

The Nature of Revelation

I. REVELATION IS HISTORICAL

EWALD SAYS that the "all absorbing quest of Israel was religion and the good life based thereupon." Athanasius (c. 325) affirms that Israel was, through the prophets, "the sacred school of the knowledge of God and of the spiritual life for all mankind." I think we must recognize that various nations have fulfilled distinctive missions in history. Thus, we remember the Greeks for their artistic and philosophic genius. In art not only were they pre-eminent among ancient peoples, but their artistic sense dominated their whole life; and this fact is the secret at once of the strength and of the weakness in the Greek ideal of life. They saw everything in terms of beauty. Their religion was a religion of beauty, and their ethics partook of the same character. Naturally, they saw life from a subjective point of view. And their ethics were individualistic and subjective in character. As Ellwood says, "Almost from the first, Grecian civilization was corrupt, and at length in certain of its features it became degraded beyond belief." However, in spite of this, we owe to the Greeks our artistic and intellectual traditions. Fisher says, "We are the children of the Hellas."

The Romans were primarily a military and warlike people, and their standards in ethics and religion were not philosophic and were not very much above the level of barbarism. But they had genius for political and legal organization, and laid the foundations for all modern government. The keeping of standing armies was first advocated in modern times by Machiavelli, in the sixteenth century, because he admired the methods of ancient Rome. Rome was a militant conquering nation, aiming at the domination of the world by force, and while many of the unfortunate tendencies in our civilization have come from Rome,

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we have greatly benefited by their genius for law and organization.

Still another ancient people contributed to our present life, the Teutons. They brought to us a strong tradition of individual liberty. So we must recognize, as we have said, that certain peoples have been the channels through which various aspects of reality have come to us.

But, supreme among these contributions, is that of Israel, whose concept of God and whose ethic lies at the very heart of all that is enduring in our present civilization. In their literature and in their history they have evolved a monotheistic religion under the tutelage of the prophets and developed the conception of the ethical fruits thereof.

A study of religions comparatively will not alter this fact. We may freely admit that Zoroaster (c. 800 B. C.), or Mohammed, (A. D. 570-632), or Confucius, (551-478 B. C.), or Socrates, (469-399 B. C.), were to some extent inspired by the Spirit of God. In admitting this we shall simply validate the Scripture which says "the light of it lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This will not prevent us from accepting the thesis that in Israel we see a special movement of God towards man, gradually enlarging and refining itself in the measure of man's adjustment thereto. This divine revelation has its roots in the history of Israel, and if we are to understand it, we must see it at work among this people. We have, then, between the year 760 B. C., the time of Amos, to about 400 B. C., the time of Malachi, a succession of men who claim that in a special sense the mind and will of God were impressed upon them. I do not think it is necessary for us to argue this point, since the most hostile critic

would be prepared to concede that the language these men use admits of no other interpretation but that they *claimed* to be in touch with God.

Many had come before them, and I am not ignoring the fact that the Old Testament speaks of Moses and of Elijah and of others. But it is generally recognized that within the historical limits set, 760-400 B. C., we are on solid historical ground. Further, we cannot doubt but that the conceptions of God and of human duty were, before the days of Amos, mixed with much superstition borrowed from neighboring nations and tribes. Then, the worship of Jehovah was corrupt. Consequently, again and again the prophets, even of olden times, accuse the people of thinking wickedly, in that God was "such a one" as they were. From Amos to Malachi we see emerging against the background of the mists and shadows of antiquity a clear conception of one God, who is God of the whole earth, who has called Israel for a special mission, because he has regard to the welfare of all men. And these prophets are insistent in demanding *righteousness*, in calling for *equality*.

In analyzing their own explanation of the experiences from which their utterances stem, they say without equivocation, "Thus saith the Lord." At times they appear to be reasoning with Jehovah, and are at some pains to excuse themselves from the commission to which they have been called. But they are constrained to yield to an overmastering sense of the Divine which takes possession of them. Let us listen to some typical utterances:

I was no prophet, neither was I

prophet's son; but I was an herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees; and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel. Now, therefore hear the word of the Lord.

