

DIVINE ELEMENT IN SCRIPTURE—REVELATION.

IN Holy Scripture we have a Book that has solved more of the problems of life, that has awakened more lofty sentiments, that has aroused more genuine religious enthusiasm, that has prompted to more heroic deeds, that has inspired more useful lives, and that has helped to make men more gentle and manly, more truthful and honest, both as citizens and as Christians, than any other book ever written. In fact, it has exercised such a stupendous influence on the civilized world that we may rightly infer that there must be some strange power lodged within its pages; and the question naturally suggests itself, What is the secret of this power? How is this singular, this widespread, this permanent influence of the Book to be accounted for? What is it that gives to Holy Writ so firm a hold on the best and the noblest of our race? It is because Scripture is a *Divine* Book.

In all ages of the Christian Church the Bible has been, in some way, considered Divine and has been called "The Divine Word," "The Divine Book," "The Divine Oracles," "Divine Writ," "The Divine Library of Holy Scripture." But in what sense or, rather, in how many senses is Scripture Divine? And wherein consists its Divinity? To avoid confusion in the use of the term it may be well to make a clear distinction between two senses of the word when applied to the good Book, for Scripture is Divine in two ways: (1) By reason of its *Contents*, and (2) By reason of its *Author*.

Holy Scripture is Divine on account of its contents, on account of the topics handled in it, on account of the subject matter treated in it, on account of the truths taught in it—all of which are Divine, in so far as they treat of God and "the deep things of God." Understood in this sense, as indicating the character of the contents, Divinity is not peculiar to Scripture alone, but is common to many other books, such as the "Divina Commedia" of Dante, as well as the works of many theological writers.

In the same sense many traditions of the Church are called "Divine," to distinguish them from such as are merely ecclesiastical, Apostolic or even human in character. In the same sense, that is, for teaching so many of "the deep things of God," St. John has been called the "Divine," "O Theologos." In the same sense a student of theology is often called a student of Divinity. Therefore, if the topics discussed in a book refer directly to God, the book, whether it is inspired or not, may be properly called, and is, Divine.

Again, Holy Scripture is called Divine on account of its origin,

on account of the Divine Source from whence it proceeded, on account of the Divine Cause by which it was produced, on account of the Divine Author by whom it was composed. In this, case, whatever may be the character of the contents of the book, whether Divine or not, the *book* is Divine, because it was composed by a Divine Person and "has God for its Author." The book, considered merely as a written document, that is *qua scriptus*, is the result of a supernatural operation of God exercised on the human writer, both urging him to write and assisting him while in the act of writing, in such a way that God becomes the primary Author of the book so written and man the secondary author. In this case the book is Divine, because the act of composing it is a Divine act and was performed by God, through the instrumentality of man.

Thus the Divinity of Scripture includes two ideas, (1) Divine Topics, Contents or Truths, and (2) Divine Authorship or Composition. In other and fewer words, there are in Scripture two distinct Divine elements, the one called *Revelation* and the other *Inspiration*.

There seems not to be any other way to make clear to the reader the distinction between these two words Revelation and Inspiration than to define each absolutely, and then to consider them relatively to each other, comparing or contrasting the one with the other, to see wherein they agree and wherein they differ. But to do this will take both time and space. Therefore, reserving the question of Inspiration for future consideration, we shall, in the present article, speak only of

I. REVELATION.

The word Revelation is somewhat ambiguous and needs defining. It is one of the many figurative words borrowed from the Latin for the purpose of enriching our language. It is used in a great variety of senses. Literally and in its broadest signification, it denotes the removal of a veil, in order that what lies behind it may be seen. It is the putting aside of a veil, in order that what was before concealed may be discovered. It is the act of disclosing to view something previously hidden. The word is sometimes extended to the disclosure of a material object or of some concrete thing, event, institution or person; and it is sometimes limited to utterances that embody a truth, whether theoretical or practical. It is taken in an *Active* sense when it denotes the act itself of manifesting truth; it is taken in a *Passive* sense when it denotes the result of such act, the truth or collection of truths so revealed, the knowledge thus obtained.

Revelation may be either *Human* or *Divine*. Revelation is human when it is man who reveals. In this sense the present article may be a revelation to such of its readers as may not be familiar with

the subject matter. But of human revelation nothing more need be said. Revelation is Divine when it is God who reveals. Divine Revelation, taken in its broadest sense, includes every manifestation of God to man, no matter whether made through conscience or through the constitution of the human mind, as is sometimes assumed, or through the harmony prevailing in the universe, or through the process of the divine government of the world, or through the framework of physical nature. It embraces the entire compass of Divine disclosure, whether in word or in work, whether in the direct contact of the spirit of God on the spirit of man, whether of truth in general or of some special concrete fact, or disposition of the Divine Will in an individual case.

Every Divine Revelation implies a Subject, an Object and a Recipient, that is, a subject or agent revealing, an object, person, thing or truth revealed, and a person to whom the revelation is made. Now the *Subject* or Revealer is God; for, in the last analysis, God must be the only ultimate source of knowledge about Himself, His existence, His attributes and His relations to His creatures. The *Object* or Person revealed is also God. The Revealer reveals Himself before all else, and thus the Subject and the Object blend into one. In Scripture every providential act of God manifests either His Power, or His Wisdom, or His Justice, or His Mercy, or His Truthfulness, or His Grace, or His Holiness; or shows Him to be a God to be feared, to be obeyed, to be trusted, to be loved. The one object, then, that underlies all Divine revelation is not so much a speculative truth as it is God Himself, the concrete being of the One, Holy, Living God, in His infinite nature and divine attributes.

