

will give us the true meaning, and consequently that we can depend upon them.

Now it is my impression that Panin, and others of his viewpoint, have attempted, by the counting of letters and by assigning numerical values to letters and adding them up, to find proof of an inner structure of the words in the Bible which would be unique and different from other books. It is not my impression that they have succeeded in presenting any real evidence that such a structure exists.

It is not at all inconceivable, of course, that God might have chosen to provide this type of evidence. If He had I would expect that He might have given us some intimation of it in the Bible itself, and I find no such intimation there. Moreover, such evidence, to be of much value, ought to be so definite and clear that it could be demonstrated in such a way that any honest person would have to admit that it existed. I find, on the contrary, that many earnest Christians who have examined the matter have come to the conclusion that there is nothing at all to this method of investigation.

It is my impression that the type of method is somewhat as follows. One counts the number of words in a particular verse. He may find seven words in it. He says, "Look, here is a proof of inspiration. The verse has seven words." Yet it may be that no one of the next five or six verses has exactly seven words, therefore he uses different approaches. In one verse he may find that the number of letters in the nouns is divisible by seven. In the next he may abandon the nouns and find the letters in the verbs, or, perhaps, the alleged numerical value of these letters, to be a number divisible by seven. Thus a different method may be used in almost every verse, in the attempt to find a seven somewhere or other.

It would be strange indeed if such a method would not find numerous sevens, not only in the Bible, but in everything also that ever was written....

I am sorry not to be able to give you further information on this matter. My present impression, however, is that it is not a line of investigation that is apt to be fruitful of any real results.

Personally, I wish that those who spend days and hours counting letters in the Bible in order to find alleged proof of its verbal