

The Early Church Fathers Writings

Volume 10

THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS WRITINGS

Volume 10

Origen's Commentaries on John and Matthew, and on
the Song of Songs

c. AD 225 – 250

S E R M O N I N D E X

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Volume 10: Origen's Commentaries on John and Matthew, and on the Song of Songs

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS VOLUME

How this book is arranged

This is the tenth volume of a series that gathers the writings of the early Church in order of date, from the generation after the apostles down to the eighth century. This volume holds three of Origen's commentaries on Scripture.

Within each work the text is divided into chapters and numbered sections, so that any passage can be found again and cited. The small bold figures in the text are the section numbers.

The translations

The text is in English only. Wherever a modern English version has been prepared for SermonIndex it is used here; otherwise the book prints an older public-domain translation. In both cases the wording is the translator's own: older translations have not been altered beyond dividing them into sections. The sources for every work are listed at the back of the book, together with the licence under which each text is released. All the works in this volume are printed in older public-domain translations.

In this volume

Origen was above all a student of the Bible, and most of what he wrote was commentary. He began his Commentary on John in Alexandria and carried it on at Caesarea. It survives only in part, and this volume prints Books 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 10. The Commentary on Matthew also survives only in part, and this volume prints the introduction and Books 1, 2 and 10 to 14.

Origen read Scripture on several levels, the plain sense, the moral sense and the spiritual sense, and he looked for Christ and the soul's path to God behind the words. This way of reading is clearest in his Commentary and Homilies on the Song of Songs, which he read as the love between Christ and the soul or the Church. Those two works are known to us through the Latin translations of Rufinus and Jerome.

Dates and authorship

Dates are approximate and are debated by scholars. Each work begins with a short introduction that states what is known about its author and its date, and what is uncertain.

P A R T O N E

Commentaries on the Gospels

Origen's great commentaries on John and Matthew, which survive in part.

Commentary on John

ORIGEN OF ALEXANDRIA

c. AD 185–253

Teacher and biblical scholar of Alexandria and Caesarea.

BOOK 1

1. How Christians are the Spiritual Israel.

¹That people which was called of old the people of God was divided into twelve tribes, and over and above the other tribes it had the levitical order, which itself again carried on the service of God in various priestly and levitical suborders. In the same manner, it appears to me that the whole people of Christ, when we regard it in the aspect of the hidden man of the heart, that people which is called "Jew inwardly," and is circumcised in the spirit, has in a more mystic way the characteristics of the tribes. This may be more plainly gathered from John in his Apocalypse, though the other prophets also do not by any means conceal the state of matters from those who have the faculty of hearing them. John speaks as follows: "And I saw another angel ascending from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God, and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not either the earth, or the sea, or the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand who were sealed, out of every tribe of the children of Israel; of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand, of the tribe of Roubem twelve thousand. And he mentioned each of the tribes singly, with the exception of Dan. Then, some way further on, he continues:

²"And I saw, and behold the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder. And the voice

which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps; and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four beasts and the elders, and no one could learn the song but the hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were purchased from among men, a first fruits to God and to the Lamb; and in their mouth was found no lie, for they are without blemish. Now this is said in John with reference to those who have believed in Christ, for they also, even if their bodily descent cannot be traced to the seed of the Patriarchs, are yet gathered out of the tribes. That this is so we may conclude from what is further said about them: "Hurt not," he says, "the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand, sealed from every tribe of the children of Israel."

2. The 144, 000 Sealed in the Apocalypse are Converts to Christ from the Gentile World.

3 These, then, who are sealed on their foreheads from every tribe of the children of Israel, are a hundred and forty-four thousand in number; and these hundred and forty-four thousand are afterwards said in John to have the name of the Lamb and of His Father written on their foreheads, and to be virgins, not having defiled themselves with women. What else could the seal be which is on their foreheads but the name of the Lamb and the name of His Father? In both passages their foreheads are said to have the seal; In one the seal is spoken of, in the other it appears to contain the letters forming the name of the Lamb, and the name of His Father. Now these taken from the tribes are, as we showed before, the same persons as the virgins. But the number of believers is small who belong to Israel according to the flesh; one might venture to assert that they would not nearly make up the number of a hundred and forty-four thousand. It is clear, therefore, that the hundred and forty-four thousand who have not defiled themselves with women must be made up of those who have come to the divine word out of the Gentile world. In this way the truth of the statement may be upheld that the first fruits of each tribe are its virgins. For the passage goes on: "These were brought from among men to be a first fruits to God and to the Lamb; and in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without blemish." The state-

ment about the hundred and forty-four thousand no doubt admits of mystical interpretation; But it is unnecessary at this point, and would divert us from our purpose, to compare with it those passages of the prophets in which the same lesson is taught regarding those who are called from among the Gentiles.

3. In the Spiritual Israel the High-Priests are Those Who Devote Themselves to the Study of Scripture.

⁴ But what is the bearing of all this for us? So you will ask when you read these words, Ambrosius, thou who art truly a man of God, a mall in Christ. and who seekest to be not a man only, but a spiritual man. The bearing is this. Those of the tribes offer to God, through the levites and priests, tithes and first fruits; not everything which they possess do they regard as tithe or first fruit. The levites and priests, on the other hand, have no possessions but tithes and first fruits; yet they also in turn offer tithes to God through the high-priests, and, I believe, first fruits too. The same is the case with those who approach Christian studies. Most of us devote most of our time to the things of this life, and dedicate to God only a few special acts, thus resembling those members of the tribes who had but few transactions with the priest, and discharged their religious duties with no great expense of time. But those who devote themselves to the divine word and have no other employment but the service of God may not unnaturally, allowing for the difference of occupation in the two cases, be called our levites and priests. And those who fulfil a more distinguished office than their kinsmen will perhaps be high-priests, according to the order of Aaron, not that of Melchisedek.

⁵ Here some one may object that it is somewhat too bold to apply the name of high-priests to men, when Jesus Himself is spoken of in many a prophetic passage as the one great priest, as "We have a great high-priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. But to this we reply that the Apostle clearly defined his meaning, and declared the prophet to have said about the Christ, "Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedek," and not according to the order of Aaron. We say accordingly that men can be high-priests according to the order of Aaron, but according to the order of Melchisedek only the Christ of God.

4. The Study of the Gospels is the First Fruits Offered by These Priests of Christianity.

⁶ Now our whole activity is devoted to God, and our whole life, since we are bent on progress in divine things. If, then, it be our desire to have the whole

of those first fruits spoken of above which are made up of the many first fruits, if we are not mistaken in this view, in what must our first fruits consist, after the bodily separation we have undergone from each other, but in the study of the Gospel? For we may venture to say that the Gospel is the first fruits of all the Scriptures. Where, then, could be the first fruits of our activity, since the time when we came to Alexandria, but in the first fruits of the Scriptures? It must not be forgotten, however, that the first fruits are not the same as the first growth. For the first fruits are offered after all the fruits (are ripe), but the first growth before them all. Now of the Scriptures which are current and are believed to be divine in all the churches, one would not be wrong in saying that the first growth is the law of Moses, but the first fruits the Gospel. For it was after all the fruits of the prophets who prophesied till the Lord Jesus, that the perfect word shot forth.

5. All Scripture is Gospel; But the Gospels are Distinguished Above Other Scriptures.

⁷ Here, however, some one may object, appealing to the notion just put forward of the unfolding of the first fruits last, and may say that the Acts and the letters of the Apostles came after the Gospels, and that this destroys our argument to the effect that the Gospel is the first fruits of all Scripture. To this we must reply that it is the conviction of men who are wise in Christ, who have profited by those epistles which are current, and who see them to be vouched for by the testimonies deposited in the law and the prophets, that the apostolic writings are to be pronounced wise and worthy of belief, and that they have great authority, but that they are not on the same level with that "Thus sayeth the Lord Almighty. Consider on this point the language of St. Paul. When he declares that "Every Scripture is inspired of God and profitable," does he include his own writings? Or does he not include his dictum, "I say, and not the Lord," and "So I ordain in all the churches," and "What things I suffered at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra," and similar things which he writes in virtue of his own authority, and which do not quite possess the character of words flowing from divine inspiration. Must we also show that the old Scripture is not Gospel, since it does not point out the Coming One, but only foretells Him and heralds His coming at a future time;

⁸ but that all the new Scripture is the Gospel. It not only says as in the beginning of the Gospel, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" it also contains many praises of Him, and many of His teachings, on whose account the Gospel is a Gospel. Again, if God set in the

Church apostles and prophets and evangelists (gospellers), pastors and teachers, we must first enquire what was the office of the evangelist, and mark that it is not only to narrate how the Saviour cured a man who was blind from his birth, or raised up a dead man who was already stinking, or to state what extraordinary works he wrought; and the office of the evangelist being thus defined, we shall not hesitate to find Gospel in such discourse also as is not narrative but hortatory and intended to strengthen belief in the mission of Jesus; and thus we shall arrive at the position that whatever was written by the Apostles is Gospel. As to this second definition, it might be objected that the Epistles are not entitled "Gospel," and that we are wrong in applying the name of Gospel to the whole of the New Testament. But to this we answer that it happens not unfrequently in Scripture when two or more persons or things are named by the same name, the name attaches itself most significantly to one of those things or persons. Thus the Saviour says, "Call no man Master upon the earth;

9 "while the Apostle says that Masters have been appointed in the Church. These latter accordingly will not be Masters in the strict sense of the dictum of the Gospel. In the same way the Gospel in the Epistles will not extend to every word of them, when it is compared with the narrative of Jesus' actions and sufferings and discourses. No: the Gospel is the first fruits of all Scripture, and to these first fruits of the Scriptures we devote the first fruits of all those actions of ours which we trust to see turn out as we desire.

6. The Fourfold Gospel. John's the First Fruits of the Four. Qualifications Necessary for Interpreting It.

10 Now the Gospels are four. These four are, as it were, the elements of the faith of the Church, out of which elements the whole world which is reconciled to God in Christ is put together; as Paul says, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself;" of which world Jesus bore the sin; for it is of the world of the Church that the word is written, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. The Gospels then being four, I deem the first fruits of the Gospels to be that which you have enjoined me to search into according to my powers, the Gospel of John, that which speaks of him whose genealogy had already been set forth, but which begins to speak of him at a point before he had any genealogy. For Matthew, writing for the Hebrews who looked for Him who was to come of the line of Abraham and of David, says: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David,

the son of Abraham. And Mark, knowing what he writes, narrates the beginning of the Gospel; we may perhaps find what he aims at in John; in the beginning the Word, God the Word. But Luke, though he says at the beginning of Acts, "The former treatise did I make about all that Jesus began to do and to teach," yet leaves to him who lay on Jesus' breast the greatest and completest discourses about Jesus.

11 For none of these plainly declared His Godhead, as John does when he makes Him say, "I am the light of the world," "I am the way and the truth and the life," "I am the resurrection," "I am the door," "I am the good shepherd;" and in the Apocalypse, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. We may therefore make bold to say that the Gospels are the first fruits of all the Scriptures, but that of the Gospels that of John is the first fruits. No one can apprehend the meaning of it except he have lain on Jesus' breast and received from Jesus Mary to be his mother also. Such an one must he become who is to be another John, and to have shown to him, like John, by Jesus Himself Jesus as He is. For if Mary, as those declare who with sound mind extol her, had no other son but Jesus, and yet Jesus says to His mother, "Woman, behold thy son," and not "Behold you have this son also," then He virtually said to her, "Lo, this is Jesus, whom thou didst bear. Is it not the case that every one who is perfect lives himself no longer, but Christ lives in him; and if Christ lives in him, then it is said of him to Mary, "Behold thy son Christ.

12 What a mind, then, must we have to enable us to interpret in a worthy manner this work, though it be committed to the earthly treasure-house of common speech, of writing which any passer-by can read, and which can be heard when read aloud by any one who lends to it his bodily ears? What shall we say of this work? He who is accurately to apprehend what it contains should be able to say with truth, "We have the mind of Christ, that we may know those things which are bestowed on us by God. It is possible to quote one of Paul's sayings in support of the contention that the whole of the New Testament is Gospel. He writes in a certain place: "According to my Gospel. Now we have no written work of Paul which is commonly called a Gospel. But all that he preached and said was the Gospel; and what he preached and said he was also in the habit of writing, and what he wrote was therefore Gospel. But if what Paul wrote was Gospel, it follows that what Peter wrote was also Gospel, and in a word all that was said or written to perpetuate the

knowledge of Christ's sojourn on earth, and to prepare for His second coming, or to bring it about as a present reality in those souls which were willing to receive the Word of God as He stood at the door and knocked and sought to come into them.