The *Recipient* of the Revelation is man. Every revelation necessarily presupposes reason, a faculty capable of apprehending, if not of comprehending, the terms in which the revelation is expressed. It is evidently in the nature of things that no revelation can be made to a stone or a stump, to a dumb beast or even to an idiot. Intelligence of some kind is essential to revelation of any kind, and a higher order of intelligence is a prerequisite to a higher order of revelation. It would be a meagre knowledge of "the deep things of God" that could be imparted to and appropriated by a Choctaw Indian on his Western reservation or a savage in his native forest. The requisite faculty for receiving a revelation may indeed be there, but it is found in him only remotely and radically, and needs to be developed by methods of education adapted to the nature and laws of mind.

Divine Revelation may be either *Natural* or *Supernatural*. Divine Revelation is Natural when God reveals Himself, His existence or His attributes through the light of human reason acting on the

works of God—on the world. All nature is an open book, from the study of which man, by the proper exercise of his intellectual faculties, can rise from the knowledge of the creature to the knowledge of the Creator, or from the existence of the effect can infer the existence of the first great cause, which is God. The Creation of the world is itself an instance of God's coming forth from the silent depths and vast solitudes of His mysterious Being. We must, of course, confess that not all men have as complete a knowledge of God as is mirrored forth in nature. But that is their own fault; for such knowledge has been placed within their reach. They have not put the right interpretation upon the facts of revelation. All men see the same sun, but not all see it alike. An astronomer sees more in it than does a savage. God's self-manifestation is made to a sinful race and through a distorted medium; for man's reason is darkened and his will is warped. Hence few men see the full revelation of God in nature. St. Paul insists in his Epistle to the Romans that the Gentiles were inexcusable for not having known God as they should have known Him.

Divine Revelation is Supernatural when God reveals Himself, His existence or his attributes, not by a process of reasoning, but by means belonging to the supernatural order.

The first difference, therefore, between Divine Natural and Divine Supernatural Revelation depends on the difference in the character of the *means* employed in making the communication. The means through which Natural Revelation reaches us belong to the system of nature's forces as manifested in the ordinary operations of the material world or even of the mental world. On the other hand, the means through which Supernatural Revelation reaches us are miracles or such other exceptional means as may not, strictly speaking, constitute miracles, but which nevertheless go beyond the limits of ordinary Providence. Briefly, in the one case, the channel of revelation is nature; in the other it is grace. As is evident, the distinction between these two kinds of revelation will depend on what is meant by nature and what by grace. By nature we here mean not only the external, material, physical, sensible universe which is governed by fixed laws, but also the facts belonging to the mental and moral constitution of man, to the course of human history and to the proper government of human society. Understood in this broad sense, nature is the world of matter and the world of men; grace is all else.

The second difference between Natural and Supernatural Revelation depends on their *Extent* or *Compass*, that is, on the number, clearness and general character of the truths taught by each Revelation. They differ as the part differs from the whole, as the obscure

from clear, as the foundation from the entire structure. Hence they are not inconsistent. They are not opposed. They cannot be contrasted, as is sometimes asserted. Belief in the existence of God, which is a fundamental truth of natural religion, is also a fundamental truth in supernatural religion, and must be presupposed before we can accept any revelation as coming from God. Thus natural revelation lies at the basis of all religion, and supernatural revelation gladly welcomes and appropriates to itself all the light that comes from reason and all the truth that can be learned about God from any data furnished by nature. However, supernatural revelation teaches truth with greater clearness and certainty, and inculcates duties with greater emphasis. By its very nature, therefore, supernatural revelation was intended, not to destroy or even contradict, but to complete and supplement natural revelation. Also as the one is through grace and the other is through nature, and as both grace and nature are from the same God, it must be clear that all appearances of antagonism between them should entirely vanish.

The third difference between natural revelation and supernatural revelation depends on the different *Purpose* for which each is given. If man were destined for a natural end and lived in what theologians call the "State of Pure Nature," that is, without original sin and without either supernatural grace or the preternatural gifts that accompany such grace, natural revelation might suffice; for then man, through natural revelation, would receive from God, the Author of nature, all the knowledge needed for such an end.

But, in the present order of things, natural revelation is inadequate. Man is now destined to a supernatural end and needs supernatural knowledge to know how to reach that end. But supernatural knowledge can be obtained only by supernatural revelation. As is evident, natural revelation can throw no light on many questions of the utmost importance to men who have been elevated to a supernatural state, and who have forfeited all right to it by sin. Natural revelation cannot teach us such truths as the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, Grace, Sacrifices, Sacraments, continued personal existence after death, the proper form of Divine worship, or any of those Divine decrees that depend, not on the essence of God which is unchangeable, but on the will of God which, precisely because it is free, can be this, that or the other way. It cannot tell us so much as one word about God's readiness to pardon repented sin nor about the conditions for obtaining pardon. It cannot supply the knowledge that we need about God's moral attributes, such as His mercy, His Fatherly love, or His tender compassion for His erring children; but only about His metaphysical attributes, such

as His Unity, His Immensity, His Infinity, His Eternity. It does not show us the patient, merciful and helpful side of the Divine nature, neither does it give us so much as one glimpse into the grand scheme of grace by which, from all eternity, God had determined to save the human race by the death of Jesus Christ.

We have seen that such truths as the Trinity and the Incarnation can be known only by supernatural revelation, while certain others, such as the Existence and Unity of God, can be known by the natural light of reason. Now, the first and immediate purpose of supernatural revelation is to make the first class of truths known, simply known, and to make the second class better known, known more clearly and with greater certainty, and to give them the necessary Divine confirmation and authority.

The more remote purpose of supernatural revelation is the self-manifestation of God as the God of mercy, grace and love, and as the Redeemer of a fallen race from sin and its consequences. In another order of things, it is true, this purpose might have been different. For if man had never sinned redemption from sin could not have been one of the purposes of revelation. But even in the hypothesis that man had never sinned, the Incarnation, which is the greatest and most perfect manifestation of God, could and, according to the Scotists, would have taken place for even nobler ends than the redemption of the race. However that may be, certain it is that sin has increased man's ignorance and misery and made supernatural revelation more imperatively necessary than ever. What is specially needed, in our present fallen state, is the revelation that God is a God of infinite love, mercy and compassion, that He is a loving Father ever ready to pardon His repentant children, and that He is the Restorer of the entire human family to the state of original innocence and sanctity from which they had fallen by their "unutterably great sin."