But I truly am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

Mine heart within me is broken, all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome; because of the Lord, and because of his holy words . . . Is not my word like as fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

We notice that they are acutely conscious of the contrast between their own feelings and ideas on the one hand, and on the other the purpose and mind of God who constrains them. This is vividly presented where the prophet holds conversations with God, represents to God his own feelings, questions, and complaints, and is answered. These prophets are clearly conscious of two distinct overmastering pressures of God who possesses them, making his mind and will articulate to them.

Such passages recur constantly. The prophets, then, because they are conscious of being thus even violently dealt with and possessed, claimed to utter with *supreme authority* a word message from God to man. The content of this message is, on the whole, quite clear in its final outcome. It is a message which proclaims God as intensely *personal* and *moral*, as the *one* and *only* God, the absolute *creator* and *sustainer* and *judge* of all that is, almighty in the sense that no other God or external power exists to restrain Him. It proclaims him in unmistakable terms for a practical purpose; not, that is, with a view to the satisfaction of metaphysical inquiries; but for the sole purpose of making his people understand that there is no manner of fellowship with him possible except by conformity to his character, that is, by goodness, social and individual, by "doing justly, and loving mercy,

and walking humbly with God." It proclaims the responsibility of man as a *free being*, and his awful power to thwart God by his *pride* and *willfulness*, and to throw his world into confusion—in Isaiah's tremendous phrase, "*To make God serve with his sins.*" It assumes that God does not, over the long course of this world's history, intend to remove man's liberty thus to thwart His purpose; but it declares God's intention to *judge* and *overthrow* one by one every *structure* and *device* of human pride and willfulness, and finally to vindicate himself in his whole creation. That is "the day of the Lord." Meanwhile, his prophets are his mouthpiece to make his character and will and purpose known, and to call on those who have ears to hear to correspond and co-operate with him, that is, to stand for righteousness and truth in evil days.

When one studies the process of revelation in Israel against the background of history, he is amazed to find how clearly the prophets saw into and beyond the social situation in which they lived. While they had a word of God for specific times, and from peculiar vantage points, yet they state principles which have endured and which have come down to us, and we today recognize them, at least nominally, as the foundation of all stable and enduring society. When we turn from the prophets to Jesus, we find him taking his stand upon their message, but greatly enlarging and intensifying it. The more we study the sayings of the Master, the more we are driven to the conclusion that he is more than the *subject* of their prophecies; we feel that he is the *author* of them. Whatever greatness they had, we feel, was made possible by him. And so, as we steep ourselves in his ministry, we conclude that when he said "before Abraham was, I am," he was merely speaking the truth.

Christ does not attempt to argue or philosophize about the existence of God, he sets himself the task to reveal him. The teaching of the prophets about Jehovah is outdistanced by Jesus, and emphasis is laid

upon the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

Another thing we find germane to our discussion of revelation is that the words of Jesus seem to possess the power of attaching themselves to the conscience of mankind; and thus they correct and enlighten the spirit of truth "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

Again the Apostle Paul, who was a Jew, skilled in the Hebraic theology and who believed in one God beside whom there was no other, finds no confusion in his mind in ascribing to Jesus the attributes of God. It does no violence to his monotheism when he worships the Lord Jesus. Christ was, and still is, the final and supreme revelation of God, in what Brother Koehler calls, The mode.

The revelation of Christ about God and human duty can be summed up in the commandment which admonishes men to choose God as their Father; and which tells them to act toward each other upon the basis of *dynamics* which his voice liberates within them. Again, material things, says Christianity, and indeed the whole material world, must be used by man as a stewardship. This stewardship implies that things shall be used to promote equality and fraternity among men, and whenever things are permitted to stand between them, ritualism and formalism become superstition.

In modern times we find the revelation of the prophets in direct historical continuity with the ancient prophets and with Christ. Modern commandments were given in the manner of language used today.

