

On Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge

by J.H. Newman

GOD conceals sacred truths to prevent them from being injurious to persons unworthy of them, while revealing them to those who are worthy.

Scripture: Proverbs 25:2, Matthew 13:13, Luke 8:10, John 12:37, Hebrews 12:29

Topics: "Divine Revelation", "Spiritual Maturity"

Description

J.H. Newman preaches about the remarkable mode of concealment in God's dealings with mankind, showing a tendency to conceal sacred truths until individuals are worthy to receive them. This concealment is not a mark of punishment or anger, but a way to protect individuals from harm if they are not ready for the knowledge. The sermon explores how God's manifestations of Himself, teachings by parables, miracles, and incidents all imply a reserve in revealing divine truths, leading to important practical reflections and moral understandings.

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PART I.

FROM THE EXAMPLE OF OUR LORD.

1. General allusions to this mode of concealment.

THE object of the present inquiry is to ascertain, whether there is not in GOD'S dealings with mankind, a very remarkable holding back of sacred and important truths, as if the knowledge of them were injurious to persons unworthy of them. And if this be the case, it will lead to some important practical reflections.

It is not intended to speak of it as a mark of judicial punishment, nor as denoting the anger of the Almighty, nor as connected in any way with intellectual acuteness: but, if I may so speak with reverence, I would say, that there appears in GOD'S manifestations of Himself to mankind, in conjunction with an exceeding desire to communicate that knowledge, a tendency to conceal, and throw a veil over it, as if it were injurious to us, unless we were of a certain disposition to receive it.

And though this cannot explain the speculative difficulty, why the truth is not set before mankind so strongly and clearly that they cannot fall; yet it may tend to satisfy a fair mind, to see that we have symptoms of such a thing being not good, or perhaps possible in morals; and such we may assuredly gather from what we see of GOD'S dealing with us in all His moral government, both natural and Scriptural, so as to show us, that as we are to be thankful for what is revealed, we have also to be thankful for what is not revealed.

As the first view, we have the remarkable fact of the many generations of the heathen world, in a state of great ignorance of many things which we know to be of the very highest importance to our well-being. In the next place, we may notice the silence observed, respecting a future and eternal life in the books of Moses, as one of "the secret things which belonged unto GOD." The fact that the Patriarchs were supported by an indefinite, but full assurance of GOD'S unfailing goodness, which could not cease with this life, will be a confirmation of this point; for it shows that it was in some measure revealed unto them, as they could bear it. In the next place, the numerous rites and types are instances of a veil thrown remarkably over moral and spiritual truth; for it is very evident that to David and others, they conveyed all the "secrets of wisdom," and spoke of "the hands washed in innocency," and "the sacrifice of a broken heart," and "the circumcision of the heart"--but it was through a veil. The expression "I am a stranger upon earth, hide not thy commandments from me," seem to imply, that the commandments being hid from him was the thing which the Psalmist apprehended from unworthiness; and the verse preceding, "open thou mine eyes, that I may behold the wondrous things of the law," and indeed the whole of the 119th Psalm, indicates something great and wonderful, contained in the commandments beyond the letter. Origen says (contr. Cels. p. 197.) "if the law of Moses had not any thing of a more latent meaning, the prophet would not have said, 'open mine eyes, that I may behold the wonderful things of thy law.' The descriptions of the Messiah's kingdom in the prophets were exactly of this kind, such as a carnal mind would take literally; a good man would see that God had something better for those that waited for Him."

2. The general Historic Narrative of our Saviour's Life and Resurrection.

The whole of the Gospel History may be seen to be remarkable in harmony with this view of GOD'S dealings in the Old Testament. The circumstances attending our LORD'S birth, and the important transactions at the early period of His life, we might have expected beforehand would have been more known to the Jewish nation, instead of being concealed, like the actions of apparently obscure persons, (as for instance the LORD'S appearing in His temple as foretold by Malachi.) The account of all these things is so familiar to us, that we are perhaps scarce able to judge clearly of the wonderful and mysterious economy of GOD, in these circumstances. There is something in the thought of our SAVIOUR'S being for thirty years among men, not known and not believed on, even by those about Him, and the witnesses of His early life, very remarkable and awful. And the great pledge and seal of the truth

of the Gospel, the Resurrection itself, seems in such a striking manner to have been kept back, if I may so speak, from the gaze of the multitude, from the broad light of the common day. Its great manifestations break forth, as if indistinctly, and according to the great need of certain persons, the watchful and weeping Mary, then the penitent Peter, then (the perhaps aged) Cleopas. And we find the obscure Galilee mark out so repeatedly and pointedly to be the chosen scene of these manifestations more than the crowded Jerusalem. Surely, in all this there is something of mysterious wisdom, which it is good for us humbly to consider.

3. Some particular expressions of this kind.

We may reasonably expect some more distinct intimations of this, in our blessed LORD'S own teaching and mode of disclosing Cleopas. And so we not find the same SPIRIT, "who spake by the Prophets" with type and figure, in things of this kind?

In the use, for instance, of figurative expressions to persons who did not understand the meaning of them. To this we cannot but apply the remark of Bishop Butler, where he observes the vast difference between Holy Scripture, and any human composition in this respect, that in the latter our object is by words to convey most fitly our meaning to others; we cannot say this of GOD'S written word. It may have other objects quite of another kind, which its very obscurity serves, better than its distinct meaning would do.

Thus, when our SAVIOUR told His disciples, that it was now time that he who had not a sword should sell his garment and buy one, it is evident that they took the meaning literally, nor does our LORD appear to have done away with their misconception; although their erroneous impression was of a practical nature, and perhaps led to a subsequent action, wrong in itself, but overruled by His mercy for good. The expression of "the living Water" to the Samaritan woman, "the leaven of the Pharisees," and "the Bread from Heaven," with perhaps many others, seem not to have been understood, and were spoken in such a manner as to bear a striking analogy to the figurative expressions of the Old Testament and their reception.

Such, it may be added, is the expression of rebuilding the Temple in three days, which was not comprehended. And at twelve years of age, it is said, His parents understood not the saying that He spake unto them, but Mary "kept all these sayings in her heart." (Luke ii. 51.)

