

The higher critic is, as a man, of this world, who only knows about the grains of dust, but when our eyes have been opened to the foramenifera of Truth, and when the Holy Spirit focuses the light upon the Truth we can no more doubt inspiration than we can doubt the beauty of those exquisite forms. Perhaps you, like myself, have looked through a microscope upon the tiny grains of dust, and you have been almost enraptured by the wondrous forms wrought by little insects, and you and I are only able to crush myriads of those insects in a moment. You and I are too clumsy to make those beautiful forms, the only thing WE can do is to crush them. WE with all our power and intelligence are only clever enough to be clumsy, but the God of all power could of old use those tiny insects to work those exquisite forms to enrapture a man who is more than a million times larger than they are. I think there is nothing more attractive in nature to a child of God than to look occasionally through a microscope. I know nothing more affecting as one realises God's mighty works, but if we have been brought to look into the Scriptures, we do not doubt inspiration. If our eyes are open to see the beauty of God's tiny things, we shall realise that we are face to face with a book of which there is only one possible explanation, - "God spake all these words," and when you have learned inspiration in the school of experience, when the power of the Spirit of God has laid hold of a man to teach him inspiration he can no more doubt the work of God there, than he can doubt the work of God in his own soul; and the two works are very similar. Go back to the middle ages when there was an attack upon inspiration, there was a parallel attack upon God's sovereign grace in redemption with the same source. Jesuitism is chargeable with both, and the two parts of Truth stand together. If I believe ^{inspiration} sovereign grace, ^{if I believe sovereign grace} I believe inspiration, and why? Inspiration declares that God took men and was pleased to give His Word perfectly, not partly their thoughts and partly His Word. Whatever He used of them, He did not hinder the fact that it was all His own Word, and sovereign grace says that God took hold of poor fallen sinners and saved them perfectly. If I believe that God evolved into salvation, I might believe that He evolved a Scripture,

but if a believer is a new creation so is the Scripture a creation of God. The two things stand together. In other words a belief in verbal inspiration is only part of the belief in sovereign grace that saves a soul. It is the belief that God is not attempting to evolve or patch up but He brings in His own perfect work. Hence you and I, by the mercy of God are willing to believe full verbal inspiration because God has made us willing. When our beloved Lord said the Scriptures CANNOT be broken, our hearts say again:- we echo every word He uttered. We have experienced the truth of the words - Holy men of God spake as they were borne along by the Holy Spirit. We accept this declaration of Scripture. We believe in verbal inspiration. We have NO hesitation in believing verbal inspiration. But oh, beloved friends let us see to it by grace that our belief is a thankful belief, and an obedient belief. If we want to emphasize a head belief in inspiration, without a heart belief that follows out the Lord's commands, our very head belief is dragging us down, it may be to eternal judgment, for an unsaved soul with a head belief of the truth is far further from God than those who do not know. Let us realise that many today who own the precious name of the Lord Jesus are not clear upon this subject of inspiration. They think they are but they are not. There are hundreds of dear children of God apparently, if you bring before them 1 Cor. 14, for instance, and some of the statements there as to "silence" they are inclined to say, "It is only what Paul said." They have not realised the power of inspiration.

What about ourselves? You and I ^{are} brought face to face with the fact we have made a mistake - we have grieved God on something; if we do not repent, if we only change our opinions without repentance, have we a REAL belief in inspiration? I think your hearts will at once echo the thought under the leading of the Holy Spirit in your own experience "No". If we FEEL inspiration, we shall repent if we have made a mistake. A belief in inspiration from God is one of the most powerful factors in a repentant believer. Inspiration is stated in Scripture in a definite way. I have referred to one phrase, and you will recollect such passages as: "The words of the Lord are tried words, purified" and again and again we have the declaration, "Thus saith the Lord,"