7. What Good Things are Announced in the Gospels.

¹³ But it is time we should inquire what is the meaning of the designation "Gospel," and why these books have this title. Now the Gospel is a discourse containing a promise of things which naturally, and on account of the benefits they bring, rejoice the hearer as soon as the promise is heard and believed. Nor is such a discourse any the less a Gospel that we define it with reference to the position of the hearer. A Gospel is either a word which implies the actual presence to the believer of something that is good, or a word promising the arrival of a good which is expected. Now all these definitions apply to those books which are named Gospels. For each of the Gospels is a collection of announcements which are useful to him who believes them and does not misinterpret them; it brings him a benefit and naturally makes him glad because it tells of the sojourn with men, on account of men, and for their salvation, of the first-born of all creation, Christ Jesus. And again each Gospel tells of the sojourn of the good Father in the Son with those minded to receive Him, as is plain to every believer; and moreover by these books a good is announced which had been formerly expected, as is by no means hard to see. For John the Baptist spoke in the name almost of the whole people when he sent to Jesus and asked, "Art thou He that should come or do we look for another?"

¹⁴ "For to the people the Messiah was an expected good, which the prophets had foretold, and they all alike, though under the law and the prophets, fixed their hopes on Him, as the Samaritan woman bears witness when she says: "I know that the Messiah comes, who is called Christ; when He comes He will tell us all things. Simon and Cleopas too, when talking to each other about all that had happened to Jesus Christ Himself, then risen, though they did not know that He had risen, from the dead, speak thus, "Dost thou sojourn alone in Jerusalem, and knowest not the things which have taken place there in these days? And when he said what things? they answered, The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet, mighty in deed and in word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to be sentenced to death and crucified Him. But we

hoped that it was He which should redeem Israel. Again, Andrew the brother of Simon Peter found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, Christ. And a little further on Philip finds Nathanael and says to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Jesus the son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

8. How the Gospels Cause the Other Books of Scripture Also to Be Gospel.

¹⁵ Now an objection might be raised to our first definition, because it would embrace books which are not entitled Gospels. For the law and the prophets also are to our eyes books containing the promise of things which, from the benefit they will confer on him, naturally rejoice the hearer as soon as he takes in the message. To this it may be said that before the sojourn of Christ, the law and the prophets, since He had not come who interpreted the mysteries they contained, did not convey such a promise as belongs to our definition of the Gospel; but the Saviour, when He sojourned with men and caused the Gospel to appear in bodily form, by the Gospel caused all things to appear as Gospel. Here I would not think it beside the purpose to quote the example of Him who ... a few things ... and yet all.

¹⁶ For when he had taken away the veil which was present in the law and the prophets, and by His divinity had proved the sons of men that the Godhead was at work, He opened the way for all those who desired it to be disciples of His wisdom, and to understand what things were true and real in the law of Moses, of which things those of old worshipped the type and the shadow, and what things were real of the things narrated in the histories which "happened to them in the way of type," but these things "were written for our sakes, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. With whomsoever, then, Christ has sojourned, he worships God neither at Jerusalem nor on the mountain of the Samaritans; he knows that God is a spirit, and worships Him spiritually, in spirit and in truth; no longer by type does he worship the Father and Maker of all. Before that Gospel, therefore, which came into being by the sojourning of Christ, none of the older works was a Gospel. But the Gospel, which is the new covenant, having delivered us from the oldness of the letter, lights up for us, by the light of knowledge, the newness of the spirit, a thing which never grows old, which has its home in the New Testament, but is also present in all the Scriptures.

¹⁷ It was fitting, therefore, that that Gospel, which enables us to find the Gospel present, even in the Old Testament, should itself receive, in a special sense, the name of Gospel.

9. The Somatic and the Spiritual Gospel.

¹⁸ We must not, however, forget that the sojourning of Christ with men took place before His bodily sojourn, in an intellectual fashion, to those who were more perfect and not children, and were not under pedagogues and governors. In their minds they saw the fulness of the time to be at hand—the patriarchs, and Moses the servant, and the prophets who beheld the glory of Christ. And as before His manifest and bodily coming He came to those who were perfect, so also, after His coming has been announced to all, to those who are still children, since they are under pedagogues and governors and have not yet arrived at the fulness of the time, forerunners of Christ have come to sojourn, discourses (logoi) suited for minds still in their childhood, and rightly, therefore, termed pedagogues. But the Son Himself, the glorified God, the Word, has not yet come; He waits for the preparation which must take place on the part of men of God who are to admit His deity. And this, too, we must bear in mind, that as the law contains a shadow of good things to come, which are indicated by that law which is announced according to truth, so the Gospel also teaches a shadow of the mysteries of Christ, the Gospel which is thought to be capable of being understood by any one.

¹⁹ What John calls the eternal Gospel, and what may properly be called the spiritual Gospel, presents clearly to those who have the will to understand, all matters concerning the very Son of God, both the mysteries presented by His discourses and those matters of which His acts were the enigmas. In accordance with this we may conclude that, as it is with Him who is a Jew outwardly and circumcised in the flesh, so it is with the Christian and with baptism. Paul and Peter were, at an earlier period, Jews outwardly and circumcised, but later they received from Christ that they should be so in secret, too; SO that outwardly they were Jews for the sake of the salvation of many, and by an economy they not only confessed in words that they were Jews, but showed it by their actions. And the same is to be said about their Christianity. As Paul could not benefit those who were Jews according to the flesh, without, when reason shows it to be necessary, circumcising Timothy, and when it appears the natural course getting himself shaved and making a vow, and, in a word, being to the Jews a Jew that he might gain the Jews—so

also it is not possible for one who is responsible for the good of many to operate as he should by means of that Christianity only which is in secret. That will never enable him to improve those who are following the external Christianity, or to lead them on to better and higher things.

²⁰ We must, therefore, be Christians both somatically and spiritually, and where there is a call for the somatic (bodily) Gospel, in which a man says to those who are carnal that he knows nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, so we must do. But should we find those who are perfected in the spirit, and bear fruit in it, and are enamoured of the heavenly wisdom, these must he made to partake of that Word which, after it was made flesh, rose again to what it was in the beginning, with God.

10. How Jesus Himself is the Gospel.

²¹ The foregoing inquiry into the nature of the Gospel cannot be regarded as useless; it has enabled us to see what distinction there is between a sensible Gospel and all intellectual and spiritual one. What we have now to do is to transform the sensible Gospel into a spiritual one. ²² For what would the narrative of the sensible Gospel amount to if it were not developed to a spiritual one? It would be of little account or none; any one can read it and assure himself of the facts it tells-no more. But our whole energy is now to be directed to the effort to penetrate to the deep things of the meaning of the Gospel and to search out the truth that is ill it when divested of types. Now what the Gospels say is to be regarded in the light of promises of good things; and we must say that the good things the Apostles announce in this Gospel are simply Jesus. one good thing which they are said to announce is the resurrection; but the resurrection is in a manner Jesus, for Jesus says: "I am the resurrection. Jesus preaches to the poor those things which are laid up for the saints, calling them to the divine promises. And the holy Scriptures bear witness to the Gospel announcements made by the Apostles and to that made by our Saviour. David says of the Apostles, perhaps also of the evangelists: "The Lord shall give the word to those that preach with great power; the King of the powers of the beloved; "teaching at the same time that it is not skilfully composed discourse, nor the mode of delivery, nor well practised eloquence that produces conviction, but the communication of divine power. Hence also Paul says: "I will know not the word that is puffed up, but the power;

²³ for the kingdom of God is not in word but in power. And in another passage: "And my word and my preaching were not persuasive words of wis-

dom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. To this power Simon and Cleophas bear witness when they say: "Was not our heart burning within us by the way, as he opened to us the Scriptures?" And the Apostles, since the quantity of the power is great which God supplies to the speakers, had great power, according to the word of David: "The Lord will give the word to the preachers with great power. Isaiah too says: "How beautiful are the feet of them that proclaim good tidings; "he sees how beautiful and how opportune was the announcement of the Apostles who walked in Him who said, "I am the way," and praises the feet of those who walk in the intellectual way of Christ Jesus, and through that door go in to God. They announce good tidings, those whose feet are beautiful, namely, Jesus.

11. Jesus is All Good Things; Hence the Gospel is Manifold.

²⁴Let no one wonder if we have understood Jesus to be announced in the Gospel under a plurality of names of good things. If we look at the things by the names of which the Son of God is called, we shall understand how many good things Jesus is, whom those preach whose feet are beautiful. One good thing is life; but Jesus is the life. Another good thing is the light of the world, when it is true light, and the light of men; and all these things the Son of God is said to be. And another good thing which one may conceive to be in addition to life or light is the truth. And a fourth in addition to time is the way which leads to the truth. And all these things our Saviour teaches that He is, when He says: "I am the way and the truth and the life. Ah, is not that good, to shake off earth and mortality, and to rise again, obtaining this boon from the Lord, since He is the resurrection, as He says: "I am the resurrection. But the door also is a good, through which one enters into the highest blessedness. Now Christ says: "I am the door. And what need is there to speak of wisdom, which "the Lord created the first principle of His ways, for His works," in whom the father of her rejoiced.

²⁵delighting in her manifold intellectual beauty, seen by the eyes of the mind alone, and provoking him to love who discerns her divine and heavenly charm? A good indeed is the wisdom of God, proclaimed along with the other good foresaid by those whose feet are beautiful. And the power of God is the eighth good we enumerate, which is Christ. Nor must we omit to mention the Word, who is God after the Father of all. For this also is a good, less than no other. Happy, then, are those who accept these goods and receive them from those who announce the good tidings of them, those whose feet

are beautiful. Indeed even one of the Corinthians to whom Paul declared that he knew nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, should he learn Him who for our sakes became man, and so receive Him, he would become identified with the beginning of the good things we have spoken of; by the man Jesus he would be made a man of God, and by His death he would die to sin. For "Christ, in that He died, died unto sin once. But from His life, since "in that He liveth, He liveth unto God," every one who is conformed to His resurrection receives that living to God. But who will deny that righteousness, essential righteousness, is a good, and essential sanctification, and essential redemption? And these things those preach who preach Jesus, saying that He is made to be of God righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

²⁶ Hence we shall have writings about Him without number, showing that Jesus is a multitude of goods; for from the things which can scarcely be numbered and which have been written we may make some conjecture of those things which actually exist in Him in whom "it pleased God that the whole fulness of the Godhead should dwell bodily. and which are not contained in writings. Why should I say, "are not contained in writings"? For John speaks of the whole world in this connection, and says: "I suppose that not even the world itself would contain the books which would be written. Now to say that the Apostles preach the Saviour is to say that they preach these good things. For this is He who received from the good Father that He Himself should be these good things, so that each man receiving from Jesus the thing or things he is capable of receiving may enjoy good things. But the Apostles, whose feet were beautiful, and those imitators of them who sought to preach the good tidings, could not have done so had not Jesus Himself first preached the good tidings to them, as Isaiah says: "I myself that speak am here, as the opportunity on the mountains, as the feet of one preaching tidings of peace, as one preaching good things; for I will make My salvation to be heard, saying, God shall reign over thee, O Zion!

²⁷ For what are the mountains on which the speaker declares that He Himself is present, but those who are less than none of the highest and the greatest of the earth? And these must be sought by the able ministers of the New Covenant, in order that they may observe the injunction which says: Go up into a high mountain, thou that preachest good tidings to Zion; thou that preachest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength! Now

it is not wonderful if to those who are to preach good tidings Jesus Himself preaches good tidings of good things, which are no other than Himself; for the Son of God preaches the good tidings of Himself to those who cannot come to know Him through others. And He who goes up into the mountains and preaches good things to them, being Himself instructed by His good Father, who "makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust," He does not despise those who are poor in soul. To them He preaches good tidings, as He Himself bears witness to us when He takes Isaiah and reads: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, for the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor, He hath sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and sight to the blind. For closing the book He handed it to the minister and sat down.

²⁸ And when the eyes of all were fastened upon Him, He said, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."

12. The Gospel Contains the ILL Deeds Also Which Were Done to Jesus.

²⁹ It ought not to be forgotten that in such a Gospel as this there is embraced every good deed which was done to Jesus; as, for example, the story of the woman who had been a stalker and had repented, and who, having experienced a genuine recovery from her evil state, had grace to pour her ointment over Jesus so that every one in the house smelt the sweet savour. Hence, too, the words, "Wherever this Gospel shall be preached among all the nations, there also this that she has done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her. And it is clear that whatever is done to the disciples of Jesus is done to Him. Pointing to those of them who met with kind treatment, He says to those who were kind to them, "What ye did to these, ye did to Me. So that every good deed we do to our neighbours is entered ill the Gospel, that Gospel which is written on the heavenly tablets and read by all who are worthy of the knowledge of the whole of things. But on the other side, too, there is a part of the Gospel which is for the condemnation of the doers of the ill deeds which have been done to Jesus.

