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SERMON CC.

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NEW-YORK.

THE AUTHENTICITY AND GENUINENESS OF THE BIBLE,
AND MADNESS OF INFIDELITY.

HOSEA, viii. 12—*I have written to him the great things of my law ; but they were counted a strange thing.*

THE Holy Scriptures are transmitted to us, as containing a revelation from God. Our simple object, at present, will be to show that these Scriptures are *genuine*, and *authentic*. They are *genuine*:—that is, they have been written by the persons whose names they bear. They are *authentic*: that is,—they relate real matters of fact; and their doctrines and precepts are in exact accordance with the mind and will of God.

The proof of this is precisely of the same kind as that by which the authenticity and genuineness of any ancient books are established. Nay, it is the same form of argument, as that by which we establish the authenticity and genuineness of our Declaration of Independence, the statute laws of the land, and the history of our patriot fathers.

A political sceptic might say the same thing of these documents, which the religious sceptic utters relative to the Bible. I deny, he might say, *the authenticity and genuineness* of your laws, and your Declaration of Independence, which, you pretend, was drawn up in '76, and signed by the members of the old Congress. How should we meet this sceptic? Why, thus:—many witnesses were concerned in preparing this document; the people saw it when first published; they read it; took copies of it; and handed it down to us: and the national monuments, such as the 4th of July, commemorate the same; as also our courts, and existing magistrates, and the whole order of our national affairs. Manifestly, then, these documents *cannot be forgeries*. They could not have been fabricated in the days of the old Congress. The people of that day could not have been so imposed on as to believe them, if they had not seen with their eyes, and heard with their ears, all these revolutionary movements and documents.

Nor could these documents possibly have been fabricated since the death
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SERMON CCI.

Preached Oct. 4, 1835, in commemoration of the first printing of an English Bible, A. D. 1535.

By REV. WILLIAM ADAMS,
NEW-YORK.

THE HISTORY, CHARACTER, AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RECEIVED ENGLISH VERSION OF THE BIBLE.

ROMANS, XV. 4.—*Whatever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

THE fourth of October, 1535—just three hundred years from this day—was signalized by the publication, for the first time, of the whole Bible in the English language. We call it a great event, because great results have followed. If it is natural for individuals to commemorate striking events in their history; if nations fail not to mark the return of the day which gave them the charter of their rights, and secured to them and their posterity the invaluable blessings of peace and liberty—with what propriety may a Christian pause, gratefully to celebrate the day which secured to him, and his children's children, the intelligible word of God—that charter of every earthly hope, the source of all true liberty, the title to a heavenly inheritance. Who has not noticed on the return of our national jubilee, a high-wrought patriotism, which seems to float in the air, causing multitudes to rejoice in view of all that day achieved for us and the world? Who that ever visited those memorable fields, where our ancestors fought in defence of their country, has not felt some deep emotion suffusing his eye, and agitating his frame, as he thought that he stood upon the very sod which was once wet with the blood of his fathers;—and that all which we now enjoy—the blessings of home and country, and religion—are to be traced back to the event which there occurred, and that their very existence was suspended upon that day's success? And what heart does not dilate with gratitude to God, on the morning of this Sabbath, which commemorates the bestowment of a gift to our parent country, from which Christian patriots have drawn all their inspiration—the unsealed fountain of light and truth, and intelligence, to which we trace back all our civil and religious privileges, our hopes for time and eternity, and without which we should now be sitting in darkness and primeval barbarism, the victims of a despotism whose "iron entereth into the soul."

Any information concerning the faithful transmission of the Holy Scriptures from other times; any testimony to the correctness of the version which we now possess, cannot be inappropriate or destitute of interest and profit.

The Scriptures were originally written upon rolls of parchment, similar, probably, to those which are to be seen in the holy place of Jewish synagogues, at the present day. These manuscripts were copied with the utmost care. Many versions of them were made from the original Hebrew and Greek, into other tongues. The various manuscripts which have come down to the present day, all agree essentially in their contents. This is admitted both by believers and unbelievers.