That "God's mercies are above all His works," natural revelation may convey some vague hint, but can give no certain knowledge. It might, at most, suggest that God is possessed of a certain degree of mild benevolence; but it is only supernatural revelation that could ever have uttered the astonishing words, "God so loved the world as to give His Only-Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life." Also that God is our Creator and Master, and that we are His servants, natural revelation may, indeed, make clear enough; but it is only supernatural revelation that could teach us that there exists a closer and dearer relationship between us and God, the relationship of children to a father. "You have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of children, whereby

we cry, Abba, Father. And if children, heirs also, heirs indeed of God and coheirs of Christ." (Romans, viii., 15.)

II. NATURAL REVELATION.

We know *that* God is and we know *what* He is, because He reveals Himself, His existence and His attributes through nature. St. Paul says that He was thus known to the Gentiles, and there is still stronger reason to believe that He was thus known to the early Hebrews and that some of this knowledge made its way into the Holy Scriptures.

We know that the visible world of matter and the invisible world of mind exist; because they reveal themselves by their activity. We learn from the science of Physics that nothing in nature is purely passive, but that all is also active. A stump or a stone, or any mass of apparently inanimate matter or inorganic substance is instinct with activity, and the molecules composing it, being forever in motion, thus make their presence known. As to the invisible spirits of our fellow-men, we know that they also exist, because through words and deeds and in other mysterious ways, which science fails adequately to explain, they make their presence felt to those around them, and so unmistakably felt that there can be no more doubt about the existence of the human soul than about the existence of the human body.

In a similar way God's existence is known. He exists; that we know, because He reveals Himself. In reality, it is not so much we who discover God as it is God who discovers Himself to us. St. Paul says: "That which is known of God is manifest to them (the Gentiles); for God manifested it to them." (Romans i., 19.) To the pagans, of whom St. Paul speaks, God manifested Himself, we may suppose, chiefly in the order and harmony that are everywhere evident in the world, and in the logical necessity for a First Cause of the world and of its continued existence. In each of these ways, and perhaps in other ways, the idea of God springs up in the mind under the suggestive power of the universe, requiring that some one should have created the world and continue to rule it. The idea is aroused by the play of thought in the action and reaction of reason on the external works of nature and of these on reason. There is something in the world of matter and in the world of men, something in the existence, in the forces, in the structure and in the movements of the grand universe in which we are placed that tends to originate and develop the notion of a Supreme Being in minds whose faculties are matured and in a normal condition. The Psalmist says: "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth forth work of His hands." (Psalm xix., 1.) And the

Apostle no less categorically affirms: "For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being perceived from the things that are made, also His eternal Power and Divinity, so that they are inexcusable." (Romans i., 20.)

The same arguments that prove *that* God is, prove also *what* He is. For the knowledge of His existence and the knowledge of His nature easily blend into one and become inseparable. Thus a due consideration of the world around us compels us to admit not only that God is, but also that He is Truth, Justice and Holiness; that He is self-existent, independent and superior to all limitations of time and place; that He is eternal in duration, ubiquitous in space, and unlimited in knowledge; that He is infinite in power, the source of all perfection, the ground of all truth, the Cause of all things, the Sustainer of all things, the Ruler of all things and the Judge of all men.

Now, all these Divine attributes, which could possibly have been derived from natural revelation, are abundantly found in nearly every book of Holy Writ. Just how far, as a matter of fact, such notions about God were originally developed by the natural light of reason, and how far they were supernaturally revealed before being committed to writing in Sacred Scripture, is now neither possible nor necessary to determine. All that is now contended is that Scripture contains many religious truths which, considering their very nature, could have been revealed through reason, and whose presence in Scripture can be amply justified by an appeal to reason. The following are a few among innumerable instances of *Speculative* truths about God:

"Thou, O Lord, in the beginning, didst lay the foundations of the earth,
And the heavens are the work of Thy hands.
They shall perish, but Thou shalt continue;
And they shall all grow old as a garment,
And as a vesture Thou shalt change them,
And they shall be changed.
But Thou art the self-same,
And Thy years shall not fail."

Psalm ci., 26; Hebrews i., 10-12.

"Whither shall I fly from Thy spirit?
Whither shall I go from Thy presence?
If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there;
If I descend into hell, Thou art there.
If I take unto me the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall Thy hand lead me;
And Thy right hand hold me
Darkness shall not be dark to Thee,
And night be as light as the day."

Psalm cxxxviii., 7-12.

As to the *Practical* side of natural revelation, it is found in all classes of books. In the Pentateuch the most important ethical document is the Decalogue or Ten Commandments, which rise before us in majesty as the guide of morality to the Jewish Synagogue

and the Christian Church, and which though subsequently revealed in a supernatural manner to Moses, is in great part based on the ethical law of nature and cannot be abrogated, and is as binding now as it was when God thundered it forth from the summit of Mount Sinai. However, Biblical ethics abound especially in the "Wisdom Literature" of the Old Testament, which was intended to have a direct practical bearing on conduct. It starts, of course, with the assumption of God's existence, and seeks by reason and reflection to understand God's way of dealing with the world, and to determine man's duties towards God better than they are explained in the Law or the Prophets. These Sapiential Books consist largely of shrewd observations on the ways of the world; of maxims, the product of the sage's own experience; of proverbs, the result of meditation and reflection on the ever varying phases of human life; and of practical advice, bearing on topics of domestic, social and civil affairs, on public policy and on the best means of getting on in the world. It has been said that this "wisdom" seems at times to proceed on the assumption that such virtue as is here recommended is of the utilitarian kind and is to be cultivated as a means to temporal happiness and worldly prosperity. "Honor the Lord with thy substance and thy barns shall be filled with abundance and thy wine presses shall run over with wine." (Prov. iii., 9.) But there is no question here of Christian ethics.