³⁰ The treachery of Judas and the shouts of the wicked crowd when it said, "Away with such a one from the earth," and "Crucify Him, crucify Him," the mockings of those who crowned Him with thorns, and everything of that kind, is included ill the Gospels. And as a consequence of this we see that every one who betrays the disciples of Jesus is reckoned as betraying Jesus Himself. To Saul, when still a persecutor it is said, "Saul Saul,

why persecutest thou Me? "and, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. There are those who still have thorns with which they crown and dishonour Jesus, those, namely, who are choked by the cares, and riches, and pleasures of life, and though they have received the word of God, do not bring it to perfection. We must beware, therefore, lest we also, as crowning Jesus with thorns of our own, should be entered in the Gospel and read of in this character by those who learn the Jesus, who is in all and is present in all rational and holy lives, learn how He is anointed with ointment, is entertained, is glorified, or how, on the other side, He is dishonoured, and mocked, and beaten. All this had to be said; it is part of our demonstration that our good actions, and also the sins of those who stumble, are embodied in the Gospel, either to everlasting life or to reproach and everlasting shame.

13. The Angels Also are Evangelists.

³¹ Now if there are those among men who are honoured with the ministry of evangelists, and if Jesus Himself brings tidings of good things, and preaches the Gospel to the poor, surely those messengers who were made spirits by God, those who are a flame of fire, ministers of the Father of all, cannot have been excluded from being evangelists also. Hence an angel standing over the shepherds made a bright light to shine round about them, and said: "Fear not; behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all tile people; for there is born to you, this day, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David." And at a time when there was no knowledge among men of tim mystery of the Gospel, those who were greater than men and inhabitants of heaven, the army of God, praised God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men." And having said this, the angels go away from the shepherds into heaven, leaving us to gather how the joy preached to us through the birth of Jesus Christ is glory in the highest to God; they humbled themselves even to the ground, and then returned to their place of rest, to glorify God in the highest through Jesus Christ. But the angels also wonder at the peace which is to be brought about on account of Jesus on the earth, that seat of war, on which Lucifer, star of the morning, fell from heaven, to be warred against and destroyed by Jesus.

14. The Old Testament, Typified by John, is the Beginning of the Gospel.

³² In addition to what we have said, there is also this to be considered about the Gospel, that in the first instance it is that of Christ Jesus, the head of the

whole body of the saved; as Mark says, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Then also it is the Gospel of the Apostles; whence Paul says, "According to my Gospel. But the beginning of the Gospel-for in respect of its extent it has a beginning, a continuation, a middle, and an end-is nothing but the whole Old Testament. John is, in this respect, a type of the Old Testament, or, if we regard the connection of the New Testament with the Old, John represents the termination of the Old. For the same Mark says: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. And here I must wonder how the dissentients can connect the two Testaments with two different Gods. These words, were there no others, are enough to convict them of their error. For how can John be the beginning of the Gospel if they suppose he belongs to a different God, if he belongs to the demiurge, and, as they hold, is not acquainted with the new deity?

³³ And the angels are not entrusted with but one evangelical ministry, and that a short one, not only with that addressed to the shepherds. For at the end an exalted and flying angel, having the Gospel, will preach it to every nation, for the good Father has not entirely deserted those who have fallen away from Him. John, son of Zebedee, says in his Apocalypse: "And I saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the Eternal Gospel, to preach it to those who dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, saying, with a loud voice, Fear God and give Him glory, for the hour of His judgment hath come, and worship Him that made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

15. The Gospel is in the Old Testament, and Indeed in the Whole Universe. Prayer for Aid to Understand the Mystical Sense of the Work in Hand.

³⁴ As, then, we have shown that the beginning of the Gospel, according to one interpretation, is the whole Old Testament, and is signified by the person of John, we shall add, lest this should be called a mere unsupported assertion, what is said in the Acts about the eunuch of the queen of the Ethiopians and Philip. Philip, it is said, began at the passage of Isaiah: "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb," and so preached to him the Lord Jesus. How can he begin with the prophet and preach Jesus, if Isaiah was not a part of the beginning of the Gospel? From

this we may derive a proof of the assertion made at the outset, that every divine Scripture is Gospel. If he who preaches the Gospel preaches good things, and all those who spoke before the sojourn of Jesus in the flesh preach Christ, who is as we saw good things, then the words spoken by all of them alike are in a sense a part of the Gospel. And when the Gospel is said to be declared throughout the whole world, we infer that it is actually preached in the whole world, not, that is to say, in this earthly district only, but in the whole system of heaven and earth, or from heaven and earth. And why should we discuss any further what the Gospel is? What we have said is enough.

³⁵ Besides the passages we have adduced, passages by no means inept or unsuited for our purpose,—much to the same effect might be collected from the Scriptures, so that it is clearly seen what is the glory of the good things in Jesus Christ shed forth by the Gospel, the Gospel ministered by men and angels, and, I believe, also by authorities and powers, and thrones and dominions, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come, and indeed even by Christ Himself. Here, then, let us bring to a close what has to be said before proceeding to read the work itself. And now let us ask God to assist us through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit, so that we may be able to unfold the mystical sense which is treasured up in the words before us.

16. Meaning of "Beginning." (1) in Space.

³⁶ "In the beginning was the Word. It is not only the Greeks who consider the word "beginning" to have many meanings. Let any one collect the Scripture passages in which the word occurs, and with a view to an accurate interpretation of it note what it stands for in each passage, and he will find that the word has many meanings in sacred discourse also. We speak of a beginning in reference to a transition. Here it has to do with a road and with length. This appears in the saying: "The beginning of a good way is to do justice. For since the good way is long, there have first to be considered in reference to it the question connected with action, and this side is presented in the words "to do justice; "the contemplative side comes up for consideration afterwards. In the latter the end of it comes to rest at last in the so-called restoration of all things, since no enemy is left them to fight against, if that be true which is said: "For He must reign until He have placed His enemies under His feet. But the last enemy to be destroyed is death. For then but one activity will be left for those who have come to God on account of

His word which is with Him, that, namely, of knowing God, so that, being found by the knowledge of the Father, they may all be His Son, as now no one but the Son knows the Father.

³⁷ For should any one enquire carefully at what time those are to know the Father to whom He who knows the Father reveals Him, and should he consider how a man now sees only through a glass and in a riddle, never having learned to know as he ought to know, he would be justified in saying that no one, no apostle even, and no prophet had known the Father, but when he became one with Him as a son and a father are one. And if any one says that it is a digression which has led us to this point, our consideration of that one meaning of the word beginning, we must show that the digression is necessary and useful for the end we have in view. For if we speak of a beginning in the case of a transition, and of a way and its length, and if we are told that the beginning of a good way is to do justice, then it concerns us to know in what manner every good way has for its beginning to do justice, and how after such beginning it arrives at contemplation, and in what manner it thus arrives at contemplation.

17. (2) in Time. The Beginning of Creation.

³⁸ Again, there is a beginning in a matter of origin, as might appear in the saying: "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth. This meaning, however, appears more plainly in the Book of Job in the passage: "This is the beginning of God's creation, made for His angels to mock at. One would suppose that the heavens and the earth were made first, of all that was made at the creation of the world. But the second passage suggests a better view, namely, that as many beings were framed with a body, the first made of these was the creature called dragon, but called in another passage the great whale (leviathan) which the Lord tamed. We must ask about this; whether, when the saints were living a blessed life apart from matter and from any body, the dragon, falling from the pure life, became fit to be bound in matter and in a body, so that the Lord could say, speaking through storm and clouds, "This is the beginning of the creation of God, made for His angels to mock at. It is possible, however, that the dragon is not positively the beginning of the creation of the Lord, but that there were many creatures made with a body for the angels to mock at, and that the dragon was the first of these, while others could subsist in a body without such reproach. But it is not so.

³⁹ For the soul of the sun is placed in a body, and the whole creation, of which the Apostle says: "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," and perhaps the following is about the same: "The creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but on account of Him who subjected it for hope; "so that bodies might be in vanity, and doing the things of the body, as he who is in the body must. ... One who is in the body does the things of the body, though unwillingly. Wherefore the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but he who does unwillingly the things of the body does what he does for the sake of hope, as if we should say that Paul desired to remain in the flesh, not willingly, but on account of hope. For though he thought it better to be dissolved and to be with Christ, it was not unreasonable that he should wish to remain in the flesh for the sake of the benefit to others and of advancement in the things hoped for, not only by him, but also by those benefited by him. This meaning of the term "beginning," as of origin, will serve us also in the passage in which Wisdom speaks in the Proverbs. "God," we read, "created me the beginning of His ways, for His works. Here the term could be interpreted as in the first application we spoke of, that of a way:

⁴⁰ "The Lord," it says, "created me the beginning of His ways. One might assert, and with reason, that God Himself is the beginning of all things, and might go on to say, as is plain, that the Father is the beginning of the Son; and the demiurge the beginning of the works of the demiurge, and that God in a word is the beginning of all that exists. This view is supported by our: "In the beginning was the Word. In the Word one may see the Son, and because He is in the Father He may be said to be in the beginning.

18. (3) of Substance.

⁴¹ In the third place a beginning may be that out of which a thing comes, the underlying matter from which things are formed. This, however, is the view of those who hold matter itself to be uncreated, a view which we believers cannot share, since we believe God to have made the things that are out of the things which are not, as the mother of the seven martyrs in the Maccabees teaches, and as the angel of repentance in the Shepherd inculcated.

19. (4) of Type and Copy.

⁴² In addition to these meanings there is that in which we speak of an arche, according to form; thus if the first-born of every creature is the image of the

invisible God, then the Father is his arche. In the same way Christ is the arche of those who are made according to the image of God. For if men are according to the image, but the image according to the Father; in the first case the Father is the arche of Christ, and in the other Christ is the arche of men, and men are made, not according to that of which he is the image, but according to the image. With this example our passage will agree: "In the arche was the Word."

20. (5) of Elements and What is Formed from Them.

⁴³ There is also an arche in a matter of learning, as when we say that the letters are the arche of grammar. The Apostle accordingly says: "When by reason of the time you ought to be teachers, you have need again that some one teach you what are the elements of the arche of the oracles of God." Now the arche spoken of in connection with learning is twofold; first in respect of its nature, secondly in its relation to us; as we might say of Christ, that by nature His arche is deity, but that in relation to us who cannot, for its very greatness, command the whole truth about Him, His arche is His manhood, as He is preached to babes, "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." In this view, then, Christ is the arche of learning in His own nature, because He is the wisdom and power of God; but for us, the Word was made flesh, that He might tabernacle among us who could only thus at first receive Him. And perhaps this is the reason why He is not only the firstborn of all creation, but is also designated the man, Adam. For Paul says He is Adam: "The last Adam was made a life-giving spirit."

21. (6) of Design and Execution.

⁴⁴ Again we speak of the arche of an action, in which there is a design which appears after the beginning. It may be considered whether wisdom is to be regarded as the arche of the works of God because it is in this way the principle of them.

22. The Word Was in the Beginning, I.e., in Wisdom, Which Contained All Things in Idea, Before They Existed. Christ's Character as Wisdom is Prior to His Other Characters.

⁴⁵ So many meanings occur to us at once of the word arche. We have now to ask which of them we should adopt for our text, "In the beginning was the Word. It is plain that we may at once dismiss the meaning which connects it with transition or with a road and its length. Nor, it is pretty plain, will the

meaning connected with an origin serve our purpose. One might, however, think of the sense in which it points to the author, to that which brings about the effect, if, as we read, "God commanded and they were created. For Christ is, in a manner, the demiurge, to whom the Father says, "Let there be light," and "Let there be a firmament. But Christ is demiurge as a beginning (arche), inasmuch as He is wisdom. It is in virtue of His being wisdom that He is called arche. For Wisdom says in Solomon: "God created me the beginning of His ways, for His works," so that the Word might be in an arche, namely, in wisdom. Considered in relation to the structure of contemplation and thoughts about the whole of things, it is regarded as wisdom; but in relation to that side of the objects of thought, in which reasonable beings apprehend them, it is considered as the Word. And there is no wonder, since, as we have said before, the Saviour is many good things, if He comprises in Himself thoughts of the first order, and of the second, and of the third.

⁴⁶ This is what John suggested when he said about the Word: "That which was made was life in Him. Life then came in the Word. And on the one side the Word is no other than the Christ, the Word, He who was with the Father, by whom all things were made; while, on the other side, the Life is no other than the Son of God, who says: "I am the way and the truth and the life. As, then, life came into being in the Word, so the Word in the arche. Consider, however, if we are at liberty to take this meaning of arche for our text: "In the beginning was the Word," so as to obtain the meaning that all things came into being according to wisdom and according to the models of the system which are present in his thoughts. For I consider that as a house or a ship is built and fashioned in accordance with the sketches of the builder or designer, the house or the ship having their beginning (arche) in the sketches and reckonings in his mind, so all things came into being in accordance with the designs of what was to be, clearly laid down by God in wisdom. And we should add that having created, so to speak, ensouled wisdom, He left her to hand over, from the types which were in her, to things existing and to matter, the actual emergence of them, their moulding and their forms.