And are not the numerous expressions in the Old Testament, which are taken from the Old, and are either brought forward in a new meaning, or in a light which opens and expands their fuller meaning, or in a light which opens and expands their fuller meaning, of the same kind? for they are made to convey a lesson different from what is at first sight perceptible to a careless hearer, such as that of taking the lowest place in order that we may gain honor in the presence of those who sit at meat; and that of the Apostle's, to do good to our enemy in order to "heap coals of fire on his head?" And in the Old Testament itself are there not passages that refer to this reserve of wisdom? what is the meaning of that expression, (in Proverbs xxv. 2.) "It is the glory of GOD to conceal a matter?" Does it not allude to this?

But what is much to be observed with regard to those expressions of our LORD is, that the not understanding of them was considered as matter of reproof, as implying something morally deficient, not intellectually. This would, I think, appear to be the case, as for instance, as in the expression of the "leaven of the Pharisees," "He saith unto them, Why reason ye because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?" (Mark viii. 17.)

In St. Matthew the same expression of complaint or rebuke is repeated, "do ye not yet understand?" ch. xvi. ver. 9. and "how is it ye do not understand?" (Mark viii. 21.) And in the explanation of the parable of the sower, "the understanding" or "not understanding" is spoken of in some higher sense, evidently, than that of the mere reception or barren acknowledgement of a Truth; "when any one heareth the word and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart," where, of course, it cannot be the mere intellectual apprehension, for without that it could not be received at all. And again, "but he that received the seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word and understandeth it." (St. Matt. xiii. 23.)

And in chap. vi. of St. John, when the Jews murmured at the literal expression, and said it was "a hard saying," it seems to be implied that it was the teaching of GOD only that could bring them to a better mind, so as that they should understand the full meaning of such typical expression, "JESUS answered and said, Murmur not among yourselves, no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him." "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of GOD; every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me."

Again, of the coming of Elijah in the person of John, our SAVIOUR says, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come." "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." From which it is evident that it was a certain state of the heart which could alone receive it in the sense implied. The Baptist had before declared that he was not Elias in the manner that the Jews conceived.

Add to this that the Disciples are reprov'd, for not understanding the parables (Matt. xv. 15.) "Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Declare unto us his parable. And JESUS said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand?"

Again, does not the expression of the Disciples in St. John, (xvi. 29.) "Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb," seem to imply that in our LORD'S usual discourse there had been proverbs which they did not understand?

All of which instances are examples in various degrees of persons "who hear the word of the kingdom and understand it not;" and which I would adduce as showing that the want of comprehension was indeed a fault in the moral understanding of the hearer; on which supposition alone is grounded the argument of the Truth not being fully manifested by our LORD.

There is another circumstance that will bear upon this subject, that which must be observed on many occasions, and perhaps it would lead us to a better comprehension of other points, if it was observed in more, viz., our LORD'S custom of answering not the words of the inquirer, but the thoughts in his mind, which had prevented his discerning the truth, or of directing His answer to the sentiments which the circumstance suggested to others. This must necessarily have rendered His expressions difficult of comprehension to some, while at the same time they were beneficial to all, according to the need of each. Like the rains from Heaven, or the seasons, in His natural providence, which are not as each wishes, or prays for, but as is best for each and for all. This may be perceived in the observations made at the feast in Levi's house, where the company was composed of such different kinds of persons; and expressions so pregnant and full of meaning to one, must have been dark sayings to another.

4. The teaching by Parables.

I cannot but conceive that there must have been this intention of veiling truth in the Parables. It has been said indeed that they render moral truths more plain and easy, as well as more engaging; and that this was their purpose. But is this the case? They are easy to us, as all such things seem to be when explained; but were they so at the time? Was not the Crucifixion foretold nine times to the Apostles, and yet it was said distinctly that they did not understand it, although it does not appear to us, who know the circumstances, so difficult? Does not the place where the word parable occurs, often imply that this was its meaning or effect?

Twice in the Psalms it occurs with "dark sayings," Psalm xlix. 4., "I will incline mine ear to a parable, I will open my dark sayings upon the harp," and Ps. lxxviii. 2. quoted expressly to this purpose by St. Matt. ch. xiii. verse 35. "I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old."--And in the prophet Ezekiel in the same sense, "They say of me, Doth he not speak parables?" And does not our LORD'S answer to his Disciples, when they asked him why he taught the people in Parables, prove this? "He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given." The whole of which passage at length seems to me to explain this view of the subject. And seems, with regard to the Disciples, the same as is said of Moses in Numbers xii. "If there be a Prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known to him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches."

The passage just now referred to in the Gospels is the following, "And He said to His disciples privately, But blessed are the eyes which see the things which ye see, for I say unto you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things which ye see, and have not seen them." Those glorious promises therefore of the Old Testament were now already thrown upon the world, but only seen by certain persons who had "eyes to see." So that those glowing prophetic descriptions of CHRIST'S kingdom may not imply any great change in the external appearance of the world, as is sometimes supposed, but only those high and heavenly privileges which some may value and receive. And the blessings of CHRIST'S kingdom as contained in the Beatitudes would indicate the same, as confined to persons of a certain description and character.

I think we cannot but be struck at the little direct information that our Blessed Saviour gives to the Pharisees and such inquirers; the moving and striking discourses, as they appear to us, are all more or less private, such as the prophecies and parables respecting the end of the world and the like, (Matt. xxiv. xxv.) and the discourses towards the end of St. John's Gospel. It is in the retired Galilee, that the Gospel seems to open with blessings, couched in the half secret though simple forms of the Beatitudes; and it is in the crowded Temple at Jerusalem that our LORD'S public ministry ends with the opposites throughout to those Beatitudes, the woes pronounced on the Jews at Jerusalem.

In speaking of a Parable as a veil, I would be cautious against mentioning anything as the end proposed in the operations of GOD: which, of course, to confine to one end and purpose, we may perceive would be quite impossible, as in the works of Nature; I would only say that the Parable did serve this purpose among others. Might it not be that the most spiritual and heavenly precepts were thus left to the rude and rough world, so that the veil of the figure might still be over them, though disclosing its import to any attentive and thoughtful person; performing thus by themselves through the wonderful wisdom of GOD, that which He has commanded us to observe, in not "giving that which is holy to the dogs," and not "casting pearls before swine."