By whom, and at what time, Christianity was first introduced into the British Isles, cannot now be ascertained, with any degree of precision. It is certain, however, that many manuscript copies of the Scriptures, or parts of Scripture, in the Saxon tongue, existed at a very early date. One translation of the Psalms is ascribed to king Alfred. For several centuries after this, the general reading of the Bible was prohibited by the Papal See, whose supremacy was then felt and acknowledged.

The first translations of the Bible into English were previous to the invention of printing. They were the result of incalculable labor and expence of time. Transcripts were obtained with great difficulty, and being rare, were purchased at a price which seems to us incredible. The monks who employed their time, in lone seclusion, in executing these beautiful manuscript copies of the word of God, knew not for what vast and glorious results they were laboring:—like the electric chain, unconscious itself of the tremendous power it is transmitting to others.

The whole Bible was *translated* into English—but not printed—in the fourteenth century, by Wickliffe. Great efforts were made by the dignitaries of Church and State to suppress this translation. A decree was issued, prohibiting all from translating, or reading any English version of the Bible. Great persecutions arose. Many were punished severely, and some put to death for reading the Scriptures in English.

But the day had begun to dawn. It was not in the power of man to roll back the “living wheels” which the Prophet saw. A child may put in motion the nicely-poised rocking-stone; but the arm of a giant cannot stay it. The art of Printing was invented. The Reformation had commenced. Luther and his coadjutors had lifted up their voices, and Europe was beginning to shake with the volcanic fires which were rumbling beneath her.

William Tindal, was among the first in England to catch the spirit of the reformers; and to him are we indebted for the first *printed* translation of *any part* of the Bible in the English language. In order to accomplish his holy work, he left his order in the church, and retired from his native land. Nearly all the copies of this work which found their way to England were publicly burned, by authority; and all who were suspected of possessing and concealing any copies, were disgraced, fined, and punished. And let it be held in remembrance by us, enjoying without fear or molestation, as we do, the fruits of those labors, that the man who first printed any part of the word of God in our mother tongue, was himself strangled to death, and his body burned, for his temerity; praying, with his dying breath, in the true spirit of his Saviour, “Lord, open the king of England’s eyes.”

The first printed translation of the *whole Bible*, was by Coverdale, and was probably published at Zurich, in Switzerland, the last page bearing these words:

“Printed in the yeare of our Lorde, 1535, and fynished the fourth day of October.”

Versions of the Scriptures were now multiplied, copies circulated, and the power of God began to be felt. But as yet there was no common standard. To other times was reserved the emission of that version of the Sacred Text which we now possess; and which, we believe, is destined to stand to the end of time, as one of the most splendid monuments of scholarship and success the world has ever seen. This version of the Scriptures generally passes by the name of King James’ Bible; during whose reign, and at whose instance, the translation was undertaken, and to whom it is dedicated. It is an intensely interesting question to every Christian, How much evidence have we that this is a correct translation of the word of God? As this is the version universally received by Protestants, wherever

the English language is spoken, and there exists no probability that any other will ever supersede it, a few remarks, in passing, upon this point, may not be inappropriate.

1. It is worthy of remark, in the first place, that the word of God, in the original, is so remarkably distinct, intelligible, and obvious in its import, that no translator, possessing a tolerable knowledge of the original, and aiming to give a correct version of it, can possibly fail of finding there, *all the substantial doctrines of the gospel—all that is necessary to salvation.*

There are some human faces, and many scenes in nature, so peculiar and striking that the rudest attempt to sketch them cannot fail to convey some idea of the original. Let a thousand artists, of every variety of talent and skill, undertake to paint the face and form of our immortal Washington, and in all their productions, from the finished and almost breathing pictures of Stewart and Peale, down to the rudest effort of village skill, there will be a convergence of resemblance to one and the same original, that cannot fail to strike the most superficial observer. Or let them attempt to sketch the same bold and lofty mountain, peculiar in its form, striking in its outline;—one may present a picture with the last touchings and finishings of skill—but in all you will see a substantial resemblance to an object so prominent and peculiar. So let a thousand men, possessing the least claims to scholarship, of heterogeneous habits and prejudices, undertake to give a translation of the original Scriptures, and, *on all substantial points*, there will be such an obvious resemblance, that none can mistake, and be that runneth may read—just as the eye catches the outline of the vast and lofty mountain.

