY THE PROPHET, (ΔΙΑ τοῦ προφήτου, - and even - ΥΠΟ τοῦ κυρίου ΔΙΑ τοῦ προφήτου), saying.”<sup>17</sup>.....

It is in a quite analogous sense that holy scripture gives the name of *prophets* and of *false prophets* to impostors, who lied among the Gentiles, in the temples of the false gods, whether they were only common cheats, falsely pretending to visions from God, or whether they were really the mouth or an occult power, of a malevolent angel, of a spirit of Python.<sup>18</sup>

And it is, farther, in the same sense that St Paul, in quoting a verse of Epimenides, a poet, priest, and soothsayer among the Cretans, called him “*one of their prophets;*” because all the Greeks consulted him as an oracle; because Nicias was sent into Crete by the Athen-

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ians to fetch him to purify their city; and because Aristotle, Strabo,<sup>19</sup> Suidas,<sup>20</sup> and Diogenes Laertius,<sup>21</sup> tell us that he undertook to foretell the future, and to discover things unknown.

From all these quotations, accordingly, it remains established, that in the language of the Scriptures the *prophecies* are “the words of God put into the mouth of man.”

Accordingly, it is by a manifest abuse also, that in common language people seem to understand no more by that word than a miraculous *prediction*. The prophecies could reveal the past as well as the future; they denounced God’s judgments; they interpreted his Word; they sang his praises; they consoled his people; they exhorted souls to holiness; they testified of Jesus Christ.

And as “*no prophecy came by the will of man,*”<sup>22</sup> a prophet, as we have already intimated, was such only at intervals, “*and as the Spirit gave him utterance.*” - (Acts ii. 4.)

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<sup>16</sup> Acts. iii. 18.

<sup>17</sup> Matt. i. 22, ii. 5, 15, 23, xiii. 35, xxi. 4, xxvii. 9, iv. 14, viii. 17, xii. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Acts xiii. 6; Jer. xxix. 1-8; 2 Kings xviii. 19. The LXX. often render ) נִבְאָנָה by ψευδοπροφήτης. (Jer. vi. 13, xxvi. 7, 8, 11-16, xxvii. 1, xxix. 1-8; Zech. xiii. 2).

<sup>19</sup> Georg. lib. x.

<sup>20</sup> In voce Επίμεν

<sup>21</sup> Vita Epimen.

<sup>22</sup> 2 Pet. 1. 21.

A man prophesied sometimes without foreseeing it, sometimes too without knowing it, and sometimes even without desiring it.

I have said, without foreseeing it; and often at the very moment when he could least expect it. Such was the old prophet of Bethel. - (1 Kings xiii. 20.) I have said, without knowing it; such was Caiaphas. - (John xi. 51.) Finally, I have said, without desiring it; such was Balaam, when, wishing three times to curse Israel, he could not, three successive times, make his mouth utter any words but those of benediction. - (Numb. xxiii. xxiv.)

We shall give other examples to complete the demonstration of what a prophecy generally is, and thus to arrive at a fuller comprehension of the extent of the action of God in what St Peter calls *written prophecy* (*προφητείαν γραφῆς*).

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We read in the 11th of Numbers (25th to the 29th verses), that, as soon as the Lord made the Spirit to rest upon the seventy elders, "they prophesied," but (it is added) "they did not continue." The Spirit, then, came upon them at an unexpected moment; and after he had thus "spoken by them," and his word "had been upon their tongue," (2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2), they preserved nothing more of this miraculous gift, and were prophets only for a day.

We read in the First Book of Samuel (xii.), with what unforeseen power the Spirit of the Lord seized young king Saul at the moment when, as he sought for his father's she-asses, he met a company of prophets who came down from the holy place. "What is this that is come to the son of Kish," said they one to another; "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

We read at the 19th chapter, something still more striking. Saul sends to Ramah men who were to take David; but no sooner did they meet Samuel and the company of prophets over whom he was set, than the Spirit of the Lord came upon these men of war, and "they also prophesied." Saul sends others, and "they also prophesy." Saul at last goes thither himself, and "he also prophesied all that day and all that night before Samuel." "The Spirit of God," we are told, "WAS UPON HIM."

But it is particularly by an attentive study of the 12th and 14th chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, that one obtains an exact knowledge of what the action of God, and the part assigned to man severally, were in prophecy.

The apostle there gives the Church of Corinth the rules that were to be followed in the use of this miraculous gift. His counsels will be found to throw a deal of light on this important subject. One will then recognise at once the following facts and principles:-

1. The Holy Ghost at that time conferred upon the faithful, for the common advantage, a great variety of gifts (xii. 7-10); - to one that of miracles; to another

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that of healing; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues, which the man himself did not understand when he spoke them; to another, the interpretation of tongues; to another, in fine, *prophecy* - that is, uttering with his own tongue words dictated by God.

2. One and the selfsame Spirit divided severally as be would these different miraculous powers.<sup>23</sup>

3. These gifts were a just subject of Christian desire and ambition. (*ζηλοῦτε*, xiv. 1, 39.) But the one that was to be regarded as the most desirable of all, was that of *prophesying*; for one could speak an unknown tongue without edifying any body, and that miracle was “useful rather to the unbelievers than to believers;” whereas “he that prophesied spoke unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” - (I Cor. xiv. 1-3.)

4. That prophecy - that is to say, those words that fell miraculously on the lips that the Holy Ghost had chosen for such an office - that prophecy assumed very different forms. Sometimes the Spirit gave a psalm, sometimes a doctrine, sometimes a revelation; sometimes, too, it was a miraculous interpretation of that which others had miraculously expressed in strange tongues.<sup>24</sup>

5. In those prophecies there was evidently a work of God and a work of man. They were the words of the Holy Ghost; but they were also the words of the prophet. It was God that spoke, but in men, by men, for men; and there you would have found, as on other occasions, the sound of their voice - perhaps also the habitual peculiarities of their style - perhaps, moreover, allusions to their own experience, to their position at the time, to their individuality.

6. These miraculous facts continued in the primitive Church throughout the long career of the apostles. St Paul, who wrote his letter to the Corinthians twenty

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years after the death of Jesus Christ, speaks of them as a common and habitual order of things, for some time existing among them, and which ought still to continue.

7. The prophets, although they were the mouth of God to make his words heard, were not, however, absolutely passive while engaged in prophesying.

“The spirits of the prophets,” says St Paul, “are subject to the prophets” (1 Cor. xiv. 22); that is to say, that the men of God, while his prophetic word was on their lips, could nevertheless check its escape by the repressive action of their own wills; nearly as a man suspends, when he wishes to do so, the almost involuntary course of his respiration. Thus, for example, if any revelation came upon one of those that were sitting, the first that spoke had then “to hold his peace, sit down, and let him speak.”

Let us now apply these principles and these facts to the prophecy of Scripture (*τῇ προφητείᾳ γραφῆς*), and to the passage of St Peter, for the explanation of which we have adduced them.

No prophecy of the Scripture,” says he “is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by a will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” - (2 Pet. i. 21.)

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<sup>23</sup> Verse ii. See also Eph. iv. 7; and Acts xix. 1 to 6.

<sup>24</sup> Ver. 26 to 31; and 1 Sam. x. 6; xviii. 10.

Here, then, we have the plenary and entire inspiration of the Scriptures clearly established by the apostle; here we have the SCRIPTURE assimilated to those prophecies which we have just defined. It “came not by a will of man;” it is entirely dictated by the Holy Ghost; it gives us the very words of God; it is entirely (*ἐνθεος* and *θεόπνευστος*) given by the breath of God.

Who would dare then, after such declarations, to maintain, that in the Scriptures the expressions are not inspired? They are WRITTEN PROPHECIES (*πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς*). One sole difficulty, accordingly, is all that can any longer be opposed to our conclusion. The testimony and the reasoning on which it rests, are so clearly valid, that one can elude them only by this objection. We agree, it will be said, that written prophecy

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(*προφητεία γραφῆς*) has, without contradiction, been composed by that power of the Holy Ghost which was put forth in the prophets; but the rest of the book, the Epistles, the Gospels, and the Acts, the Proverbs, the Books of Kings, and so many other purely historical writings, are not entitled to be put in the same rank.

Here, then, let us pause; and, before replying, see clearly the extent of our argument.

It ought already to be fully acknowledged, that *all that part of the Scriptures* at least called PROPHECY, whatever it be, has been *completely dictated by God*; so that the words as well as the thoughts have been given by him.

But who now will permit us to establish a distinction between any one of the books of the Bible, and all the other books? Is not all given by prophecy? Certainly all has equally God’s warrant; this is what we proceed to prove.

### SECTION III.

#### ALL THE SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT ARE PROPHETIC.

And, first of all, all the Scriptures are without distinction called THE WORD OF GOD. This title is sufficient of itself to demonstrate to us, that if Isaiah began his prophecies by inviting the heavens and the earth to give ear because the Lord had spoken,<sup>25</sup> the same summons ought to come forth for us from all the books of the Bible, for they are all called “The Word of God.” “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken!”

Nowhere shall we find a single passage that permits us to detach one single part of it as less divine than all the rest. When we say that this whole book is the Word of God, do we not attest that the very phrases of which it is composed have been given by him?

