

## "Human reasoning sitting in judgment on the word of God"

In the Introduction to 3rd Quarter 2016 Adult Sabbath School Quarterly there is an illustration used to help explain what the Quarterly believes to be the "The *Whole Gospel*."

"A pastor held up his Bible before the congregation. It was in tatters, full of holes. In seminary he and some classmates had gone through his Bible and underlined every passage that dealt with justice, poverty, wealth, and oppression. Then, with a pair of scissors, they cut out every verse dealing with those topics. When they finished, his Bible was in shambles. Throughout Scripture these themes are so central that there is a lot missing from the Bible when they are removed. The tattered Bible speaks powerfully and loudly about the things that God cares about."

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We reprint the following *Signs of the Times* article in response to the above foolishness:

### All Scripture.

WE read in 2 Tim. 3:16, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," etc. (Authorized Version). The revisers say, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable," etc. And they put in the margin, "Every scripture is inspired of God and profitable." But in the *Homiletic Review* for January, a doctor of divinity says, "It is an exploded error that every part of the Bible is of equal inspiration and importance." Is there not in this statement the germ, at least, of a very dangerous doctrine, viz., that human reason is to sit in judgment on the word of God? If the Bible is inspired at all, it is all inspired. And if it is all inspired, it is all important. To assume that there are degrees of inspiration and degrees of importance will lead naturally to the assumption that we may reject as uninspired whatever seems to us unimportant. The book is given to us as a whole. It is declared emphatically that the holy men who wrote it were moved by the Holy Ghost. What right have we to modify this declaration and say that the Holy Ghost moved some of them more than others, or more at one time than at another?

The attempt to cut and carve the Bible according to our ideas of good, better, and best, seems to us very much like taking a living man and trying to show by dissection that some parts of his body are more important than others. Every part of the body is essential to its completeness and perfection. Every part of it was divinely planned. The whole is "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth." Eph. 4:16.

Here is a tree. It is rooted in the soil. It spreads its branches out on every side, and they are covered with leaves and fruit. That tree is a living unit. You cannot say that any part of it, from the tiniest rootlet to the leaf that flutters on the topmost bough, is relatively unimportant. God made it to consist of root, trunk, bark, foliage, and fruit. But though the fruit is what we prize most, we know that its growth and perfection depend on processes that require all the other parts, whether under or above the ground. And is

it not so with the Bible? Even those parts of it Which seem most obscure and least profitable may have a vital connection with parts that we prize and enjoy.

Paul tells Timothy not only that all Scripture is inspired, but that all of it is profitable "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Now, he evidently does not mean to say that all Scripture is profitable for every one of the objects specified, but for some one of them. And he does not intimate that there is any difference in the relative importance of these objects. Surely instruction in righteousness, though named last, is not less valuable to a Christian than doctrine or reproof. The apostle's idea is that all are needed in order that the man of God may be perfect, *i. e.*, complete.

As citizens of this world we need air, light, food, clothing, shelter. All these are essential to our health and our comfort. None of us would say that we can be thoroughly furnished for the enjoyment of life if any of these essentials are wanting. Then how foolish it would be for us to sit down and try to determine which of these is the most important? Equally foolish is the attempt of that doctor of divinity, or of anybody else, to classify God's revelations, and tell us which have more and which less of his mind and heart and will in them. Christ joined two disciples as they walked to Emmaus, "and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." He claimed that he was in every part of the Old Testament. Touch those venerable records where you will, with the finger of faith, and you are thrilled by the presence of Christ. He is the Word. He is incarnated in the Bible as truly as he was in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Every part of the Bible is necessary to the complete revelation of the divine Redeemer, as every member and organ of that human body was to the Word made flesh. The sandaled feet with which Christ walked, were they less important than the hands with which he touched blind eyes, or the voice with which he called Lazarus from the grave?

Let us imagine a division of an army awaiting orders from the commander-in-chief. An *aid-de-camp* comes. He presents the expected paper. The division-general gathers his staff around him, and begins to read. He stops from time to time, and says: "Now this is evidently from headquarters. It is just what I expected from our commander, but this is evidently suggested by some of his subordinates, and is therefore less important. We will of course give special and prompt attention to what we regard as fully expressing the wishes of our military chief, but the rest of the paper we will treat with respect, yet not be so particular in obeying it." No leader of a division in a campaign would presume to cut and carve his orders in that way. What he regarded as of secondary importance, might be vital to the success of the campaign. He has no business to think of anything but how he can best carry out the wishes of his chief in all respects. The Bible comes to us just as it is, from the Captain of our salvation. The first chapter of 1 Chronicles is no less inspired than the twenty-third Psalm. We may not be able to see just why it is in the Bible, or how to use it for edification, but that may be because of our ignorance. God is infinitely wise, and he doeth all things well. We gratefully accept his word as just what we need in order that we may be thoroughly

furnished. We believe in the Bible, and the whole Bible, and deny the right of any man to expurgate it—to winnow what he calls chaff from the wheat.—*Interior*.

*Signs of the Times*, July 7, 1890. pp. 405, 406.