Some of the directions for regulating life and conduct, found in the Moral Books of the Old Testament, would seem to need even less supernatural revelation to make them known than the preceding.

"Hear thou, my son, and be wise,
And guide thy mind in the way.
Be not at the feast of the wine-bibbers;
Among gluttonous eaters of flesh;
For the drunkard and the glutton shall be consumed;
And sleepiness shall clothe a man with rags."

Prov. xxiii., 19-21.

"Go to the ant, O Sluggard;
Consider her ways and be wise;
Who, having neither guide, nor master, nor captain,
Provideth her food in the summer,
And gathereth her meat in the harvest.
How long wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard?
When wilt thou rise out of thy sleep?
Thou wilt sleep a little,
Thou wilt slumber a little,
Thou wilt fold thy hands a little to sleep;
And want shall come upon thee as a robber,
And poverty as an armed man."

Prov. vi., 6-12.

"Correct thy son and he will give thee rest;
The rod and reproof give wisdom;
But the child that is left to his own will,
Bringeth his mother to shame."

Prov. xxix., 15.

III. SUPERNATURAL REVELATION.

While a very superficial glance at certain books of Holy Writ will enable us to infer that much of their contents could have been originally derived from natural reason, by what is called universal revelation, we should not forget that there are everywhere in Scripture indications which point as clearly to the fact that very considerable portions of some of the books are of such a nature that they could not have been known except by supernatural revelation from heaven. That we may recognize and appreciate properly this important element in the Bible, we shall consider the (1) *Form* in which it is given and examine some of its (2) *Contents*.

As we have seen, Natural Revelation is *Universal*, because it is common to all men, in so far as they are endowed with reason. Not so Supernatural Revelation. It is *Special*, because it was at first given to but a few chosen ones, such as Moses, or Isaiah, in order that they should communicate it to others and mediately to all. And this is the method that God usually employs, "to use the few to bless the many." We are told that, in the past, while communicating His mind to men, God used a marvellous variety of means, "In sundry manners and in divers ways." Accordingly we find that supernatural revelations have been made through *Nations*, through *Individuals*, through *Laws*, through *Miracles*, through *Doctrines*, through *Histories*, through *Types*, through *Prophecies*, through *Theophanies*, the last and the greatest of which is the *Incarnation*. Let us consider these various

(A) FORMS OF SUPERNATURAL REVELATION.

The one *Nation* that was chosen to be the channel of grace and the bearer of truth to all the other nations of the world was the Hebrew people. Both natural and supernatural methods were employed in their training. Secular and spiritual influences were exercised in their schooling, so as to bring them to the knowledge of God and His ways. The process of preparing them to be the bearers of light to the rest of the world was steadily and painfully carried on through thousands of years, and when at last "the fulness of time had come," it was among this extraordinary people that the brave men and noble women were found who were ready to receive the torch of truth that had been lighted among them and hand it on to others.

The *Individuals* chosen to be the channels of grace to the world were generally men of the same nationality, men of high moral character and exceptional religious acquirements, men whom God had specially prepared to be the instruments of His will. Sometimes, from a moral point of view, they had their faults; yet they were men whom God knew how to use as instruments of good for His gracious purpose.

But among them all One there was to whom grace was given without measure, "the Chosen One," "the Beloved One," "the Holy One of Israel," who was not so much the channel of revelation as He was its very source, Himself the most perfect revelation of God. But of Him, apart.

Sometimes a knowledge of God and His attributes was revealed through *Laws* promulgated in Scripture and imposed with a sanction, so as to make God known as a God of Justice and Righteousness, and as an object of obedience.

Sometimes a knowledge of God and His attributes was revealed through the *Miracles* related in Scripture; for miracles, which are extraordinary Divine facts happening in the realm of external nature, prove that God is so mighty that He can do as He pleases in His own creation and that He will do as He pleases, for higher providential reasons.

Sometimes a knowledge of God and His attributes was revealed in Scripture in the form of direct and explicit *Doctrinal Statement*. It is a great yet common mistake to suppose that there can be no supernatural revelation of Divine truths unless they are expressed in the dry-as-chaff technical language and in the abstract formulæ so much in vogue among the schoolmen. This style of language, of course, has its place and can be made to serve a good purpose; but it is seldom found in Scripture. Biblical Revelation is generally the statement of concrete facts. It is the unveiling of God, a personal, living Being. It is the disclosure of His transcendent moral excellences displayed in deeds. It is the gradual unfolding, in time and place, of the grand scheme of Redemption through Jesus Christ. Hence it is given largely in the form of History and Biography. Divine truth may, indeed, be communicated in abstract forms and expressed in general propositions; but these are usually deduced from the concrete facts related in Scripture. Therefore, once the reader has ceased to look for revealed truth in Scripture, expressed in the form usually employed in modern systematic theology, he will find that the sacred pages are full to repletion with such ideas.

Sometimes a knowledge of God and His attributes was revealed through the historical facts related in Scripture. Indeed, *History* is one of the principal vehicles through which a knowledge of the Divine truths has been transmitted to posterity. With the inspired writer the case was not always as it is with us. The facts which he has recorded may not have been revealed to him. He may have learned them from reliable sources of information, or he may have been an eye witness of many of them. If so, it is not that God has revealed the facts, but that the facts have revealed God. In our case, God has revealed the facts and the facts have revealed God.