Men of every character and nation agree in finding the same obvious and fundamental truths in the Bible. Infidel scholars even, have been forced to acknowledge that they were there, while they have denied their divine origin. Errorists of every name have admitted that these same declarations were in the sacred text, and then have resorted to notes and comments to explain them away. The following sentence from the writings of Chrysostom, one of the early fathers of the Church, not only expresses the same sentiment, but confirms our preceding assertion, that the Scriptures existed in Britain at a very early period. “Though thou visitest the ocean and the *British Islands*, though thou sailest to the *Euxine Sea*, and travellest to the Southern regions, thou shalt hear *all men*, every where, reading out of the Scriptures; with another voice indeed, but not with another faith; in a different language, but with the same understanding.” In a word, no man has ever been able to maintain any reputation as a classical scholar, who has departed far from that obvious meaning of the Scriptures which is to be found in every version. So bold, and obvious, and deep-chiseled are these truths, that they can, by no process, be sunk below the surface, and another, false, far-fetched and unnatural construction made to take their place. This is a feature in the original structure of that book which came forth from God. We should have been led to expect it from what we know of the character and intentions of its Author. Revelation is a gift of light; it cannot thicken and multiply our perplexities. The Teacher of infinite wisdom cannot expose those whom he would teach to infinite error. He will rather surpass all other instructors in bringing down truth to our apprehensions. In the language of Milton, “The very essence of truth is plainness and brightness; the darkness and crookedness are our own. The Scriptures protest their own plainness and perspicuity, calling to be instructed, not only the wise and learned, but the simple, the poor, babes and sucklings.”

2. But the version we possess claims the *highest character for accuracy*, and that claim is founded on *the number and qualifications of those who made it; the manner in which they executed it; and the circumstances of the times in which they lived.*

The men appointed for this important labor were fifty-four in number, all of them pre-eminently distinguished for piety and profound learning in the original languages of the sacred text. Seven of them deceased, or declined the task, before the commencement of the work; and the remaining forty-seven were divided into six classes, from ten to seven in each. To each of these classes was assigned a certain portion of the Scriptures. Each and every individual in that department translated this portion by himself. These several translations were subsequently read by the whole division, who together agreed upon the final reading. The portion thus finished was sent to each of the other divisions again to be revised; by which arrangement every part of the Bible passed the scrutiny of all the forty-seven translators successively. Furthermore, these translators were empowered to call to their aid any learned men, whose studies enabled them to shed light on points of difficulty. The completion of this holy work occupied about three years. The lives of all the venerable men, who commenced it, were spared to witness its successful close.

One circumstance in the *aspect of the times* in which this version was made, deserves our special attention; affording, as it does, another most satisfactory testimony to its impartiality. Protestantism was then one and homogeneous; or if not absolutely so, more nearly than at any other period. It was not yet sundered and divided into sects and parties. The friends of truth were all occupied in opposition to one mighty error—to a common enemy—and had not yet found time or disposition to attack one another, and build up distinct and divided interests. Hence there existed no temptation on the part of the translators to impress upon their work a single sectarian feature. In this respect, certainly, it may be pronounced incapable of amendment. Any one can see that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to make a translation, in the day in which we live, when so many unhappy divisions and sectarian jealousies exist, which would conciliate the favor, and secure the confidence of all, and be cheerfully acknowledged as the common standard. But so it happened, in the kind providence of God, that the received version was made just in that auspicious moment of peace and union among Protestants, which has secured its adoption by all as the common standard. None have charged it with partiality—as favoring this or that sect—for the good reason that these sects and partialities did not then exist. Men may now differ in their *construction* of particular passages, but I know of no denomination, which has generally expressed a desire for a new and different version. Men may differ in the construction which they put upon the constitution of their country, but to give up the constitution itself, and undertake to form another out of present discordant and heterogeneous materials, is a point essentially different in its nature, and, perhaps, impracticable in its execution.