We find the same notes of *universal fatherhood*, and *human brotherhood* in the utterances of Joseph Smith which have been endorsed by the church. We find, too, a great deal of attention is given in the prophetic utterances to the *certainty of coming judgment* and the *inevitability of the day of the Lord and the world to come*. All this *apocalyptic* literature is given as "history written before time" (to use Bishop Butler's great phrase)

to confirm the hope and sustain the brotherly relations which should exist in and between members of the church. Modern revelation carries forward the kingdom ideal, and gives an interpretation and a philosophy of the natural world which testifies of Christ and of his centrality in the whole created order. I shall have a word to say in a moment or two about this interpretative philosophy of nature.

When it was necessary to conserve and save the institution, to reorder its quorums, and to re-annunciate the principles of administration, between the years 1860 and 1900, such revelation as came to the church was clearly in order to inspire, to promote, and to extend the spirit of brotherhood. When institutions were conceived in this period and when the relations between quorums were defined, it is always with a view of promoting brotherhood.

II. REVELATION—ITS ORGANIC UNITY AND CONTINUITY

Revelation, then, is historically an organic whole. These latter days in which we live are *the days for which the former days were made*. We enjoy the same promises latterly as were given formerly. The Inspired Version of the Scriptures is of remarkable value to us in this connection, and I cannot too strongly emphasize that in matters of doctrine and in matters of discipline the Inspired Version of the Scriptures is much more to be desired in our work than any other version extant.

Revelation is not only an organic whole throughout history, but it is progressive. Jesus said he had many things to say to his disciples but they could not bear them. The same thing might be said to us, and with truth we can see that revelation is limited by the capacity of mankind to assimilate the mind of God. Further, man has no celestial language, and thus some things are not lawful to be phrased. And the reason for this is quite apparent. The spirit of revelation beckons us for-

ward and inspires to explore in Elysian fields, where truths are perceived for which no human language is adequate. Indeed, such truths would be distorted and degraded were we to attempt to put them in a vehicle of expression which has been made sordid by human commerce. As Oliver Cowdery said of the visit of John the Baptist—he could only gaze, admire, and wonder.

III. REVELATION AND CONSCIENCE

We must also realize that divine revelation appeals to the conscience of man. While the prophets claim that the word of God is given to them and is not created by them, they assume that there exists in mankind as normally constituted, a faculty for recognizing the authority of their message. Conscience is the "daughter of the voice of God." "Man's conscience is the lamp of the eternal, flashing into his inmost soul." Seneca speaks of conscience as "A Holy Spirit residing in us, the guardian and observer of our good and evil deeds." Conscience and reason alike conspire to render man able to apprehend the voice of God when it is uttered. A friend of Socrates was talking about immortality, and emphasized the stern duty of man to use his reason to the utmost. I quote from his statement:

Well, Socrates, then I will tell you my difficulty. . . . For I dare say that you feel as I do, how very hard or almost impossible is the attainment of any certainty about questions such as these in the present life. And yet I deem him a coward who did not test what is said to the uttermost, or whose heart failed him before he had examined them on every side. For he should persevere until he has obtained one of two things: either he should learn or discover the truth about them; or, if this is impossible, I would have him take the best and most irrefragable of human words, and let this be the raft upon which he sails through life—not without risk, as I admit—if he cannot find some word of God which will more surely and safely carry him."—Plato, *Phaedo*, 85 (Jowett's translation, slightly altered).

Thus while reason may not find God, it does have within it the power

to recognize God when he is revealed. The ancient scripture which says that "Adam heard the voice of God from the Garden of Eden" illustrates the truth that while we have been cast out from his presence we do retain, by our constitution, a racial memory of times when we were in his presence. "Ye were also in the beginning with the Father." This fact constitutes at once both the possibility of salvation and of condemnation for all mankind. Jesus said, "this is condemnation that light has come into the world and men love darkness rather than light."

The 19th century prophet has given an exposition of the same truth in Section 83, paragraph 7, *Doctrine and Covenants*:

And now I give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life; for you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God. For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ; and the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit; and everyone that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit, cometh unto God, even the Father; and the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world; and the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness and under the bondage of sin; and by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me; for whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin; and whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me; and by this you may know the righteous from the wicked, and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now.