This view of a parable as a veil of the truth seems generally confirmed by the Fathers. A Parable is explained by Theophylact (see Schleusner) as "a dark saying." Cyril (in the Catechesis vi.) says, "Is it only the GOD of the Old Testament who hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not? Hath not JESUS Himself said, 'therefore I speak unto them in Parables, that seeing they might not perceive.' Was it from hating them that he wished them not to see? Or, was it not that they were unworthy to do so, since they had closed their eyes?" and again, the same writer says, "To those who could not hear He spoke in parables, and privately expounded them to His disciples. The brightness of glory was for these; and blindness for unbelievers."

Clement of Alexandria says (Stromata, B. vi. p. 676.) "Neither Prophecy nor our Saviour Himself promulgated the divine mysteries in such a manner that they might easily be apprehended by all persons, but discoursed in Parables. Certainly the Apostles say concerning the LORD, 'that He spake all things in Parables, and without a Parable spake He not unto them.'" "And even in the law and prophets," he adds, "it was He that spake to them in Parables."

And Chrysostom in like manner. "Had He not wished them to hear and to be saved, He would have been silent, and not have spoken in Parables. But by this means He moveth them, by speaking things overshadowed and darkened." (Homil. on St. Matt. xiii.)

5. The manner of our Lord's Miracles,--their concealment, &c.

The miracles of our blessed LORD were the other mode of His teaching mankind and disclosing His Divinity--and will not all that has been said forcibly apply to them also? Would it not appear (if I may so express myself with reverence) that He walked about, infinitely desirous to communicate good, without any limit or measure of His own goodness or power, but yet bound, as it were, in some very wonderful manner, by the unfitness of mankind to receive Him? For as He is revealed to us as more than willing to forgive, but as it were unable to do so unless we repent; in like manner is He also as desirous to manifest Himself to us, but as it were unable to do so, unless we are fitly disposed for it. Is it not very observable that the miracles recorded were to the very utmost of the faith of the person seeking relief, but as it were unable to go beyond? By a word, and at a distance, if so asked, as in the case of the Centurion: by laying on His hand, if the request went to this, as in Jairus's daughter: by a more speedy cure of another intervening by touching the hem of His garment, if such the belief; and He is spoken of as unable to work miracles (except a few) because they believed not: A very memorable expression, which incidentally occurs as marking the sole bounds of His power and will.

I think it may be considered without doubt as a general rule, that the benefits conferred in the Gospel are in a sort of measured proportion according to the faith of the recipient or person engaged, as shown by the words of St. Mark, "JESUS said to them that word of His, If thou canst believe," ([to, ei dnasai piseteusai,]) and there are many like sayings. There may be some instances which appear to be exceptions to this, and in the manifold and incomprehensible ways of GOD'S wisdom, there may of course be these exceptions, and some mode of accounting for them, but this would not affect the general rule. But in the second place I doubt, whether any of these exceptions can be made out to be so. Take for instance the case of the healing of Malchus; we are perfectly in the dark respecting this individual and the state of his mind, excepting so far as the service he was engaged in proves he could not have had the highest degree of faith and knowledge. The case of the ten lepers might appear an exception, but cannot be proved to be so; it was said to the one, in some especial sense probably, "Thy faith hath saved thee." It would seem from this that he had in his case some benefit conferred which the others had not; and though

the nine had not the gratitude to return thanks, they might have had, under the pressure of disease, the faith to trust for help, which would only make it an ordinary case of human nature, of good thoughts departing with restored health. And that this faith required was the result of a certain state of the heart, and not a mere effort of the feelings or imagination, would be evident from the place where the means of acquiring it are spoken of, viz. by prayer and fasting.

The frequent instances of our LORD forbidding them to mention His miracles, is usually accounted for by His not wishing to call the attention of the Jews, and provoke persecution on the one hand, and that the people might not make Him a King on the other, for which on more than one occasion we have an Evangelist's authority. But may we not see more in it than this? forbearing to work miracles before some persons seems to be like that of keeping from them what was already done. For might it not have been that, if such persecution on the part of the Jews were thus brought on prematurely, it would prove their more hardened state; He would therefore first of all deal with them more gently, by not showing them His full power? This will, I think, appear from the instance in St. Matt. xii, 16, where it is said, that "He charged them that they should not make him known," and that in His thus doing, was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, in part of which it is said, "He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any one hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench, until He shall send forth judgment unto victory." The application of which passage to our LORD, introduced with reference to His having charged them not to make Him known, would seem to imply, that it was from great tenderness towards them, that our LORD would not disclose Himself. And this will appear also from a circumstance that occurs immediately afterwards in the narration, when on our LORD'S casting out a devil, and the people being greatly astonished, the Pharisees on "hearing" of it, attributed it to the prince of the devils. And upon this, we know, follows that most awful and earnest admonition, as if by this circumstance they had come to the edge of the precipice from which He had been endeavouring to save them, the sin against the HOLY GHOST. For they might have doubted the reality of GOD'S revelation, and have seen only the Son of Man, and still have repented; but if they allowed the miracles, which must be divine, and still continued in unbelief, they were in a state of heart that could neither repent nor be forgiven. If the manifestation of Divinity is made to them, and they still disbelieve, nothing more can be done. All sin is forgiven which is repented of; but to see GOD Himself revealed, and to deny Him, is a state in which all principle is gone; there can therefore, perhaps, be no repentance; we are sure there is no forgiveness. Might it not be to prevent their falling into this sin against the HOLY GHOST, that so much was done to keep the knowledge from them, till all means might be tried gently to lead them? It may be remarked, that this twice takes place: that after our LORD charged them not to declare the miracle, on the next occasion the Pharisees bring this charge of casting out devils by the prince of the devils; the one alluded to in the xiith of St. Matt., another in the xith.