Nothing which diligence, circumspection, scholarship, love of truth, and prayer, could avail, was wanting to perfect this version of the word of God. It is what it professes to be, a translation, not a paraphrase; each word and expression corresponding to the original. What has, by some, been deemed a defect, is in fact a great excellence in our translation—it preserves, as far as possible, the very idiom of the original, the peculiarities of oriental diction; thus proving that the men who made it understood what was the best style of translation—that, which, like a transparent glass, is not seen itself, but shows every thing which is beyond it.

Our version of the Scriptures is pure English. Its words are of Saxon origin. Those venerable translators had not acquired the modern taste for languages of foreign extraction. They used the language which belonged to their own soil. They have demonstrated its wonderful resources and powers. They have contributed much to fix our language and save it from premature and universal corruption. It is an interesting fact that the men who have done the most to corrupt the English language, have been the least familiar with the English Bible.

It is sometimes said, that modern advances in knowledge of the original Scriptures have been so great, that many errors have been detected in the present version. And, so much has been said to this effect, studiously, habitually, and injudiciously, as we must think, by some of good intentions, that much has already been done towards shaking general confidence in its fidelity. Let it be understood, however, that such assertions do not refer to any thing important, or essential to salvation, but exclusively, to minuter points, and more delicate shades of criticism. With regard to this subject, we would remark, that it is not absolutely certain that the present so called "enlightened age," is so far in advance of other times, in profound learning of the original Scriptures, as the claims of some would lead us to believe. It is as true in reference to generations, as to individuals, that to be inordinately self-complacent, is nearly the same thing as being pitifully superficial. Reverence for the old is an original element of a good and great mind. To undervalue the wisdom of those who have gone before us, and to overrate our own, is one of the surest signs of ignorance. But, unhappily our ears are too familiar with language of such import. One would think, from all that is said about modern advances in knowledge, and "discoveries in religion," that our fathers were involved in melancholy ignorance and errors, and that the present age, like a certain divinity in Grecian mythology, "had been hatched from the egg of Night, and all of a sudden had spread its radiant wings on the primeval darkness." It is an interesting circumstance in connection with our subject, that during that long period of more than a thousand years of general darkness, there was in England in each century, excepting the fifth and sixth, some one or more scholars pre-eminent for knowledge of the Hebrew language. At the period when the first English translations were printed, such examples, instead of being few, like a star here and there in a cloudy sky, were so numerous as to form an illustrious constellation, whose light has reached our own age. Neither was this knowledge confined to one sex. A celebrated historian of that period remarks, in language somewhat quaint and antiquated, that "many of the daughters of nobility and quality, were not only as familiarly traded in the Latin and Greek tongues, as in their own, but also in the Holy Scriptures were so ripe, that they were able, aptly and with much grace, to translate them into the vulgar tongue for the public inspection, and edifying of the unlearned multitude." And he adds, "It is now no news in England for inmates of noble houses willingly to set all other vain pastimes at nought for learning's sake—to have continually in their hands either psalms, homilies, or Paul's epistles, and as familiarly to read or reason thereof, in Greek, Latin, or French, as in English." With all due gratitude for present facilities for *diffusing* knowledge, it would be well for us to bear in mind that many of our fathers were, from their youth up, familiar with the original Scriptures; and that in generations long since passed away, some of the venerable ministers of Christ were wont to read morning and evening, at the family altar, out of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures. That knowledge is more generally diffused among all classes, and less exclusively confined to the few, in our day, all will allow; but that other times were so far deficient in accurate and familiar knowledge of the original Scriptures, as to justify the belief that any essential improvements will ever be made in the present version, demands a serious doubt.

