

saith" about Abraham (that he "believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness") as divine testimony to the way of salvation. The New Testament concept of Old Testament inspiration is crystallized in the statement in 1 Timothy 3:16, "all Scripture is inspired by God" (R. S. V.), where "inspired by God" is *theopneustos*, literally "breathed out from God." The thought here is that, just as God made the host of heaven "by the breath of his mouth" (Ps. 33:6), through His own creative fiat, so we should regard the Scriptures as the product of a similar creative fiat -- "let there be Law, Prophets, and Writings" (the three divisions of the Jewish canon in New Testament times). The New Testament faith about the Old Testament was that the real narrator of Israel's history in the Law and Former Prophets (that is, the Pentateuch and historical books), and the real psalmist, poet, and wisdom-teacher in the Writings, as well as the real preacher of the prophets' sermons, was God Himself.

Moreover, we have also seen that our Lord, according to His own explicit testimony, spoke from God, and so did His apostles, to whom He promised His Spirit to enable them to do precisely this in their witness to Himself (see Jn. 14:26, 15:26f., 16:7-15, 20:21ff. ; ct. Mt. 10:19f. ; Lk. 10:16; I Cor. 2:12f. ). Apostolic witness to Christ, spoken or written, thus has the same Spirit -- prompted, divine-human character -- that is, is inspired in the same sense -- as the sacred books of the Old Testament. As, therefore, we should follow the New Testament Christians in viewing the Old Testament as given by God for our learning, so we should read the New Testament as part of Jesus Christ's legacy to us -- as if at each point we heard Him say, "I had Paul(or John, or Matthew, or whoever it is) write this in order to help you." This is what it means to believe in biblical inspiration biblically.

The inspiring process, which brought each writer's thoughts into such exact coincidence with those of God, necessarily involved a unique oversight and control of those who were its subjects. Some moderns doubt whether this control could leave room for any free mental activity on the writers' part, and pose a dilemma: either God's control of the writers was complete, in which case they wrote as robots or automata (which clearly they did not), or their minds worked freely as they wrote the Scriptures, in which case God could not fully have controlled them, or kept them from error. Exponents of this dilemma usually hold that the evidence for errors (false statements purporting to be true) in the Bible is in fact as conclusive as the evidence for spontaneous self-expression by its human writers. But our first comment must be that this is not so. That Scripture errs has been assumed by many, but it cannot in principle be proved, any more than it can be proved that Jesus was not morally perfect. Both questions are actually settled farther back: if Jesus was God incarnate, He could not but be morally perfect, and if Scripture is the Word of the God of truth it cannot be but true and trustworthy at all points. Moreover, the dilemma rests on the