

Old Catholic Church. Can a similar hypothesis be advanced with regard to the Old Testament?

Our first information as to the attitude which was taken toward the Old Testament must be sought in the Old Testament itself. The earliest books of the Old Testament make this claim to binding authority. Moses asserts that the Law which the LORD gave through him was fixed and binding, not merely in its general ideas, but in its very words. He proclaims it as the word of the Living God, He makes the people promise to obey it to the smallest detail. He orders that it shall never be added to nor subtracted from. From the time of Moses on, the five books which he wrote constituted a canon, or norm to the Hebrew people. They never recognized any other writing as binding on them if it conflicted with the Pentateuch.

The remainder of the Old Testament asserts a similar claim to be the direct words of the Almighty One. I need not go into this in detail now, as I have this morning submitted a paper which summarizes the evidence on this point. Suffice it to say that the idea of the Canon, as a set of writings which came from the hand of the Living God, and which were a norm for all subsequent times is recognized all through the Old Testament, and certainly must have been accepted in ancient Israel.

When we come to the time of Christ and the Apostle/s, we find that they recognize the authority of the scriptures of the Old Testament. They quote them as a final arbiter of all disputes. When tempted by the devil, Jesus Christ was willing to pin His faith for victory upon the words of Deuteronomy, a book which some modern so-called Christians would have us believe was a pious forgery written long after the time of its alleged author! He declared that neither a jot nor a tittle should pass from the Law, "Till all be fulfilled".

Paul referred to the scriptures of the Old Testament as