

other occasions; and also to consider the modes in which they were communicated to the mind of the prophet, whether in a vision exhibited to him when entranced; in a dream when asleep; or under certain acts, which he was commanded, or by immediate inspiration excited, to perform. So that if we wish to ascertain the meaning of any particular symbol, or of the terms in which any communication is made from God in Holy Scripture; we must not be satisfied by studying merely the passage under our eye, but, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, *hunt* out the meaning, as it were, by considering all those passages where the same thing is alluded to.

It is to be observed, that in all the communications which it has pleased the Deity to make of his will to mankind, respect is had to the then state of society, and the progress of knowledge, arts, and civilization—light was imparted to them as they were able to bear it; they were fed with milk when they could not digest strong meat. Prejudices take usually so firm a hold upon the bulk of any people, that to attack them directly, instead of opening, closes all the avenues to the heart. Even the most enlightened in some respects, in others are often under their dominion; and, therefore, it is only by imparting truth *here a little and there a little*, as circumstances admit, and embroidering the veil, under which we are obliged to soften the effulgence of her light, with varied imagery, darkly shadowing out her mysteries, that a way is prepared for her final triumph and universal reception. She is often *a light shining in a dark place*, gradually expelling prejudice and error, and *shining more and more unto the perfect day*.

It was not so much necessary for the conversion and reformation of mankind to make them *philosophers* as to make them *believers*. The great bulk of mankind were ignorant and uninstructed persons, whence, in order to win their