IV. REVELATION AND INSPIRATION

As we pursue further the question of the nature of revelation, the following facts which will distinguish between inspiration and reve-

lation appear to me to be quite apparent. And it is well to make a differentiation between inspiration and revelation.

We in the church have plenty of evidence for the view that God, by the Spirit, is "in all things, and through all things, and is the law by which all things are governed." No one can read Section eighty-five without profound gratitude for this conception which convinces us that no particle of the universe goes ultimately beyond the divine control. We believe in divine immanence.

No finer expression of the work of God in nature is to be found than that given by Wordsworth in "Tintern Abbey":

I have learned
To look on nature not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth but hearing
oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of
ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the
joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sub-
lime
Of something far more deeply inter-
fused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting
suns,
And the round ocean and the living
air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of
man;
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all
thought,
And rolls through all things.

Through the ages the "sense sublime" has deeply impressed the human heart. In fact, the worship of nature played a large part of the activities of primitive man. The book of nature is rich in evidences of the divine mind. It has inspired countless numbers—poets, seers, philosophers, musicians, sculptors, and painters, as well as the lowly peasant. In learning more about the world around us, we are learning

more about God.

Our Heavenly Father has been at work in history, in the lives of men of good will, in every age and among all people. The prophets, especially, were souls specially illuminated to give light to a darkened world. The profoundest ministry was, of course, in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Great inspiration is still to be had by studying history, or by striving to appreciate the principles uttered by the prophets, and by dwelling in awe upon the superlative light of Christ. Inspiration still flows from Nazareth. Men are forever discovering new wonder as they look at the record of the life of Christ. This record is given in the New Testament and in the history of mankind since his day, a record still bearing fruit in a thousand different ways. The reason in decent men responds naturally to the order of God revealed in Christ. But the church of Christ means much more when it speaks of the transcendence of God and his revelation.

Try to imagine all the riches of culture and grace, of law and order, and of goodness which humanity has gathered up through the ages by looking at God's handiwork. One would indeed be rich were he able to possess them. But if he could, he would still fall far short of what we mean when we speak of the process of revelation. For, by looking at God's handiwork, including man, one is simply reflecting the divine light. We do not despise such reflection. It has always been and still is, of inestimable worth to us. It lightens our darkness. But no amount of such inspiration as we have been describing can alone regenerate humanity in and of itself. And in this lies the cardinal difference between inspiration and revelation. We believe in divine immanence but more—that revelation conveys a spirit, a gift, which is part of God himself.

In a paragraph by itself, to emphasize its importance, we put the following proposition. It is one thing to live your life in the light of

Christ, and another thing to surrender your life so that Christ can live in you.

We in the church are in danger constantly of placing our greatest investment in the second best. If we mistake the *reflection* of the light of Christ for the possession of the *gift of God*, we shall go to our ruin. For the worst enemy that the best has is not the worst, but the second best. What the world needs today is a new revelation of Christ, not a reflection of his life lived centuries ago and distorted through the faulty spectrum of human personality. This new revelation of Christ must be made by himself, upon his own terms, and in his own way. What other construction can we put upon the language which says, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me"? What else did Paul mean when he uttered the great secret of his power, "It is not that I liveth but Christ who liveth within me"?

(To be continued.)

We Move Too Fast

It is no accident that we so often speak of grace as languid. One of the first lessons the movie directors learned was that the actors must move to a slow, steady tempo. Count off as Garbo moves about the screen and notice how long it takes her to remove or put on a wrap, to come through a door and close it behind her—yet every foot of film is costly. That's why home movies are jerky, often ridiculously so. We move too fast. A graceful woman, a well-poised man never hurries, at least never gives you the impression of haste. It's the snatches and jerkers who bump into their chairs and tip over the water glasses. And it's the heel-clicking trit-trotters who stumble up curbstones and down unexpected steps. If you are inclined to be jerky, practice moving to a slow and rhythmic phonograph record, preferably in waltz time. Or simply pace yourself off to a slow count.—Ruth Chandler Moore in *Collier's*.