It is admitted on all hands that the received English version of the Bible far excels every other translation. It may be relied on as giving a full, clear and accurate exhibition of the mind of God. The illiterate man who reads it, with docility and faith, may obtain just as correct information of all that is requisite for salvation, as the most profound and critical scholar the world has ever seen. While we would most earnestly encourage every effort, on the part of all who have it in their power, to prosecute the study of the Scriptures, in their original tongues,—while we feel that the church has a

right to expect this of those who are set for the defence of the gospel, we are very sure, that the result of all such investigations will be to heighten confidence in the present version, and fill the heart with unfeigned gratitude to God, for that blessed book which we now enjoy, and which, for more than two centuries, has been pouring its light and consolation, wherever the English tongue is spoken. Let science toil, and diligence labor in original investigation—for the Hebrew Scriptures are a mine of solid and inexhaustible gold, where giants may dig for ages—let literature hold up her torch, and cast all possible light upon the sacred text, but we must and ever shall deprecate any wanton attacks upon our received version—any gratuitous attempts to supersede it by a new and different translation. It is the Bible which our godly fathers have read, and over which they have wept and prayed. It is the GOOD OLD ENGLISH BIBLE, with which are associated all our earliest recollections of religion. As such let it go down unchanged to the latest posterity. We give it in charge to coming generations, and bid them welcome to all the blessings it has conveyed to us. It is our fervent prayer, that the light of the resurrection morning may shine on the very book which we now read:—that we may then behold again the familiar face of our own Bible, the very same which we read in our childhood.

So many interesting reflections crowd on the mind, in connection with our subject, that we find it difficult to select the few only which we shall be able to present on this occasion.

1. *How great should be our gratitude that we possess the Bible in such an intelligible and accessible form.* It is not hidden from us in an obscure and foreign tongue; but in "our own tongue, in which we were born, we read the wonderful works of God." We receive not the interpretation of this blessed book from the lips of interested and ungodly men—from hirelings, whose own the sheep are not; but we may, each for himself, come to the living fountain, and partake of truth free from any earthly admixture. No more do we hear the cry, "Profanation!—an envelope of purple!—a casket and a lock for the word of life!" Whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely. None are debarred from owning and reading the word of God by legal proscription. No flaming sword hangs over the garden of the Lord. We may possess, and read, and study, and bind the Bible to our hearts, and openly avow it our treasure and our guide. Neither are any debarred from the privilege of reading the Bible because of the scarcity of copies and the immense price which they command.—When the Scriptures were first introduced into our ancestral land, happy was the man, nay, happy was the religious community, that could say it possessed a small portion of the precious word. What wonders has the press achieved! What millions of copies has it sent forth! Our Bible Societies have issued them in numbers "like the dust of the summer threshing floor." Every one may obtain the Bible now in any form and at any price. And he that hath not, to him it is given. And it is worthy of remark, that, in this merchandise, the greater the supply the greater is the demand. When Bible Societies were first formed, it was urged by some, as an objection to them, that they would interfere with the honest industry of those who were printing and vending the Scriptures on their own responsibility. The reverse has proved wonderfully true. Give away one Bible and you may sell two. Dispose of a hundred, and you may sell a thousand. Give away a thousand, or tens of thousands, over all the land, imparting to as many immortal minds a taste of the pure river of life, and you create a demand which cannot be satisfied, short of "all the fulness of God."

2. *The remarkable preservation and transmission of the Bible furnishes us with delightful evidence of its inherent and indestructible power.* How ineffectual the efforts which have been made to bury it in oblivion! Secret treachery and open violence have conspired to destroy it. The time has

been when to read it was death. Infidelity has fought against it. But it has lived. It has triumphed. The identical press which was employed by Voltaire and the French Institute, to disseminate their attacks upon the Bible, has since been used in printing that very Bible they so vainly sought to destroy. Surely "the word of the Lord is tried." At first, like a little spark, it glimmered in the noon of night; many waters could not quench, nor floods drown it. It spread and brightened. The blast of violence but served to fan it to a larger flame, and the world is now illuminated by its celestial light. It shall never expire. It shall shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. All the facts in its history, leaving out of account the question of its divine origin, go to show that it possesses a principle of vitality—a victorious power of its own, by which it has overcome every opposition, and on which we ground the reasonable expectation of its final and universal triumph.