⁴⁷ But I consider, if it be permitted to say this, that the beginning (arche) of real existence was the Son of God, saying: "I am the beginning and the end, the A and the W, the first and the last. We must, however, remember that He is not the arche in respect of every name which is applied to Him.

For how can He be the beginning in respect of His being life, when life came in the Word, and the Word is manifestly the arche of life? It is also tolerably evident that He cannot be the arche in respect of His being the first-born from the dead. And if we go through all His titles carefully we find that He is the arche only in respect of His being wisdom. Not even as the Word is He the arche, for the Word was in the arche. And so one might venture to say that wisdom is anterior to all the thoughts that are expressed in the titles of the first-born of every creature. Now God is altogether one and simple; but our Saviour, for many reasons, since God set Him forth a propitiation and a first fruits of the whole creation, is made many things, or perhaps all these things; the whole creation, so far as capable of redemption, stands in need of Him. And, hence, He is made the light of men, because men, being darkened by wickedness, need the light that shines in darkness, and is not overtaken by the darkness;

⁴⁸ had not men been in darkness, He would not have become the light of men. The same thing may be observed in respect of His being the first-born of the dead. For supposing the woman had not been deceived, and Adam had not fallen, and man created for incorruption had obtained it, then He would not have descended into the grave, nor would He have died, there being no sin, nor would His love of men have required that He should die, and if He had not died, He could not have been the first-born of the dead. We may also ask whether He would ever have become a shepherd, had man not been thrown together with the beasts which are devoid of reason, and made like to them. For if God saves man and beasts, He saves those beasts which He does save, by giving them a shepherd, since they cannot have a king. Thus if we collect the titles of Jesus, the question arises which of them were conferred on Him later, and would never have assumed such importance if the saints had begun and had also persevered in blessedness. Perhaps Wisdom would be the only remaining one, or perhaps the Word would remain too, or perhaps the Life, or perhaps the Truth, not the others, which He took for our sake.

⁴⁹ And happy indeed are those who in their need for the Son of God have yet become such persons as not to need Him in His character as a physician healing the sick, nor in that of a shepherd, nor in that of redemption, but only in His characters as wisdom, as the word and righteousness, or if there be any other title suitable for those who are so perfect as to receive Him in

His fairest characters. So much for the phrase "In the beginning." ⁵⁰ 23. The Title "Word" Is to Be Interpreted by the Same Method as the Other Titles of Christ. The Word of God is Not a Mere Attribute of God, But a Separate Person. What is Meant When He is Called the Word. ⁵¹ Let us consider, however, a little more carefully what is the Word which is in the beginning. I am often led to wonder when I consider the things that are said about Christ, even by those who are in earnest in their belief in Him. Though there is a countless number of names which can be applied to our Saviour, they omit the most of them, and if they should remember them, they declare that these titles are not to be understood in their proper sense, but tropically. But when they come to the title Logos (Word), and repeat that Christ alone is the Word of God, they are not consistent, and do not, as in the case of the other titles, search out what is behind the meaning of the term "Word. I wonder at the stupidity of the general run of Christians in this matter. I do not mince matters; it is nothing but stupidity. The Son of God says in one passage, "I am the light of the world," and in another, "I am the resurrection," and again, "I am the way and the truth and the life. It is also written, "I am the door," and we have the saying, "I am the good shepherd," and when the woman of Samaria says, "We know the Messiah is coming, who is called Christ; when He comes, He will tell us all things," Jesus answers, "I that speak unto thee am He.

⁵² Again, when He washed the disciples' feet, He declared Himself in these words to be their Master and Lord: "You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. He also distinctly announces Himself as the Son of God, when He says, "He whom the Father sanctified and sent unto the world, to Him do you say, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God? "and "Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son also may glorify Thee. We also find Him declaring Himself to be a king, as when He answers Pilate's question, "Art Thou the King of the Jews? "by saying, "My kingdom is not of this world; if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is My kingdom not from hence. We have also read the words, "I am the true vine and My Father is the husbandman," and again, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. Add to these testimonies also the saying, "I am the bread of life, that came down from heaven and giveth life to the world. These texts will suffice for the present, which we have picked up out of the storehouse of the

Gospels, and in all of which He claims to be the Son of God. But in the Apocalypse of John, too, He says, "I am the first and the last, and the living One, and I was dead.

⁵³ Behold, I am alive for evermore. And again, "I am the A and the W, and the first and the last, the beginning and the end. The careful student of the sacred books, moreover, may gather not a few similar passages from the prophets, as where He calls Himself a chosen shaft, and a servant of God, and a light of the Gentiles. Isaiah also says, "From my mother's womb hath He called me by my name, and He made my mouth as a sharp sword, and under the shadow of His hand did He hide me, and He said to me, Thou art My servant, O Israel, and in thee will I be glorified. And a little farther on: "And my God shall be my strength, and He said to me, This is a great thing for thee to be called My servant, to set up the tribes of Jacob and to turn again the diaspora of Israel. Behold I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation to the end of the earth. And in Jeremiah too He likens Himself to a lamb, as thus: "I was as a gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter. These and other similar sayings He applies to Himself.

⁵⁴ In addition to these one might collect in the Gospels and the Apostles and in the prophets a countless number of titles which are applied to the Son of God, as the writers of the Gospels set forth their own views of what He is, or the Apostles extol Him out of what they had learned, or the prophets proclaim in advance His coining advent and announce the things concerning Him under various names. Thus John calls Him the Lamb of God, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world," and in these words he declares Him as a man, "This is He about whom I said, that there cometh after me a man who is there before me; for He was before me. And in his Catholic Epistle John says that He is a Paraclete for our souls with the Father, as thus: "And if any one sin, we have a Paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," and he adds that He is a propitiation for our sins, and similarly Paul says He is a propitiation: "Whom God set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood, on account of forgiveness of the forepast sins, in the forbearance of God. According to Paul, too, He is declared to be the wisdom and the power of God, as in the Epistle to the Corinthians: "Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. It is added that He is also sanctification and redemption:

⁵⁵ "He was made to us of God," he says, "wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. But he also teaches us, writing to the Hebrews, that Christ is a High-Priest: "Having, therefore, a great High-Priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. And the prophets have other names for Him besides these. Jacob in his blessing of his sons says, "Judah, thy brethren shall extol thee; thy hands are on the necks of thine enemies. A lion's whelp is Judah, from a shoot, my son, art thou sprung up; thou hast lain down and slept as a lion; who shall awaken him? "We cannot now linger over these phrases, to show that what is said of Judah applies to Christ. What may be quoted against this view, viz., "A ruler shall not part from Judah nor a leader from his loins, until He come for whom it is reserved; "this can better be cleared up on another occasion . But Isaiah knows Christ to be spoken of under the names of Jacob and Israel, when he says, "Jacob is my servant, I will help Him; Israel is my elect, my soul hath accepted Him. He shall declare judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any one hear His voice on the streets. A bruised rod shall He not break. and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He bring forth judgment from victory, and in His name shall the nations hope.

⁵⁶ That it is Christ about whom such prophecies are made, Matthew shows in his Gospel, where he quotes from memory and says: "That the saying might be fulfilled, He shall not strive nor cry," etc. David also is called Christ, as where Ezekiel in his prophecy to the shepherds adds as from the mouth of God: "I will raise up David my servant, who shall be their shepherd. For it is not the patriarch David who is to rise and be the shepherd of the saints, but Christ. Isaiah also called Christ the rod and the flower: "There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall spring out of his root, and the spirit of God shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness, and He shall be full of the spirit of the fear of the Lord. And in the Psalms our Lord is called the stone, as follows: "The stone which the builders rejected is made the head of the corner. It is from the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes. And the Gospel shows, as also does Luke in the Acts, that the stone is no other than Christ; the Gospel as follows: "Have ye never read, the stone which the builders rejected is made the

head of the corner. Whosoever falls on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust.

⁵⁷ And Luke writes in Acts: "This is the stone, which was set at naught of you the builders, which has become the head of the corner. And one of the names applied to the Saviour is that which He Himself does not utter, but which John records;-the Word who was in the beginning with God, God the Word. And it is worth our while to fix our attention for a moment on those scholars who omit consideration of most of the great names we have mentioned and regard this as the most important one. As to the former titles, they look for any account of them that any one may offer, but in the case of this one they proceed differently and ask, What is the Son of God when called the Word? The passage they employ most is that in the Psalms, "My heart hath produced a good Word; "and they imagine the Son of God to be the utterance of the Father deposited, as it were, in syllables, and accordingly they do not allow Him, if we examine them farther, any independent hypostasis, nor are they clear about His essence. I do not mean that they confuse its qualities, but the fact of His having an essence of His own. For no one can understand how that which is said to be "Word" can be a Son. And such an animated Word, not being a separate entity from the Father, and accordingly as it, having no subsistence.

⁵⁸ is not a Son, or if he is a Son, let them say that God the Word is a separate being and has an essence of His own. We insist, therefore, that as in the case of each of the titles spoken of above we turn from the title to the concept it suggests and apply it and demonstrate how the Son of God is suitably described by it, the same course must be followed when we find Him called the Word. What caprice it is, in all these cases, not to stand upon the term employed, but to enquire in what sense Christ is to be understood to be the door, and in what way the vine, and why He is the way; but in the one case of His being called the Word, to follow a different course. To add to the authority, therefore, of what we have to say on the question, how the Son of God is the Word, we must begin with those names of which we spoke first as being applied to Him. This, we cannot deny, will seem to some to be superfluous and a digression, but the thoughtful reader will not think it useless to ask as to the concepts for which the titles are used; to observe these matters will clear the way for what is coming.

59 And once we have entered upon the theology concerning the Saviour, as we seek with what diligence we can and find the various things that are taught about Him, we shall necessarily understand more about Him not only in His character as the Word, but in His other characters also.

24. Christ as Light; How He, and How His Disciples are the Light of the World.

60 He said, then, that He was the light of the world; and we have to examine, along with this title, those which are parallel to it; and, indeed, are thought by some to be not merely parallel, but identical with it. He is the true light, and the light of the Gentiles. In the opening of the Gospel now before us He is the light of men: "That which was made," it says, "was life in Him, and the life was the light of men; and the light shines in darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. A little further on, in the same passage, He is called the true light: "The true light, which lightens every man, was coming into the world. In Isaiah, He is the light of the Gentiles, as we said before. "Behold, I have set Thee for a light of the Gentiles, that Thou shouldest be for salvation to the end of the earth. Now the sensible light of the world is the sun, and after it comes very worthily the moon, and the same title may be applied to the stars; but those lights of the world are said in Moses to have come into existence on the fourth day, and as they shed light on the things on the earth, they are not the true light.

61 But the Saviour shines on creatures which have intellect and sovereign reason, that their minds may behold their proper objects of vision, and so he is the light of the intellectual world, that is to say, of the reasonable souls which are in the sensible world, and if there be any beings beyond these in the world from which He declares Himself to be our Saviour. He is, indeed, the most determining and distinguished part of that world, and, as we may say, the sun who makes the great day of the Lord. In view of this day He says to those who partake of His light, "Work while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. Then He says to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world," and "Let your light shine before men. Thus we see the Church, the bride, to present an analogy to the moon and stars, and the disciples have a light, which is their own or borrowed from the true sun, so that they are able to illuminate those who have no command of any spring of light in themselves. We may say that Paul and Peter are the light of the world, and that those of their dis-

ciples who are enlightened themselves, but are not able to enlighten others, are the world of which the Apostles were the light.

62 But the Saviour, being the light of the world, illuminates not bodies, but by His incorporeal power the incorporeal intellect, to the end that each of us, enlightened as by the sun, may be able to discern the rest of the things of the mind. And as when the sun is shining the moon and the stars lose their power of giving light, so those who are irradiated by Christ and receive His beams have no need of the ministering apostles and prophets—we must have courage to declare this truth—nor of the angels; I will add that they have no need even of the greater powers when they are disciples of that first-born light. To those who do not receive the solar beams of Christ, the ministering saints do afford an illumination much less than the former; this illumination is as much as those persons can receive, and it completely fills them. Christ, again, the light of the world, is the true light as distinguished from the light of sense; nothing that is sensible is true. Yet though the sensible is other than the true, it does not follow that the sensible is false, for the sensible may have an analogy with the intellectual, and not everything that is not true can correctly be called false.

