

religious book, and when we come to speak of the great ideas which pervade it, and give it its unity, our wonder is still increased.

Ah, yes! our critical friends will tell us, the great ideas are there, but they were not originally there. They were put in later by the prophets. The prophets took the old legends and put these grand ideas into them, and made them religiously profitable. If that was the way in which God chose to give us His revelation, we would be bound gratefully to accept it, but I must be pardoned if I prefer to believe that the great ideas did not need to be put into these narratives; that they were there in the things themselves from the very first.

The truth is, a great deal here depends on your method of approach to these old narratives. There is a saying, "Everything can be laid hold of by two handles," and that is true of these ancient stories. Approach them in one way and you make them out to be a bundle of fables, legends, myths, without historical basis of any kind. Then wonderful feats can be performed in the handling of the myths. Prof. Gunkel, *e.g.*, that very capable Old Testament scholar, is not content with the analysis of books and chapters and verses, but adds to it the analysis of personalities. He will show you, for instance, that Cain is composed originally out of three distinct figures, blended together, Noah out of another three, and so on. I have ventured to describe Gunkel's theory as the explanation of the Patriarchal history on the ancient principle of a fortuitous concurrence of atoms. Only that does not quite answer to the kind of history we have in these narratives, which stand in such organic connection with the rest of revelation. Approach these narratives in another way and they are