

What we may think it says by what we were told it says.

When a Man Dies

By

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God Has Spoken

So God has spoken to man. He has spoken to man in His Son and in His Word. And the revelation of His truth for us is in the Bible, as it is nowhere else.

That being so, the question of the ultimate authority regarding truth is settled. The last and supreme word concerning God, man, life, death, and eternity has been spoken. That supreme authority is the Bible.

There are those who would have us believe that the source of final authority is to be found in human reason. They are wrong. I would not deprecate reason. It is valuable and altogether indispensable. To test the claims of any professed revelation, reason is necessary. It is wholly necessary in order to receive the revelation thus tested. Nevertheless, it is not the source of authority.

The reasoning faculties of mankind have been affected by the fall of the race. Sin has not left these untouched but has unsettled their delicate balance and accurate functioning. Absolute reliance cannot be placed on their operation. Even if this were not so, there is such a thing as truth and reality wholly apart from, and independent of, reason.

Truth is not what I *believe*. Truth is not even what I *know*. Truth is *fact*. I may not believe it. I may not know it. That does not change it. It is there nevertheless, waiting to be discovered and believed.

Truth does not depend on the unsettled and changing opinions of men. It was truth before it was believed. It remains truth, whether it is believed or not. Reason does not originate or create it. It merely discovers it. Consequently, reason is not a source. Truth goes back beyond reason.

Others would have us believe that the church is the source of authority, particularly in matters of theology. They are wrong. The church is the *product* of truth. It does not *originate* it. It came into being by accepting divine revelation. It is not the source of that revelation. Truth goes beyond the church, is antecedent to it.

To The Point.

7. By the mystical method of Origen, it is vain to hope for any uniform understanding of either Daniel or the Revelation, or of any other book of the Bible; for that system (if it can be called a system) knows no law but the uncurbed imagination of its adherents; hence there are on its side as many different interpretations of Scripture as there are different fancies of different writers. ***By the literal method, everything is subject to well-established and clearly-defined law;*** and, viewed from this standpoint, the reader will be surprised to see how simple, easy, and clear many

portions of the Scriptures at once become, which, according to any other system, are dark and unsolvable. It is admitted that many figures are used in the Bible, and that much of the books under consideration, especially that of the Revelation, is clothed in symbolic language; but it is also claimed that the Scriptures introduce no figure which they do not somewhere furnish literal language to explain. This volume is offered as a consistent exposition of the books of Daniel and the Revelation according to the literal system. {D&R 1897 PREFACE 4.2 1912 4.3}

But the strongest and most conclusive evidence that the message belongs to the present time will consist in finding some movement in this generation through which its fulfilment has been, or is going forward. On this point we refer to a movement of which it would now be hard to find any one who is wholly ignorant. It is the great Advent movement of the last century. As early as 1831, Wm. Miller, of Low Hampton, N.Y., by an earnest and consistent study of the prophecies, was led to the conclusion that the gospel dispensation was near its close. He placed the termination, which he thought would occur at the end of the prophetic periods, about the year 1843. This date was afterward extended to the autumn of 1844. (See diagram and argument under Dan.9:24-27.) *We call his investigations a consistent study of the prophecies, because he adopted that rule of interpretation which will be found lying at the base of every religious reformation, and of every advance movement in prophetic knowledge; namely, to take all the language of the Scriptures, just as we would that of any other book, to be literal, unless the context or the laws of language require it to be understood figuratively; and to let scripture interpret scripture.* True, on a vital point he made a mistake, as will be explained hereafter; but in principle, and in a great number of particulars, he was correct. He was on the right road, and made an immense advance over every theological system of his day. When he began to promulgate his views, they met with general favor, and were followed by great religious awakenings in different parts of the land. Soon a multitude of colaborers gathered around his standard, among whom may be mentioned such men as F.G. Brown, Chas. Fitch, Josiah Litch, J.V. Himes, {{D&R 1897 591.1 1912 638.1}}

RULES.

PROOFS.

I. Every word must have its proper bearing on the subject presented in the Bible. Matt. v. 18.

II. All scripture is necessary, and may be understood by a diligent application and study. 2Tim. iii. 15,16,17.

III. Nothing revealed in the scripture can or will be hid from those who ask in faith, Deut. xxix. 29. Matt. x.

not wavering. 26,27. 1Cor.
ii. 10. Phil.

iii. 15. Isa.

xiv. 11. Matt.

xxi. 22. John

xiv. 13,14.

xv. 7. James

i. 5,6.