And if we take the instance of those miracles which appear to have been the most public, those, for instance, of the loaves and fishes, with 5000 persons on one occasion, and 4000 on the other partaking of them; even here it would appear as if there was somehow a sort of secret character about the miracle, for the multitudes were afterwards following our SAVIOUR, because they ate the bread, but not considering the miracle; and of the disciples themselves, of whom it is said, (by some doubtless very important coincidence of expression by the four Evangelists on both occasions,) that they distributed the bread as it grew in their hands, it is said immediately after on the sea, that they considered not the miracle. It was not, therefore, even on this public occasion like an overpowering sign from heaven, but the Divine agency even here retiring in some degree from view, as in His natural providence.

One must be cautious not to appear to limit the intention of Divine Wisdom by any interpretation, and, indeed, Chrysostom on St. Matt. viii. gives another purpose to the words [hora medeni eipes], "see that thou tell no man," (and also, I think, does he on another occasion,) which he considers as a lesson to us in all our good works to avoid the praise and even the knowledge of men. But thankfully acknowledging this lesson does not prevent our seeing other purposes also. For it is evident that another, a deeper and higher meaning, was sometimes (if not always) contained in it, as when our LORD told His disciples not to declare who He was. And at another time, when the devils were commanded not to make Him known. And on these occasions it is much to be observed, that it is the Divinity of our Lord, or any thing that would indicate Divine power, such as the Transfiguration, which they were commanded not to divulge.

All these things tend to confirm the supposition that our LORDÂ'S manifesting Himself was accompanied with very great and singular danger, and this is born out by expressions such as these, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin;" and, "If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin;" and we know that the places of our LORDÂ'S peculiar abode, and the scene of His mighty works, Capernaum and Bethsaida, were brought into a condition so fearful, that as to the former it will be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment. If, therefore, such great guilt was incurred by witnessing our SAVIOURÂ'S miracles and preaching, may we not reasonably suppose that the withholding the full evidence of His power was in mercy intended to keep them back from so awful a state? It may also be observed, persons who come before us as most accepted, are those who have had least advantages, the Centurion, the Canaanitish woman, the good Samaritan, the returning leper, (also a Samaritan,) the thief on the cross; on the contrary, the Levite in the parable, is only not so bad as the priest; out of those admitted nearest to our LORD the Judas is found.

In accordance to all this, viz., that withholding the sign or greater manifestation was out of great tenderness to them, is that circumstance which is mentioned, when they asked a sign of Him, "He sighed deeply in spirit." And on other occasion our SAVIOUR pointed out the manner in which they should have arrived at the truth, in the same way of probably evidence by which they judged of things in Nature, that they knew the signs of the weather, whether it would be fine or cloudy. And, indeed their continual asking for a sign, when such wonderful miracles were being abundantly performed, seems extraordinary, for it cannot but occur to one, What greater sign could they have? And the circumstance of their thus asking seems to prove that the miracles or the greatness of them was rather out of their sight. And what is much to be noticed is, that although our LORDÂ'S divinity was thus, as it were, concealed from the indifferent and careless observer, yet from any serious attention to the miracles, even in the accounts we have, the fulness of divine power is clearly discernible, as in the expression, [thelo, katharistheti], "I will, be thou clean," and many others, and in that power which is the attribute of GOD alone, so frequently exerted, reading the thoughts, [ate echon ophthalmous kardias dialogismous blepontas], "as having eyes which behold the thoughts of the heart," as Origen says of the words, [idon dialogismous], "seeing their thoughts." Indeed, it has been well shown in some vases, and in many other it may clearly be noticed, so as to carry the fullest conviction to any one desires to know the truth, that by an attention to our LORDÂ'S actions and the manner of His speaking, we may perceive strong and lively indications of His divinity. Observe, for instance, the Sermon on the Mount. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, I am not come to destroy;" and that expression frequently repeated, "For I say unto you," which considering they were spoken with reference to the law of Moses, it seems almost blasphemous to suppose could be spoken by one less than Divine.

On the occasion of their requiring a sign, though they are told with such sorrow and earnestness, that no sign should be given to that generation, yet St. Matthew twice inserts an exception, "excepting the sign of the prophet Jonas."

The only sign which they should receive, namely, "the sign of Jonas," which was thus promised them, cannot but convey to us, who know to what it applied, something very awful; for it was, that they should have no sign such as they wanted, but should have one which they themselves would bring about in condemning Him, a sign which would show the enormity of their guilt, that they had done no less than put to death the SON of GOD.

And will not the solemn answer of Abraham to the rich man bear much on this point? We are inclined to say they will repent if they have this or that warning; but this mournful prophecy has declared otherwise, for one can scarce help thinking of it as conveying a prophetic intimation of the Resurrection and its reception. It was a mercy, therefore, that no one was sent to them from the dead, for otherwise they would have been worse. May not this be said also of the Jews, to whom the manifestation of the Resurrection publicly was not vouchsafed? And it is to be observed, that the very commencement of the plot against our SAVIOUR'S life, was the report of his raising Lazarus from the dead. (St. John xi. 45.) "But some of them went their way to the Pharisees, and told them what thing JESUS had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council;" and the object of this council was to put Him to death. Certainly a most astonishing fact, as leading to the development of this fearful phenomena in the human mind, that the circumstance, which of all conceivable should have been most to their wealth, was to them an occasion of falling. I would speak with caution on such a subject, but if, on other occasions, our LORD'S being troubled was from causes of this kind, may not this explain our LORD'S personal deportment (so to speak,) on that occasion, as proceeding from the very fearful nature of such a miracle to those who should witness it. (v. 38) "JESUS therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave." We naturally watch for some expression to give us some clue to the cause of this distress, and in the next verse but one, we read, "JESUS saith unto her, (Martha) Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of GOD?" And, indeed, one cannot but remark, that the preparation, as it were, for this miracle, was a gentle leading or drawing on of Martha, the weaker sister, to this fulness of belief which was necessary: first of all a confession of our Saviour's power is elicited from her, great indeed, but inadequate, "I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of GOD, GOD will give it Thee." But our LORD proceeds afterwards to declare to her His own inherent Divinity, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," and a full confession is required, "Believest thou this?"

