

The Divine Inspiration of the Bible CHAPTER TWO: THE PERENNIAL FRESHNESS OF THE BIBLE BEARS WITNESS TO ITS DIVINE INSPIRER

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Transcript

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CHAPTER TWO:

THE PERENNIAL FRESHNESS OF THE BIBLE BEARS WITNESS TO ITS DIVINE INSPIRER

The full force of the present argument will appeal only to those who are intimately acquainted with the Bible, and the more familiar the reader is with the Sacred Canon the more heartily will he endorse the following statements. Just as a knowledge of Latin is necessary in order to understand the technique of a treatise on pathology or physiology, or just as a certain amount of culture and academic learning is an indispensable adjunct to intelligently follow the arguments and apprehend the illustrations in a dissertation on philosophy or psychology, so a first-hand acquaintance with the Bible is necessary to appreciate the fact that its contents never become commonplace. One of the first facts which arrests the attention of the student of God's Word is that, like the widow's oil and meal which nourished Elijah, the contents of the Bible are never exhausted. Unlike all other books, the Bible never acquires a sameness, and never diminishes in its power of response to the needy soul which comes to it. Just as a fresh supply of manna was given each day to the Israelites in the wilderness, so the Spirit of God ever breaks anew the Bread of Life to them who hunger after righteousness; or, just as the loaves and fishes in the hands of our Lord were more than enough to feed the famished multitude—a surplus still remaining—so the honey and milk of the Word are more than sufficient to satisfy the hunger of every human soul—the supply still remaining undiminished for new generations. Although one may know, word for word, the entire contents of some chapter of Scripture, and although he may have taken the time to ponder thoughtfully every sentence therein, yet, on every subsequent occasion, provided one comes to it again in the spirit of humble inquiry, each fresh reading will reveal new gems never seen there before and new delights will be experienced never met with previously. The most familiar passages will yield as much refreshment at the thousandth perusal as they did at the first. The Bible has been likened to a fountain of living water: the fountain is ever the same, but the water is always fresh. Herein the Bible differs from all other books, sacred or secular. What man has to say can be gathered from his writings at the first reading: failure to do so indicates that

the writer has not succeeded in expressing himself clearly, or else the reader has failed to apprehend his meaning. Man is only able to deal with surface things, hence he cares only about surface appearances; consequently, whatever man has to say lies upon the surface of his writings, and the capable reader can exhaust them by a single perusal. Not so with the Bible. Although the Bible has been studied more microscopically than any other book (even its very letters have been counted and registered) by many of the keenest intellects for the past two thousand years, although whole libraries of works have been written as commentaries upon its teachings, and although literally millions of sermons have been preached and printed in the attempt to expound every part of Holy Writ, yet its contents have not been exhausted, and in this twentieth century new discoveries are being made in it every day! The Bible is an inexhaustible mine of wealth: it is the El Dorado of heavenly treasure. It has veins of ore which never "give out" and pockets of gold which no pick can empty; yet, like earthly treasures, the gems of God must be diligently sought if they are to be found. Potatoes lie near the surface of the ground, but diamonds require much laborious digging, so also the precious things of the Word are only revealed to the prayerful, patient and diligent student. The Bible is like a spring of water which never runs dry. No matter how many may drink from its life-giving stream, and no matter how often they may quench their thirst at its refreshing waters, its flow continues and never fails to satisfy the needs of all who come and take of its perennial springs. The Bible has a whole continent of Truth yet to be explored. A learned scholar who died during the present year of grace had read through the Bible no fewer than five hundred times! What other book, ancient or modern, Oriental or Occidental, would repay even a fiftieth reading? How can we account for this marvelous characteristic of the Bible? What explanation can we offer for this startling phenomenon? It is only stating a commonplace axiom when we affirm that what is finite is fathomable. What the mind of man has produced the mind of man can exhaust. If human mortals had written the Bible its contents would have been "mastered" ages ago. In view of the fact that the contents of the Scriptures cannot be exhausted, that they never acquire sameness or staleness to the devout student, and that they always speak with fresh force to the quickened soul that comes to them, is it not apparent that none other than the infinite mind of God could have created such a wonderful Book as the Bible?

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