1John v.

13,14,15.

IV. To understand doctrine, bring all the scriptures together on the subject you wish to know; then let every word have its proper influence, and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in an error.

27. Luke

27,44,45. Rom.

James v. 19.

19,20.

V. Scripture must be its own expositor, since it is a rule of itself. If I depend on a teacher to expound it to me, and he should guess at its meaning, or desire to have it so on account of his sectarian creed, or to be thought wise, then his *guessing*, *desire*, *creed*, or *wisdom* is my rule, not the Bible.

12,13,14,15,16. Eze.

102,103,104,105. Matt.

1Cor. ii.

12,13,14,15,16. Eze.

Luke xi.

7,8.

VI. God has revealed things to come, by visions, in figures and parables, and in this way the same things are oftentimes revealed again and again, by different visions, or in different figures, and parables. If you wish to understand them, you must combine them all in one.

19. Hos. xii.

6. Heb. ix.

lxxviii. 2.

13,34. Gen.

- xli. 1-32.
- Dan. ii. vii.
- and viii.
- Acts x. 9-16.
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- VII. Visions are always mentioned as such. 2Cor. xii. 1.
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- VIII. Figures always have a figurative meaning, and are used much in prophecy, to Dan. ii. 35,44. vii. 8,17.
- represent future things, times and events; such as *mountains*, meaning Rev. xvii.
- 1,15.
- governments; beasts*, meaning *kingdoms*. *Waters*, meaning *people*. Ps. cxix.
- 105.
- Lamp*, meaning *Word of God*. *Day*, meaning *year*. Ezek. iv. 6.
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- IX. Parables are used as comparisons to illustrate subjects, and must be explained in the same way as figures by the subject and Bible. Mark iv. 13. See explanation of the ten virgins, Miller's Lectures, No. xvi.
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- X. Figures sometimes have two or more different significations, as day is used in a Eccles. vii. 14.
- figurative sense to represent three diferent periods of time. 1. Indefinite. Ezek. iv. 6.
2. Definite, a day for a year. 3. Day for a thousand years. If you put on the 2Pet. iii. 8.
- right construction it will harmonize with the Bible and make good sense, otherwise it will not.
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- XI. How to know when a word is used figuratively. If it makes good sense as it stands, and does no violence to the simple laws of nature, then it must be understood literally, if not, figuratively. Rev. xii. 1,2. xvii. 3-7.
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- XII. To learn the true meaning of figures, trace your figurative word through your Bible, and where you find it explained, put it on your figure, and if it makes good sense you need look no further, if not, look again.
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- XIII. To know whether we have the true historical event for the fulfilment of a Ps. xxii. 5.
- Isa. xiv.
- prophecy. If you find every word of the prophecy (after the figures are 17,18,19.
- 1Pet. ii. 6.
- understood) is literally fulfilled, then you may know that your history is the true Rev.
- xvii. 17.
- event. But if one word lacks a fulfilment, then you must look for another event, Acts
- iii. 18.
- or wait its future development. For God takes care that history and prophecy doth agree, so that the true believing children of God may never be ashamed.

XIV. The most important rule of all is, that you must have *faith*. It must be a faith that requires a sacrifice, and if tried, would give up the dearest object on earth, the world and all its desires, character, living, occupation, friends, home, comforts, and worldly honors. If any of these should hinder our believing any part of God's word, it would show our faith to be vain. Nor can we ever believe so long as one of these motives lies lurking in our hearts. We must believe that God will never forfeit his word. And we can have confidence that he that takes notice of the sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our head, will guard the translation of his own word, and throw a barrier around it, and prevent those who sincerely trust in God, and put implicit confidence in his word, from erring far from the truth, though they may not understand Hebrew or Greek.