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<sup>25</sup> Isa. i. 2.

But the whole Bible is not only Called “*The Word of God*,” (ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ); it is called, without distinction, THE ORACLES OF GOD (τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ).<sup>26</sup> Who knows not what oracles were held to be in the ideas of men in ancient times? Was there a word that could more absolutely express a verbal and complete inspiration? And as if this term, which St Paul employs, were not sufficient, we farther hear Stephen, filled with the Holy Ghost, call them the LIVING ORACLES (λόγια ζῶντα); “Moses,” he says, “received the lively oracles, to give them unto us.” - (Acts vii. 38.)

All the Scriptures then, without exception, are a continuous word of God; they are his miraculous voice; they are his written prophecies and his lively oracles. Which of their various parts, then, would you dare to cut off? The apostles often distinguish *two parts in them*, when they call them “Moses and the Prophets.” Jesus Christ distinguished them *into three parts*<sup>27</sup> when he said to his apostles, “That all things must be fulfilled which were written in Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.” According to this division, then, in which our Lord speaks according to the language of that time, the Old Testament would be made up of these three parts, - Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms; as the New Testament is composed of the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles, and the Book of the Revelation. Which, then, of these three parts of the Old Testament, or which of these four parts of the New, would you dare to withdraw from the *Scripture of the prophets* (προφητείας γραφῆς), or from the inspired Word (ἐνθέου λόγου - γραφῆς θεοπνεύστου)?

Would it be Moses? But what more holy and more divine, in the whole Old Testament, than the writings of that man of God? He was in such sort a prophet that his holy books are placed above all the rest, and are called emphatically THE LAW. He was in such sort a prophet, that another prophet, speaking of his

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books alone, said, “The law of the Lord is perfect” (Ps. xix. 7); “The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.” - (Ps. xii. 6.) He was in such sort a prophet of God, that he is compared by himself to none but the Son of God. “This is that Moses,” it is written, “who said to the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, LIKE UNTO ME; him shall ye hear.” - (Acts vii. 37.) He was in such sort a prophet, that he was accustomed to preface his orders with these words: “Thus saith the Lord.” He was in such sort a prophet, that God said to him, “Who hath made man’s mouth? have not I, the Lord? Now therefore go; and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.” - (Exod. iv. 11.) Finally, he was in such sort a prophet, that it is written, “And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.” - (Deut. xxxiv. 10.)

What other part of the Old Testament, then, would you exclude from the prophetic Scriptures? Shall it be the second ? – that which Jesus Christ calls *The Prophet?*, and which comprises all the Old Testament, exclusive of Moses and the Psalms, and sometimes exclusive of Moses alone? It is well worth noting, that Jesus Christ, and the apostles, and the whole people, habitually call by the name of *prophets* all the authors of the Old Testament. They were wont to say, in order to designate the whole Scriptures, “Moses and the prophets.” - (Luke xxiv. 25, 27, 44; Matt. v. 17, vii. 12, xi. 13, xii. 40; Luke xvi. 16, 29, 31, xx. 42; Acts i. 20, iii. 21, 22,

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<sup>26</sup> Rom iii. 2.

<sup>27</sup> Luke xxiv. 44.

vii. 35, 37, viii 28, xxvi. 22, 27, xxviii. 23; Rom. i. 2, iii. 21, x. 5, &c. &c.) Jesus Christ called all their books *The Prophets*:- they were prophets. Joshua, then, was a prophet; the authors of the Chronicles were prophets, quite as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, and all the rest were, down to Malachi.

They wrote then, all of them, *the prophetic Scriptures* (*προφητείαν γραφῆς*); all, the words of which St

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Peter has said, “that none of them came by a will of man;” all, those ἱερὰ γράμματα, those holy letters, which the apostle declares to be “divinely inspired.”<sup>28</sup> The Lord said of all of them as of Jeremiah, “Lo, I have put my words in thy mouth;”<sup>29</sup> and as of Ezekiel, “Son of man, go, speak unto them MY words: speak unto them, and tell them, Thus SAITH THE LORD GOD.”<sup>30</sup>

And that all the phrases, all the words, were suggested to them by God, is demonstrated by a fact stated to us more than once, and in the study of their writings frequently brought under our eye, to wit - that they were charged to transmit to the Church oracles, the meaning of which was to remain veiled to their own minds. Daniel, for example, declares more than once, that he was unable to seize the prophetic meaning of the words that proceeded from his own lips, or were traced with his hand.<sup>31</sup> The types, impressed by God on all the events of primitive history, were not to be recognised till many centuries after the death of the men who were commissioned to relate to us their leading features; and the holy Ghost informs us that the prophets, after having written out their sacred pages, set themselves to study them with the, most respectful attention, as they would have done with the other Scriptures, “searching what, or what manner of time THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”<sup>32</sup> Behold, then, these men of God bending over their own writings. There they ponder the words of God and the thoughts of God. Can this cause you any surprise, seeing that they have written for the elect of the earth, and for the principalities and powers of heaven, the doctrines and the glories of the Son of God, and seeing these are things “into which the angels desire to look ?”<sup>33</sup>

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So much for Moses and for the Prophets; but what will you say of the Psalms? Shall we consider these less given by the spirit of prophecy than all the rest? Are not the authors of the Psalms always called *prophets*?<sup>34</sup> And if they are sometimes, like Moses, distinguished from the other prophets, is it not evidently in order that a place of greater eminence may be assigned them? “David was a prophet,” says St Peter. - (Acts ii. 30.) Mark what he himself says he is: “The Spirit of the Lord SPAKE BY ME,” says he, “and HIS WORD WAS UPON MY TONGUE.” - (2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.) “What David wrote,” and even his words in detail, “he wrote SPEAKING BY THE HOLY Ghost,” said our Lord. - (Mark xii. 36.) The apostles also,

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<sup>28</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 16.

<sup>29</sup> Jer. i. 1,2, 9.

<sup>30</sup> Ezek. iii. 10, 11.

<sup>31</sup> Dan. xii. 4, 8, 9, viii. 27, x. 8, 21.

<sup>32</sup> 1 Pet. i. 10,11, 12.

<sup>33</sup> Eph. iii 10, 11.

<sup>34</sup> Matt. xiii. 35; for Asaph (Ps. lxxvii.)

quoting him (in their prayer), take care to say, “This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake.” - (Acts i. 16.) “Lord, thou art God, who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said.” - (Acts iv. 25.) What do I say? These psalms were to such a degree all dictated by the Holy Ghost, that the Jew’s, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself, call them by the name of THE LAW;<sup>35</sup> all their utterances had the force of *law*; their smallest words were from God. “Is it not written in your LAW?” said Jesus while quoting them, and in quoting them even for a SINGLE WORD (as we shall soon have occasion to show).

The whole Old Testament then is, in a scriptural sense of the expression, a WRITTEN PROPHECY (προφητεία γραφῆς). It is plenarily inspired therefore by God, seeing that, according to the testimony of Zachariah, “it is God who spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began;<sup>36</sup> and

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because, according to that of Peter, “they spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”<sup>37</sup>

It is true that thus far our reasonings, and the testimonies on which they are founded, directly relate to the books of the Old Testament only; and it might possibly be objected to us that as yet we have proved nothing for the New.

We shall begin, before we reply, with asking, If it were likely that the Lord could have designed giving successive revelations to his people, and that, nevertheless, the latest and the most important of these should be inferior to the first? We would ask, If it be rational to imagine that the first Testament, which contained only “the shadows of things that were to come,” could have been dictated by God in all its contents; while the second Testament, which sets before us the grand object to which all those shadows relate, and which describes to us the works, the character, the person, and the sayings even of the Son of God, was to be less inspired than the first? We would ask, If one can believe that the Epistles and the Gospels, which were destined to repeal many of the ordinances of Moses and the Prophets, could be less divine than Moses and the Prophets; and that the Old Testament could be throughout an utterance of thought on the part of God, while it was to be replaced, or at least modified and consummated, by a book emanating partly from man and partly from God?

But there is no need even of our having recourse to these powerful inductions in order to establish the prophetic inspiration of the Gospel; nay, its superiority to Moses and the prophets.

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## SECTION IV.

### ALL THE SCRIPTURES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ARE PROPHETIC.

<sup>35</sup> John x. 34. St Paul (Rom. iii. 19) calls the whole Old Testament equally by the name of LAW, and more especially Isaiah, the Proverbs, and the Psalms (which he quotes). This remark has not escaped Chrysostom (Homil. viii.): ἐνταῦθα τοὺς ψαλμοὺς Νόμον ἐκάλεσεν and Theophalact adds, καὶ τὰ τοῦ Ἡσαίου.

<sup>36</sup> Luke i. 70.

<sup>37</sup> 2 Pet. I. 21. See also Matt. I. 22, xxii. 43; Mark xii.36.

The whole tenor of Scripture places the writers of the New Testament in the same rank with the prophets of the Old; and even when it establishes any difference between them, it is always in putting the last in date above the first, in so far as one of God's sayings is superior (not doubtless in divinity, not in dignity, but in authority) to the saying that preceded it.