To us, who did not know them otherwise, those facts have been supernaturally revealed by God through the pages of Holy Writ. Many of the historical facts of the Bible, having been brought about providentially by God Himself, are the means by which His wonderful dealings with His people have been made known to all who in any reliable way, natural or supernatural, have acquired a knowledge of those facts. By what He has done in all ages of the past to save His people, God has proved Himself to be a God of infinite love and mercy. Thus the tragical death of Christ on the Cross, with all its accompaniments, is a fact of history; but what an astonishing exhibition of the love of God for man!

The Old Testament History differs from all other histories, because it contains a preparatory dispensation leading up to a permanent covenant, that was to succeed in the distant future and to last to the end of time. St. Paul speaks of the Old Testament as the pedagogue that led the children of God, the Father of men, to Jesus Christ, the Teacher of men. "The Law was a pedagogue to Christ." (Gal. iii., 24.) Thus the New Testament grew out of the Old and realized all the sublimest ideals of that older dispensation.

The Old Testament History differs from all other histories in this also, that while they refer exclusively to the past, this contains a considerable element pointing unmistakably to the far-off future, either to the first or to the second Coming of the great Redeemer of the world and bearing on many events not to be realized till the close of the Book, till "the latter days."

Sometimes a knowledge of God and His attributes was revealed through the *Types* of the Old Testament. In this connection the word Type generally denotes a prophetic similitude, by means of which something that is to come to pass in the future is symbolized and foretold. It is essential that the resemblance between the type and the antitype should have been purposely intended by God, the Author of both. Now it is well known that much of the Old Testament God intended to be a type of the New, a foreshadowing of the good things to come. Many of the privileges that God conferred on the chosen people, much of the Legislation that He prescribed for their religious instruction and proper government, the peculiar relationship which they, as "a holy nation," bore towards God, together with many of the chief personages who held high office in Church or State in the Jewish Commonwealth, all foreshadowed something that was to be realized on a grander scale in the life and work or in the person and character of Jesus Christ, or in the Church which He was to establish.

Adam and Noah, Abraham and Melchisadeck, Sarah and Hagar, Isaac and Ishmael, Joseph and Joshua, David and Solomon, the

Ark of the Covenant and the Paschal Lamb, the Scape-Goat and the Brazen Serpent, the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day, and the Shekina or visible Divine Presence resting on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies in the Temple were all so many shadows of things to come in the distant future. In fact, St. Paul, in his Epistles to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, and to the Hebrews, explains the entire Aaronic Ritual, with all its ceremonies and sacrifices, as foreshadowing the realities of the future Church of Christ.

As almost any one of these types bears so many and so remarkable resemblances to their corresponding antitypes, that there can be no doubt that they were divinely intended, what shall we think when dozens of such types are found, consisting of persons, events, things or institutions and described with the greatest variety and complexity of detail, yet all foreshadowing their antitypes in the remote future? St. Paul says: "Now all these things happened to them in figure; and they were written for our correction, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (I. Cor. x., 11.) "Which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body (substance) is Christ's." (Coll. ii., 17.) "Which serve as a shadow of heavenly things." (Heb. viii., 5.) "Which things are said by an allegory." (Gal. iv., 24.)

Sometimes a knowledge of God and His attributes was revealed through the *Prophecies* of Scripture. Much of the future that is predicted in the Bible is foretold directly, and not through the intervention of type and figure. Those direct Prophecies were made at a time and under circumstances when there was no indication in the course of events that such predictions cannot be ascribed to the shrewd political forecast, to the happy conjecture, or to the mental acumen of the Prophet, but must have come supernaturally from God. Combined, these prophetic glimpses into futurity form a long series of prophecies which, when fulfilled, are converted into a record of ancient historical events of prime importance to the History of Religion. Since many of the predictions of the early Prophets of Israel referred to the fate that overtook most of the neighboring nations, their fulfillment ever impressed more and more on the Hebrew mind that their God was not a mere local or national Deity, but was the one Universal God, who regulates the destinies of nations as well as the fate of individuals.

Another series of direct prophecies refers to the gradual development of the Messianic Idea, to the future establishment of "the Kingdom of God," and to the Redemption of the whole human race through Him "who was to come." But of this later on.

Since many of these predictions referred to events that were to happen only in a remote future, and that were dependent on

many unforeseen contingencies, and on the free will of so many unknown men not yet born, and bore on matters that were beyond the reach of human sagacity, their fulfilment makes it clear that the Hebrew Prophet read the future in the light of "Him who knows the end from the beginning," and proves to every reflecting mind that this very considerable portion of the contents of Scripture is also Divine.

Sometimes a knowledge of God and of His attributes was revealed in the form of *Theophanies*. By Theophany is generally meant a sensible manifestation of God. Such manifestations have been made in a great variety of ways. Some have been made through an audible voice, as when God spoke to Adam, Abraham or the other Patriarchs; some through the "Angel of Jehovah;" some through the pillar of fire and of the cloud; some through the Shekina, or visible presence of God on the wings of the cherubim; some through visions and prophetic dreams; some through various other displays of the glory and majesty of God; but principally through the Incarnation, Birth, Baptism, Transfiguration, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ.

The frequency of such apparitions and the distance in time and place at which they happened teach that God is not the mere local or national God of the Hebrews, but the God of all the earth; and that while He is so transcendent as to be above and beyond the universe, yet He is so immanent as to be everywhere present in the world—in it, but not of it. The Theophanies teach that God is not so far from any of us, and that, if we but reach out our hand to Him and feel after Him, we shall find Him.

If God is ubiquitous, if He is everywhere present in nature, if He pervades the universe, this truth could not have been more impressively taught than by these Theophanies, which prove, even to sense, that He is not so far off but that He can also be near, and a present help in time of need to all that call upon Him. "Thus saith the High and Lofty One who inhabiteth Eternity; the Holy One is His Name; I dwell in the Heights and in the Holy Place, and with those who are lowly and humble in spirit." (Isaiah lvii., 15.)

(B) CONTENTS OF SUPERNATURAL REVELATION.

