

# **THOUGHTS ON THE BIBLE**

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Thoughts on the Bible by W. Gresley

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**W. GRESLEY**

**THOUGHTS  
ON THE BIBLE**



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BIBLE.

By THE REV. W. GRESLEY, M.A.

PREBENDARY OF LICHFIELD,  
AND VICAR OF BOYNE HILL, MAIDENHEAD.

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## CONTENTS.

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LETTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
II. THE PROBABILITY THAT GOD WOULD GIVE US A REVELATION, AND THE MODE IN WHICH HE HAS VERIFIED IT . . . . .	8
III. HOW THE BIBLE CAME TO BE WRITTEN . . . . .	15
IV. VAST IMPORTANCE OF THE BIBLE . . . . .	23
V. THE WONDERFUL FORCE OF THE BIBLE . . . . .	30
VI. ALL SCRIPTURE INSPIRED . . . . .	37
VII. WHAT IS INSPIRATION? . . . . .	44
VIII. HOW THE WORD OF GOD IS CONTAINED IN THE BIBLE . . . . .	55
IX. DIFFICULTIES . . . . .	62
X. THE SAME . . . . .	71
XI. THE SAME . . . . .	79
XII. THE SPIRIT AND THE LETTER . . . . .	85
XIII. INTERPOLATION . . . . .	90
XIV. THINGS INCOMPREHENSIBLE—UNITY OF THE FATHER AND THE SON . . . . .	96
XV. THE SAME—SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES . . . . .	102

LETTER	PAGE
XVI. MYSTERY IN REVELATION AND SCIENCE	109
XVII. MIRACLES—THE STRANGENESS OF SOME MIRACLES . . . . .	115
XVIII. SCIENTIFIC DIFFICULTIES—TESTIMONY.	124
XIX. GENESIS I. . . . .	131
XX. BEFORE THE FLOOD . . . . .	140
XXI. AFTER THE FLOOD . . . . .	148
XXII. CIVILIZATION . . . . .	154
XXIII. PROGRESS OF HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION.	167
XXIV. PROPHECY AND ITS FULFILMENT . . . . .	173
XXV. RIDICULE . . . . .	181
XXVI. UNBELIEF—SCYPTICISM . . . . .	187
XXVII. WANT OF FIRMNESS OF FAITH . . . . .	197
XXVIII. CONCLUSION . . . . .	202
POSTSCRIPT.—DARWINISM . . . . .	211



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## LETTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You ask me to recommend you a book which shall explain the difficulties which some persons now-a-days fancy they find in the Bible. The faith of many, you say, has been shaken by the current literature of the day, and you have not been able to find exactly what you want, either for your own reading, or to place in the hands of your friends, who, in common with yourself, wish to meet the difficulties which have been brought before them, and to be able to give a reason for the faith that is in them.

Well, there are many very excellent books; but I do not know that they are exactly what you require. There is Butler's Analogy. Every

student for Holy Orders, and every man of education who really desires to enter into the subject, should read Butler's Analogy three or four times over, until he has mastered every page of it. Then there are Paley's Volumes on the Evidences, the *Horæ Paulinæ*, and Natural Theology. These are excellent and sound books, more lively than Butler, and perfectly unanswerable in argument; they have never been refuted, and never can be. We sadly want another Paley amongst us. I wish they were more read than they are. Perhaps the reason of their being read less than they used to be is that they are somewhat out of date. The objections against revealed religion have taken a new turn; new cases have arisen, and modern science has developed many fresh illustrations of the goodness and wisdom of God which were not known in Paley's time.

I am really not able to direct you to the sort of book which you require. So there is no help for it but that I must try and write one myself<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> There is a very good book on the Catalogue of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, "Why do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God?" by Josiah Bateman, M.A., which embraces some of the topics contained in this volume, but the general scope is different.

There are also many excellent books on different branches

A bold undertaking ! you will say, and somewhat presumptuous to class oneself with such men as Butler and Paley. But in truth the book that is wanted is not any thing very learned or very scientific, but a common-sense popular view of the facts in question.

Let me first set before you what is the view which I propose to take of the subject. I do not intend so much to answer objections or explain the difficulties raised by men of science or of learning, as rather to show that such objections and difficulties are not such as can reasonably shake the faith of men of ordinary sense and candour. Objections there must needs be, as I think the following arguments will show, even on Christian principles.

1. If, as we believe, revelation and science emanate both from the Great God and source of all things, they must needs both be true. But seeing that we imperfectly understand both one and the other, it is clear that they must often *appear* to differ. This is no paradox. The difficulties which we imagine arise not from any real discrepancies between science or religion, but from our imperfect understanding of them.

of the subject in the Catalogues of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Christian Evidence Society.