3. *What obligations rest upon us to multiply and circulate copies of this holy book.* Freely have we received, freely let us give. Regarding ourselves as almoners of the divine bounty, furnished with every facility and motive, how incessant should be our labor, to share with all our brethren of the human family the precious bread of life. Much has already been accomplished. It is a cheering fact, that the Bible is already translated into the languages of nearly three-fourths of all the inhabitants of the world.—Past success should stimulate us to still greater efforts. Truly it is the work of God, and let it prosper. Let us never cease from its prosecution so long as a single individual, in our own or other lands, is destitute of the Bible. Let no brazen gates, no iron walls deter us. The Bible was given by Almighty God to man, as man, wherever and whenever he exists. Robbery most woful is it to appropriate to a few what was meant for mankind; to debar any from its perusal; to keep a single soul in ignorance of those celestial truths which are our only solace and joy. The Bible!—let it go forth as on the wings of the wind. We welcome men of every land, and hue, and rank, to its glorious revelations, free as the air they breathe—the source and element of spiritual life.

4. *How surprising and cheering the results which have followed the English translation of the Bible.* If it never had been made, how changed would be the present aspect of the world, how different its probable destiny. Suppose, for a moment, that the world were rolled back to that point in its history when the Bible existed for us only in a foreign and hidden tongue. Let the millions of copies which are now read, and have been read wherever the English language is known, be recalled and consumed by the flames. Let the British and Foreign Bible Society and its sister association in our own land sink like lead in the mighty waters, and carry down in their curling vortex every Tract, and Sabbath School, and Missionary, and Education Society, that now exists on the face of the globe. Let us seek for the Bible and search in vain. Not only have you quenched the light, and liberty, and intelligence, which now exist in our prosperous and highly blessed land, but you strike out of the number of civilized nations the whole country which we inhabit. For we cannot forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were mostly brought hither by their high veneration and soul-felt love for the Bible. They journeyed by its light; they labored in its hope. Without its inspiration never would they have crossed the wintry seas to seek here an asylum for liberty. The Bible was their star. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society, and to diffuse its influence through all their institutions, civil, literary, and religious. But recall and annihilate the whole. Give back this smiling land to the wilderness from which it has been redeemed. Let loose again the untamed savage, and universal silence and gloom once more overspread this fair heritage of our fathers. We retrace our steps across the waters, but what a change! The spirit of liberty is gone! religion is gone! the

Newtons, and Scotts, and Baxters! the men of science and the men of prayer, the glory of the land are gone! No spires of churches pierce the skies to invoke the blessing of Heaven; here and there are to be seen the sheltered monastery and the cowed priest; the press is shackled; Papacy has resumed her power; not one dares to peep, or murmur, to move the wing or open the mouth; all are given over to uniform ignorance and oppression, enslaved by that most cruel and most contemptible of all tyrants, religious superstition—and that land which, for ages, has been radiating intelligence and liberty over the world, goes back to its primeval darkness, or becomes like Spain, in our day, unblest with the Bible, stagnant as the Dead Sea, whose sullen waters send no tributary to the ocean; and as it is said by some, that no bird ever wings its way through the poisonous vapors which ascend from that accursed lake, so no faithful ministers of Christ are seen flying with the messages of salvation over that deserted land. The whole world lieth in wickedness again—"heaven mourns and hell keeps jubilee, because the day-light has passed and darkness returned." O! what has the Bible already wrought for the world through its English translation! and what mightier results are yet to follow! This may not be the time or the place to discuss the interesting question, but there are not wanting many probabilities that the English tongue is destined to become as nearly universal as it is practicable for any one language. Whether we take into account the vast numbers of those who already speak it, and who are now spreading themselves over the face of the whole earth, in pursuit of science or wealth—the advances which they have already made in improvement—the vast territories under their jurisdiction, and the mighty impulse which bears them on, we cannot but think that they possess incalculable advantages, not only for translating and distributing the Bible in other tongues, but for making their own tongue ultimately the medium of international intercourse, and our own version to be used by unborn and countless millions of the human family.

