

Quotations

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Article 5 of 47 **Short Meditations**

(Cavenagh, 1866.)

Passages of the Old Testament cited, as they are, in all parts of the New, with many and many a glance, or tacit, unexpressed reference, link all the parts of the Volume together, and give it a character of unity and completeness. The contents themselves of the Volume do the same. They also give unity and completeness to it — for they are a series of events which stretch from the beginning to the end, from the creation to the kingdom. And prophecies in the Old Testament of events in the New, are as quotations in the New of passages in the Old. And thus, in the mouth of several witnesses of the highest dignity, we have the oneness and the consistency of the Divine Volume from first to last fully set forth and established.

This would tell us, that it is all the breathing of one and the same Spirit. Scripture itself announces the same. And again, the contents themselves speak also in this case. "Their selfevidencing light and power," the moral glories in which they so brightly, so abundantly, and so variously shine, witness that God is their source. And thus the Divine original of the Book, as well as its unity and consistency, is established. And we hold to these truths in the face of all the insult which is put upon them by unreasonable and wicked men — oppositions of criticism, falsely so called, only spend themselves in vain, like angry waves upon the seashore. God Himself has set the bounds; and these things only return upon themselves, foaming out their own shame.

In the progress of the New Testament Scriptures, the Lord and the Holy Ghost, in their several way and season, use the Scriptures of the Old. This is a sealing of them, if they needed that. But it is so. It is God putting His seal on them *after they come forth*, as it was He who breathed them *before they came forth*.

As to the Lord, we shall find that He uses Old Testament Scriptures in several different ways.

1. He observes them obediently, ordering His life, forming His character, as I may speak, according to them.
2. He uses them as His weapons of war, or shield of defence, when assailed by the Tempter or by the world.
3. He treats them as authority, when teaching or reasoning.
4. He avows and avers their Divine original, and their indestructible character, and that too in every jot and tittle of them.
5. He fulfils them, not withdrawing Himself from His place of service and of suffering, till He could survey the whole of them (as far as that service and suffering had respect to them) as realized, verified, and accomplished.

In such ways as these, and it may be in others, the Lord honours the Scriptures. What a sight! What a precious fact! How blessed to see Him in such relationships to the Word of God, that Word which is the ground and witness of all the confidence and liberty and peace we know before God! We read the hundred and nineteenth Psalm, there tracing a worshipper's relation to Scripture, and we find it edifying to mark the breathings of a saint under the teachings, and drawings, and inspirings of the Holy

Ghost. But it is still a more affecting thing to mark and trace the relations into which the Lord Jesus puts Himself to the same Scripture.

Then, when the ministry of the Lord is over, when the Son has returned to heaven, and the Spirit comes down, He appears, (as in the Apostles whom He fills to write the Epistles,) doing the like service for us. For in all the Epistles we get quotations from the writings of the Old Testament.

And there is no limit to this. These quotations are found in every part of the New Testament, and are taken from every part of the Old, from Genesis to Malachi — and that very largely. So that we have, in the structure of the Divine Volume, nothing less than the closest, fullest, and most intricate interweaving of all parts of it together, the end, too, returning to the beginning, and the beginning anticipating the end. In a certain sense, we are in all parts of the Volume when we are in any part of it, though the variety of communications, in disclosing the dispensations of God, is infinite.

And surely we say, these qualities of the Holy Book are in the highest sense Divine; as its contents or material have in them a comprehension and display Of moral glories in all unsullied excellency, which in the clearest manner, speak of God, unmistakeably, to heart and conscience.

But further. — Scripture links itself with eternity.

If we have foretellings in the Old Testament of events in the New, so have we, in both Old and New, foretellings of the eternity that is to come.

If we have quotations in the New Testament of passages in the Old, so have we in both the Old and New, references to the eternity that is past. Scripture passes beyond its borders, as I may say, and is in the scenes and glories of the coming eternity — Scripture also retires behind its borders, and is in the secrets and counsels of the eternity that is past, unsealing "the volume of the book," and disclosing predestinations which were formed and settled in Christ ere worlds were.

Surely it is marvellous! But the Spirit of Him who knows the end from the beginning, accounts to us for it — but nothing less can. And the Book, as has been said, is a greater miracle than any which it records.

And blessed for us to know and to prove, that it prepares us for everything, for all that which surrounds us at this moment. Confusion and corruption may be infinite, but we have it all anticipated in and by the Book, to which we listen as the witness of everything to us in the name and truth of God. We need not be afraid with any amazement, since we have it. We may (if that be a holy action of the soul) "deride," and not "dread," the insolent infidelity of the day; and if we have grace, pray for those wicked men, that God would give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

And I would add this — that these citations out of His own writings by God Himself, first in the Person of the Son, and then in the Person of the Holy Ghost, are beautiful in this character to which I before alluded — that as He sent forth these writings as from Himself, at the beginning, being the Source of them, so after they have come forth, and been embodied in human forms, and accepted of men, as in all languages of the nations, and seated in the midst of the human family, He Himself comes to accredit them there. He has *inspired* them and *sealed* them — and we receive them thus introduced to us by Himself — and we ask no more.

And we may say of the Scriptures from beginning to end, one part of them cannot be touched without all being affected. To use inspired language, "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it," God has so tempered all of it together. And I may go further in the same analogy, and say, the uncomely parts have been given more abundant honour — as for instance, in the Book of

Proverbs we get as rich and blessed a witness of the Christ of God in His mysterious glories, as we find anywhere.

Yea, and I will take on me to add, if all other parts, like the members of the one. body, resent trespass and wrong done to any part, so the Spirit will say of God and Scripture, as He does of God and His saints, "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." I am sure of it. God will make the quarrel of Scripture His own quarrel. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words," says the Lord Jesus, "hath one that judgeth him."