Whatever else it may be, Scripture is a religious Book. To appreciate this statement at its proper value, we should know what is meant by religion. St. Thomas teaches that religion is a bond of union between God and man. It is, of course, a moral bond, because it exists between two intelligent and free beings, who are united by means of intelligence and free will. Now, the relation which religion establishes between God and man is the relation of

supreme dominion over man on the part of God and of absolute subjection to God on the part of man. In religion, then, there is an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God and of the dependence of man and a voluntary expression of that relationship in acts of worship. The first part of this complex act, which consists in a knowledge of certain speculative truths to be believed about God and man, belongs to the intellect and is Theoretical; the second part, which consists of certain resultant duties to be performed towards God, concerns the will and is Practical. Now Scripture contains much Theoretical and much Practical knowledge, supernaturally revealed, about God, about man and about the God-man, Jesus Christ, and about their mutual relations.

As to the *Speculative* Teachings of Scripture, God's character is everywhere described in a manner worthy of the Supreme Being. His Unity, His Eternity, His Infinity, His Immensity, His Personality, His Self-Existence, His Perfection, His Wisdom, His Inscrutable Will, His Fatherly Compassion, His all-embracing Love, His unlimited Divine Presence, His Truthfulness, His Almighty Power, His Awful Sanctity, His Mysterious Divine Life, and all the moral excellences of His Being are, on nearly every page of Holy Writ, again and again insisted upon in a tone calculated to win Him the admiration, the reverence, the obedience and the love of every rational creature.

In fact, Scripture is full of God. While inspiring it, He must have breathed Himself into it. Accordingly the Book has thoughts above every human thought. It contains truths that penetrate the soul and arouse it as no other truths can arouse it. To the sorrowful, to the repentant, to the afflicted, to the abandoned, to all that long for light, and strength, and grace to do what is right and avoid what is evil, Scripture speaks of God and speaks of Him in such a manner as to inspire a love of truth, justice and holiness.

"Thus saith the High and Lofty One who inhabiteth Eternity;
The Holy One is His Name;
I dwell in the Heights and in the Holy Place,
And with the contrite and the humble of spirit,
To revive the spirit of the humble,
And to revive the heart of the contrite."

Isaiah lvii., 15.

"He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with infirmity;
He was wounded for our iniquities,
He was bruised for our sins,
And by his stripes we are healed;
And the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.
He was led like a lamb to the slaughter;
For the wickedness of my people have I struck him."

Isaiah liii., 6-8.

"How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts!
My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God.

For the sparrow hath found herself a home,
 And the turtle dove a nest,
 Where she may lay her young.
 Thy altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God.
 Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house.
 Blessed is the man whose help is in Thee.
 I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God
 Than dwell in the tabernacle of sinners.
 For God loveth mercy and truth;
 The Lord will give grace and glory.
 Upon the harp will I give thanks to Thee, O God, my God."
 Psalm lxxxiv., 1-12.

These are not isolated instances of the pure and lofty worship in which the soul is brought face to face with God in this wonderful collection of songs. In fact, the Psalter is full to overflowing with passages that breathe forth the deepest homage of the heart for God. Thus is this book a fitting symbol of the fearful struggle of the soul for all that is worth having, a struggle lasting a lifetime, a struggle full of pitfalls and lapses, full of conversions and tears of repentance, yet crowned with victory in the end.

"Have mercy on me, O Lord;
 For I am alone and poor.
 Keep Thou my soul and deliver me.
 Show Thy ways to me and teach me Thy paths;
 For Thou art my Saviour.
 Wash me thoroughly from my sins,
 And cleanse me from my iniquity.
 Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.
 Turn away Thy face from my sins,
 And blot out my iniquities.
 Cast me not away from Thy face,
 And take not Thy holy Spirit from me."

Psalm l., 6-8.

While a former shepherd boy sat on the throne of Israel, the recollections of his early youth, when he lovingly and tenderly followed and fed his flock on the hills around Bethlehem, furnished him with beautiful metaphors for the most touching psalms.

"The Lord is my Shepherd;
 I shall want nothing.
 He hath made me to lie down in green pastures;
 He hath led me beside the restful waters.
 He hath brought me in the paths of justice
 For His Name's sake.
 Though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death,
 I will fear no harm; for Thou art with me;
 And Thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life,
 And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Psalm xxii.

As to *man*, nothing can be more noble than the speculative teachings of Scripture about his physical and moral nature. Man is represented as having been created immediately by God Himself; his body from the dust of the earth and his soul from the breath of God. Man was created after all other creatures, so as to show that he is the "Lord of the fowl and the brute," and that while all are subject to him, he is subject to God alone. He is also endowed with reason and free will to show that he must serve his Creator intelli-

gently and freely. He is adorned with grace and destined to a supernatural end, which consists in seeing God face to face in the Beatific Vision in heaven.

“What is man that Thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man that Thou didst visit him?
Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor,
And placed him over the works of Thy hands.
Thou hast put all things under his feet;
All sheep and oxen and the beasts of the field;
The birds of the air and fishes of the sea,
That pass through the paths of the sea,
Thou hast made him little lower than the angels.”

Psalm viii., 5-9.

Finally, man having fallen from his high estate, a Redeemer is promised in the Old Testament and the completed work of Redemption is related in the New.

The *Practical* teachings of Scripture concerning man's duties to God, to himself, to his parents, to his neighbors and to society at large are so sublime, so profound, so perfect and so true to the majesty of God and so worthy of the exalted dignity of man that they must have been revealed by God Himself.

The Decalogue or Ten Commandments might be mentioned as a brief resume of our moral duties; for there, in a few words, our obligations, both negative and positive, are inculcated as is done in the code of no other ancient people. It is wonderfully well drafted. First come our duties towards God, then towards our parents, then towards our neighbors. As to the latter, the gradation should be noticed. A man's most precious blessing and the foundation of all the others is his life. His next greatest treasure in his wife. The next is his fortune. And finally his reputation. In the same order, murder, adultery, theft and calumny are forbidden. In what follows the gradation is no less remarkable and complete. For not only wicked deeds, but also wicked words are forbidden; and not only wicked words, but also wicked desires.