5. *Our subject teaches us how highly we should prize the word of God; with what prompt obedience and ready compliance we should practice all its precepts.* It is the precious gift of God. It has been transmitted to us at the price of toil, and tears and blood. It has been preserved for ages to be our guide and comfort. It is our only rule of living, reveals our only source of peace when dying. It sheds its light over all our dreary path in this world, and gathers its joyful hopes, like the setting sun, over the world to come. Millions have, in ages past, made trial of its precious truths. Many an eye has wept for joy over the very book which we now possess, and the cheek of sorrow here been lighted up with the smile of Christian hope. What shall we prize higher than the Bible?—without which this world were a wilderness, and the world to which we are hastening an awful mystery. Let every passing day bear witness to your gratitude for this blessed book of God. Let the FAMILY BIBLE be a conspicuous object in your dwellings. Let it be the object with which the earliest and fondest associations of your children shall be connected, and to which with hallowed pleasure they will revert in all the wanderings and dangers of subsequent life. The family Bible! How blessed the recollections which crowd into our minds at the mention of the name! It bore the record of our first existence. We remember now its very form and type—the shelf on which it lay—the morning and evening hour when it was read. It is associated with scenes of domestic peace, of parental affection. Forget it! as well might we forget the thousand expressions of a mother's love—the father's voice which daily commended us to God in prayer;—as well forget all which made our childhood's Christian home a blessing, and joy, and protection—and what is this but to say, that we might tear in sunder all the delicate threads, out of which that intricate web-work, the heart of man, is woven? For ever hallowed be the word of God. Let every fire-side witness its frequent perusal. Let

parental wisdom and youthful ardor together study its immortal truths. If you can bestow nothing else upon your children give them the Bible. Give it to them with a parent's blessing and a Christian's prayers. Tell them it is the word of God; beg them to read it when you are dead. Teach it to them now, in the house and by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up; so shall they call you blessed on earth and in heaven.

Finally, *How great will be the guilt of those who remain impenitent under the full light of the Scriptures!* To whom *much* is given, of the same *much* will be required. "To him who *knoweth* to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." The poor heathen may stand up in the judgment and plead ignorance, for every man shall be judged according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not. To us light has come, and henceforth there can be no cloke for our sin. We *know* our Lord's will, and, if we do it not, we shall indeed be beaten with many stripes. Wo, wo unto those who repent not under the mighty works of God. Deep will be the ruin of those who, being exalted unto heaven, fall thence into hell. It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for such. We may not trample with impunity upon the pearl of great price. We may not receive or reject the Bible at our option. O no! Light neglected augments guilt; salvation despised will exasperate the accents of vengeance. Neglect your Bibles in this life, and they will hang like millstones about your neck in the life to come. Better to live in Pagan darkness, and grope, trembling and afraid, down to the grave, than, amid the effulgent light of the Bible, having eyes, to see not, and ears, to hear not, and an understanding that will not perceive. Better to die unenlightened, starting with instinctive horror from the mystery of the sepulchre, than, in the hour of death, to be stung with remorse for having despised reproof and rejected all the counsel of the Lord. Better perish any where else than in a land where Bibles meet the eye at every step, and are pouring upon the ear their accents of mercy. O go not from the sanctuary, from the light of truth—the weeping expostulations of love—the offers of forgiveness—the promises of heaven—the intercessions of Christ—the strivings of the Spirit—the full displays of God's everlasting love—go not to the judgment impenitent and unforgiven. A voice from these sacred pages cries, "Why, why will you die?" While you have an ear to hear it will not cease from its eloquent and divine appeals. Hearken and your soul shall live. Blessed be God, with this book in our hands we may bid every despairing sinner come to his Redeemer. Come, poor, and blind, and naked, and weary, to this unailing supply. The unchanging word is written on this changeless book, COME. As its glorious revelations were all about to close, its final, free, and unlimited invitation is, Come! "*The Spirit and the bride say, Come: and let him that heareth say, Come: and let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*" And, enamored with the word, the ministers of Christ go forth to repeat it in the ears of every child of Adam; and, believing in its infinite fulness and freeness, we would run forward to meet all coming generations, ere yet they have arrived on the shores of being, and bid them welcome to the pure light of the Gospel—the hope of heaven—the splendors of everlasting truth.