These are some of the most important rules which I find the word of God warrants me to adopt and follow, in order for system and regularity. And if I am not greatly deceived, in so doing, I have found the Bible, as a whole, one of the most simple, plain, and intelligible books ever written, containing proof in itself of its divine origin, and full of all knowledge that our hearts could wish to know or enjoy. I have found it a treasure which the world cannot purchase. It gives a calm peace in believing, and a firm hope in the future. It sustains the mind in adversity, and teaches us to be humble in prosperity. It prepares us to love and do good to others, and to realize the value of the soul. It makes us bold and valiant for the truth, and nerves the arm to oppose error. It gives us a powerful weapon to break down Infidelity, and makes known the only antidote for sin. It instructs us how death will be conquered, and how the bonds of death will be conquered, and how the bonds of the tomb must be broken. It tells us of future events, and shows the preparation necessary to meet them. It gives us an opportunity to hold conversation with the King of kings, and reveals the best code of laws ever enacted.

This is but a faint view of its value; yet how many perishing souls treat it with neglect, or, what is equally as bad, treat it as a hidden mystery which cannot be known. Oh, my dear reader, make it your chief study. Try it well, and you will find it to be all I have said. Yes, like the Queen of Sheba, you will say the half was not told you.

The divinity taught in our schools is always founded on some sectarian creed. It may do to take a blank mind and impress it with this kind, but it will always end in bigotry. A free mind will never be satisfied with the views of others. Were I a teacher of youth in divinity, I would first learn their capacity and mind. If these were good, I would make them study the Bible for themselves, and send them out free to do the world good. But if they had no mind, I would stamp them with another's mind, write bigot on their forehead, and send them out as *slaves!*

Revelation is a sealed book, but it is also an opened book. It records marvelous events that are to take place in the last days of this earth's history. The teachings of this book are definite, not mystical and unintelligible. In it the same line of prophecy is taken up as in Daniel. ***Some prophecies God has repeated, thus showing that importance must be given to them. The Lord***

does not repeat things that are of no great consequence.--Manuscript 107, 1897, pp. 1,2.

It was my idea to have the two books bound together, Revelation following Daniel, as giving fuller light on the subjects dealt with in Daniel. ***The object is to bring these books together, showing that they both relate to the same subjects.*** TM 117.2

My brethren, ***let the word of God stand just as it is.*** Let not human wisdom presume to lessen the force of one statement of the Scriptures. The solemn denunciation in the Revelation should warn us against taking such ground. In the name of my Master I bid you: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." {5T 711.2}

Our lesson for the present time is, How may we most clearly comprehend and present the gospel that Christ came in person to present to John on the isle of Patmos--the gospel that is termed "the Revelation of Jesus Christ"? We are to present to our people a clear explanation of Revelation. ***We are to give them the Word of God just as it is, with as few of our own explanations as possible.*** No one mind can do this work alone. Although we have in trust the grandest and most important truth ever presented to the world, we are only babes, as far as understanding truth in all its bearings is concerned. Christ is the great Teacher, and that which He revealed to John, we are to tax our minds to understand and clearly to define. We are facing the most important issues that men have ever been called upon to meet. The theme of greatest importance is the third angel's message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels. All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life, for this is essential to salvation. We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these grand truths; and our power to learn and comprehend will be taxed to the utmost. {12MR 212.3} {CW 29.3}

But these volumes were not to be the last. There was much yet to be accomplished. "I must prepare books," she wrote in May, 1903, "and thus give to others the light that the Lord gives me. I do not want to leave an unfinished work." And during the same month she wrote further: "I am trying to prepare for publication matter that will guard the work on every side, so that it may not become disproportionate. We have many things in preparation for publication. . . . ***The truth must appear just as it is.***" {LS 433.4}

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought" - that is, anxious thought, unbelieving thought - "for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" Can you answer that question? We want and God wants us to recognize that every gift that we receive, to be a help and strength to us, it cometh from God. And we should be grateful and we are to carry the gratitude in our individual hearts. And if we carry that gratitude into our individual hearts, let me tell you there will be a different atmosphere surrounding our souls from what we now have. Try to live closely - ***take the truth of God just as it is given in his word.*** {PC 177.4}

The union of the divine and the human, manifest in Christ, exists also in the Bible. ***The truths revealed are all "given by inspiration of God;"*** yet they are expressed in the words of men and are adapted to human needs. Thus it may be said of the Book of God, as it was of Christ, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." And this fact, so far from being an argument against the Bible, should strengthen faith in it as the word of God. Those who pronounce upon the inspiration of the Scriptures, accepting ***some portions as divine while they reject other parts as human,*** overlook the fact that Christ, the divine, partook of our human nature, that He might reach humanity. In the work of God for man's redemption, divinity and humanity are combined. {5T 747.1}