63 Now I ask whether the light of the world is the same thing with the light of men, and I conceive that a higher power of light is intended by the former phrase than by the latter, for the world in one sense is not only men. Paul shows that the world is something more than men when he writes to the Corinthians in his first Epistle: "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. In one sense, too, it may be considered, the world is the creation which is being delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God, whose earnest expectation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. We also draw attention to the comparison which may be drawn between the statement, "I am the light of the world," and the words addressed to the disciples, "Ye are the light of the world. Some suppose that the genuine disciples of Jesus are greater than other creatures, some seeking the reason of this in the natural growth of these disciples, others inferring it from their harder struggle. For those beings which are in flesh and blood have greater labours and a life more full of dangers than those which are in an ethereal body, and the lights of heaven might not, if they had put on bodies of earth, have accomplished this life of ours free from danger and from error.

⁶⁴ Those who incline to this argument may appeal to those texts of Scripture which say the most exalted things about men, and to the fact that the Gospel is addressed directly to men; not so much is said about the creation, or, as we understand it, about the world. We read, "As I and Thou are one, that they also may be one in Us," and "Where I am, there will also My servant be. These sayings, plainly, are about men; while about the creation it is said that it is delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. It might be added that not even when it is delivered will it take part in the glory of the sons of God. Nor will those who hold this view forget that the first-born of every creature, honouring man above all else, became man, and that it was not any of the constellations existing in the sky, but one of another order, appointed for this purpose and in the service of the knowledge of Jesus, that was made to be the Star of the East, whether it was like the other stars or perchance better than they, to be the sign of Him who is the most excellent of all.

⁶⁵ And if the boasting of the saints is in their tribulations, since "tribulation worketh patience, and patience probation, and probation hope, and hope maketh not ashamed," then the afflicted creation cannot have the like patience with man, nor the like probation, nor the like hope, but another degree of these, since "the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but on account of Him who subjected it. for hope. Now he who shrinks from conferring such great attributes on man will turn to another direction and say that the creature being subjected to vanity groans and suffers greater affliction than those who groan in this tabernacle, for has she not suffered for the utmost extent of time in her service of vanity-nay, many times as long as man? For why does she do this not willingly, but that it is against her nature to be subject to vanity, and not to have the best arrangement of her life, that which she shall receive when she is set free, when the world is destroyed and released even from the vanity of bodies. Here, however, we may appear to be stretching too far, and aiming at more than the question now before us requires. We may return, therefore, to the point from which we set out, and ask for what reason the Saviour is called the light of the world, the true light, and the light of men.

⁶⁶ Now we saw that He is called the true light with reference to the sensible light of the world, and that the light of the world is the same thing as the light of men, or that we may at least enquire whether they are the same.

This discussion is not superfluous. Some students do not take anything at all out of the statement that the Saviour is the Word; and it is important for us to assure ourselves that we are not chargeable with caprice in fixing our attention on that notion. If it admits of being taken in a metaphorical sense we ought not to take it literally. When we apply the mystical and allegorical method to the expression "light of the world" and the many analogous terms mentioned above, we should surely do so with this expression also.

25. Christ as the Resurrection.

⁶⁷ Now He is called the light of men and the true light and the light of the word, because He brightens and irradiates the higher parts of men, or, in a word, of all reasonable beings. And similarly it is from and because of the energy with which He causes the old deadness to be put aside and that which is par excellence life to be put on, so that those who have truly received Him rise again from the dead, that He is called the resurrection. And this He does not only at the moment at which a man says, "We are buried with Christ through baptism and have risen again with Him," but much rather when a man, having laid off all about him that belongs to death, walks in the newness of life which belongs to Him, the Son, while here. We always "carry about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus," and thus we reap the vast advantage, "that the life of the Lord Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies."

26. Christ as the Way.

⁶⁸ But that progress too, which is in wisdom and which is found by those who seek their salvation in it to do for them what they require both in respect of exposition of truth in the divine word and in respect of conduct according to true righteousness, it lets us understand how Christ is the way. In this way we have to take nothing with us, neither wallet nor coat; we must travel without even a stick, nor must we have shoes on our feet. For this road is itself sufficient for all the supplies of our journey; and every one who walks on it wants nothing. He is clad with a garment which is fit for one who is setting out in response to an invitation to a wedding; and on this road he cannot meet anything that can annoy him. "No one," Solomon says, "can find out the way of a serpent upon a rock." I would add, or that of any other beast. Hence there is no need of a staff on this road, on which there is no

trace of any hostile creature, and the hardness of which, whence also it is called rock (petra), makes it incapable of harbouring anything hurtful.

27. Christ as the Truth.

⁶⁹ Further, the Only-begotten is the truth, because He embraces in Himself according to the Father's will the whole reason of all things, and that with perfect clearness, and being the truth communicates to each creature in proportion to its worthiness. And should any one enquire whether all that the Father knows, according to the depth of His riches and His wisdom and His knowledge, is known to our Saviour also, and should he, imagining that he will thereby glorify the Father, show that some things known to the Father are unknown to the Son, although He might have had an equal share of the apprehensions of the unbegotten God, we must remind him that it is from His being the truth that He is Saviour, and add that if He is the truth complete, then there is nothing true which He does not know; truth must not limp for the want of the things which, according to those persons, are known to the Father only. Or else let it be shown that some things are known to which the name of truth does not apply, but which are above the truth.

28. Christ as Life.

⁷⁰ It is clear also that the principle of that life which is pure and unmixed with any other element, resides in Him who is the first-born of all creation, taking from which those who have a share in Christ live the life which is true life, while all those who are thought to live apart from this, as they have not the true light, have not the true life either.

29. Christ as the Door and as the Shepherd.

⁷¹ But as one cannot be in the Father or with the Father except by ascending from below upwards and coming first to the divinity of the Son, through which one may be led by the hand and brought to the blessedness of the Father Himself, so the Saviour has the inscription "The Door." And as He is a lover of men, and approves the impulse of human souls to better things, even of those who do not hasten to reason (the Logos), but like sheep have a weakness and gentleness apart from all accuracy and reason, so He is the Shepherd. For the Lord saves men and beasts, and Israel and Juda are sowed with the seed not of men only but also of beasts.

30. Christ as Anointed (Christ) and as King.

⁷²In addition to these titles we must consider at the outset of our work that of Christ, and we must also consider that of King, and compare these two so as to find out the difference between them. Now it is said in the forty-fourth Psalm, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, whence Thou art anointed (Christ) above Thy fellows. His loving righteousness and hating iniquity were thus added claims in Him; His anointing was not contemporary with His being nor inherited by Him from the first. Anointing is a symbol of entering on the kingship, and sometimes also on the priesthood; and must we therefore conclude that the kingship of the Son of God is not inherited nor congenital to Him? But how is it conceivable that the First-born of all creation was not a king and became a king afterwards because He loved righteousness, when, moreover, He Himself was righteousness? We cannot fail to see that it is as a man that He is Christ, in respect of His soul, which was human and liable to be troubled and sore vexed, but that He is conceived as king in respect of the divine in Him. I find support for this in the seventy-first Psalm, which says, "Give the king Thy judgment, O God, and Thy righteousness to the king's Son, to judge Thy people in righteousness and Thy poor in judgment.

⁷³This Psalm, though addressed to Solomon, is evidently a prophecy of Christ, and it is worth while to ask to what king the prophecy desires judgment to be given by God, and to what king's Son, and what king's righteousness is spoken of. I conceive, then, that what is called the King is the leading nature of the First-born of all creation, to which judgment is given on account of its eminence; and that the man whom He assumed, formed and moulded by that nature, according to righteousness, is the King's Son. I am the more led to think that this is so, because the two beings are here brought together in one sentence, and are spoken of as if they were not two but one. For the Saviour made both one, that is, He made them according to the prototype of the two which had been made one in Himself before all things. The two I refer to human nature, since each man's soul is mixed with the Holy Spirit, and each of those who are saved is thus made spiritual. Now as there are some to whom Christ is a shepherd, as we said before, because of their meek and composed nature, though they are less guided by reason; so there are those to whom He is a king, those, namely, who are led in their ap-

proach to religion rather by the reasonable part of their nature. And among those who are under a king there are differences;

⁷⁴some experience his rule in a more mystic and hidden and more divine way, others in a less perfect fashion. I should say that those who, led by reason, apart from all agencies of sense, have beheld incorporeal things, the things which Paul speaks of as "invisible," or "not seen," that they are ruled by the leading nature of the Only-begotten, but that those who have only advanced as far as the reason which is conversant with sensible things, and on account of these glorify their Maker, that these also are governed by the Word, by Christ. No offence need be taken at our distinguishing these notions in the Saviour; we draw the same distinctions in His substance.

31. Christ as Teacher and Master.

⁷⁵It is plain to all how our Lord is a teacher and an interpreter for those who are striving towards godliness, and on the other hand a master of those servants who have the spirit of bondage to fear, who make progress and hasten towards wisdom, and are found worthy to possess it. For "the servant knoweth not what the master wills," since he is no longer his master, but has become his friend. The Lord Himself teaches this, for He says to hearers who were still servants: "You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am," but in another passage, "I call you no longer servants, for the servant knoweth not what is the will of his master, but I call you friends," because "you have continued with Me in all My temptations." They, then, who live according to fear, which God exacts from those who are not good servants, as we read in Malachi, "If I am a Master, where is My fear? "are servants of a master who is called their Saviour.

32. Christ as Son.

⁷⁶None of these testimonies, however, sets forth distinctly the Saviour's exalted birth; but when the words are addressed to Him, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee," this is spoken to Him by God, with whom all time is to-day, for there is no evening with God, as I consider, and there is no morning, nothing but time that stretches out, along with His unbeginning and unseen life. The day is to-day with Him in which the Son was begotten, and thus the beginning of His birth is not found, as neither is the day of it.

33. Christ the True Vine, and as Bread.

⁷⁷To what we have said must be added how the Son is the true vine. Those will have no difficulty in apprehending this who understand, in a manner worthy of the prophetic grace, the saying: "Wine maketh glad the heart of man." For if the heart be the intellectual part, and what rejoices it is the Word most pleasant of all to drink which takes us off human things, makes us feel ourselves inspired, and intoxicates us with an intoxication which is not irrational but divine, that, I conceive, with which Joseph made his brethren merry, then it is very clear how He who brings wine thus to rejoice the heart of man is the true vine. He is the true vine, because the grapes He bears are the truth, the disciples are His branches, and they, also, bring forth the truth as their fruit. It is somewhat difficult to show the difference between the vine and bread, for He says, not only that He is the vine, but that He is the bread of life. May it be that as bread nourishes and makes strong, and is said to strengthen the heart of man, but wine, on the contrary, pleases and rejoices and melts him, so ethical studies, bringing life to him who learns them and reduces them to practice, are the bread of life, but cannot properly be called the fruit of the vine, while secret and mystical speculations, rejoicing the heart and causing those to feel inspired who take them in, delighting in the Lord, and who desire not only to be nourished but to be made happy, are called the juice of the true vine, because they flow from it.

34. Christ as the First and the Last; He is Also What Lies Between These.

⁷⁸Further, we have to ask in what sense He is called in the Apocalypse the First and the Last, and how, in His character as the First, He is not the same as the Alpha and the beginning, while in His character as the Last He is not the same as the Omega and the end. It appears to me, then, that the reasonable beings which exist are characterized by many forms, and that some of them are the first, some the second, some the third, and so on to the last. To pronounce exactly, however, which is the first, what kind of a being the second is, which may truly be designated third, and to carry this out to the end of the series, this is not a task for man, but transcends our nature. We shall yet venture, such as we are, to stand still a little at this point, and to make some observations on the matter. There are some gods of whom God is god, as we hear in prophecy, "Thank ye the God of gods," and "The God of

gods hath spoken, and called the earth. Now God, according to the Gospel, "is not the God of the dead but of the living. Those gods, then, are living of whom God is god. The Apostle, too, writing to the Corinthians, says: "As there are gods many and lords many," and so we have spoken of these gods as really existing.

⁷⁹ Now there are, besides the gods of whom God is god, certain others, who are called thrones, and others called dominions, lordships, also, and powers in addition to these. The phrase, "above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," leads us to believe that there are yet others besides these which are less familiar to us; one kind of these the Hebrews called Sabai, from which Sabaoth was formed, who is their ruler, and is none other than God. Add to all these the reasonable being who is mortal, man. Now the God of all things made first in honour some race of reasonable beings; this I consider to be those who are called gods, and the second order, let us say, for the present, are the thrones, and the third, undoubtedly, the dominions. And thus we come down in order to the last reasonable race, which, perhaps, cannot be any other than man. The Saviour accordingly became, in a diviner way than Paul, all things to all, that He might either gain all or perfect them; it is clear that to men He became a man, and to the angels an angel. As for His becoming man no believer has any doubt, but as to His becoming an angel, we shall find reason for believing it was so, if we observe carefully the appearances and the words of the angels, in some of which the powers of the angels seem to belong to Him.