Let the reader be so good as attend to the following passage of the apostle St Peter. It is very important, inasmuch as it lets us see that, in the lifetime of the apostles, the book of the New Testament was already almost entirely formed, in order to make one whole together with that of the Old. It was twenty or thirty years after the day of Pentecost that St Peter felt gratified in referring to ALL THE EPISTLES OF PAUL, his beloved brother, and spoke of them as sacred writings which, even so early as his time, formed part of the Holy Letters (*ἱερῶν γραμμάτων*), and behoved to be classed with THE OTHER SCRIPTURES (*ώς καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς, γραφὰς*). He assigns them the same rank, and declares that "unlearned men can wrest them but to their own destruction." Mark this important passage; "Our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also IN ALL HIS EPISTLES, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the OTHER SCRIPTURES, unto their own destruction."<sup>38</sup>

The apostle, at the second verse of the same chapter, had already placed himself, along with the other apostles, on the same rank, and assumed the same authority, as the sacred writers of the Old Testament, when he said:

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"That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken BEFORE by the holy PROPHETS, and of the commandment OF US the APOSTLES of the Lord and Saviour."

The writings of the apostles, then, were that which those of the Old Testament were; and these being a WRITTEN PROPHECY - that is to say, something spoken altogether by God - the latter are no less so.

But we have said the Scripture goes much farther in the rank it assigns to the writers of the New Covenant. It teaches us to consider them as even superior to those of the Old, whether as respects the importance of their *mission*, or the glory of the *promises* made to them, or the greatness of the *gifts* conferred on them - or, in fine, the eminence of the *rank* assigned to them.

1. First, let us distinctly perceive what their mission was, compared with that of the ancient prophets; and it will at once be seen, from passages bearing on this point, that their inspiration could not be inferior to that of their predecessors.

When Jesus sent the apostles whom he had chosen (it is written), he said to them: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I AM WITH YOU alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."<sup>39</sup> "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be

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<sup>38</sup> 2 Peter iii. 15, 16.

<sup>39</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth?"<sup>40</sup> "Peace be unto you: as my Father HATH SENT ME, even SO SEND I YOU."<sup>41</sup>

Such was their mission. They were the immediate *envoys* (*ἀποστόλοι*) of the Son of God; they went to all nations; they had the assurance that their Master would be present with the testimony they were to bear to him in the holy Scriptures. Did they require, then, less inspiration for their going to the ends of the earth, and

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to make disciples of all nations, than the prophets required "forgoing to Israel and teaching that one people, the Jews?" Had they not to promulgate all the doctrines, all the ordinances, all the mysteries of the kingdom of God? Had they not to bear "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" in such sort, that whatsoever they should bind or loose on earth should be bound or loosed in heaven?"<sup>42</sup> Had not Jesus Christ expressly conferred the Holy Ghost upon them for this end, that sins might be remitted or retained with regard to those to whom they should remit or retain them? Had he not breathed upon them, saying, "Receive the Holy Ghost?" Had he not to reveal to them the wondrous character of the Word made flesh, and of the Creator so abased as to take upon him the form of a creature, and even to die upon the cross? Had they not to report his inimitable words? Had they not to perform on earth the miraculous intransmissible functions of his representatives and of "his ambassadors, as if it had been Christ that spoke by them?"<sup>43</sup> Were they not called to such a glory, "that, in the great final regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, they also should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel?"<sup>44</sup> If, then, the prophetic Spirit was necessary for the former men of God, in order to show the Messiah under the shadows, was it not much more necessary for them, in order to their bringing him out into the light, and to their evidently setting him forth as crucified amongst us,<sup>45</sup> "in such a manner that he that despiseth them despiseth him, and he that heareth them heareth him?"<sup>46</sup> Let one judge by all these traits what the inspiration of the New Testament behoved to have been, compared with that of the Old; and let one say whether, while the latter was wholly and entirely prophetic, that of the New could be any thing less.

2. But this is not all; listen further to the *promises*

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that were made to them for the performance of such a work. No human language can express with greater force the most absolute inspiration. These promises were for the most part addressed to them on three great occasions: first, when sent out for the first time to preach the kingdom of God;<sup>47</sup> next, when Jesus himself delivered public discourses on the gospel before

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<sup>40</sup> Acts 1. 8.

<sup>41</sup> John xx. 21.

<sup>42</sup> Matt. xviii. 18, xvi. 19.

<sup>43</sup> 2 Cor. v. 20.

<sup>44</sup> Matt. xix. 28.

<sup>45</sup> Gal. iii. i.

<sup>46</sup> Luke x. 16; Matt. x. 40.

<sup>47</sup> Matt. x. 19, 20.

an immense multitude, gathered by tens of thousands around him;<sup>48</sup> third, when he uttered his last denunciation against Jerusalem and the Jewish nation.<sup>49</sup>

“But when they deliver you up, take no thought HOW or WHAT ye shall speak ( $\pi\hat{\omega}\varsigma \ \hat{\eta} \ \tau\acute{i}$ ), for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not YE that speak, but the SPIRIT OF YOUR FATHER WHICH SPEAKETH IN YOU.”

“And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates and powers, TAKE YE NO THOUGHT HOW or WHAT thing ye shall answer, or WHAT ye shall say; for the Holy Ghost shall teach you IN THE SAME HOUR what ye ought to say.” “Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, NEITHER DO YE PREMEDITATE, but WHATSOEVER shall be GIVEN you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is NOT YE THAT SPEAK, but the Holy Ghost.”

On these different occasions, the Lord assured his disciples that *the fullest inspiration* would regulate their language in the most difficult and important moments of their ministry. When they should have to speak to princes, they were to feel *no disquietude*; they were not even *to premeditate*, they were not even *to take thought* about it, because there would then be *immediately given to them* by God, not only *the things* they were to say, but the *words* also in which those things were to be expressed; not only  $\tau\acute{i}$ , but  $\pi\hat{\omega}\varsigma \ \lambda\alpha\lambda\acute{h}\sigma\sigma\tau\alpha\iota$ . - (Matt. x. 19, 20.) They behoved to cast themselves entirely on him; it would be *given them entirely*; it would be given them by *Jesus*; it would be given them *in that*

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*same hour*; it would be given them in such a manner, and in such plenitude, that they should be able then to say that it was *no more they*, but the Holy Ghost, the SPIRIT OF THEIR FATHER, which spoke IN THEM;<sup>50</sup> and that then also it was not only an irresistible wisdom that was given them, it was a *mouth*.<sup>51</sup>

“Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist.”

Then (as with the ancient prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) it shall be the Holy Ghost that will speak by them, as God spoke by his holy prophets since the world began.<sup>52</sup> In one sense, indeed, it was *they* that were to speak; but it shall be the Holy Ghost who will teach them (Luke xii. 12) in that same hour what they are to say; so that, in another sense, “it was to be the *Holy Ghost* himself that was to speak by their lips.”

We ask if it were possible, in any language, to express more absolutely the most entire inspiration, and to declare with more precision, that the very words were then vouched by God and given to the apostles?

No doubt, in these promises there is no direct reference to the support which the apostles were to receive as writers; and that they bear rather on what they were to expect, when they had to

<sup>48</sup> Luke xii. 12.

<sup>49</sup> Mark xiii. 11; Luke xxi. 14, 15.

<sup>50</sup> Matt. x. 20; Mark xiii. 14.

<sup>51</sup> Luke xxi. 14, 15.

<sup>52</sup> Acts iii. 21.

appear before priests, before governors, and before kings. But is it not evident enough, that if the most entire inspiration were assured to them<sup>53</sup> for passing exigencies, to shut the mouths of some wicked men, to conjure the perils of a day, and to subserve interests of the narrowest range; if it were promised them, notwithstanding that the very words of their answers should then be given to them by means of a calm, mighty, but inexplicable operation of the Holy Ghost, - is it not evident enough that the same assistance could not be refused to those same men, when, like the ancient prophets, they had to continue the book of

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God's oracles; and so to hand down to all succeeding ages the laws of the kingdom of heaven, and describe the glories of Jesus Christ and the scenes of eternity? Can any one suppose that the men who, before Ananias, or Festus, or Nero, were in such sort "the mouth of the Holy Spirit," that then it was no longer they that spoke, but that Spirit, should, when writing the everlasting Gospel, have returned to the condition of ordinary beings merely enlightened, denuded of their previous inspiration, no longer speaking by the Holy Ghost, and thenceforward employing only words dictated by human wisdom, (*θελήματι ἀνδρώπου καὶ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνδρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις*)? This is quite inadmissible.

3. See them, further, commencing their apostolic ministry on the day of Pentecost: see *what gifts* they received.

Tongues of fire descend on their heads; they are filled with the Holy Ghost; they leave their upper chamber, and a vast multitude hears them proclaim, in fifteen different languages, the wonderful works of God; they speak AS THE SPIRIT GIVES THEM UTTERANCE;<sup>54</sup> they speak (it is said) THE WORD OF GOD (*ἐλάλουν τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ*).<sup>55</sup> Assuredly, the words of those foreign languages must have been then supplied to them as well as the things, the expression as well as the thoughts, the *πῶς* as well as the *τί* - (Matt. x. 19.; Luke xii. 11.) Now then will it be believed, that the Spirit could have taken care to dictate all that they behoved to say, for preachings at the corners of the streets, for words which passed away with the sound of their voices, and which, after all, reached only some thousands of hearers; while those same men, when they came afterwards to write for all earth's nations, and for all ages of the Church, "the lively oracles of God," were to be deprived of their first assistance? Will it be believed, that after having been more than the ancient prophets as respects preaching in public, they were to be less than those

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prophets, and were to become ordinary men, when they took the pen to finish the Book of the Prophets, to write their Gospels, their Epistles, and the Book of the Revelation? The unreasonableness and inadmissibility of such a supposition are felt at once.