In addition to these two circumstances, viz. the performing of miracles, only in proportion to men's faith, and the withholding the knowledge of them, there is another point, which requires to be considered, that of certain persons only being admitted on some occasions, and others excluded. We do not of course suppose that it was from any partiality to the three disciples thus favoured, but in divine love and wisdom, alike for their good and that of all. We are reasonably led to inquire, why, in one instance recorded, that of Jairus's daughter, he put them all out but those three disciples, and the father, (who had asked and worshipped Him) and the mother? We shall find one thing mentioned in all these accounts, that may explain it, viz. it is said, "they laughed Him to scorn." It seems probable from this, that our LORD knew they were not of a temper of heart fitted to witness such a miracles without injury to themselves.

On the other occasion, that of the Transfiguration, we are naturally inclined to ask, why it is stated, in all three accounts, so particularly in connexion with a certain conversation, which took place about a week before? The "six days" of St. Matthew and St. Mark, and the "eight days" of St. Luke, perhaps imply that it

was on the same day in the following week: whether it was on our Sunday, or there was any other circumstance that rendered the day, on which these two great events occurred, remarkable. That discourse, so noticed as preceding this event, was the confession of St. Peter; from which it would appear that it was this testimony so blessed of our LORD, that rendered them now meet to be, as St. Peter expresses it in his second Epistle, "eye witnesses of His majesty."

And may there not be something more in it, than what we should call a mere accidental circumstance, that, on our LORD'S appearing to the assembled disciples on the evening of the Resurrection, that one of them who was most slow of belief was not present? I trust also it will not be considered fanciful, to apply to this view of the subject the remarkable difference in the tone (if I may so speak reverently) of our LORD'S conversation, after the departure of Judas at the last supper: and also the high and divine subjects of the discourse which ensues, independently of its free and affectionate character. Again, in that most interesting narrative of the circumstances which occurred to two of them as they were going to Emmaus, (which St. Luke records) we shall be supplied with another instance of this caution, in not revealing the truth, excepting so far as there was a great disposed to seek out and embrace it: "And they approached to the village whither they went, and He made as though He would have gone farther, and they constrained Him," on which, we read, He went in to abide with them, and revealed Himself to them. From which it would appear, that he would have gone away, and left them, if they had not evinced this desire to retain Him.

There is another incident, in which there might be something of the same kind; it is in one of those interesting incidental observations in which St. Mark abounds, where, in describing the account of our SAVIOUR'S walking on the sea, and their alarm at seeing Him, he adds, [kai ethele parethein autous], "and he would have passed by them," but when in their fear they cried out, then he immediately talked with them.

To which may be applied the remark of St. Chrysostom on another occasion, when they besought Him to depart from their coasts: we read, "He entered into a ship and passed over;" to which St. Chrysostom adds, [akontas gar ou sophronidzei], "for the unwilling he does not instruct;" and [ekbletheis ouk anteteine, all' anechorese], "and "when cast out He resisted not, but retired." There are examples, or perhaps typical intimations of the same mode of acting, which might be pointed out in the Old Testament, in which it would appear that GOD was "waiting to be gracious," but waiting til something should be done on the part of man, to accept his deliverance. Thus, when the angel appeared unto Moses in the bush, we read, "and Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside, GOD called unto him." (Exod. iii. 3, 4.) It is also to be observed, that even those miracles in the Old Testament, which we might suppose most public and open, were not entirely of this character; thus in the striking of the rock it is said, "The Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee the elders of Israel," (Exod. xvii. 5.) which might be compared with the miracle of the loaves dispensed by the disciples, as referred to above.

6. Some incidents which seem to imply the same reserve.

In addition to the parables, and miracles, are there not events in the Gospel, which are similar in their effect to those difficult expressions before alluded to, such as convey a high and heavenly meaning beyond the letter? I do not allude to any mere fanciful interpretations, but to events such as to a plain attentive reader would suggest immediate moral and spiritual intentions and instructions; as perhaps that of St. Peter walking on the sea, which seems in many points typical or prophetic of his fall; and the

miraculous draught of fishes, recorded in the 5th of St. Luke, when the disciples, as it appears, had been previously called, and were now again at their worldly employments, by which action they seem to be significantly taught, that, though they had to relinquish their means of livelihood to follow our SAVIOUR, they need not fear to do so, and that, as fishers of men, they need not despair, though their efforts might long seem unavailing. Such also was the withering of the fig tree, and the bearing of the cross after Him. These evidently contained hidden wisdom, not palpable, nor seen or acknowledged at the time, if at all. They seem to be quite of the nature and character of dark and difficult sayings, conveying instruction by a kind of metaphor, or similitude, in the same way. And in both, the full meaning was a secret to those to whom it was first spoken. Such are remarkably in unison with events in the Old Testament, as, e.g., the offering up of Isaac. The instances mentioned appear obvious ones--they may be but glimpses, which we perceive, of a great system. Add to these the Sabbath day being selected by our LORD for His miracles of mercy. How much is signified in this, to a thoughtful observer! Indeed no less than all the Gospel, as contained within, and rising out of the law, and the latter departing away.

7. Our LORD spoken of by others, and speaking of Himself.

May we not also, from the expressions of other respecting our SAVIOUR, see allusions to this awful and mysterious wisdom, and which indicate that He was in the habit of concealing, in a remarkable manner, His divine power and majesty, excepting so far as persons might be found capable of receiving it? Such is the expostulation of His brethren: "No man doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly; if thou do these things, shew thyself to the world." And not his unbelieving brethren only, but the unbelieving Jews at Jerusalem also say, "How long makest thou us to doubt? if thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." All of which cannot but forcibly remind us of passages in the Old Testament, such as where the angel (or, as it would appear, more than an angel) says to Manoah, "Why askest thou my name, seeing it is secret?" (or wonderful;) and to Israel, "Why askest thou my name?" and in Isaiah, (xlv. 15.) "Verily thou art a GOD that hidest thyself, O GOD of Israel, the SAVIOUR." And, though GOD hath appeared out of Sion in perfect beauty, yet "clouds and darkness are round about Him." So that, although the beloved disciple could say, "we have seen His glory," yet to the world He hath "no form nor comeliness." (Origen.)