⁸⁰ In several passages angels speak in such a way as to suggest this, as when "the angel of the Lord appeared in a flame of fire. And he said. I am the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. But Isaiah also says: "His name is called Angel of Great Counsel. The Saviour, then, is the first and the last, not that He is not what lies between, but the extremities are named to show that He became all things. Consider, however, whether the last is man, or the things said to be under the earth, of which are the demons, all of them or some. We must ask, too, about those things which the Saviour became which He speaks of through the prophet David, "And I became as a man without any to help him, free among the dead. His birth from the Virgin and His life so admirably lived showed Him to be more than man, and it was the same among the dead. He was the only free person there, and His soul was not left in hell. Thus, then, He is the first and the last. Again, if there be letters of

God, as such there are, by reading which the saints may say they have read what is written on the tablets of heaven, these letters, by which heavenly things are to be read, are the notions, divided into small parts, into A and so on to W, the Son of God.

⁸¹ Again, He is the beginning and the end, but He is this not in all His aspects equally. For He is the beginning, as the Proverbs teach us, inasmuch as He is wisdom; it is written: "The Lord rounded Me in the beginning of His ways. for His works. In the respect of His being the Logos He is not the beginning. "The Word was in the beginning. Thus in His aspects one comes first and is the beginning, and there is a second after the beginning, and a third, and so on to the end, as if He had said, I am the beginning. inasmuch as I am wisdom, and the second, perhaps, inasmuch as I am invisible, and the third in that I am life, for "what was made was life in Him. One who was qualified to examine and to discern the sense of Scripture might, no doubt, find many members of the series; I cannot say if he could find them all. "The beginning and the end" is a phrase we usually apply to a thing that is a completed unity; the beginning of a house is its foundation and the end the parapet. We cannot but think of this figure. since Christ is the stone which is the head of the corner, to the great unity of the body of the saved.

⁸² For Christ the only-begotten Son is all and in all, He is as the beginning in the man He assumed, He is present as the end in the last of the saints, and He is also in those between, or else He is present as the beginning in Adam, as the end in His life on earth, according to the saying: "The last Adam was made a quickening spirit. This saying harmonizes well with the interpretation we have given of the first and the last.

35. Christ as the Living and the Dead.

⁸³ In what has been said about the first and the last, and about the beginning and the end, we have referred these words at one point to the different forms of reasonable beings, at another to the different conceptions of the Son of God. Thus we have gained a distinction between the first and the beginning, and between the last and the end, and also the distinctive meaning of A and W. It is not hard to see why he is called "the Living and the Dead," and after being dead He that is alive for evermore. For since we were not helped by His original life, sunk as we were in sin, He came down into our deadness in order that, He having died to sin, we, bearing about in our body the dying of Jesus. might then receive that life of His which is for evermore. For those

who always carry about in their body the dying of Jesus shall obtain the life of Jesus also, manifested in their bodies.

36. Christ as a Sword.

⁸⁴ The texts of the New Testament, which we have discussed, are things said by Himself about Himself. Isaiah, however, He said that His mouth had been set by His Father as a sharp sword, and that He was hidden under the shadow of His hand, made like to a chosen shaft and kept close in the Father's quiver, called His servant by the God of all things, and Israel, and Light of the Gentiles. The mouth of the Son of God is a sharp sword, for "The word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." And indeed He came not to bring peace on the earth, that is, to corporeal and sensible things, but a sword, and to cut through, if I may say so, the disastrous friendship of soul and body, so that the soul, committing herself to the spirit which was against the flesh, may enter into friendship with God. Hence, according to the prophetic word, He made His mouth as a sword, as a sharp sword. Can any one behold so many wounded by the divine love, like her in the Song of Songs, who complained that she was wounded: "I am wounded with love," and find the dart that wounded so many souls for the love of God, in any but Him who said, "He hath made Me as a chosen shaft."

37. Christ as a Servant, as the Lamb of God, and as the Man Whom John Did Not Know.

⁸⁵ Again, let any one consider how Jesus was to His disciples, not as He who sits at meat, but as He who serves, and how though the Son of God He took on Him the form of a servant for the sake of the freedom of those who were enslaved in sin, and he will be at no loss to account for the Father's saying to Him: "Thou art My servant," and a little further on: "It is a great thing that thou shouldst be called My servant. For we do not hesitate to say that the goodness of Christ appears in a greater and more divine light, and more according to the image of the Father, because "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," than if He had judged it a thing to be grasped to be equal with God, and had shrunk from becoming a servant for the salvation of the world. Hence He says, desiring to teach us that in accepting this state of servitude He had received a great gift from His Father: "And My God shall be My strength. And He said to Me, It is a

great thing for Thee to be called My servant. For if He had not become a servant, He would not have raised up the tribes of Jacob, nor have turned the heart of the diaspora of Israel, and neither would He have become a light of the Gentiles to be for salvation to the ends of the earth.

⁸⁶ And it is no great thing for Him to become a servant, even if it is called a great thing by His Father, for this is in comparison with His being called with an innocent sheep and with a lamb. For the Lamb of God became like an innocent sheep being led to the slaughter, that He may take away the sin of the world. He who supplies reason (logoj to all is made like a lamb which is dumb before her shearer, that we might be purified by His death, which is given as a sort of medicine against the opposing power, and also against the sin of those who open their minds to the truth. For the death of Christ reduced to impotence those powers which war against the human race, and it set free from sin by a power beyond our words the life of each believer. Since, then, He takes away sin until every enemy shall be destroyed and death last of all, in order that the whole world may be free from sin, therefore John points to Him and says: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. It is not said that He will take it away in the future, nor that He is at present taking it, nor that He has taken it, but is not taking it away now.

⁸⁷ His taking away sin is still going on, He is taking it away from every individual in the world, till sin be taken away from the whole world, and the Saviour deliver the kingdom prepared and completed to the Father, a kingdom in which no sin is left at all, and which, therefore, is ready to accept the Father as its king, and which on the other hand is waiting to receive all God has to bestow, fully, and in every part, at that time when the saying is fulfilled, "That God may be all in all. Further, we hear of a man who is said to be coming after John, who was made before him and was before him. This is to teach us that the man also of the Son of God, the man who was mixed with His divinity, was older than His birth from Mary. John says he does not know this man, but must he not have known Him when he leapt for joy when yet a babe unborn in Elisabeth's womb, as soon as the voice of Mary's salutation sounded in the ears of the wife of Zacharias? Consider, therefore, if the words "I know Him not" may have reference to the period before the bodily existence.

⁸⁸ Though he did not know Him before He assumed His body, yet he knew Him when yet in his mother's womb, and perhaps he is here learning something new about Him beyond what was known to him before, namely, that on whomsoever the Holy Spirit shall descend and abide on him, that is he who is to baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He knew him from his mother's womb, but not all about Him. He did not know perhaps that this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit and with fire, when he saw the Spirit descending and abiding on Him. Yet that He was indeed a man, and the first man, John did not know.

38. Christ as Paraclete, as Propitiation, and as the Power of God.

⁸⁹ But none of the names we have mentioned expresses His representation of us with the Father, as He pleads for human nature, and makes atonement for it; the Paraclete, and the propitiation, and the atonement. He has the name Paraclete in the Epistle of John: "If any man sin, we have a Paraclete with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." And He is said in the same epistle to be the atonement for our sins. Similarly, in the Epistle to the Romans, He is called a propitiation: "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith." Of this proportion there was a type in the inmost part of the temple, the Holy of Holies, namely, the golden mercy-seat placed upon the two cherubim. But how could He ever be the Paraclete, and the atonement, and the propitiation without the power of God, which makes an end of our weakness, flows over the souls of believers, and is administered by Jesus, who indeed is prior to it and Himself the power of God, who enables a man to say: "I can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengtheneth me." Whence we know that Simon Magus, who gave himself the title of "The power of God, which is called great," was consigned to perdition and destruction, he and his money with him. We, on the contrary, who confess Christ as the true power of God, believe that we share with Him, inasmuch as He is that power, all things in which any energy resides.

39. Christ as Wisdom and Sanctification and Redemption.

⁹⁰ We must not, however, pass over in silence that He is of right the wisdom of God, and hence is called by that name. For the wisdom of the God and Father of all things does not apprehend His substance in mere visions, like the phantasms of human thoughts. Whoever is able to conceive a bodiless existence of manifold speculations which extend to the rationale of existing

things, living and, as it were, ensouled, he will see how well the Wisdom of God which is above every creature speaks of herself, when she says: "God created me the beginning of His ways, for His works. By this creating act the whole creation was enabled to exist, not being unreceptive of that divine wisdom according to which it was brought into being; for God, according to the prophet David, made all things in wisdom. But many things came into being by the help of wisdom, which do not lay hold of that by which they were created: and few things indeed there are which lay hold not only of that wisdom which concerns themselves, but of that which has to do with many things besides, namely, of Christ who is the whole of wisdom. But each of the sages, in proportion as he embraces wisdom, partakes to that extent of Christ, in that He is wisdom; just as every one who is greatly gifted with power, in proportion as he has power, in that proportion also has a share in Christ, inasmuch as He is power.

⁹¹ The same is to be thought about sanctification and redemption; for Jesus Himself is made sanctification to us and redemption. Each of us is sanctified with that sanctification, and redeemed with that redemption. Consider, moreover, if the words "to us," added by the Apostle, have any special force. Christ, he says, "was made to us of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. In other passages, he speaks about Christ as being wisdom, without any such qualification, and of His being power, saying that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, though we might have conceived that He was not the wisdom of God or the power of God, absolutely, but only for us. Now, in respect of wisdom and power, we have both forms of the statement, the relative and the absolute; but in respect of sanctification and redemption, this is not the case. Consider, therefore, since "He that sanctifies and they that are sanctified are all of one," whether the Father is the sanctification of Him who is our sanctification, as, Christ being our head, God is His head. But Christ is our redemption because we had become prisoners and needed ransoming. I do not enquire as to His own redemption, for though He was tempted in all things as we are, He was without sin, and His enemies never reduced Him to captivity.

40. Christ as Righteousness; As the Demiurge, the Agent of the Good God, and as High-Priest.

⁹² Having expiscated the "to us" and the "absolutely"-sanctification and redemption being "to us" and not absolute, wisdom and redemption both to us

and absolute—we must not omit to enquire into the position of righteousness in the same passage. That Christ is righteousness relatively to us appears clearly from the words: "Who was made to us of God wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." And if we do not find Him to be righteousness absolutely as He is the wisdom and the power of God absolutely, then we must enquire whether to Christ Himself, as the Father is sanctification, so the Father is also righteousness. There is, we know, no unrighteousness with God; He is a righteous and holy Lord, and His judgments are in righteousness, and being righteous, He orders all things righteously.

⁹³ The heretics drew a distinction for purposes of their own between the just and the good. They did not make the matter very clear, but they considered that the demiurge was just, while the Father of Christ was good. That distinction may, I think, if carefully examined, be applied to the Father and the Son; the Son being righteousness, and having received power to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man and will judge the world in righteousness, but the Father doing good to those who have been disciplined by the righteousness of the Son. This is after the kingdom of the Son; then the Father will manifest in His works His name the Good, when God becomes all in all. And perhaps by His righteousness the Saviour prepares everything at the fit times, and by His word, by His ordering, by His chastisements, and, if I may use such an expression, by His spiritual healing aids, disposes all things to receive at the end the goodness of the Father. It was from His sense of that goodness that He answered him who addressed the Only-begotten with the words "Good Master," and said, "Why callest thou Me good? None is good but one, God, the Father. This we have treated of elsewhere, especially in dealing with the question of the greater than the demiurge; Christ we have taken to be the demiurge, and the Father the greater than He.

⁹⁴ Such great things, then, He is, the Paraclete, the atonement, the propitiation, the sympathizer with our weaknesses, who was tempted in all human things, as we are, without sin; and in consequence He is a great High-Priest, having offered Himself as the sacrifice which is offered once for all, and not for men only but for every rational creature. For without God He tasted death for every one. In some copies of the Epistle to the Hebrews the words are "by the grace of God. Now, whether He tasted death for every one without God. He died not for men only but for all other intellectual beings too, or whether He tasted death for every one by the grace of God, He died

for all without God, for by the grace of God He tasted death for every one. It would surely be absurd to say that He tasted death for human sins and not for any other being besides man which had fallen into sin, as for example for the stars. For not even the stars are clean in the eyes of God, as we read in Job, "The stars are not clean in His sight," unless this is to be regarded as a hyperbole. Hence he is a great High-Priest, since He restores all things to His Father's kingdom, and arranges that whatever defects exist in each part of creation shall be filled up so as to be full of the glory of the Father.