4. But here we have to say something still more simple and more peremptory. We would speak of the *rank* that is assigned them; and indeed, after what we said of the prophets of the Old Testament, we might even have limited ourselves to this simple fact, that the apostles were all of them PROPHETS, and MORE THAN PROPHETS.

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<sup>53</sup> Luke xii. 12.

<sup>54</sup> Acts II. 2.

<sup>55</sup> Acts iv. 31

Their writings, therefore, are WRITTEN PROPHECIES (*προφητεία γραφῆς*), as much, and even more, than those of the Old Testament; and hence we are led to conclude once more, that all Scripture in the New Testament, as well as in the Old, is inspired of God, even to its smallest particles.

I have said that the apostles were all prophets. They often declare this; but, not to multiply quotations unnecessarily, we content ourselves here with appealing to the two following passages of the apostle St Paul.

The first is addressed to the Ephesians (iii. 4, 5): "Whereby," he tells them, "when ye read WHAT I WROTE before in a few words, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is NOW revealed unto his holy APOSTLES AND PROPHETS by the Spirit."

One clearly sees, then, here the *apostle* and *prophet* Paul, the apostles and prophets Matthew, John, Jude, Peter, James, received by the Spirit the revelation of the mystery of Christ; and wrote about it as PROPHETS.

Further, it is of the same mystery, and of the writings of the same prophets, that that same apostle speaks in the second of the passages we have indicated, that is, in the last chapter of his Epistle to the Romans.<sup>56</sup>

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"Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the SCRIPTURES OF THE PROPHETS (*διά τε γραφῶν προφητικῶν*), according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen!"

Here, then, we have the authors of the New Testament again called PROPHETS; we have their writings called PROPHETICAL WRITINGS (*γραφαὶ προφητικαί*, the equivalent of the *προφητεία γραφῆς*; of St Peter). And Since we have already Seen that "no prophecy ever came by the will of him that uttered it, but that it was as moved and impelled by the Holy Ghost that holy men of God spake," the prophets of the New Testament spoke therefore like those of the Old, and according to the commandment of the everlasting God. They were all of them prophets.<sup>57</sup>

But we may advance a step farther; for, as we have said, they were MORE THAN PROPHETS. Here again we have a remark of the learned Michaelis.<sup>58</sup> Loose as are his principles on the inspiration of a part of the New Testament, this has not escaped his notice. It is clear, according to him, looking to the context, that, in the judgment pronounced by Jesus Christ on John Baptist (Matt. xi. 9, 11), the terms *great* and *little* of the 11th verse, apply only to the title of *prophet* which precedes; them at the 9th verse; so that Jesus Christ there he dares, that if John Baptist is the *greatest of the prophets* - if he is even *more than a prophet* -

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<sup>56</sup> Rom. xvi. 25, 27

<sup>57</sup> See further Luke xi. 49; Eph. ii. 20, iii. 5, iv. 11; Gal. i. 12; I Pet. i. 12; 1 Cor. xii. 28; 1 Thess. ii. 15.

<sup>58</sup> Introd., t. 1. p. 118, French edition.

*still the least of the prophets of the New Testament is greater than John Baptist;* that is to say, greater than the greatest of the Old Testament prophets.<sup>59</sup>

Besides, this superiority of the *apostles and prophets*

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of the New Testament, is more than once attested to us in the apostolical writings.

Every where, when mention is made of the different offices established in the Churches, the apostles are placed above the prophets.

Take, for example, a very remarkable passage of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians. The apostle's object is to make known to us the gradations of excellence and dignity among the several miraculous charges constituted by God in the primitive Church, and he expresses himself as follows:- "And God hath set some in the Church, *first APOSTLES, secondarily PROPHETS, thirdly TEACHERS,* after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."<sup>60</sup>

At the fourth chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians, at verse ii, he again puts the apostles ABOVE the prophets.

At chapter ii. ver. 20, he calls the apostles, APOSTLES and PROPHETS. And at chapter xiv. of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, he places himself ABOVE the prophets whom God had raised up in that Church. His wish is, that every one of them, if he have really received the Holy Ghost, should employ the gifts he has received in acknowledging that the things that he wrote unto them were the commandments of the Lord; and so fully convinced is he that what he writes is dictated by inspiration of God, that, after having dictated ORDERS to the Churches, and concluded them with these words, which nothing short of the highest inspiration could sanction, *It is thus I ORDAIN in all the Churches*, he goes farther, he proceeds to rank himself ABOVE THE PROPHETS; or rather, being himself a prophet, he calls upon the spirit of prophecy in them to acknowledge the words of Paul as the words of the Lord; and he ends with these remarkable expressions:- "What? came the word of God out from you? ..... If any man think himself to be a PROPHET, or SPIRITUAL, let him acknow-

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ledge that the things that I WRITE UNTO YOU are the COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD."<sup>61</sup>

The writings of the Apostles, then, are (like those of the ancient prophets) the commandments of the everlasting God; they are "written prophecies" (*προφητεία γραφῆς*) as much as the Psalms, and Moses, and the prophets (Luke xxiv. 44); and all their authors then could say with St Paul, CHRIST SPEAKS IN ME (2 Cor. xiii. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 13); what I say is the word of God, and the things I speak are taught me by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. ii. 13); quite as David before them had said, "The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Ib., and Luke vii. 28-30.

<sup>60</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 28.

<sup>61</sup> Πνευματικὸς, 1 Cor. xiv. 37; See too xv. 45, and Jude 19.

<sup>62</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 2.

Mark, besides, their own words, when they speak of what they are. Would it be possible to declare more clearly than they have done, that words as well as subject have been given them by God. "As for us," they say, "*we have the mind of Christ.*" - (1 Cor. ii. 16.) "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received THE WORD OF God which ye heard of us, ye received not the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the WORD OF GOD." - (1 Thes. ii. 13.) "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit." - (1 Thes. iv. 8.)

Such then, in fine, is the word of the New Testament. It is like that of the Old, a word uttered by prophets, and by prophets greater even than those that preceded them; in such sort, for example, as has been very well remarked by Michaelis,<sup>63</sup> that an epistle commencing with these words, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ,"<sup>64</sup> thereby gives us a higher attestation of his divine authority and his divine inspiration, than could have been given even by the writings of the most illustrious prophets of the Old Testament when they began with these words, "Thus saith the Lord"<sup>65</sup> – "The

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vision of Isaiah" – "The word that Isaiah saw"<sup>66</sup> - "the words of Jeremiah ..... to whom the word of the Lord came"<sup>67</sup> - "Hear the word of the Lord" - or such like analogous expressions. And if there be in the New Testament some books where such inscriptions are not to be found, their inspiration is no more compromised thereby than this or that book of the Old Testament (the second or the ninety-fifth psalm, for example);<sup>68</sup> which, although they have not the names of the prophets that composed them, are not the less quoted as divine by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

The objection has sometimes been started that Luke and Mark were not apostles, properly so called; and that consequently they did not receive the same inspiration as the other sacred writers of the New Testament. True, they were not apostles; but they were certainly prophets, and they were even greater than the greatest of those of the Old Testament. - (Luke vii. 26, 28.)

Without insisting here on the ancient traditions,<sup>69</sup> which say that both were of the number of the seventy disciples whom Jesus sent at first to preach in Judea, or at least of those one hundred and twenty on whom the tongues of the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost; are such objectors not aware that the apostles had received the power of conferring, by the imposition of hands, miraculous gifts on all who believed, and that they exercised this power in all the countries and all the cities whither they directed their steps? And since St Luke and St Mark were, amid so many other prophets, the fellow-workers chosen by St Paul and St Peter, is it not clear enough that these two apostolic men must have bestowed upon such associates the gifts which they dispensed to so many besides who had believed? Do we

<sup>63</sup> Introd. tome 1, p. 118, 119, &c., French edition.

<sup>64</sup> Rom. 1, i; GaL 1.1; Cor. i.I., &c.; 1 Pet. 1.1; 2 Pet. i.1.

<sup>65</sup> Isa. lvi. I; xlii. 1, and *passim*.

<sup>66</sup> Isa. i. 1, ii. 2, and elsewhere.

<sup>67</sup> Jer. i. 2.

<sup>68</sup> Acts iv. 25, xiii. 33; Heb. I. 5, iii. 7, 17, iv. 3, 7, v. 5.