Elsewhere in Scripture our duties are described and insisted upon more in detail. We are told “to rise up before the gray head;” “to honor the person of the aged;” “to be honest in weight and measure;” and “to speak the truth every man to his neighbor.” In the Gospels a higher order of morality is inculcated. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like unto this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” (Matt. xxii., 38.) “Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; bless them that curse you; and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you; that you may be the children of your Father in heaven, who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust; and

do unto others as you would that others should do unto you." (Matt. v., 44-46.)

Their civil and religious code imposed on the Hebrews the obligation of protecting the weak, the helpless and the downtrodden of every description. Nor can it be shown that the Constitution of any other people of antiquity takes so carefully into account the welfare of this class of persons as does the legislation of the Hebrews. For this reason it would be difficult to find in the code of any other people, unless borrowed from this, a law more humane and at the same time more Divine than the following: "Thou shalt not molest a stranger, neither shalt thou afflict a widow, or a fatherless child. (Ex. xxii., 22.) "The gleanings of thy olive tree, of thy harvest and of thy vineyard, thou shalt not return to take them, but thou shalt leave them for the stranger, and for the fatherless child, and for the widow." (Deut. xxiv., 20-22.)

A knowledge of God and of man and of their mutual relations was still further revealed through the *God-man*, whose life is related in the Holy Gospels. Jesus Christ is the Central Figure in history. Appearing on the border-line, where the two Testaments meet, the one pointing forward to Him and the other looking backward to Him, He filled both Prophet and Apostle with all the truth that they could contain and with more than they could impart. The Old Testament Revelation shines, but it shines, like the moon, with a borrowed light, with a light borrowed from Him. It is ever looking forward. It is ever approaching nearer and nearer to its source, and becoming more and more illumined by the light shining from Him. The golden age of the Old Testament Revelation was not in the past, as was the case with all other ancient nations, but in the future. It was the age in which the long expected Messiah was to be the light of the world. In fact, the Messianic idea is the golden thread that runs through the entire fabric of the Old Testament, warp and woof, and gives to it whatever beauty or value it possesses. Of a truth, the Old Testament existed for Him, and without Him it would never have existed. Somewhat unlike His mother, the Jewish Synagogue, who bore Him and then expired, the Old Testament is still pregnant with Christ. "*Lex gravida Christo.*" If you take Him out of the Old Testament, what remains? If you take Him out, what is the remainder worth? Worth as much as the figure without the reality; or the shadow without the substance; or the shell without the kernel. "For to Him all the Prophets give testimony." (Acts x., 43.) And not only the Prophets, but all the Laws, all the Doctrines, all the Types, all the Miracles, all the Histories, all the Ritual Observances, all the Theophanies, all the Teachings, both Theoretical and Practical, of the Old Testament lead up to Him, prepare the way for His

Coming, and, like converging rays of light, point to Him, who is the "Promised One," and are all absorbed in the sunshine of His blessed countenance. "For Christ is the end of the Law." (Rom. x., 4.)

Beginning with the vague prediction that the Saviour of the race was to be "the seed of the woman," the Old Testament Prophecies grow ever more and more definite as time rolls on. It was foretold that He was to be of the family of Abraham, then of Isaac, then of Jacob, then of the tribe of Judah, then of the royal line of David and Solomon, then of a Virgin; that He was to be born in Bethlehem and after seventy weeks of years; that He would be both a glorious and a suffering Messiah; and that He was to be Priest, and Prophet, and King, and more than man. These and many other circumstances regarding the life and character of the future Redeemer are described in all the beauty of poetic numbers, with all the magnificence of Oriental imagery and with an ever increasing accuracy of detail to the end. In fact, so clear, so itemized, so circumstantial are some of the Messianic prophecies of Isaiah, written about B. C. 700, that, if the verbs were uniformly expressed in the past tense, as they often are, the author would appear to have written, not a Prophecy, but a history and might be considered a fifth Evangelist.

Indeed, so thoroughly did the faith of the Hebrews in a Messiah fashion their character and arouse their hopes that, while other ancient nations have looked back to a golden age in a remote past, the Israelites alone have ever looked forward to a golden age in the future, when the great Deliverer, upon whose head are many benedictions, would arise from among their own brethren and rule the destinies of nations. And what is still more strange, so deep was the impression made on the minds of neighboring nations by these prophecies of the Jews that there prevailed throughout the Orient the expectation that a King was to be born who was destined to rule the world.

At length the fulness of time is come. The Messianic age arrives. The long delay is ended. Salvation is nigh. He is here. The rude outline, roughly drafted by Moses in the early chapters of Genesis, was filled out by successive Prophets, as by so many artists, till the life-colors glowed on the canvas and, at the appointed time, He "who was to come," He who was "the Expected of the nations," "the Desired of the eternal hills," "the End of the Law," and the realization of all the Old Testament ideals, drew aside the veil of prophecy and stood before the world in the human garb of the divine Rabbi of Nazareth.

Henceforth Revelation shall no more be given through Seer or Prophet. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, in times past, spoke to the fathers through the prophets, last of all, in

these days, hath spoken to us through His Son, . . . by whom also He made the world." (Hebrews i., 1-2.) The Logos, the Eternal Word, the Second Person of the Trinity, having revealed God through the Prophets of old, now becomes man Himself, and through this man He becomes the perfect revelation, the completed revelation, the final revelation of God to man, the revelation of grace, and love, and mercy, and righteousness, and redemption, the revelation which can never be surpassed or even equaled, the revelation of "God manifested in the flesh."

