

Chapter 4

Independently of these general and common means which error and falsehood employ daily to blind us to our misery and to lull us ceaselessly into a hope that is always disappointed, the Spirit of Darkness has found open secret paths, far more abusive still and far more fatal to us. For the first errors we have just described fall more on the outer man and on his visible course than on the inner and spiritual man; so simple morality would be sufficient to make him avoid them, and however unfortunate they may be, the *greatest* harm they cause him is to delay him in his course; but those which we have yet to describe have the terrible power to lead him so astray, that he can no longer find his way back, and it is here that the meaning of this word *Ecce Homo* becomes truly lamentable.

Our primitive state had called us to possess superior knowledge, to visibly enjoy the spectacle of the deeds of the spirit, clothed in all the splendor of its light, and even to have authority over the various inhabitants of all these regions, hidden to us today by the thick veil of the elements.

If, since our fall, it has sometimes been in Wisdom's plan to call here a few mortals here below to share in such a great privilege, despite the darkness which enveloped them, it has just as often happened that this same darkness, revived at first by the presence of this light, has then sought to combine with it and soon to take its place, by cleverly repeating the same facts they had witnessed, or by drawing from man's mind the means to deceive himself; for they can read both into the fertile regions of his thoughts and into his even more fertile imprudence in almost always turning against him that very same thing, which was meant to be his support, his guide and his universal security.

Higher graces, sent directly by Wisdom to a few mortals, had the double advantage of teaching these same mortals how sweet and magnificent were these treasures which we have enjoyed, and how ignominious is the nothingness in which we have had the imprudence to plunge ourselves; and it is in this spirit that privileged men then spread their instructions to other men.

Works born or infected by darkness have the opposite purpose, that of persuading man that he still enjoys all his rights, and of robbing him of that spiritual destitution which is the true *characteristic* sign to which the name of *Ecce Homo* is attached, a destitution whose intimate and perfect knowledge is, as we have said above, the first indispensable condition for beginning our reconciliation.

So, no sooner does man take a step out of his interior, than these fruits of darkness envelop him and combine with his spiritual action, just as his breath, as soon as it leaves him, would be seized and infested by putrid and corrosive miasmas if he breathed in the midst of corrupt air.

Supreme Wisdom knows so well that such is the state of our abysses, that it takes the greatest precautions to pierce them and to bring us its aid; yet only too often it is unfortunately compelled to withdraw into itself because of the terrible corruption with which we imbue its gifts; and if any mortal

has been fortunate enough to experience the approach of this Holy Wisdom in himself, and having been able to glimpse in its light the horrible poison of which we are composed, and the distressing bitterness which it feels as a result, he will know by experience and similarity how many dangers man, in turn, runs into as soon as he leaves his center and enters the outer regions.

So how carefully do the wise distribute their words, and how much care do they take to ensure that the treasures of truth are not tainted by the corruption which corrodes all our abysses? They know very well that it is in this inner and invisible center that the source of light resides, and that the reason why the world is so little advanced in the sacred paths of the Word is because it habitually throws the word into the outer regions, and never takes the precaution of coming to center it on the living root or on the inner word, the only hearth that can animate all our true words, since it is there alone where the living and creative Word of all words is to be found. Finally, it is because he continually forgets that the most precious truths he can know are of such a nature that they can only be expressed by weeping and silence, and that the man's material mouth isn't worthy to utter them, nor his corporeal ear to hear them.

And so, through his universal recklessness, man is perpetually plunged into abysses of confusion, which become all the more disastrous and obscure, as they constantly give rise to new regions opposed to each other, and which only result in man finding himself placed in the midst of a frightful multitude of powers which pull him and drag him in every directions, it would truly be a wonder if he had a *breath of life* left in him and a spark of light in his mind.

What advantages do we not give, by our lightness, to this principle of darkness, which also seeks to extend its reign in imitation of the truth? So long as we lend ourselves to this secret weakness, which leads us all to seek outside of ourselves for the support we can only find within ourselves, and insofar we cease to be as natural, as true and as simple as children in the midst of the higher favors which are still sometimes granted to us here below and the spiritual and divine missions with which we can be entrusted, from the moment the Principle of Darkness himself helps us to throw ourselves more and more into these outer regions.

Having brought us into them, he keeps us there by the charms and joys that we first begin to taste, and that soon make us forget those of the interior, which are as calm and as peaceful as the others are agitated and turbulent. Once he has placed us in those outer regions, he sinks us into them, so to speak, permanently, by the venom of our own contemplation and by the fatal organ of the eye of our fellow men, who have not established themselves any more than us in their own interior, bring their false influences to bear on our imprudent manifestations and drag us all the more into darkness and falsehood, by awakening in us all the affections opposed to the simple, tranquil, humble, equal and lasting affection that we would have received from directly within us, as long as we had allowed it to open up within us by means of our wise precautions.

For it would not be deceiving our fellow beings to tell them the true work of man takes place far from all these external movements. According to the principles set out above, we are placed under the

aspect of divinity itself – that is to say, we rest on a living root which must operate in us all our regular vegetations – and so, whether there are around us, and even through us, facts that are external and outside the ordinary course of Nature; indeed, whether there is a Nature and a world, or whether there is not, our work must always have its course, since our work is that God in us should be everything, and we nothing, and since, in the very impure and legitimate facts that may operate, it is not the facts that must be noticed and deserve our homage, but rather the God who alone operates them.

Among these secret and dangerous paths, which the Principle of Darkness takes advantage of to lead us astray, we can't help but place all these extraordinary manifestations, with which all centuries have been inundated, and which wouldn't strike us so much if we hadn't lost sight of the true character of our being, and especially if we had a better understanding of the spiritual annals of our history from the beginning of things.

In all ages, most of these paths began to open in good faith and without any kind of evil intent on the part of those to whom they made themselves known. But since these favored men lacked both the prudence of the serpent and the innocence of the dove, they operated more with the enthusiasm of inexperience than with a sublime and profound sense of the holy magnificence of their God; and it was then that the Principle of Darkness came to mingle with these paths and produce this innumerable multitude of different combinations, all tending to obscure the simplicity of the Light.

In some, the Principle of Darkness casts only slight stains, which are almost imperceptible, and which are absorbed by the superabundance of light which balances them out; in others, it carries enough infection to overpower the pure element. In others, finally, he so establishes his dominance that he becomes their sole ruler and administrator.

Zealous and vehement writers have shown us, in the constitution of the Universe, one of the ways in which the Principle of Darkness propagating his illusions. These writers have thus rendered the misguided nations the greatest service they could have hoped for, and they can do no better than to meditate carefully on this ray of light. It will clearly reveal to them the source of the abominations and religious errors which once drew the dazzling vengeance of divine wrath down upon famous peoples; and they will be able to draw from it the widest and useful knowledge for our modern times, which, in this respect, resemble ancient times more than one might think. Thus, with this key being already delivered to man's intelligence, we can confine ourselves in this writing to considering the fruits of these shadowy realms which have led so many mortals astray, going through both the various signs by which they can be recognized, and the disappointments reserved for those who feed on them.