<sup>69</sup> Epiph., Heeres., 51 and others - Orig., De recta in Deum fide. Doroth. in Synopsi. - Procop. Diacon., apud Bolland., 25th April.

not see Peter and John first go down to Samaria to confer these gifts on the believers of that city; this

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followed by Peter coming to Cesarea, there to shed them on all the Gentiles who had heard the word in the house of the centurion Cornelius?<sup>70</sup> Do we not see St Paul bestow them abundantly on the believers of Corinth, on those of Ephesus, on those of Rome?<sup>71</sup> Do we not see him, before employing his dear son Timothy as his fellow-labourer, causing spiritual powers to descend upon him?<sup>72</sup> And is it not evident that St Peter must have done as much for his dear son Mark,<sup>73</sup> as St Paul did for his companion Luke?<sup>74</sup> Silas, whom St Paul had taken to accompany him (as he took Luke and John, whose surname was Mark), Silas was a prophet at Jerusalem.<sup>75</sup> Prophets abounded in all the primitive churches. Many were seen to come down from Jerusalem to Antioch;<sup>76</sup> a great many were to be found in Corinth;<sup>77</sup> Judas and Silas were prophets in Jerusalem. Agabus was such in Judea; farther, four daughters, still in their youth, of Philip the evangelist, were prophetesses in Cesarea;<sup>78</sup> and in the Church of Antioch, there were to be seen many believers who were prophets and doctors;<sup>79</sup> among others Barnabas (St Paul's first companion), Simeon, Manaen, Saul of Tarsus himself; and, finally, that Lucius of Cyrene, who is thought to be the Lucius whom Paul (in his Epistle to the Romans) calls his kinsman,<sup>80</sup> and whom (in his Epistle to the Colossians) he calls Luke *the physician*;<sup>81</sup> in a word, the St Luke whom the ancient fathers call indifferently Lucas, Lucius, and Lucanus.

From these facts, then, it becomes sufficiently evident that St Luke and St Mark ranked at least among the prophets whom the Lord had raised up in such numbers in all the Churches of the Jews and the Gentiles,

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and that from among all the rest they were chosen by the Holy Ghost to be conjoined with the apostles in writing the sacred books of the New Testament.

But, moreover (and let this be specially noticed), the prophetic authority of St Mark and St Luke is far from resting solely on these inductions. It rests on the testimony even of the apostles of Jesus Christ. It ought not to be forgotten, that it was under the long protracted government of those men of God, that the divine canon of the Scriptures of the New Testament was collected and transmitted to all the Churches. By a remarkable dispensation of God's providence, the lives of the greater number of the apostles were prolonged to a great many years. St Peter and St Paul lived to edify the Church of God for above thirty-four years

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<sup>70</sup> Acts viii. 15, 17.

<sup>71</sup> Acts xix. 6, 7; 1 Cor. xii. 28, xiv; Horn. 1. 11, xv. 19, 29.

<sup>72</sup> I Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6.

<sup>73</sup> 1 Pet. v. 13.

<sup>74</sup> Acts xiii. 1, xvi. 10, xxvii. 1; Rom. xvi. 21; Col. iv. 11; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24; 2 Cor. viii. 18.

<sup>75</sup> Acts xv. 32.

<sup>76</sup> Acts xi. 38.

<sup>77</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 19, 20 xiv. 31, 39.

<sup>78</sup> Acts xi. 28, xxi. 9, 10.

<sup>79</sup> Acts xiii. 1 2.

<sup>80</sup> Rom. xvi. 21

<sup>81</sup> Col. iv. 14.

after the resurrection of their Master; nay, St John continued his ministry, in the province of Asia, in the centre of the Roman empire, for more than thirty years longer, after their death. The book of the Acts, which was written by St Luke subsequently to his Gospel,<sup>82</sup> had been already diffused through the Church a long while (I mean to say, for ten years at least) before the martyrdom of St Paul. But St Paul, even long before going to Rome, had already diffused the gospel abundantly from Jerusalem ns far as Illyricum.<sup>83</sup> The apostles maintained a constant correspondence with the Christians of all countries; they were daily called to meet the cares they had to sustain with respect to all the Churches.<sup>84</sup> St Peter, in his second letter, addressed to the catholicity of God's Churches, spoke to them even then of ALL THE EPISTLES of St Paul as incorporated with the Old Testament. And for more than half a century, all the Christian Churches were formed and conducted under the superintendence of these men of God. It was, accordingly, with the assent, and under the prophetic government, of these apostles, called as they were to bind and to

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loose, and to become, next to Christ, the twelve *foundations* of the universal Church, that the *canon of the Scriptures* was formed, and that the new people of God received its lively oracles, to transmit them to us.<sup>85</sup> And it is thus that the Gospel of Luke, that of Mark, and the book of Acts, have been received by common consent, on the same authoritative grounds, and with the same submission as the apostolical books of Matthew, of Paul, of Peter, and John. These books, then, have the same authority for us as all the rest; and we are called upon to receive them equally, "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which worketh effectually in all that believe"<sup>86</sup>

We venture to believe that these reflections will suffice for enabling the reader to comprehend how little ground there is for the distinction which Michaelis,<sup>87</sup> and some other German doctors, have made bold to establish with respect to inspiration, between the two evangelists and the other writers of the New Testament. It even appears to us, that it was in order to obviate any such supposition that Luke took care to place at the head of his gospel the four verses that serve as a preface to it. You see, in fact, that his object there is to contrast the certainty and divinity of his own account with the uncertainty and the human character of those narrations, which *many* (*πολλοί*) *had taken in hand to set forth* (*ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι*) on the facts connected with the gospel - facts, he adds, *most surely believed among us*, that is to say, among the apostles and prophets of the New Testament (*τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων*, the word in the original signifying the highest degree of certainty, as may be seen, Rom. iv. 21; xiv. 5; 2 Tim. iv. 5, 17.) And therefore, adds St Luke, *it seemed good to ME also, having had perfect understanding of all things<sup>88</sup> FROM ABOVE, to write of them unto thee in order.*

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<sup>82</sup> Acts i. 1.

<sup>83</sup> Rom. xv. 19.

<sup>84</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 28.

<sup>85</sup> Acts vii. 83; Rom. iii. 2.

<sup>86</sup> 1 Thes. ii. 13.

<sup>87</sup> Introd., vol. i. pp. 112-129, English ed.

<sup>88</sup> Παρακολουθηκότι. - Thus Demosthenes de Corona, i. 55. Παρακολουθηκώς τοῖς πράγμασιν ἀπ ὀρχῆς. Theophrast., Char. Proem, 4: Σὸν δ παρακολουθῆσαι καὶ εἰδῆσαι, εἰ ὄρθως λέγω - Josephus, in the first lines of his book against Apion, opposes this same word παρακολουθηκότα (*diligenter assecutuat*) to τῷ πυνθανομένῳ (*sciscitanti ab aliis*).

St Luke had obtained this knowledge FROM ABOVE; that is to say, by the wisdom which comes from above, “and which had been given him.” It is very true that the meaning ordinarily attached to this last expression, in this passage, is from *the very first*, as if instead of the word ἀνωθεν (*from above*), there were here the same words ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς (*from the commencement*), which we find in verse second. But it appears to us that the opinion of Erasmus, of Gomar, of Henry, of Lightfoot, and other commentators, ought to be preferred as more natural, and that we must take the word ἀνωθεν here in the sense in which St John and St James have used it, when they say: “Every perfect gift cometh from *above* (James i. 17) – “Thou couldst have no power against me, except it were given thee *from above*” (John xix. 11) – “Except a man be born *from above*, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John iii. 3) – “The wisdom that cometh *from above* is first pure.” - (James iii. 15, 17.)

The prophet Luke, then, “had obtained from above a perfect understanding of all things that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up.”

Meanwhile, whatever translation one may prefer giving to these words, it is by other arguments that we have shown how Luke and Mark were prophets, and how their writings, transmitted to the Church by the authority of the apostles, are incorporated with those of the apostles, as well as with all the other books of the everlasting Word of God.

Such, then, is the extent to which our argument has conducted us, and this is, we have had to acknowledge, on the very authority of holy Scripture. It is, first of all, that the inspiration of the words of the prophets was entire; that the Holy Ghost spake by them, and that the Word of the Lord was upon their tongue. It is,

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next, that whatever was written in the Bible, having been so written by prophecy, all the sacred books are *holy letters* (ἱερὰ γράμματα), *written prophecies* (προπητεῖαι γραφῆς): and *Scriptures given by divine inspiration* (γραφαὶ θεόπνευστω.) Every thing there is from God.

Nevertheless, the reader will be pleased to remember (we once more repeat it here, although we have had occasion more than once to say it already), that it does not necessarily follow that the prophets of the Old and New Testament were thrown into a state of excitation and enthusiasm, which took them out of themselves; we must, on the contrary, beware of entertaining any such idea. The ancient Church attached so much importance even to this principle, that under the reign of the emperor Commodus, according to what Eusebius says, Miltiades (the illustrious author of a Christian Apology) “composed a book for the express purpose of establishing,” against Montanus and the false prophets of Phrygia, “*that true prophets ought to be masters of themselves, and ought not to speak in ecstasy.*”<sup>89</sup> The action of God was exerted upon them without their passing entirely out of their ordinary condition. “The spirits of the prophets,” says St Paul, “are subject to the prophets.”<sup>90</sup> Their intellectual faculties were at the time directed, not suspended. They knew, they felt, they willed, they

<sup>89</sup> Hist. Eccles., lib. v. c. 17. - Ἐν τῷ ἀποδείκνυσι περὶ τοῦ μηδένα Προφήτην ἐν εκστάσει λαλεῖν. - See also Niceph., lib. iv. c. 24. See the same principles in Tertullian (against Marcion, lib. iv. c. 22); in Epiphanius (Adv. haereses, lib. ii. hæres., 48, c. 3); in Jerome (Præmium in Nahum.); in Basil the Great (Commentar. in Esaiam, proem, 5).

