

HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE regarding

There is a great deal of misunderstanding the claim of historic Christianity as to the origin of the Word of God. Modernists are frequently deriding the idea of verbal inspiration as if it meant that God dictated the whole of the Scripture to the writers. They point out that the styles of writers differ and assert that this proves that verbal inspiration cannot possibly be a fact. Such criticism rests upon an entire misunderstanding of what the Christian Church means by verbal inspiration.

It is important that we differentiate between inspiration and revelation, both of which enter into the formation of the Bible as Christians have historically considered it. Revelation consists of the presentation of ideas to the mind of the writer directly from God. Here actual dictation may occur. God may reveal by making a statement to the writer in words, or by showing him a picture, or by causing him to have an imaginative experience. As to this third type we find Peter describing in Acts 10, as seeing a great sheet let down from heaven with all sorts of animals, and hearing the words, "Kill and eat." He answers, "Not so Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." The voice answers, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." Through this experience, Peter received from God a revelation of truth previously unknown to him. Many parts of the Bible are made up of revelations of God to man. Often I find it stated that the Lord spoke to Moses, or the word of the Lord came to Isaiah, or some such expression, showing that God gave a revelation to the writer. However, many parts of the Scripture make no claim whatever to be a revelation. They simply tell what the writer has seen, or experienced, or heard. It did not require a revelation of God for Paul to ask Timothy to bring with him the cloak that was left at Troas, or for Moses to describe the battle with the Amalekites. In all these passages any thought of dictation has never been contained in the Christian doctrine of inspiration.