

precepts, moral maxims, sermons, prayers, letters, parables, conversations, personal incidents, stories, etc. In brief, no book is such a medley as the Bible—a great gathering from many men in many ages and nations, and from every social condition. Each writer gives his own portion, in his own way, and with no reference to what has been said or written before him.

From the fact that the binder has brought the several parts together within the same covers we have got into the habit of regarding the Bible as one book instead of a whole library. Even intelligent Christian people never think of it in any other light than as one book, revealed and written at the same time: a formal, full revelation from God to man, sent down from heaven as he sent the manna, one book by one author, bound and delivered over to us as we now have it, as a rule of life. But the Bible consists of seventy books, or volumes, written by 40 or 50 different authors, and extending over a period of nearly 2,000 years, during which it was given at sundry times and in diverse manners. From the time that Moses wrote the Pentateuch till John wrote the book of Revelation, a period of fifteen centuries elapsed; and Moses himself, in composing his books, no doubt made use of pre-existing material. Moreover, the Bible was written by men of different nationalities and in various languages, *Hebrew, Syriac, Greek*, etc. Written by kings and by bondsmen, by poets and fishermen, in prose and poetry, in all varieties of style, from the sublime imagery of the drama to the dry chronicle. It was written by men who had no knowledge of each other and who therefore had no means of comparing notes, and no idea of the kind of book which was to result from their joint labors, for none of them had any intention of making such a book. Some parts of the Bible were written by men of the highest literary culture as Moses, Solomon, David, Luke, Paul, etc., while other parts were written by plain, unlettered, unsophisticated men, as Matthew, Mark and Peter.

Before the art of printing, each portion was written on parchment by itself and rolled up on a cylinder, and unrolled when required to be read; their various parts constituted the sacred *Scriptures*, or *writings*. But in our day the printer's and binder's art have brought them together into one volume. And we more than half regret that this has been done, because many have in