⁹⁵ This High-Priest is called, from some other notion of him than those we have noticed, Judas, that those who are Jews secretly may take the name of Jew not from Judah, son of Jacob, but from Him, since they are His brethren, and praise Him for the freedom they have attained. For it is He who sets them free, saving them from their enemies on whose backs He lays His hand to subdue them. When He has put under His feet the opposing power, and is alone in presence of His Father, then He is Jacob and Israel; and thus as we are made light by Him, since He is the light of the world, so we are made Jacob since He is called Jacob, and Israel since He is called Israel.

41. Christ as the Rod, the Flower, the Stone.

⁹⁶ Now He receives the kingdom from the king whom the children of Israel appointed, beginning the monarchy not at the divine command and without even consulting God. He therefore fights the battles of the Lord and so prepares peace for His Son, His people, and this perhaps is the reason why He is called David. Then He is called a rod; such He is to those who need a harder and severer discipline, and have not submitted to the love and gentleness of God. On this account, if He is a rod, He has to "go forth; "He does not remain in Himself, but appears to go beyond His earlier state. Going forth, then, and becoming a rod, He does not remain a rod, but after the rod He becomes a flower that rises up, and after being a rod He is made known as a flower to those who, by His being a rod, have met with visitation. For "God will visit their iniquities with a red," that is, Christ. But "His mercy He will not take from him," for He will have mercy on him, for on whom the Son has mercy the Father has mercy also. An interpretation may be given which makes Him a rod and a flower in respect of different persons, a rod to those who have need of chastisement, a flower to those who are being saved; but I prefer the account of the matter given above.

⁹⁷ We must add here, however, that, perhaps, looking to the end, if Christ is a rod to any man He is also a flower to him, while it is not the case that he who receives Him as a flower must also know Him as a rod. And yet as one flower is more perfect than another and plants are said to flower, even though they bring forth no perfect fruit, so the perfect receive that of Christ which transcends the flower. Those, on the other hand, who have known Him as a rod will partake along with it, not in His perfection, but in the flower which comes before the fruit. Last of all, before we come to the word Logos, Christ was a stone, set at naught by the builders but placed on the head of the corner, for the living stones are built up as on a foundation on the other stones of the Apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself our Lord being the chief corner-stone, because He is a part of the building made of living stones in the land of the living; therefore He is called a stone. All this we have said to show how capricious and baseless is the procedure of those who, when so many names are given to Christ, take the mere appellation "the Word," without enquiring, as in the case of His other titles, in what sense it is used;

⁹⁸ surely they ought to ask what is meant when it is said of the Son of God that He was the Word, and God, and that He was in the beginning with the Father, and that all things were made by Him.

42. Of the Various Ways in Which Christ is the Logos.

⁹⁹ As, then, from His activity in enlightening the world whose light He is, Christ is named the Light of the World, and as from His making those who sincerely attach themselves to Him put away their deadness and rise again and put on newness of life, He is called the Resurrection, so from an activity of another kind He is called Shepherd and Teacher, King and Chosen Shaft, and Servant, and in addition to these Paraclete and Atonement and Propitiation. And after the same fashion He is also called the Logos, because He takes away from us all that is irrational, and makes us truly reasonable, so that we do all things, even to eating and drinking, to the glory of God, and discharge by the Logos to the glory of God both the commoner functions of life and those which belong to a more advanced stage. For if, by having part in Him, we are raised up and enlightened, herded also it may be and ruled over, then it is clear that we become in a divine manner reasonable, when He drives away from us what in us is irrational and dead, since He is the Logos (reason) and the Resurrection. Consider, however, whether all men have in

some way part in Him in His character as Logos. On this point the Apostle teaches us that He is to be sought not outside the seeker, and that those find Him in themselves who set their heart on doing so; "Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?

¹⁰⁰ That is to bring Christ down; or, Who shall descend into the abyss? That is to bring Christ up from the dead. But what saith the Scripture? The Word is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart," as if Christ Himself were the same thing as the Word said to be sought after. But when the Lord Himself says "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin," the only sense we can find in His words is that the Logos Himself says that those are not chargeable with sin to whom He (reason) has not fully come, but that those, if they sin, are guilty who, having had part in Him, act contrary to the ideas by which He declares His full presence in us. Only when thus read is the saying true: "If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin. Should the words be applied, as many are of opinion that they should, to the visible Christ, then how is it true that those had no sin to whom He did not come? In that case all who lived before the advent of the Saviour will be free from sin, since Jesus, as seen in flesh, had not yet come. And more—all those to whom He has never been preached will have no sin, and if they have no sin, then it is clear they are not liable to judgment.

¹⁰¹ But the Logos in man, in which we have said that our whole race had part, is spoken of in two senses; first, in that of the filling up of ideas which takes place, prodigies excepted, in every one who passes beyond the age of boyhood, but secondly, in that of the consummation, which takes place only in the perfect. The words, therefore, "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin," are to be understood in the former sense; but the words, "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers, and the sheep did not hear them," in the latter. For before the consummation of reason comes, there is nothing in man but what is blameworthy; all is imperfect and defective, and can by no means command the obedience of those irrational elements in us which are tropically spoken of as sheep. And perhaps the former meaning is to be recognized in the words "The Logos was made flesh," but the second in "The Logos was God. We must accordingly look at what there is to be seen in human affairs

between the saying, "The Word (reason) was made flesh" and "The Word was God.

¹⁰² When the Word was made flesh can we say that it was to some extent broken up and thinned out, and can we say that it recovered from that point onward till it became again what it was at first, God the Word, the Word with the Father; the Word whose glory John saw, the verily only-begotten, as from the Father. But the Son may also be the Logos (Word), because He reports the secret things of His Father who is intellect in the same way as the Son who is called the Word. For as with us the word is a messenger of those things which tile mind perceives, so the Word of God, knowing the Father, since no created being can approach Him without a guide, reveals the Father whom He knows. For no one knows the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son reveals Him, and inasmuch as He is the Word He is the Messenger of Great Counsel, who has the government upon His shoulders; for He entered on His kingdom by enduring the cross. In the Apocalypse, moreover, the Faithful and True (the Word), is said to sit on a white horse, the epithets indicating, I consider, the clearness of the voice with which the Word of truth speaks to us when He sojourns among us. This is scarcely the place to show how the word "horse" is often used in passages spoken for our encouragement in sacred learning. I only cite two of these:

¹⁰³ "A horse is deceitful for safety," and "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will rejoice in the name of the Lord our God. Nor must we leave unnoticed a passage in the forty-fourth Psalm, frequently quoted by many writers as if they understood it: "My heart hath belched forth a good word, I speak my works to the King. Suppose it is God the Father who speaks thus; what is His heart, that the good word should appear in accordance with His heart? If, as these writers suppose, the Word (Logos) needs no interpretation, then the heart is to be taken in the natural sense too. But it is quite absurd to suppose God's heart to be a part of Him as ours is of our body. We must remind such writers that as when the hand of God is spoken of, and His arm and His finger, we do not read the words literally but enquire in what sound sense we may take them so as to be worthy of God, so His heart is to be understood of His rational power, by which He disposes all things, and His word of that which announces what is in this heart of His. But who is it that announces the counsel of the Father to those of His creatures who are worthy and who have risen above themselves, who but the Saviour? That "belched

forth" is not, perhaps, without significance; a hundred other terms might have been employed;

¹⁰⁴ "My heart has produced a good word," it might have been said, or "My heart has spoken a good word. But in belching, some wind that was hidden makes its way out to the world, and so it may be that the Father gives out views of truth not continuously, but as it were after the fashion of belching, and the word has the character of the things thus produced, and is called, therefore, the image of the invisible God. We may enter our agreement, therefore, with the ordinary acceptance of these words, and take them to be spoken by the Father. It is not, however, a matter of course, that it is God Himself who announces these things. Why should it not be a prophet? Filled with the Spirit and unable to contain himself, he brings forth a word about his prophecy concerning Christ: "My heart hath belched forth a good word, I speak my works to the King, my pen is the tongue of a ready writer. Excellent in beauty is He beyond the sons of men. Then to the Christ Himself: "Grace is poured out on Thy lips. If the Father were the speaker, how could He go on after the words, "Grace is poured out on thy lips," to say, "Therefore God hath blessed thee for ever," and a little further on, "Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

¹⁰⁵ Some of those who wish to make the Father the speaker may appeal to the words, "Hear, O daughter, and behold and incline thine ear, and forget thy people and thy father. The prophet, it may be said, could not address the Church in the words, "Hear, O daughter. It is not difficult, however, to show that changes of person occur frequently in the Psalms, so that these words, "Hear, O daughter," might be from the Father, in this passage, though the Psalm as a whole is not. To our discussion of the Word we may here add the passage, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens rounded, and all the power of them by the breath of His mouth. Some refer this to the Saviour and the Holy Spirit. The passage, however, does not necessarily imply any more than that the heavens were founded by the reason (logos) of God, as when we say that a house is built by the plan (logos) of the architect, or a ship by the plan (logos) of the shipbuilder. In the same way the heavens were founded (made solid) by the Word of God, for they are of a more divine substance, which on this account is called solid; it has little fluidity for the most part, nor is it easily melted like other parts of the world, and specially the

lower parts. On account of this difference the heavens are said in a special manner to be constituted by the Word of God.

¹⁰⁶ The saying then stands, first, "In the beginning was the Logos; "we are to place that full in our view; but the testimonies we cited from the Proverbs led us to place wisdom first, and to think of wisdom as preceding the Word which announces her. We must observe, then, that the Logos is in the beginning, that is, in wisdom, always. Its being in wisdom, which is called the beginning, does not prevent it from being with God and from being God, and it is not simply with God, but is in the beginning, in wisdom, with God. For he goes on: "He was in the beginning with God." He might have said, "He was with God; "but as He was in the beginning, so He was with God in the beginning, and "All things were made by Him," being in the beginning, for God made nil things, as David tells us, in wisdom. And to let us understand that the Word has His own definite place and sphere as one who has life in Himself (and is a distinct person), we must also speak about powers, not about power. "Thus saith the Lord of powers, (A.V. hosts)" we frequently read; there are certain creatures, rational and divine, which are called powers: anti of these Christ was the highest and best. and is called not only the wisdom of God but also His power. As, then, there are several powers of God, each of them in its own form, and the Saviour is different from these, so also Christ, even if that which is Logos in us is not in respect of form outside of us, will be understood from our discussion up to this point to be the Logos, who has His being in the beginning, in wisdom. This for the present may suffice, on the word: "In the beginning was the Logos."

BOOK 2

1. "And the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In the preceding section, my revered brother Ambrosius, brother formed according to the Gospel, we have discussed, as far as is at present in our power, what the Gospel is, and what is the beginning in which the Word was, and what the Word is which was in the beginning. We now come to consider the next point in the work before us, How the Word was with God. To this end it will be of service to remember that what is called the Word came to certain persons; as "The Word of the Lord which came to Hosea, the son of Beeri," and "The Word which came to Isaiah, the son of Amos, concerning Judah and concerning Jerusalem," and "The Word which came to Jeremiah concerning the drought. We must enquire how this Word came to Hosea, and how it came

also to Isaiah the son of Amos, and again to Jeremiah concerning the drought; the comparison may enable us to find out how the Word was with God. The generality will simply look at what the prophets said, as if that were the Word of the Lord or the Word, that came to them. May it not be, however, that as we say that this person comes to that, so the Son, the Word, of whom we are now theologizing, came to Hosea, sent to him by the Father;

² historically, that is to say, to the son of Beer, the prophet Hosea, but mystically to him who is saved, for Hosea means, etymologically, Saved; and to the son of Beer, which etymologically means wells, since every one who is saved becomes a son of that spring which gushes forth out of the depths, the wisdom of God. And it is nowise marvellous that the saint should be a son of wells. From his brave deeds he is often called a son, whether, from his works shining before men, of light, or from his possessing the peace of God which passes all understanding, of peace, or, once more, from the help which wisdom brings him, a child of wisdom; for wisdom, it says, is justified of her children. Thus he who by the divine spirit searches all things, and even the deep things of God, so that he can exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! he can be a son of wells, to whom the Word of the Lord comes. Similarly the Word comes also to Isaiah, teaching the things which are coming upon Judaea and Jerusalem in the last days; and so also it comes to Jeremiah lifted up by a divine elation. For *Iao* means etymologically lifting up, elation. Now the Word comes to men who formerly could not receive the advent of the Son of God who is the Word; but to God it does not come, as if it had not been with Him before.

³ The Word was always with the Father; and so it is said, "And the Word was with God. He did not come to God, and this same word "was" is used of the Word because He was in the beginning at the same time when He was with God, neither being separated from the beginning nor being bereft of His Father. And again, neither did He come to be in the beginning after He had not been in it, nor did He come to be with God after not having been with Him. For before all time and the remotest age the Word was in the beginning, and the Word was with God. Thus to find out what is meant by the phrase, "The Word was with God," we have adduced the words used about the prophets, how He came to Hosea, to Isaiah, to Jeremiah, and we have noticed the difference, by no means accidental, between "became" and "was. We have

to add that in His coming to the prophets He illuminates the prophets with the light of knowledge, causing them to see things which had been before them, but which they had not understood till then. With God, however, He is God, just because He is with Him. And perhaps it was because he saw some such order in the Logos, that John did not place the clause "The Word was God" before the clause "The Word was with God.