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(Continued from last week.)

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This higher level can best be expressed when the mind of Christ dwells in us. As we grow up unto him in all things, we shall be able to meet life and the course of history with the same power and insight which was manifested by Christ. We shall know as we are known. This does not mean that prophecy and vision will have no place, but rather that these are blended into a total life attitude which is the essence of the kingdom of God. What the church means by revelation, then, is almost beyond our present understanding. We can see it only dimly as we strive to live always on higher planes.

Thus having laid down these basic considerations, how can we approximate these rich gifts? Our individual differences are so marked that it is well-nigh impossible to lay down hard and fast rules as to what one shall do and shall not do, and how and when he shall do or shall not do it. But there are certain practices which are vital to the acquisition of spiritual power. And how better can they be delineated than in the Book of Alma? In speaking of the sons of Mosiah who had entered into a fiendish and hostile community at great personal risk, and had come out therefrom bringing with them a redeemed people, he says:

They were men of sound understanding,

And they had searched the Scriptures diligently

That they might know the word of God.

But this is not all:

They have given themselves to much prayer,

And fasting,

Therefore they had the spirit of prophecy,

And the spirit of revelation,

And when they taught,

They taught with power and authority,

Even as with the power and authority of God.

Many were brought before the altar of God,

To call upon his name,

And confess their sins.

Who is there in the church today who would be bold enough to venture the assertion that such a procedure adopted by a thousand men would not transform this church and change beyond all recognition the seal of its significance in the world of men and affairs?

The world needs divine revelation after the manner given by Christ. That revelation must be lived for. It will not come simply by asking for it. As it is lived for, it will be given, and as it is given, it must be responded to. Thus will the expanding life of God in the soul of the church bless all humanity, and the towers of Zion for which so many of us have longed be seen in the righteousness which is the fruitage of the word of God.

VI. REVELATION—SUPERNATURAL BUT NOT UNNATURAL

Revelation, then, is given in history for the purpose of molding the life of mankind. It is fashionable in our day, now that men of scientific accomplishment have told us about the universal reign of law, to discount miracles. It has come to pass even as said by the prophet of old "If they say there is a miracle believe it not, for God is not a God of miracles." But the objections urged against miracles rest upon certain assumptions which themselves are prejudices. Science cannot claim infallibility on the ground of its consistency, because what was thought to be scientific truth a generation ago has been placed in discard today. For instance, the atom was regarded about fifty years ago as the key to the structure of the universe; a universe which was then

supposed to be composed of atoms and force. Along with this conception arose a materialistic philosophy of life and a mechanistic view of the universe, and athiests galore who had a smattering of science told those of us who believed that personality lay in the heart of creation, that we were children, that we were intellectual cowards, and that we were afraid to face a reality of which they conceived themselves to be the high priests. But lo! fifty years after, we discovered the key which was so confidently proclaimed would unlock the mysteries of the universe, proved not to be the key so much as the lock itself. Ptolemy built a universe which lasted some 750 years. Then came along Sir Isaac Newton and constructed another universe which lasted about 400 years. Today Einstein has built a universe for us and nobody knows just how long that will last. But despite these changing scenes in the philosophic and intellectual landscape, one fact remains rooted in history: that fact is that God is, that he is a person, and that he is love. And that fact is attested to by long, long successions of great souls who tell us that God has made himself manifest to us. Those who are prejudiced thus against the miraculous, accuse believers of being dominated by religious authority enshrined in institutions. But surely it is just as bad to be dominated by the authority of the intellectuals whose fashions of thought are so manifestly unstable, as it is to be persuaded by the voluminous and consistent testimony of those who believe in God, and that he speaks. Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God speaks to man?