Origen has, I think, observed, that, although false Christs should arise, saying, "I am CHRIST, and I am CHRIST," yet that our LORD does not openly profess, or proclaim Himself as such. And the constant open designation of Himself as "the Son of Man," is to be noticed, for it might be thought, here is the common admission which those, who wish to deny the Godhead of CHRIST, might most desire. And will it not be seen, by examining the passages where our LORD most fully declared His Divinity, that it was, as it were, (so to speak) forced from Him by others, and followed by violence? And when indeed the most full declaration was at last extorted from Him, by the adjuration of the high priest, the consequences which ensued were, we know, dreadful beyond example, for it was the beginning of the great crime. But on the other hand, any thing approaching to an acknowledgment of divine power in our SAVIOUR seems to be followed by some signal blessing, as in the case of the Centurion, &c. and the full confession still more so in the case of St. Peter; no one else seems to have made this, others acknowledged our SAVIOUR as the Son of David, or as the CHRIST, not knowing what it imported. It is worthy of attentive observation, that the acknowledgement is from the devils, (see Mark iii.) when He strictly charged them not to divulge it. As if to see, and acknowledge, without suitable reverence, was a state utterly hopeless.

From all which it may be gathered, that it was indeed of infinite importance, that they should see and believe that He was the CHRIST; but, that it was of no less infinite importance, that He should not Himself declare it to them. If, when they required the sign, the stronger miraculous attestation, He groaned deeply

in spirit; so, on the contrary, when Peter acknowledged Him to be the CHRIST, the SON of GOD, (from which conversation it would appear that He had never Himself told them that He was,) then came down that blessing, which ceases not, and never shall cease. And it has been observed, (by Origen) that, as St. Matthew is the only one of the three Evangelists, who records the expression, "Thou art the SON of GOD," in addition to "Thou art the CHRIST," so he is the only one of the three who records the blessing, and that this was revealed to Peter "not of flesh and blood, but of GOD," as if this latter expression of our SAVIOUR'S, had a reference to that declaration of His Divinity [sic!] on the part of St. Peter.

The only mode, therefore, of arriving at the truth was by means of that moral inference, under the influence of GOD'S good Spirit, which arises from that probably evidence, which He has given us as the guide of life: in the same way that we have in natural truths. This was the mode pointed out to the Jews, and such appears to have been the vase with the Virgin herself, of whom it is said, [Mariam suneterei tauta sumballousa te kardia autes], "Mary kept to herself these things, pondering them together in her heart," and on another occasion, [he meter dieterai panta ta hremata tauta en te kardia autes], "His mother kept throughout all these words in her heart;" the same which St. Paul has pointed out as the way to heavenly wisdom, "comparing thing spiritual with spiritual," and thus arriving at what is sometimes called the [plerophoria], the full accumulation gathered from probable evidence to the full assurance of faith.

As if in the same manner, as in natural events or worldly matters, we gather this fulness of assurance from the recurrence or repetition of many single circumstances, so also a divinely illuminated mind, in the course of practical obedience, necessarily must accumulate numerous facts which necessarily lead to certain conclusion, or convictions of divine truth, so as to be open to the heart, and full reception of higher knowledge, when presented to it; the numerous circumstances, on which such evidence is built, being perfectly unknown to the careless, and disobedient; which of course would explain how such conviction is entirely moral.

This view of the subject seems to explain, and itself to be explained by, the Baptist'S sending his disciples when he was in prison, to our SAVIOUR, and our LORD'S reply to them. As John came to bear testimony to our LORD, and some of his disciples had already followed our SAVIOUR on that testimony, the Baptist must naturally have desired, that the others should do the same, particularly now on his approaching death; and, according to this mode of divine teaching, would have been desirous to leave it to them to see and believe according to the strong moral evidence set before them. For if John expresses no belief in His being the CHRIST, nor does our SAVIOUR on the other hand declare Himself to be so; the Baptist tells them not it is the CHRIST, but sends them to see: and our LORD declares not that He is the CHRIST, but points to His works.

For we can hardly suppose, I think, that the Baptist, to whose testimony our LORD himself so strongly appealed, could have had any doubts himself. That John the Baptist'S sending in that manner might have naturally occasioned such a supposition on the part of the persons present, and that our LORD intended to correct that erroneous impression, appears to me to be the meaning of what our blessed LORD says on the occasion; as if (Matt. xi.) in that passage which commences with the words "what went ye out for to see," something of this kind was implied, "Thin not the Baptist'S faith is shaken; you yourselves went to see him, you well knew his character, that it was not liable to wavering, like the reed of his own desert. But, perhaps, you think his own sufferings, or my lowly appearance, have shaken this belief. He was not, you well knew, (for you have seen him) a person like this, one who looked on personal exterior, whom a king'S court could have dazzled, or subsequent misfortune shake. Such a man as that you would not have to see in the desert; was he not a prophet, yea, indeed, and more? Do not think, therefore, that he

himself has any doubt or wavering."

And at the same time they are told that, if they could receive it, this was the foretold Elijah; which seems to prove two things, first, that, if he was that great prophet, he could be no doubtful testimony, and secondly, that it required a certain disposition of heart to receive him as such.

And our blessed LORD Himself describes this peculiarity in His own mode of teaching, as in the parable of the new cloth added to the old, and the new wine received into the old bottles, which appears to indicate the exceeding danger of the Gospel being received into the unregenerate heart of the old man, and such fatal consequences as our LORD'S manner of teaching was calculated to avert. And even to the disciples themselves at the last, He thus speaks, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." In all which our LORD appears as morally dealing with mankind in the same way as He supplies the necessities of all His creatures in His natural providence, ministering to all their wants in due season, and also according to the wants of each, and as they were able to bear it.

There is a tradition (mentioned I think by Origen) highly interesting from the moral reflections it suggests, that our LORD was in the habit of appearing to different beholders in a different personal form. Whether there is any evidence for the truth of such a statement or not, it is clear, that the very different feelings with which He would be looked upon, from those of the deepest adoration and love, to those of Pharisaical contempt, would, in fact, in the eyes of mankind have invested him with the greatest imaginable difference of exterior, which might have given rise to such a report. Indeed the same writer makes this application of it, "The Word," he says, "hath different forms, appearing unto each beholder in the way beneficial to him, and being manifested unto no one, beyond what he that beholdeth Him can receive." (Origen, Comment. St. Matt. tom. xii. 36.)