"Thus saith the Lord." Again, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" etc. Moreover, it is again and again IMPLIED that the Scriptures are inspired, and implication is often stronger than statement. When we read of the Truth as a "lamp unto our feet, and light unto our path," we are not surprised that the Scripture is spoken of as a lamp, implying very definitely it is God's own Word, written down and recorded to be applied by the Holy Spirit to our hearts. All the varied figures that are used in the Scripture imply His inspiration. "As the Holy Ghost saith" is a beautiful formula that introduces a quotation. "It hath been written." "It is written" loses somewhat ^{thing} of the force in our English. I suppose the German, "It stands written" is more suitable to the original. The Words of God have a living force and power. We find arguments built on single words without the slightest misgiving. Everything in Scripture implies and acknowledgment of full inspiration. Personally, I was much impressed in the book of Hebrews, to notice there a stress on the inspiration of a single word, e.g. the word "Son"; the inspiration of the ORDER of the words where you have "Sacrifice and offering" as distinct from "Offering and sacrifice"; on the inspiration of a recorded type; the Holy Ghost being viewed as a Witness; "the Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way into the Holiest was not open;" the inspiration of omission, "This Melchisedec king of Salem ... being BY INTERPRETATION, without father" etc. Here we seem to find every possible form of inspiration emphasized, and we have only one alternative, we either accept full inspiration, or set aside the Holy Scriptures. There is no in between position, though men may TALK of another inspiration - If it be not verbal inspiration there is no dependence: it is not inspiration at all. If it be not verbal, there is no authority, for I may be emphasizing the part that is not inspired, IF the Divine appointment is not verbal, or I may be laying a stress on part of a verse which is not Divine. How shall I know which words ^{do} ~~does~~ not reproduce God's thought aright? If there be not verbal inspiration, some of us would feel we have no authority in our preaching, no authority to know what to do in our lives. We should be ships without charts. This is of deep importance. The man who persuades MEN he believes in inspiration, but denies its verbal character, is

falling into the terrible danger, which is so popular today, "I believe what suits me; I reject what does not suit me". Self becomes the final determining power. Inspiration verbally is as remarkable as well as a precious fact. It takes away all the glory from man, even as sovereign grace takes away all the glory and it gives all the glory to God. The practical power of a belief in verbal inspiration is deeply important. Non-verbal inspiration ^{would} ~~would~~ be a contradiction in terms, leading a man to deceit, as well as uncertainty and damaging every moral factor in his life. It is not merely a question of loss; any other theory becomes positively demoralising. The glory of inspiration is that it is humblingly precious, that it not only shows us salvation but it puts us in a position that keeps us lowly. We do need to realise this in experience. The Holy Spirit not only provides for our needs precisely in a perfect book, but He provides that which puts us in a place where we can receive His instruction when He strikes down our pride and thus opens our eyes. But it may be helpful to some dear children of God who sometimes feel confused when they are preaching just to know what is involved in verbal inspiration and what is not. We do not assert the verbal inspiration of any translation. That is deeply important. We value translations, but verbal inspiration belongs to the original. May I offer one further suggestion which is more humbling? We do not assert the verbal inspiration of any interpretation that a believer may make. Sometimes even when God has humbled us we are apt to think that our interpretation is on the level of the inspired Scripture. If so, we are showing that we are not sufficiently humbled. As a translation loses the power of the original so does ~~our~~ our interpretation. And though there may be some things as to which our hearts can say "God, I am sure, has taught me this in the power of the Holy Spirit", we have to own all our interpretations lack the fulness of verbal inspiration in the way we express them. Furthermore, every word

in Scripture is inspired, as originally given, but every word is not a revelation. It is important to be clear upon this point, because some will say to us "Do you declare all the statements are a revelation?" and then they will refer, perhaps to some historical statement, or to some extract from a genealogy, or to some statement in the book of Proverbs "It is not good to eat much honey" for example, or some statement of that character. We do not declare these are revelations but we do declare that they are given by full inspiration. In other words, if an extract is taken from a genealogy - (it may be a heathen genealogy or a heathen record) - it is taken by inspiration; that is to say God begins at the word He meant to include and leaves us at the word wherewith He meant to close. He included what He meant to put there - nothing more and nothing less. It is fully inspired. If God tells me the simplest statement, that the ants are a people not strong, I do not reply "I knew that beforehand". I may have known it beforehand, but I did not know beforehand how God meant to tell me that for a special purpose, and therefore it is His inspiration to pick it out and tell me that, when there are a million other things He could have told me which I did not know. He picked out just what He wanted to tell me. Furthermore, some dear children of God have been confused by some saying "You tell me the Bible is all through the Words of God". We acknowledge in the Bible we find the words of the devil, and others, but they are recorded by inspiration. So, when we read of the words of a Felix, are those words inspired? Felix says, "When I have a more convenient season, I will send for thee". Tertullus the orator speaks of the Roman governor, and says what a beautiful experience they had under his rule. Were these words inspired? They were lies. What then? The record of the lies is included by inspiration, to make us ashamed of a man of the world, and to lead us to see that if we stand before governors we must not

