

**THE UNITY OF GOD AND
MAN: AND OTHER SERMONS.
PREACHED AT BEDFORD
CHAPEL, BLOOMSBURY**

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The Unity of God and Man: And Other Sermons. Preached at Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury by
Stopford A. Brooke

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STOPFORD A. BROOKE

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PREACHED AT BEDFORD CHAPEL, BLOOMSBURY,

BY THE

REV. STOPFORD A. BROOKE, M.A.



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PREFACE.

THE Sermons included in this volume have appeared at various times, in a private publication, and I have thought that the public might, perhaps, care to read them. They have been carefully revised and corrected.

The two discourses on Joshua do not include any statement concerning the authenticity of the history, but the remarks at the beginning of the following sermon on Lot and Abraham state the way in which I look upon, and consider these early Old Testament stories.

STOPFORD A. BROOKE.

I, MANCHESTER SQUARE,
May 1, 1886.

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SERMONS.

[June 7, 1885.]

THE UNITY OF GOD AND MAN.

"I and my Father are one."—JOHN x. 30.

THIS mighty saying proclaims by the lips of Jesus the ancient truth suggested in the first of the Hebrew books, that man is the image of God. It is the highest of the disclosures made by Jesus concerning Man. Indeed, all that he has told us of humanity is contained in it. Embodied now and then in casual phrase by prophets of other races, hidden in myth and legend, Jesus was the first who declared it roundly, clearly, boldly, and left it to mankind. And it was not understood by those who came after him. They could not believe that he said it as a man, in the name of humanity. Therefore, not wishing to deny his words, they declared that Jesus said it, as God, about himself and God.

The true, and the more practical view is, that Jesus, when he said these words, and others of the same meaning, said them, knowing and feeling himself to be nothing more than a man; said in them that which was, in idea, true of all the human race, which ought to be true of every man, and which in the future will be true of all men. There is none who, having grown to the measure of the stature of

the fulness of Christ, will not be able hereafter to say with him—I and my Father are one.

It is the right and destiny of the human race which are proclaimed in these words—Man is at one with God. That is the Magna Charta of our religion; the idea by which we live, towards which we strive; the idea which will certainly become fact for all of us. It was the voice of Jesus; the voice of his revelation. It is the voice now in our hearts whereby we cry—Abba, Father; and our conviction of it is supported by the daily growth of the spiritual life.

I will take it here as the theory by which we may best explain the conceptions man in general has conceived of God. There are other theories, of course, both Christian and unchristian, spiritual and materialistic; but as this was the assumption, the revelation, of Jesus, let us see what it does when we bring up to it for explanation the main ideas of God which mankind possesses.

We certainly have conceptions of God. How did we gain them? According to this theory—according, in another way of stating it, to this revelation of Jesus—we gain them from God Himself in us. The divine attributes belong to us in part. We realize them imperfectly, portions of them; we are conscious of their imperfection in us; conscious of their partial quality in us; and immediately we desire and imagine their perfection, and in this effort we dimly conceive Deity. The idea of God in us is the idea of our own spiritual nature, made pure and infinite in thought. It is not in a figure that we are like God, but in reality. We conceive His attributes because we share in them.

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The Unity of God and Man

Again, God is intelligence, pure intelligence. How do we come to think that? We conceive it by and through our own intelligence. Through our limited intelligence we can conceive the illimitable Intelligence—because what there is of it in us is the same in kind as it is in God. The light and fire and life of thought of which we are aware, through their partial manifestation in ourselves, we proceed to conceive of as absolute and perfect, and in doing so we think of God and shape Him before us—we shape supreme Intelligence.

Again, how do we know of God's goodness, of His love? Not from without us, not primarily from revelation, but by the goodness and love we have within us! *They* are God's character in us; and when we are lifted over sin in conquest, or are ardent in the hour of some great sacrifice, then we know that we are so far—in the action of the powers of goodness and love—at one with God; and with a rush of unconscious faith, we multiply our love and goodness infinitely, and behold our God.

And when that inward law within, whereby we approve of righteousness and hate sin, speaks clear and loud, and calls us to obey it; when abiding in it we are conscious of an infinite Right and Truth, of a mighty authority without us, and in us, whereby all things are bound, to which God Himself binds Himself, and which His will, self-determined, obeys—why have we these thoughts? What means this vast and sublime imperative? How is it that we know it?

It is because we are partakers of God's moral nature, because we are made in His image, because we and the Father are one.

It is not we alone then who have wrought this, who have

made this God out of our own fancies, built Him up out of our wants and thoughts, developed Him, while He has no real existence! There are folk whose intellect that theory satisfies; there are others who are afraid that theory is true. I am sorry for both of them; but death at least will settle the questioning of the one and the trouble of the other; and death is not far away. But for us, it is better, to have another faith while we live, and to hear in our hearts those words—"O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." Our theory, our faith is—That it is God who, thinking through our thought, loving through our love, has built up in man man's thought of Him, woven into our nature our love of Himself, our knowledge of Him as love. It is the Father in the child who has made known the Father. We and the Father are one.

Others say that it is from without us, from the universe and its work on the perceptions, that we conceive God.

In truth God is in the universe; in everything His thought appears to us! But appears to what? If the universe be only matter, of course it speaks only to matter in us; and there it ends for the materialists. They are now a few and feeble folk, and need not be considered. But if it be Thought that energizes in the universe, why then, it speaks to thought and its powers in us; and we understand what is doing in the universe because we are capable of doing the same kind of things ourselves. It is because we can ourselves create, that we can comprehend creation. It is because we can design, apportion means to an end, conceive a whole, that we can discover