But how is it that Jesus Christ is the most perfect revelation of God? How is it that His deeds, even when not accompanied by words or other verbal expressions, are a revelation at all? The answer to these questions should not be difficult to grasp once the fact and the nature of the Incarnation of the Son of God are properly understood.

Jesus Christ is the only Being in whom the two natures, human and Divine, are combined in such a way as to form but one individual, one person, a person who is at the same time both God and man, God from all eternity, made man in time. For, without ceasing to be God, as He was from everlasting, the Logos, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, took to Himself a perfect human nature, consisting of soul and body, and thus began to be man. He clothed Himself in our nature as in a garment, to show us how we also should wear the same garb. He folded Himself in our nature, as in an external form or medium, through which He might become visible, tangible and accessible to us. By becoming man, He never ceased to be a Person, and the human nature never began to be a Person, but was, from the first moment of its existence, united to the Person of the Eternal Word.

This union between the human and the Divine in Jesus Christ is a personal or hypostatical union, like the union between the soul and body of man, a union so close as to make but one person of the two natures, one individual, one principle of action, one responsible agent. This union is so intimate that the person of the divine Word is the only person that remains, and He so dominates and directs the human nature in Christ as to become the only agent responsible for all the actions of Jesus Christ. Therefore, all that was ever said or done or thought by the man Jesus Christ was said or done or thought by the second person of the Trinity, who is at the same time both God and man. From this it follows that all the acts of the head, or of the hand, or of the heart, all the thoughts, desires, emotions and affections of the human soul of Christ were perfectly conformable to the mind of God. They were God's acts and thoughts, and they revealed God to the world. And because God

dwelt in Christ and made use of His human nature to communicate His own mind to men, it follows that to see Christ, to hear Christ, to be taught by Christ was the same as to see God, to hear God and to be taught by God. Thus it is that, while men looked upon the human countenance of Christ, and conversed with Him, and heard His human language, and observed His human mode of life, they were in direct communication with God Himself and were receiving Divine revelations through all that He said or did.

One necessary result of the Incarnation is that the intellect of Christ knows nothing but what is true, and the will of Christ loves nothing but what is good. Hence all that He says or does or wills is a supernatural revelation of the mind of God. If, then, Christ loved the poor, or forgave sinners, or dined with publicans, or drove the buyers and sellers out of the Temple, or cast out devils, or cursed the barren fig tree, or fasted whole days, or passed the night in prayer, or was present at a marriage feast, or obeyed the laws of the land, or commanded to give to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar, or allowed Himself to be called the Son of David, or the Son of man, or the Son of God, or sacrificed His life for others, the mere fact that He did such things is proof conclusive that it was at least lawful for Him to do them under the circumstances, and that we may imitate His example. Thus such deeds, even when not accompanied by words, are a revelation of the mind of God in our regard. His every act was a revelation of God.

Jesus Christ is the Person revealing, and the Person revealed, and the revelation itself. For though He revealed Himself by His words, yet He revealed Himself still more luminously by His works, by His example and by His whole life. And it is especially by His voluntary death on the Cross to save sinners that He has revealed Himself as the God of infinite justice and of infinite love and mercy. He revealed Himself more by what He did and by what He was, than by what He said. He is the perfect revelation. For no matter how well revelation may have been made through the prophets of old, all that is as nothing when compared with that more luminous revelation that flashed from the eyes, and beamed from the face, and welled up from the heart, and flowed from the lips of Him who is "the Way, the Truth and the Life," and "the Light of every man that cometh into the world." Augustine says: "Facta Verbi verba sunt." And Gregory adds: "Dominus et Salvator noster, . . . aliquando nos sermonibus, aliquando vero operibus admonet. Ipsa Ejus Facta Præcepta sunt; quia dum aliquid tacitus facit, quid agere debeamus, innotescit." Yet what we know about His life, His work and His character we learn from the Holy Gospels.

This statement is confirmed by Leo XIII. in one of his official

utterances. In his latest and noblest Encyclical "On Jesus Christ Our Redeemer," he says: "We beg all Christians throughout the world to strive all they can to know their Redeemer as He really is. . . . There is nothing more salutary than His law; there is nothing more Divine than His teaching. . . . You should look upon it as the chief part of your duty to engrave upon the minds of your people the true knowledge and the very image of Jesus Christ; to explain His Love, His Mercies, and His Teachings by your writings, and by your words, in Schools and Universities, and from the Pulpit, and wherever an opportunity is offered. . . . This devotion we should hand on to the New Century as a pledge of better times to come." Elsewhere in the same document he says: "The greatest of all misfortunes is never to have known Jesus Christ."

But where is this knowledge of Jesus Christ to be found? This question Leo XIII. answers very forcibly in his Encyclical "On the Study of Holy Scripture," where we read, "Nowhere is there anything more fully or more clearly expressed in regard to the Saviour of the world than is to be found in the entire range of the Bible." St. Jerome says: "To be ignorant of the Scriptures is to be ignorant of Jesus Christ." In its pages the Image of Jesus Christ stands out living and breathing and diffusing everywhere around consolation in trouble, encouragement to virtue and attraction to the love of God.

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SANCTISSIMI DOMINI NOSTRI LEONIS, DIVINA PROVIDENTIA PAPAE XIII., EPISTOLA ENCYCLICA.

AD PATRIARCHAS, PRIMATES, ARCHIEPISCOPOS, EPISCOPOS,
ALIOSQUE LOCORVM ORDINARIOS

PACEM ET COMMVNIONEM CVM APOSTOLICA SEDE HABENTES.

Venerabiles Fratres, Salvtem et Apostolicam Benedictionem.

GRAVES de communi re oeconomica disceptationes, quae non una in gente iam dudum animorum labefactant concordiam, crebrescunt in dies calentque adeo, ut consilia ipsa hominum prudentiorum suspensa merito habeant et sollicita. Eas opinionum fallaciae, in genere philosophandi agendique late diffusae, invexere