8. The instructions to the Disciples, and their conduct illustrating the same.

Again, do not our LORD'S instructions to His disciples, when they were sent forth to preach, convey throughout something of the same impression, that they were not to press the truth beyond what men were willing to receive, and imply the awful state of those, to whom it had been spoken, as may be seen at length in the 10th chapter of St. Luke? Again, the word [matheteusate panta ta ethne, baptizontes] is to be remarked, as of course it implies something different from "teach all nations," as if it was not to be the mere communicating of knowledge, but rather, the training them, and making them disciples; and it is observable, that the same expression is also applied to the apostles in the Acts, xiv. 21, [matheteusantes], "having made disciples." And these remarks derive an additional force from something of this kind being observable in their conduct, as when St. Peter in raising Tabitha first "put them all forth." Athanasius speaks of them as observing the same reserve which is here noticed in our LORD respecting His Divinity. In his answer to the Arians, who urge that the apostles spoke of our SAVIOUR, as of a man, as when St. Paul says at Athens, "by the Man whom he hath ordained," and St. Stephen, "I see the Son of Man standing." To this says Athanasius, "Because the apostles used these words, did they consider that CHRIST was only a man and nothing more? GOD forbid! Let such a thought never enter the mind. But this they did as wise master-builders and dispensers of the mysteries of GOD; not without a good reason for doing so."--"With much wisdom the blessed apostles first declared to the Jews what concerned the human nature only of our LORD: in other that, when they had thoroughly persuaded them from the manifest miracles that had taken place that CHRIST had come, they might afterwards lead them on to faith in His divine nature, showing that the works which had taken place were not those of a man, but of GOD." [Athanasius de Senten. Dionys. 8.]

9. The same system in the Epistles.

And now, if this view of the subject be correct with respect to the Old Testament, and the Gospels, may we not reasonably expect to find the same Spirit dealing with us in the same manner in the Epistles? And if we find what we might consider obscurities in the former, which had the effect of misleading the unwary and inconsiderate, as the prophecy of Elijah, those of the supposed temporal kingdom, and perhaps the expression of the sword, misunderstood by St. Peter: we know also from the authority of an apostle, that there are things hard to be understood in the Epistles of St. Paul, which are "wrested to their own destruction by the unwary." May we not suppose that the difficulties in the Epistles were intended to answer the same purpose as the figures of the Old Testament, and the parables of the New? Such was the opinion of Origen, who on the Epistle to the Romans thus writes:

"It must be observed, as a general truth, that, where it is the purpose to throw a veil over, and not openly to set forth the sentiments of truth, whether it be by the Spirit of CHRIST speaking in the prophets, or by His word in the apostles, there is often a confusion (or obscurity) in the diction, and the order of the sentiments is not clear and unbroken, to prevent those who are unworthy from discovering, to the condemnation of their souls, things which it is for their good should be concealed from them. And hence it is oftentimes the case that there appears a want of order and connexion in different parts of Scripture, especially, as we said before, in the Prophetical and Apostolical parts. And in the latter, especially in the Epistle to the Romans, in which things concerning the law are spoken of, and in such different ways, and under such different circumstances, that it might have appeared as if St. Paul had not the object of that Epistle distinctly before his mind in writing it."

But with regard to the Epistles, as confirming these opinions, the subject would be too long to enter upon further than just to notice the many passages in them, in which the Apostle speaks of his care not to impart divine knowledge to those, who are not worthy to receive it.

A full and adequate reason for this withdrawing, and withholding of divine truth, might be shown in passages which speak of the great danger of a revelation of GOD to man, as a savour of death, as well as a savour unto life. If fire be the figure under which the Holy Ghost is spoken of, it is alluded to under both its properties, to cheer and give life, and also to consume. The Baptist, who foretold our SAVIOUR'S manifestation as baptizing with fire, spoke also of the fire unquenchable, which should burn the chaff; and the pillar of fire, which was the strength of the Israelite, was the destruction of the Egyptian. Is it not said of Tophet, "the breath of the LORD like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it?" In all His moral dealing, therefore it is the same mercy which said to Moses, "Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish." (Exod. xix. 21.) "For our GOD is a consuming fire." (Heb. xii. 29.)

10. Passages in Scripture on the other side explained.

There is one passage in Holy Scripture, which has occurred to me as at first sight appearing contrary to the whole of this argument, where in the Book of Proverbs it is said, "Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets, she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates, in the city she uttereth her words, saying." But, on a little consideration, it will be seen to fall in with, and confirm the view we have taken. For of this whole description in the Book of Proverbs, Bishop Butler has remarked, that it may be questioned, whether it was most intended as applicable to prudence in our temporal affairs, or to that wisdom, which is purely religious and heavenly. To him, therefore, who was a beginner, or who had

not yet entered into the school of CHRIST, it would speak of this temporal wisdom; the higher sense would be to him a secret, concealed under the other, as by the veil; but to the heavenly minded it would open the higher meaning, the deeper treasures of divine Wisdom. So that it would really appear the same as that Wisdom, of which it is said in another place, that she walks at first in difficult and trying ways, and not shewing her secrets, but to those whom she hath proved and found worthy. "She goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her, shewing herself favourably unto them in the ways, and meeting them in every thought." (Wisdom xi.) And of course the passage from the Book of Proverbs means that there is no one living but to whom Wisdom speaks, a voice that tells him of something better, which he ought to do, than what he does, which the very nature of probation implies; but until he follows this first voice, the higher and better Wisdom is hid from him. But, however this may be, we know it was said of Him who was Wisdom itself, and "the light that lighteth every one that cometh into the world," "that He should not cry nor lift up His voice in the street."

Another passage has been suggested to the writer, as appearing to militate against some of the foregoing inferences,--the expression of our LORD'S "compel them to come in, that my house may be full." But the meaning of that parable seems to be that, on the Jews refusing the Gospel, the Gentiles would be forced to enter, that the Church throughout the world might be full. And it rather therefore seems to imply the mode of GOD'S dealing with the world at present (which will be noticed afterwards), contrary to all His former dispensations, when all men are as it were forced to come in. While, at the same time, of the spiritual kingdom, it may be always "that the violent take it by force."

