

God in the highest, and on earth peace." "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people: and hath raised up a mighty salvation for us." "The Dayspring from on high hath visited us." The manifestation of God in the flesh is the theme: the different modes and degrees of that manifestation the elaboration of the theme. Manifest first to the shepherds of Bethlehem; then to the Eastern sages; then, after twelve years, to the doctors of the Temple, if only they had had eyes to see; then after a long period of obscurity manifest to all the beholders at this marriage feast in Cana of Galilee, when His Divinity shone forth in this first miracle that He wrought. Let us view this light as it then burst forth, so unexpectedly; let us analyze its rays and see what we can learn therefrom.

"This *beginning* of miracles." Our Lord Jesus Christ, then, never performed a single miracle—never let the world know that He was the Messiah—until He was thirty years of age. All that long period of time, from His birth, when "all the sons of God shouted for joy," until His baptism, when the voice from heaven was heard saying, "Thou art My beloved Son" (Luke iii. 22), is wrapt in obscurity, save that one gleam which we catch of the Holy Child when He was twelve years of age, and went up, "after the custom of the feast," to His confirmation at Jerusalem. We dwelt upon this on Sunday last. Does He not by this very obscurity reveal Himself—to speak in paradox? Does He not manifest Himself as the typical, the representative, the perfect human character? Does He not show us hereby that He does not countenance precociousness in children and youths? Does He not teach us that even if we think we have a call from God we must bide our time until the outward call comes? "So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son" (Heb. v. 5).