

dor, but which, nevertheless, are of little use, so far as the great purpose for which the Scriptures were given is concerned. There have been commentators, it is true, who have been more zealous than candid, and who have gone out of their way to find a rationalistic interpretation for revealed truth. But there are also men, like Ewald and Meyer, whose candor, no less than their scholarship, will never be questioned. Nevertheless, while we recognize and acknowledge the scholarly merits of the works of such men, and have charity toward them, we cannot escape from the fact that an interpretation of the Scriptures based upon a merely grammatico-literary study of them is decidedly imperfect and misleading. If the Bible were only literature, such men would be its foremost interpreters; but the one thing specially worth learning from the Scriptures cannot be discovered by their methods.

It is frequently said, "Interpret the Bible just as you would interpret any other book," with which is frequently implied the assumption, "because it is just like any other book." But that is just what we cannot assume. The Christian cannot, with a vestige of consistency, assume the Scriptures to be like the Koran or the Vedas.

The *origin* of a book has something to do with its meaning. The same document may manifest an assurance of the most steadfast friendship or conceal the most deceitful treachery, according as it originates with a friend or an enemy. The fact that the Scriptures are given by *inspiration of God* must be taken into account in their interpretation. The Christian cannot interpret them as he would interpret any other book, because his very profession of Christianity is itself a declaration that they are not like any other book. Only the Spirit of God can fully interpret the meaning of His own Word. Much more than the inability of the naturally prosaic to enter into the rapture of the poet, or of the naturally unæsthetic to appreciate the beautiful, is the inability of the naturally unspiritual man, without the Spirit's illumination, to interpret the Scriptures.

This necessity for the Spirit in the understanding of the Scriptures has served the double purpose of unlocking the truth to the seeking believer and sealing it against the haughty unbeliever. It ensures that the deep things of God shall be hidden to them that are lost, "that seeing they shall see, but shall not