

of its humanity—its close connexion with human feelings and interests; while at the same time we reverence it as divine in its origin, and thus authoritative in its revelations. We call its writers friends, brothers; we press our lips at once reverently and affectionately on their gift to us; we feel that we can live by it and die by it; we wet it with our warm tears; come to it in the lonely hour of sadness and place it under our pillow on the bed of death. We bless God for the treasure, and rightly name it “book of books.” So wisely and so wonderfully has God mingled the human and the divine in this universal book.

Is there not in this respect a striking point of resemblance between the book and him who is the great subject of it—the God-man, at once divine and human,—our brother according to the flesh, and therefore endeared to us and able to sympathise with us, because tried and tempted as we are? He became a perfect Saviour through suffering—by becoming one of our race, a true and perfect man. And so the Bible is fitted to our wants, by being at once human and divine. Suppose that it had been otherwise, and that, instead of humanizing his thoughts, God had written the whole Bible as the ten commandments were written, on tables of stone, with his own hand, and sent it down, without human intervention, directly from heaven; who does not see that in such a case, though it might be awe-inspiring, yet it could not come home to our hearts, win our affections, and become the household book, the staff of our declining years, the sweet comforter in the hour of loneliness and sorrow, the friend of youth and age that it now is? God, therefore, has adopted the form of revelation best suited to bring home the everlasting truths he wished to impart to our feelings, and to our hearts. The Bible is thus man’s book as well as God’s.

If these principles be correct they will furnish an answer to the question, why has God given us so much of the Bible in the form of poetry? It must strike every reflecting mind as remarkable, that so many books of the Bible are cast in the poetic mould. Without mentioning the poetic fragments which, like “orient pearls,” are scattered through the historic portions, we can point to the book of Job as being wholly a grand poem; the psalms we all reckon poetry; Solomon’s Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs—nearly the whole

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