flatter them, but have the plain speaking, yet respect, of God's servant Paul. The grace of God leads His people to be gracious and gentle and thankful. The grace of God does not enable us to do without food and sleep and earthly made ^{clothes} clothes. God is pleased to deal with His people as living in the world. If God leads us to have food or clothing it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer and yet if inspiration (as some think) must leave out Paul's ~~clock~~ and leave out other details, then we are "unsanctifying" the common things of daily life. It is a serious thing to say the apostle was uninspired in 2 Tim. 4.13. While his Lord spent 30 years in the background and only 3 in the foreground, surely a believer can say there is sanctification in the background, in the ~~clock~~ and thanks be unto God inspiration is on the line of bringing God into the little things. Furthermore someone may ask, where was the need for inspiration in historical passages? Men knew what happened and could just record what happened. I venture to say there is nothing harder to write than history without a bias. Take too the Gospel narratives - they record some days at length and other days are quite left out. Inspiration selected. For God meant to tell us some things and meant not to tell us other things. There are those who will say "Where is inspiration?" Paul has some favourite words and John some favourite words and Peter some favourite words". Well beloved friends how does that touch verbal inspiration? Do you think that if God saves a soul and puts a new life into him - a new creation - that man loses his personal physical appearance, that when you see him the next day, you will not know him? You say a "No". There are those who will tell us there are difficulties in the way of inspiration. They will remind us of seeming contradictions but I suppose the answer of most of God's people will be, if you search the seeming contradictions more you will find each contains a hidden blessing and a hidden lesson. We have not found one contradiction that leaves out the word "seeming" Moreover, men will remark, "What about the quotations?" and dare to add "They are not quoted accurately". What shall we answer concerning

this? The whole objection is based on error. Can you quote German in English? I cannot. When the Holy Spirit gives quotations in Greek He translates, and bold, and worse than bold is the man who would dare to say He has translated wrongly. There is utter ignoring of the fact that we have a translation which brings out that part of the fulness of truth that God wishes to bring out in the verse before us. Some have, perhaps, felt a difficulty as to inspiration from such a book as the book of Job. I think I should put that down as ~~the~~ ^{my} greatest difficulty but in one sense my *only* difficulty would be this - Here is Job in intense agony and speaks beautiful poetry. On the other hand, I cannot say it is only a precious moral story, but I am sure there is a solution of this, one of the greatest difficulties. Where are we told Job wrote his book? Can you inform me that Job spoke Hebrew? My own belief is that the inspired writer translated the words into Hebrew and that he, under definite inspiration, gave this translation, and we have the beautiful poetry. Some would bring up the thought against inspiration - of lost books. This is only beside the mark, and has no bearing on the subject. There is no difficulty to us in a lost book. God has been pleased to give us enough for our knowledge, and if an inspired book has not been handed down (I will not say lost), God has the record. Others have brought forward objections based upon the various readings. They have said "You believe in verbal inspiration, you have just the same difficulty". This is only a catch-phrase objection. What does this come to? The argument is simply this. One word in a hundred, shall I say, is uncertain because of different manuscripts; therefore 99 words in the 100 are far more definitely proved than if we only had one manuscript. If any man of reasonable common sense can think that is a parallel with the whole hundred words being uncertain, I venture to suggest that he has no knowledge of what criticism means. There are a few verses I could not build an argument upon, because I am not sure if ~~there~~ ^{they} are in the original or not but one word in a hundred is an overestimate of the problem. There are one or two statements we cannot be sure are there or not. ^{but} ~~One~~ simple answer

is this - we know God gave everything perfect. Whatever man has had he has damaged, and, just as those whom God has sovereignly saved you cannot be sure in every case that that one is saved, if you answer because we are not sure in one or two cases therefore no-one is saved at all, you are making a grave mistake. Thanks be unto God, there are those who are saved, and know it and the Scriptures are so wondrously preserved that we must confess almost every verse stands out in its full verbal inspiration, which we can ~~see~~ accept and emphasize, without the slightest misgiving and with the fullest praise.