<sup>90</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

recollected, they understood, they approved. They could say, "It seemed good to me to write;" and, as apostles, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to write."<sup>91</sup> And the words as well as the thoughts were given them; for, after all, words are themselves but second thoughts relating to language, and having recourse to it for the selection of expres-

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sions. In both cases, to explain the gift is equally easy and equally difficult.

Meanwhile, as respects inspiration, there is something in holy Scripture that strikes us if possible still more than all those declarations of the apostles and of Jesus Christ himself, and that is the examples they present to us.

## SECTION V.

### THE EXAMPLES OF THE APOSTLES AND OF THEIR MASTER ATTEST THAT, IN THEIR VIEWS ALL THE WORDS OF THE HOLY BOOKS ARE GIVEN BY GOD.

First of all, consider what use is made by the apostles themselves of the Word of God, and the terms in which they quote it. See how, in doing this, they not only think it enough to say, "God hath said;"<sup>92</sup> "the Holy Ghost saith;"<sup>93</sup> "God saith in such a prophet;"<sup>94</sup> but observe, farther, when they quote it, with what respect they speak of what are for them its smallest particles; how attentively they weigh every word; with what a religious assurance they often insist on a single word, in order to deduce from it the most serious consequences, and the most fundamental doctrines.

For ourselves, we confess nothing more strongly impresses us than this view of the subject; nothing has begot in us so deep and firm a confidence in the entire inspiration of the Scriptures.

The preceding reasonings and testimonies seem of themselves sufficient to carry conviction to every attentive mind; but if we felt conscious of any need on our own part of having our belief of this truth fortified, we feel that we should not go so far in search of reasons. It would be enough for us to inquire what holy Scrip-

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ture was in the view of God's apostles, and how far, according to their apprehension, its language was inspired. What, for example, were St Paul's sentiments on the subject? For we make no pretension to be more enlightened divines than the twelve apostles. Cleaving to the dogmatical theology of St Peter and the exegetical of St Paul, among all the systems ever

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<sup>91</sup> Acts i. 3, xv. 28.

<sup>92</sup> Eph. iv.8; Heb. i. 8.

<sup>93</sup> Acts xiii. 2, xxviii. 23; Heb. iii. 1, x. 25, and elsewhere.

<sup>94</sup> Rom. ix. 25.

broached on the inspiration of the Scriptures, theirs is what we have decidedly resolved to prefer.

Hear, then, the apostle Paul when he quotes them, and proceeds to comment upon them. On such occasions he discusses their minutest expressions; and often, when about to deduce the most important consequences from them, he employs arguments which, were it we that should employ them in discussions with the doctors of the Socinian school, would be treated as childish or absurd. For such a respect for the words of the text, we should be sent back to the sixteenth century with its gross orthodoxy and its superannuated theology. Mark with what reverence the apostle dwells upon their most minute expressions; with what confidence he expects the submission of the Church, while he notes the use of such a word rather than of such another; with what studiousness and affection he as it were presses every one of them in his hands till the last drop of meaning has been obtained from it.

Among so many examples which we might adduce, let us confine ourselves, for brevity's sake, to the Epistle to the Hebrews.

See how, at verse 8th of chapter ii., after quoting these words, "Thou hast put all things under his feet," the sacred author argues from the authority of the word *all*.

See how, at the 11th verse, in quoting the 22d Psalm, he argues from the expression *my brethren*, that the Son of God behoved to put on the nature of man.

See how, at the 27th verse of chapter xii., in quoting the prophet Haggai, he argues from the word *once more*, "Yet once more."

See at the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th verses, how

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largely he argues from these words *my son*, of the 3d chapter of the Proverbs, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord."

See how, at the 10th chapter, in quoting the 40th Psalm, he argues from the words *Lo I come*, set against the words. "Thou wouldest not."

See how, at chapter viii., from the 8th to the lath verses, in quoting Jeremiah xxxi. 31, he argues from the word *new*.

See, at chapter iii. 7-19, and iv. 2-11, with urgency in quoting the 95th Psalm, he argues from the word "*to-day*," from the words "*I have sworn*," and, above all, from the words "*my rest*," illustrated by that other expression of Genesis, " And God *rested* on the seventh day."

See how, at verses 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, he argues from these words *servant* and *my house*, taken from the book of Numbers, "My servant Moses, who is faithful in all my house."

See, especially at chapter vii., the use he makes successively of all the words of the 110th Psalm; mark how he takes up each of its expressions, one after another, in order to deduce from them the very highest doctrines: "The Lord hath sworn;" "he hath sworn by himself;" Thou art a priest;" "Thou art a priest for ever;" "Thou art a priest after the order of

Melchisedec;" "of Melchisedec king of Sedec," and "of Melchisedec king of Salem." The exposition of the doctrines contained in each of these words will be found to occupy three chapters, the 5th, the 6th, and the 7th.

But here I pause. Can we fail to conclude from such examples, that, in the view of the apostle Paul, the Scriptures were inspired by God, even to their most minute expressions? Let each of us, then, place himself in the school of the man to whom and been given, by the Spirit of God, the knowledge of the mystery of Christ, as to a holy apostle and prophet.<sup>95</sup> One must

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necessarily either account him an enthusiast, and reject in his person the testimonies of the Holy Bible, or receive with him the precious and fruitful doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures.

O ye who read these lines, to what school will ye attach yourselves? to that of the apostles, or to that of the doctors of this age? "If any man take away from the words of this book" (this I testify, says St John), "God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this Book."<sup>96</sup>

But, farther, let us turn from the apostles, prophets as they are - men sent by God for the establishment of his kingdom, the pillars of the Church, the mouths of the Holy Ghost, ambassadors of Jesus Christ; let us, for an instant, turn from them as men who had not yet quite thrown off their Jewish traditions and clownish prejudices, and let us go to the Master. Let us inquire of him what the Scriptures were in his view of them. Here is the grand question. The testimonies to which we have appealed are peremptory, no doubt; and the doctrine of a plenary and entire inspiration is taught as clearly in Scripture as that of the resurrection of the dead can be; that ought of itself to be enough for us; but we repeat, nevertheless, here is an argument which for us renders all else superfluous. How did Jesus Christ appeal to the Holy Bible? What were his views of the letter of the Scriptures? What use did he make of it, he who is its object and inspirer, beginning and end, first and last? he whose Holy Spirit, says St Peter, animated all the prophets of the Old Testament (2 Peter i. 21), who was in heaven in the bosom of the Father at the same time that he was seen here below, dwelling among us and preaching the gospel to the poor? Among the most ardent defenders of their verbal inspiration, we know not one that ever expressed himself with more respect for the altogether divine au-

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thority and everlasting endurance of their most minute expressions than was done by the man Jesus. And we scruple not to say, that were any modern writer to quote the Bible, as Jesus Christ did, with the view of deducing from it any doctrine, he would forthwith have to be ranked among the most zealous partisans of the doctrine we defend. I am asked, What is your view of the Holy Letters? I answer, What thought my Master of them? how did he appeal to them? what use did he make of them? what were their smallest details in his eyes?

Ah! speak to them thyself, Eternal Wisdom, Un-created Word, Judge of judges! and as we proceed to repeat to them here the declarations of thy mouth, show them the majesty in which

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<sup>95</sup> Eph. iii. 4, 5.

<sup>96</sup> Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

the Scriptures appeared to thee - show them the perfection thou didst recognise in them, that everlasting endurance, above all, which thou didst assign to their smallest iota, and which will make them outlast the universe, after the very heavens and the earth have passed away!

We are not afraid to say it: when we hear the Son of God quote the Scriptures, every thing is said, in our view, on their divine inspiration - we need no farther testimony. All the declarations of the Bible are, no doubt, equally divine; but this example of the Saviour of the world has settled the question for us at once. This proof requires neither long nor learned, researches; it is grasped by the hand of a child as powerfully as by that of a doctor. Should any doubt, then, assail your soul, let it turn to the Lord of lords; let it behold him in presence of the Scriptures!

Follow Jesus in the days of his flesh. With what serious and tender respect does he constantly hold in his hands "the volume of the Book," to quote every part of it, and note its shortest verses. See how one word, one single word, whether of a psalm or of an historical hook, has for him the authority of a law. Mark with what confident submission he receives *the whole Scripture*; without ever contesting its sacred

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canon; for he knows that "salvation cometh of the Jews," and that, under the infallible providence of God, "to them were committed the oracles of God." Did I say, he receives them? From his childhood to the grave, and from his rising again from the grave to his disappearance in the clouds, what does he bear always about with him, in the desert, in the temple, in the synagogue? What does he continue to quote with his resuscitated voice, just as the heavens are about to exclaim, "Lift up your heads, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in?" It is the Bible, ever the Bible; it is Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets: he quotes them, he explains them, but how? Why, verse by verse, and word by word.