Revelation is supernatural, it is true, but it is not unnatural. He would be bold indeed nowadays, who dared to insist that *all* the natural laws of the universe were apprehended by mankind, and that such apprehension made impossible divine utterance. So years ago the freedom of the will was steadily denied by those who believed in cause and effect. But, today the element of indeterminism is ascribed even to the physical world, and it seems to me that belief in human agency and belief in miracles must both stem from the same world view. Thus science itself now admits, more or less, room for happenings which cannot be accounted for alone by what it now knows of the physical world.

VII. CONCLUSION

Anyone who has experienced the operation of the spirit of truth when he has been conscious of a blending of the life of God with his own, has come to know that revelation is much more than the transfer of intellectual propositions which can be phrased in words. And he knows, too, that it is much more than the transfer of deep feeling which is also present in the experience. Again the strengthening of the will which comes as one is inspired by the spirit of truth is not all that is involved in the process of revelation. Mind and heart and will are caught up and fused; the entire personality at its highest level is blessed and blended with the presence of Christ, and in such experience there is transmitted a divine gift which makes the recipient of such experience a new creature. Truly, the Lord Jesus said the word of God is like a seed. A seed which has within it a prophecy of the nature of God. A seed which is given by God and received by man. It is not the result of philosophy, it is not the result of scientific attitude of mind. It is not the result of sentimental attitude which makes one sorry for past sins. It doesn't rise from the subconscious.

Much more, it is not the result of a man holding an audience with himself and setting his own goals and standards and resolving to live up to them. There is nothing within the ken of man which can imagine what the gift of God is. God who is able to do far more abundantly than we can ask or think. It is love and light and life, as it is in Christ Jesus; and when we say this, we are extremely conscious of the paucity of human language to express the reality.

In conclusion then, brethren, we may say revelation is a historical fact. In ancient Israel, certain men claimed the vocation of prophet. The mind of God was transmitted to them. Their prophecies and perceptions, their dreams and visions were objectified in the life of Jesus Christ our Lord who made explicit what was, in them, implicit. In modern times the historical process was furthered and extended, and the message of God, his relation to man, the relation of man to man, and the certainty of the coming kingdom with its exaltation of righteousness and the condemnation of wickedness was further extended and interpreted in modern times. Revelation, considered historically, is of a piece with itself and is progressive, in that as man approximates its provision so it moves to greater understanding. It appeals to the conscience of man, which as Wordsworth said is the "stern daughter of the voice of God." It is in consonance with reason, for our minds are but an offspring of the mind and reason which is in all things.

In this connection, brethren, notice the language used by John in his testimony of our Lord.

In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God . . .

For in the beginning was the WORD, even the Son.

This word *word* has an interesting and suggestive Greek background. It means "*logos*," and to a

Greek, *Logos* was synonymous with the "reason, or the energy" in all things. Moses put it this way, "God said, Let there be light . . . and there was light." Joseph Smith, in our day: "Christ is in all things, and is the life of all things, and is the law by which all things are governed."

Sir James Jeans has pointed out that all matter is resolvable into force, or radiation, or energy; and that the whole universe, both in its material and mental aspects is by a series of waves or radiations; imprisoned waves we call matter, and the unfettered waves we call light; and that strictly speaking the whole nature of the created order, both visible and invisible is covered in the Old Testament statement, "God said, Let there be light." Moses was told, when upon the mount of clear vision observing the creation in its immensity, "This is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." It is indeed a sobering and uplifting thought that the whole order of things exists to bear record of God, and that whatever glory we achieve comes about by our complete dependence upon God. Further as one considers that this creative power as Bergoson said, which is struggling for articulation and does not find release until man is brought into being, was incarnated, "made flesh," and that Christ came down and for our sakes was made in our form and nature that he might bring us to God, he is humbled at the unspeakable condescension of the Creator.

Let us then, as ministers, and as brethren one of another, keep our souls open to the truth from whence-soever source it may come, remembering that the soul has many windows through which the light of God may stream in upon us. As we do this, and as we are made partakers of the heavenly gift and the powers of the world to come, let us answer to the demands made upon us; and we shall find the elements of our common life, as those in the soil are transmuted by the action of the seed, caught up into his life and made in his likeness.