Another expression is also to be explained; the Jews say, (John xii. 27.) "We know this man whence he is, but when CHRIST cometh, no man knoweth whence He is. Then cried JESUS in the Temple, as He taught, saying, Ye know me, and ye know whence I am." This might seem at first contrary to the view here taken. But in reconciling this passage with that in the following chapter, where our LORD says, (chap. viii. 19.) "Ye neither know me, nor my Father," Origen shows in his Commentary, that the former alludes to our LORD'S human nature, to which the Jews were referring, but the latter to His Divinity.

11. Confirmed by the analogy of God's present dealings with mankind.

The whole history of this, the Almighty's mode of revealing Himself, is the circumstance which has been matter of offence to the unbeliever, asking for a sign. And perhaps it is different to preconceived expectations, such as we might have been led to form of ourselves: for instance, we might have thought, that the evidence of the Resurrection would have been more public, and the like. It is therefore, as in solving all other difficulties in the history of revelation, very satisfactory to show, how remarkably consistent all this is what we see in the analogy of GOD'S Providence, in our own experience of His dealing with us in His moral government, which we discern, as now going on.

A good man, however illiterate, has his faith established by a daily accumulating weight of evidence, which may perhaps be considered as equivalent to the testimony of the senses in the case of any of our LORD'S miracles. A weight of evidence which is perfectly unknown to the infidel and thoughtless, however intellectually superior; it is the path of the just, brightening in the clearness of his faith to the perfect day.

It seems as if this kind of evidence might be considered as joined on to the former (as being in our case the substitution for it, and yet acting in a similar manner upon this point), by that singular fact, which Origen mentioned, (against Celsus, p. 5) that the traces (or steps) of those miracles were still remaining in

his day among those, who lived according to the precepts of the word of GOD. So that the moral evidence, which a good man ordinarily has, arose at that time to the more sensible evidence of miracles, in the same manner as good persons were admitted to a closer and more intimate knowledge of our LORD'S works, and the manifestation of Himself.

At the same time we must not speak as if we considered that a sensible manifestation of the Divine Presence, or Power, appeared to be the highest reward, or crown and end of a good and obedient faith; but rather, perhaps, it may be a help vouchsafed to those, who are desirous to be led on to something better, and require such assistance. Indeed, where St. Peter speaks of the manifestation of our LORD'S person, and the hearing of His voice, with both of which he had been so singularly honoured, he speaks of such testimony of the senses, as something less sure than the word of Prophecy, and this latter but as the "light shining in a dark place," compared with "the day-star arising in the heart," whatever this may be explained to be. Add to which, we know that St. John himself had not the earliest sensible and direct evidence of our LORD'S Resurrection; and that he needed not this assurance, but had the more especial blessing of having believed, though he had not seen, perhaps a blessing, which was no other than that, which belongs to the pure in heart, that they shall see GOD; for, surely, if this blessing of seeing GOD be one, which, in the manifold application of Scripture, refers to this life, as well as to the next, we have abundant evidence in the writings of St. John, of its having been singularly fulfilled in him, as well in the habitual turn of his own mind, as in those higher and more divine revelations, to which he was admitted.

It may well be supposed that the disciple, who lay upon His LORD'S breast, had the fulness of His Divinity (so to speak) disclosed to him in a signal and singular degree. This is obvious throughout his Gospel and Epistles. As Chrysostom says at the commencement of the former, "He beginneth not, like the rest, from below, but from above," so may it be said does he continue throughout. We may suppose him to have remembered, and dwelt upon, in a way to have almost absorbed every other thought, those of his Master'S words, which fully showed him to be the Son of God.

And this might be traced, with much interest, to some little particulars, perhaps, in his Gospel, some manifest, but as it were incidental indications, which were such as this Evangelist might alone have noticed; and with these we might compare or contrast some observations respecting St. Peter. It gives a very peculiar interest to the Gospel of St. Mark (which is supposed to have been St. Peter'S,) that the very minute, and apparently unimportant remarks, with which it abounds, are many of them respecting our LORD'S own personal demeanour.

Such as, twice that "He was angry;" that "He was moved with pity;" that "He marvelled;" that "He groaned" on two occasions; that "He loved" the young man; twice that He took children into His arms; that he was asleep on a pillow. Several observations of kind occur in a few chapters, where the substance of the account seems often taken from another Gospel; many of them such as, humanely speaking, none but one admitted to a very intimate approach to our LORD'S person, as St. Peter was, could have observed.

And all this is exactly what we should have supposed of St. Peter during this period, a most earnest watchfulness respecting every shade of expression, which might have appeared on our LORD'S countenance, and the most apparently trivial of His actions observed, and remembered. For, when he speaks, in his second Epistle, of their "having been eye witnesses of His majesty, and "having heard the voice of GOD bearing testimony to Him," he speaks like one, who had felt at the time the need of such confirmation, or at all events was much supported by such divine attestation.

And these casual remarks, which have been mentioned, are indications of a state of mind, in which his eyes were intensely bent on "the Son of Man," while GOD the Father was gradually revealing to him that, which "flesh and blood had not told." A blessed and high state of faith and acceptance; but we are supposing it to have been something less than that of St. John. The faith of the latter, needing no manifestation, may be compared to that of Abraham, who, requiring no proof of GOD'S favour, as it is more than once recorded, at the place of his sojourn "built an altar unto the LORD, and called on His name."

Whereas the faith of Jacob required some attestation of the Divine Presence with him: "If GOD will keep me, and I come again to my father's house, then shall the LORD be my GOD." To acknowledge the indications of GOD'S presence in the proofs he gives us of His favour is acceptable to Him, but not to need such sensible proofs would appear to be more so.

But to return from this digression. In addition to all that has been said, it must be remarked, that, when our LORD was most exposed to the view of the unbelieving multitude, it was, by the Providence of GOD, at a time when His Divinity was most shrouded, as it were, by the veil of human suffering; if it be true (as I think Origen says) that His Divinity was the last truth the perfect man came to know, and CHRIST crucified the first taught. And this is according to the whole analogy of the Gospel narrative, wherein he is drawing first of all "by the

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