In what alarming and melancholy contrast, after beholding all this, do we see those misguided men present themselves in our days, who dare to judge, contradict, cull, and mutilate the Scriptures. Who does not tremble, after following with his eyes the Son of Man as he commands the elements, stills the storms, and opens the graves, while, filled with so profound a respect for the sacred volume, he declares that he is one day to judge by that book the quick and the dead? Who does not shudder, whose heart does not bleed, when, after observing this, we venture to step into a Rationalist academy, and see the professor's chair occupied by a poor mortal, learned, miserable, a sinner, responsible, yet handling God's Word irreverently; when we follow him as he goes through this deplorable task before a body of youths, destined to be the guides of a whole people - youths capable of doing so much good if guided to the heights of the faith, and so much mischief if tutored in disrespect for those Scriptures which they are one day to preach? With what peremptory decision do such men display the phantasmagoria of their hypotheses; they retrench, they add, they praise, they blame, and pity the simplicity which, reading the Bible as it was read by Jesus Christ, like him clings to every syllable, and never dreams of finding error in the

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Word of God! They pronounce on the intercalations and retrenchments that Holy Scripture must have undergone - intercalations and retrenchments never suspected by Jesus Christ; they

lop off the chapters they do not understand, and point out blunders, ill-sustained or ill-concluded reasonings, prejudices, imprudences, and instances of vulgar ignorance.

May God forgive my being compelled to put this frightful dilemma into words, but the alternative is inevitable! Either Jesus Christ exaggerated and spoke incoherently when he quoted the Scriptures thus, or these rash wretched men unwittingly blaspheme their divine majesty. It pains us to write these lines. God is our witness that we could have wished to recall, and then to efface them; but we venture to say, with profound feeling, that it is in obedience, it is in charity, that they have been penned. Alas! in a few short years both the doctors and the disciples will be laid in the tomb, they shall wither like the grass; but not one jot or tittle of that divine book will then have passed away; and as certainly as the Bible is the truth, and that it has changed the face of the world, as certainly shall we see the Son come in the clouds of heaven, and judge, by his eternal Word, the secret thoughts of all men!<sup>97</sup> . . . “All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you;”<sup>98</sup> this is the word which will judge us.

Now, then, we proceed to close our proofs, by reviewing, under this aspect, the ministry of Jesus Christ. Let us follow him from the age of twelve to his descent into the grave, or rather, to his passing into the cloud, in which he went out of sight; and throughout the whole course of that incomparable career, let us see what the Scriptures were in the eye of Him who “upholds all things by the word of his power.”

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First of all, let us contemplate him at the age of twelve years. He grew, like one of the children of men, in wisdom and in stature; he is in the midst of the doctors in the temple of Jerusalem; he ravishes with his answers those who hear him; for, said they, “he knows the Scriptures without having studied them.”<sup>99</sup>

Behold him from the time he commenced his ministry. See him filled with the Holy Ghost; he is led into the wilderness, there to sustain, as the first Adam did in Eden, a mysterious contest with the powers of darkness. The impure spirit dares to approach him, bent on his overthrow; but how will the Son of God repel him, even he who had come to destroy the works of the Devil? Solely with the Bible. His only weapon, three successive times, in his divine hands, is the sword of the Spirit, the Bible. He quotes, thrice successively, the Book of Deuteronomy.<sup>100</sup> On every fresh temptation, he, the Word made flesh, defends himself by a sentence of the oracles of God, and by a sentence, too, the whole force of which lies in the use of a single word, or of two words; first of these words (*ἄρτῳ μόνῳ*), *bread alone*; then of those words, “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord (*οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις Κύριον*);” then, finally, of these two words (*θεὸν προσκυνήσεις*), *Thou shalt worship God*.

What an example for us! His whole reply, his whole defence is this:- “It is written;” “Get thee behind me, Satan, for it is written;” and as soon as this terrible and mysterious contest closed, the angels drew near to minister to him.

<sup>97</sup> Rom. ii. 16; John xii. 48; Matt. xxv. 31.

<sup>98</sup> 1 Pet. i. 24, 25.

<sup>99</sup> John vii. 15.

<sup>100</sup> Deut. vii. 3, vi. 13, x. 20; Matt. iv. 1, 11.

But, mark this farther, such was the respect of the Son of man for the authority of every word of the Scriptures, that the impure spirit himself, powerful as he was in evil, and who knew what all the words of the Bible were in his antagonist's eyes, could fancy no surer means of shaking his will than by quoting to him (but at the same time mutilating) a verse of the 91<sup>st</sup>

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psalm; and forthwith Jesus Christ, to confound him, thinks it is enough to reply once more with, "It is written."

See how his priestly ministry commenced - with the use of the Scriptures; and see how his prophetic ministry commenced soon after - with the use of the Scriptures.

Once engaged in his work, let us follow him as he goes from place to place doing good, displaying in his poverty his creative power ever for the relief of others, never for his own. He speaks, and it is done; he casts out devils, he turns the storm into a calm, he raises the dead. Yet, amid all these tokens of greatness, observe what the Scriptures are to him. The Word is ever with him; not in his hands, for lie knows it thoroughly, but in his memory and in his incomparable heart. Mark how he speaks of it! When he unrolls the sacred volume, it is as if an opening were made in heaven, that we may hear Jehovah's voice. With what reverence, with what submission, does he expound the Scriptures, comment upon them, quote them word by word! See how it becomes his grand concern to heal men's diseases and to preach the Scriptures, as it was afterwards to die and to fulfil the Scriptures!

See who comes, "as his custom was," into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day; for we are told he taught in their synagogues.<sup>101</sup> He goes into that at Nazareth; and what do we find him doing there - he, the everlasting Wisdom, possessed by Jehovah in the beginning of his way, brought forth when there were no depths, before the mountains were settled, and before the hills?<sup>102</sup> He rises and takes the Bible, opens it at Isaiah, reads some words there; then having closed the book, he sits down, and while the eyes of all that are in the synagogue are fastened on him, he begins to say, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."<sup>103</sup>

See him as he passes through Galilee, and mark how

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he employs himself there. "The volume of the book" is still in his hands; he explains it line by line, word by word; he points out to our respect its most minute expressions, as he would those of "the ten words" uttered on Sinai.

See him once more in Jerusalem, before the pool of Bethesda; what do we find him saying to the people? "Search the Scriptures." - (John v.)

See him in the holy place, in the midst of which he had dared to say aloud, "In this place is one greater than the holy place." - (Matt. xii. 6.) Follow him into the presence of the Sadducees and the Pharisees, while he reprimands them successively with these words, "It is written," as he had done in the case of Satan.

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<sup>101</sup> Luke iv. 15, 16.

<sup>102</sup> Prov. viii. 22, 25.

<sup>103</sup> Luke iv. 21.

Listen to his reply to the Sadducees who denied the resurrection of the body. How does he refute them? By ONE SOLE WORD of an HISTORICAL passage of the Bible; by a single verb in the present tense, instead of that same verb in the past tense. “Ye greatly err,” said he to them, “NOT KNOWING THE SCRIPTURES. Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham?” It is thus that he proves to them the doctrine of the resurrection. God, on Mount Sinai, four hundred years after the death of Abraham, says to Moses, not “I *was*,” but “I *am*” the God of Abraham; I am that now (אֶתְתִּי אַנְכִי אֱלֹהִים), which the Holy Ghost translates - (Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ Θεός Ἀβραὰμ). There is a resurrection, then; for God is not the God of a few handfuls of dust, the God of the dead, the God of nothing: he is the God of the living. Those men therefore are, in the view of God, still alive.<sup>104</sup>

Next, behold him in the presence of the Pharisees. It is again by the letter of the Word that he proceeds to confound them.

Some had by this time followed him into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan, and came to him asking to be informed what were his doctrines on the subject of

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marriage and divorce. Now, what followed on the part of Jesus Christ? He might certainly have given an authoritative reply, and announced his own laws on the subject. Is he not himself the King of kings and Lord of lords? But no; it was to the Bible that he made his appeal, still for the same purpose of making it the basis of doctrine; it was to these simple words taken from a purely historical passage in Genesis,<sup>105</sup> - “HAVE YE NOT READ, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female; so that they twain shall be one flesh? What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”<sup>106</sup>

But listen to him, especially when in the temple he would prove to other Pharisees, by the Scriptures, the divinity of the expected Messiah. Here likewise, to demonstrate this, he still insists on the use of A SINGLE WORD, which he proceeds to take from the Book of Psalms: “If the Messiah be the son of David,” said he, “how doth David, BY THE SPIRIT, call him LORD; saying (at the 110th Psalm), The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?”

How happens it, that among those Pharisees none was found to say in reply, “What! do you mean to insist on a single word, and still more on a term borrowed from a poesy eminently lyrical, where the royal Psalmist might, without material consequence, have employed too lively a construction, high-flown expressions, and words which, doubtless, he had not theologically pondered before throwing them into his verses? Would you follow such a mode of minutely interpreting each expression as is at once fanatical and servile? Would you worship the letter of the Scriptures to such an extreme? Would you build a whole doctrine upon a word?”

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<sup>104</sup> Matt. xxii. 31, 32.

<sup>105</sup> Gen. i. 27, ii. 24.

<sup>106</sup> Matt. xix. 4, 5, 6.

Yes, I do, is Christ's reply; yes, I will throw myself on a single word, because that word is God's! And,

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to cut short all your objections, I tell you that it is BY THE SPIRIT that David wrote all the words of his hymns; and I ask you "how, if the Messiah be his son, David, BY THE SPIRIT, can call him his Lord, when he says, The Lord said unto my Lord?"

Students of God's Word, and you especially who are to be his ministers, and who, as your preparation for preaching it, would desire first of all to have received it into a good and honest heart, behold what every saying, every single word of the Book of God, was in the regard of your Master. Go and do likewise!

But more than this. Again let us listen to him, even on the cross. There he poured out his soul as an offering for sin; all his bones were out of joint; he was poured out as water; his heart was like wax, melted in the midst of his bowels; his tongue cleaved to his jaws; he was about to give up his spirit to his Father. But, previous to this, what do we find him do? He desires to collect his remaining strength, in order to recite a psalm which the Church of Israel had sung on her religious festivals for a thousand years, and which told over, one after another, all his sorrows and all his prayers: "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthhani* (my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me)?" He does even more than this: listen to him. There remained in the Scriptures one word which had not yet been fulfilled. Vinegar had still to be given him on that cross (this the Holy Ghost had declared a thousand years before in the 69th Psalm). "After this," it is written, "Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and having bowed his head, he gave up the ghost."<sup>107</sup>

When David sang the 69th Psalm on Sosannim, and the 17th Psalm on Ajeleth, did he know the prophetic meaning of all these words, of those hands and feet

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that were pierced, of that gall poured out, of that vinegar, of those garments that were parted, of that vesture on which a lot was cast, of that mocking populace, wagging their heads and making mouths? It matters little to us his understanding it; the Holy Ghost at least understood it, and David spake BY THE SPIRIT, said Jesus Christ. The heaven and the earth shall pass away; but there was not in that book a jot or tittle that could pass away till all was fulfilled. - (John x. 35; Matt. v. 18).

Meanwhile, behold something, if possible, more striking still. Jesus Christ rises from the tomb; he has overcome death; he is about to return to the Father, there to resume that glory which he had with the Father before the world began. Let us follow him, then, during those fleeting moments with which he would still favour the earth. What words are now about to proceed from that mouth, again restored to life? Why, words from Holy Scripture. Still he quotes it, explains it, preaches it. See him, first of all, on the way to Emmaus, walking with Cleopas and his friend; afterwards in the upper chamber; and, later still, on the borders of the lake. How is he employed? In expounding the sacred books; he begins with Moses, he

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<sup>107</sup> John xix. 25-30.

continues through all the Prophets and the Psalms; he shows them what had been said concerning him in all the Scriptures; he opens their minds to understand them; he makes their hearts burn within them as he speaks of them.<sup>108</sup>

But we have not yet done. All these quotations show us what the Holy Bible was in the eyes of Him “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. ii. 3); and “by whom all things subsist” (Col. i. 17). But on the letter of the Scriptures, listen further to two declarations, and a last example of our Lord.

“It is easier,” says he, “for heaven and earth to

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pass, than for one tittle (*κεροία*) of the law to fall;<sup>109</sup> and by the law Jesus Christ understood the whole of the Scriptures, and even, more particularly, the Book of Psalms.<sup>110</sup> What terms could possibly be imagined capable of expressing, with greater force and precision, the principle which we defend; that is to say, the authority, the entire divine inspiration, and the perpetuity of all the parts, and of the very letter of the Scriptures? Ye who study God’s Word, here behold the theology of your Master! Be ye then divines after his manner; be your Bible the same as that of the Son of God! Of that not a single tittle can fall.

“Till heaven and earth pass,” saith he, “one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” - (Matt. v. 18.) All the words of the Scriptures, accordingly, even to the smallest stroke of a letter, are no less than the words OF JESUS CHRIST; for he hath also said, “heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.” - (Luke xxi. 33.) The impugners of these doctrines ask us if we are bold enough to maintain that Holy Scripture is a law of God even in its words, as hyssop, or as an oak, is a work of God even in its leaves. We reply, with all the Fathers of the Church, Yes, even in its “words, even to (*ἰῶτα ἐν, ἥ μία κεροία*) one jot or one tittle!”

But, passing from these two declarations, let us finally direct our attention to a last example given by our Lord which we have not yet adduced.

It is still Jesus Christ who is about to quote the Scriptures, but claiming for their smallest words such an authority, that one is compelled to rank him among the most ardent partisans of verbal inspiration, and that we do not think, that had we before us all the writings of divines the most uncompromising in their orthodoxy, we should anywhere find an example of more profound respect for the letter of Scripture, and for the plenitude of their divine inspiration.

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It was winter. Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon’s (the eastern) porch; the Jews came about him, upon which he said to them, “I give eternal life unto my sheep, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand: I and the Father are one.” People were astonished at such language; but he assumed a still bolder tone, until at last the Jews,

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<sup>108</sup> Luke xxiv. 21, 44.

<sup>109</sup> Luke xvi. 17.

<sup>110</sup> John x. 34, as did also the Jews, xii. 34; Rom. iii. 19.

exclaiming that it was blasphemy, took up stones to stone him, telling him they did so, “because thou, being a man, makest thyself God.”<sup>111</sup>

Now then, let the reader carefully mark the several points involved in the answer made by Jesus Christ. He quotes a saying taken from one of the psalms, and proceeds to rest the whole of his doctrine on that single saying: for “he made himself equal with God;” says John elsewhere (v. 18). In maintaining the most sublime and most mysterious of his doctrines, and, in order to legitimize the most extraordinary of his pretensions, he appeals to certain words in the 82d Psalm. But, mark well! before pronouncing the words he takes care to interrupt himself; he pauses in a solemn parenthesis, and exclaims in a tone of authority, *And the Scripture cannot be broken* (*καὶ οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή!*)!

Has sufficient attention been paid to this? Not only is our Lord’s argument here founded entirely on the use made by the Psalmist of a single word, and not only does he proceed to establish the most astonishing of his doctrines on this expression; but further, in thus quoting the Book of Psalms in order to make us understand that in his eyes the whole book was dictated by the Holy Ghost, and that every word of it carried the authority of the law, Jesus calls it by the name of LAW, and says to the Jews, “Is it not written in your law, I have said ye are gods?” These words are placed in the middle of a hymn; they might seem to have escaped from the unreflecting fervour of the prophet

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Asaph, or from the burning raptures of his poetry. And were we not to admit the full inspiration of *all that is written*, one might be tempted to tax them with indiscretion, since the imprudent use which the Psalmist may have made of them, might have led the people to usages elsewhere censured by the Word of God, and to idolatrous imaginations. How then, once more we ask, was there no rationalist scribe from the universities of Israel to be found there, under Solomon’s porch, to say to him, “You cannot, Lord, claim the authority of that expression. The use that Asaph makes of it can have been neither considerate nor becoming. Although inspired as respects the thoughts suggested by his piety, he no doubt did not maturely weigh every little word with a very scrupulous regard to the use that might possibly be made of them a thousand years after his own day.. It were rash, therefore, to insist upon them.”

But now, let the reader mark, how our Lord anticipates the profane rashness of such an objection. Observe well: he solemnly reproves it; he proceeds to pronounce words concerning himself which would be blasphemy in the mouth of an archangel. “I and the Father are one;” but he interrupts himself, and immediately after saying, “Is it not written in your law, ye are gods?” he stops, and, fixing his eyes with a look of authority on the doctors who surround him, he exclaims, “AND THE SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN!” As if he had said, “Beware! there is not in the sacred books a single word to be found fault with, nor a single word that one can neglect. This which I cite in this 82d Psalm, has been traced by the hand that made the heavens.” If then, he has been willing to give the name of gods to men, in so far as they were christ’s (anointed ones), and types of the true Christ, who is emphatically the Anointed One, and taking care nevertheless to call to mind “that they should die like men,” how shall it not still more appertain to me to take that name to myself? I, “the everlasting

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<sup>111</sup> John x. 27, and following verses.

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Father,”<sup>112</sup> Emmanuel, the God-man, who do the works of my Father, and on whom the Father hath put his seal?

Here, then, we ask of every serious reader (and our argument, be it well observed, is altogether independent of the orthodox meaning or the Socinian meaning people may choose to give to the words of Jesus Christ); we ask, Is it possible to admit that the Being who makes such a use of the Scriptures DOES NOT BELIEVE IN THEIR PLENARY VERBAL INSPIRATION? And if he could have imagined that the words of the Bible were left to the free choice and pious fancies of the sacred writers, would he ever have dreamed of founding such arguments on such a word? The Lord Jesus, our Saviour and our Judge, believed then in the most complete inspiration of the Scriptures; and for him the first rule of all hermeneutics, and the commencement of all exegesis, was this simple maxim applied to the most minute expressions of the written word, “AND THE SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN.”

Let, then, the Prince of Life, the light of the world, reckon all of us as his scholars! What he believed let us receive. What he respected let us revere. Let us press to our sickly hearts that Word to which he submitted his saviour heart, and all the thoughts of his holy humanity, and to it let us subject all the thoughts of our fallen humanity. There let us look for God, even in its minutest passages; in it let us daily dip the roots of our being, “like the tree planted by the rivers of waters, which bringeth forth his fruit in his season, and his leaf shall not wither.”

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<sup>112</sup> Isa. ix. 6, vii. H; John vi. 27.