⁴ The series in which he places his different sentences does not prevent the force of each axiom from being separately and fully seen. One axiom is, "In the beginning was the Word," a second, "The Word was with God," and then comes, "And the Word was God. The arrangement of the sentences might be thought to indicate an order; we have first "In the beginning was the Word," then, "And the Word was with God," and thirdly, "And the Word was God," so that it might be seen that the Word being with God makes Him God.

2. In What Way the Logos is God. Errors to Be Avoided on This Question.

⁵ We next notice John's use of the article in these sentences. He does not write without care in this respect, nor is he unfamiliar with the niceties of the Greek tongue. In some cases he uses the article, and in some he omits it. He adds the article to the Logos, but to the name of God he adds it sometimes only. He uses the article, when the name of God refers to the uncreated cause of all things, and omits it when the Logos is named God. Does the same difference which we observe between God with the article and God without it prevail also between the Logos with it and without it? We must enquire into this. As the God who is over all is God with the article not without it, so "the Logos" is the source of that reason (Logos) which dwells in every reasonable creature; the reason which is in each creature is not, like the former called par excellence The Logos. Now there are many who are sincerely concerned about religion, and who fall here into great perplexity. They are afraid that they may be proclaiming two Gods, and their fear drives them into doctrines which are false and wicked.

⁶ Either they deny that the Son has a distinct nature of His own besides that of the Father, and make Him whom they call the Son to be God all but the name, or they deny the divinity of the Son, giving Him a separate existence of His own, and making His sphere of essence fall outside that of the Father, so that they are separable from each other. To such persons we have to say that God on the one hand is Very God (Autotheos, God of Himself);

and so the Saviour says in His prayer to the Father, "That they may know Thee the only true God; "but that all beyond the Very God is made God by participation in His divinity, and is not to be called simply God (with the article), but rather God (without article). And thus the first-born of all creation, who is the first to be with God, and to attract to Himself divinity, is a being of more exalted rank than the other gods beside Him, of whom God is the God, as it is written, "The God of gods, the Lord, hath spoken and called the earth. It was by the offices of the first-born that they became gods, for He drew from God in generous measure that they should be made gods, and He communicated it to them according to His own bounty. The true God, then, is "The God," and those who are formed after Him are gods, images, as it were, of Him the prototype.

⁷ But the archetypal image, again, of all these images is the Word of God, who was in the beginning, and who by being with God is at all times God, not possessing that of Himself, but by His being with the Father, and not continuing to be God, if we should think of this, except by remaining always in uninterrupted contemplation of the depths of the Father.

3. Various Relations of the Logos to Men.

⁸ Now it is possible that some may dislike what we have said representing the Father as the one true God, but admitting other beings besides the true God, who have become gods by having a share of God. They may fear that the glory of Him who surpasses all creation may be lowered to the level of those other beings called gods. We drew this distinction between Him and them that we showed God the Word to be to all the other gods the minister of their divinity. To this we must add, in order to obviate objections, that the reason which is in every reasonable creature occupied the same relation to the reason who was in the beginning with God, and is God the Word, as God the Word occupies to God. As the Father who is Very God and the True God is to His image and to the images of His image-men are said to be according to the image, not to be images of God-so He, the Word, is to the reason (word) in every man. Each fills the place of a fountain-the Father is the fountain of divinity, the Son of reason. As, then, there are many gods, but to us there is but one God the Father, and many Lords, but to us there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, so there are many Lo/goi, but we, for our part, pray that that one Lo/goj may be with us who was in the beginning and was with God, God the Logos.

9 For whoever does not receive this Logos who was in the beginning with God, or attach himself to Him as He appeared in flesh, or take part in some of those who had part in this Logos, or whoever having had part in Him falls away from Him again, he will have his portion in what is called most opposite to reason. What we have drawn out from the truths with which we started will now be clear enough. First, we spoke about God and the Word of God, and of Gods, either, that is, beings who partake in deity or beings who are called Gods and are not. And again of the Logos of God and of the Logos of God made flesh, and of logoi, or beings which partake in some way of the Logos, of second logoi or of third, thought to be logoi, in addition to that Logos that was before them all, but not really so. Irrational Reasons these may be styled; beings are spoken of who are said to be Gods but are not, and one might place beside these Gods who are no Gods, Reasons which are no Reasons. Now the God of the universe is the God of the elect, and in a much greater degree of the Saviours of the elect; then He is the God of these beings who are truly Gods, and then He is the God, in a word, of the living and not of the dead.

10 But God the Logos is the God, perhaps, of those who attribute everything to Him and who consider Him to be their Father. Now the sun and the moon and the stars were connected, according to the accounts of men of old times, with beings who were not worthy to have the God of gods counted their God. To this opinion they were led by a passage in Deuteronomy which is somewhat on this wise: "Lest when thou liftest up thine eyes to heaven, and seest the sun and the moon and the whole host of heaven, thou wander away and worship them and serve them which the Lord thy God hath appointed to all the peoples. But to you the Lord thy God hath not so given them. But how did God appoint the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven to all the nations, if He did not give them in the same way to Israel also, to the end that those who could not rise to the realm of intellect, might be inclined by gods of sense to consider about the Godhead, and might of their own free will connect themselves with these and so be kept from falling away to idols and demons?

11 Is it not the case that some have for their God the God of the universe, while a second class, after these, attach themselves to the Son of God, His Christ, and a third class worship the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, wandering, it is true, from God, but with a far different and a better

wandering than that of those who invoke as gods the works of men's hands, silver and gold, -works of human skill. Last of all are those who devote themselves to the beings which are called gods but are no gods. In the same way, now, some have faith in that Reason which was in the beginning and was with God and was God; so did Hosea and Isaiah and Jeremiah and others who declared that the Word of the Lord, or the Logos, had come to them. A second class are those who know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, considering that the Word made flesh is the whole Word, and knowing only Christ after the flesh. Such is the great multitude of those who are counted believers. A third class give themselves to logoi (discourses) having some part in the Logos which they consider superior to all other reason: these are they who follow the honourable and distinguished philosophical schools among the Greeks.

¹² A fourth class besides these are they who put their trust in corrupt and godless discourses, doing away with Providence, which is so manifest and almost visible, and who recognize another end for man to follow than the good. It may appear to some that we have wandered from our theme, but to my thinking the view we have reached of four things connected with the name of God and four things connected with the Logos comes in very well at this point. There was God with the article and God without the article, then there were gods in two orders, at the summit of the higher order of whom is God the Word, transcended Himself by the God of the universe. And, again, there was the Logos with the article and the Logos without the article, corresponding to God absolutely and a god; and the Logoi in two ranks. And some men are connected with the Father, being part of Him, and next to these, those whom our argument now brings into clearer light, those who have come to the Saviour and take their stand entirely in Him. And third are those of whom we spoke before, who reckon the sun and the moon and the stars to be gods, and take their stand by them. And in the fourth and last place those who submit to soulless and dead idols. To all this we find analogies in what concerns the Logos. Some are adorned with the Word Himself;

¹³ some with what is next to Him and appears to be the very original Logos Himself, those, namely, who know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and who behold the Word as flesh. And the third class, as we described them a little before. Why should I speak of those who are thought to

be in the Logos, but have fallen away, not only from the good itself, but from the very traces of it and from those who have a part in it?

4. That the Logos is One, Not Many. Of the Word, Faithful and True, and of His White Horse.

¹⁴ "He was in the beginning with God. By his three foregoing propositions the Evangelist has made us acquainted with three orders, and he now sums up the three in one, saying, "This (Logos) was in the beginning with God. In the first premiss we learned where the Logos was: He was in the beginning; then we learned with whom He was, with God; and then who He was, that He was God. He now points out by this word "He," the Word who is God, and gathers up into a fourth proposition the three which went before, "In the beginning was the Word," "The Word was with God," and "The Word was God. Now he says, He, this (Word) was in the beginning with God. The term beginning may be taken of the beginning of the world, so that we may learn from what is said that the Word was older than the things which were made from the beginning. For if "in the beginning God created heaven and earth," but "He" was in the beginning, then the Logos is manifestly older than those things which were made at the beginning, older not only than the firmament and the dry land, but than the heavens and earth. Now some one might ask, and not unreasonably, why it is not said, "In the beginning was the Word of God, and the Word of God was with God, and the Word of God was God.

¹⁵ But he who asked such a question could be shown to be taking for granted that there are a plurality of logoi, differing perhaps from each other in kind, one being the word of God, another perhaps the word of angels, a third of men, and so on with the other logoi. Now, if this were so with the Logos, the case would be the same with wisdom and with righteousness. But it would be absurd that there should be a number of things equally to be called "The Word;" and the same would apply to wisdom and to righteousness. We shall be driven to confess that we ought not to look for a plurality of logoi, or of wisdom, or of righteousness, if we look at the case of truth. Any one will confess that there is only one truth; it could never be said in this case that there is one truth of God, and another of the angels, and another of man,-it lies ill the nature of things that the truth about anything is one. Now, if truth be one, it is clear that the preparation of it and its demonstration, which is wisdom, must in reason be conceived as one, since what is

regarded as wisdom cannot justly claim that title where truth, which is one, is absent from its grasp. But if truth is one and wisdom one, then Reason (Logos) also, which announces truth and makes truth simple and manifest to those who are fitted to receive it, will be one.

¹⁶ This we say, by no means denying that truth and wisdom and reason are of God, but we wish to indicate the purpose of the omission in this passage of the words "of God," and of the form of the statement, "In the beginning the Logos was with God. The same John in the Apocalypse gives Him His name with the addition "of God," where he says: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and He that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness doth He judge and make war. And His eyes are as a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He hath a name written which no one knoweth but He Himself. And He is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood, and His name is called Word of God. And His armies in heaven followed Him on white horses, clothed in pure fine linen. And out of His mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations, and He shall rule them with a rod of iron, and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His garment and on His thigh a name written: King of kings, and Lord of lords. In this passage Logos is necessarily spoken of absolutely without the article, and also with the addition Logos of God;

¹⁷ had the first not been the case (i.e., had the article been given) we might have been led to take up the meaning wrongly, and so to depart from the truth about the Logos. For if it had been called simply Logos, and had not been said to be the Logos of God, then we would not be clearly informed that the Logos is the Logos of God. And, again, had it been called Logos of God but not said to be Logos absolutely, then we might imagine many logoi, according to the constitution of each of the rational beings which exist; then we might assume a number of logoi properly so called. Again, in his description in the Apocalypse of the Logos of God, the Apostle and Evangelist (and the Apocalypse entitles him to be styled a prophet, too) says he saw the Word of God in the opened heaven, and that He was riding on a white horse. Now we must consider what he means to convey when he speaks of heaven being opened and of the white horse, and of the Word of God riding on the white horse, and also what is meant by saying that the Word of God is Faith-

ful and True, and that in righteousness He judges and makes war. All this will greatly advance our study on the subject of the Word of God.

¹⁸ Now I conceive heaven to have been shut against the ungodly, and those who bear the image of the earthly, and to have been opened to the righteous and those adorned with the image of the heavenly. For to the former, being below and still dwelling in the flesh, the better things are closed, since they cannot understand them and have neither power nor will to see their beauty, looking down as they do and not striving to look up. But to the excellent, or those who have their commonwealth in heaven, he opens, with the key of David, the things in heavenly places and discloses them to their view, and makes all clear to them by riding on his horse. These words also have their meaning; the horse is white because it is the nature of higher knowledge (gnw=sij) to be clear and white and full of light. And on the white horse sits He who is called Faithful, seated more firmly, and so to speak more royally, on words which cannot be set aside, words which run sharply and more swiftly than any horse, and overhear in their rushing course every so-called word that simulates the Word, and every so-called truth that simulates the Truth. He who sits on the white horse is called Faithful, not because of the faith He cherishes, but of that which He inspires, because He is worthy of faith. Now the Lord Jehovah, according to Moses, is Faithful and True.

¹⁹ He is true also in respect of His relation to shadow, type, and image; for such is the Word who is in the opened heaven, for He is not on earth as He is in heaven; on earth He is made flesh and speaks through shadow, type, and image. The multitude, therefore, of those who are reputed to believe are disciples of the shadow of the Word, not of the true Word of God which is in the opened heaven. Hence Jeremiah says, "The Spirit of our face is Christ the Lord, of whom we said, In His shadow shall we live among the nations. Thus the Word of God who is called Faithful is also called True, and ill righteousness He judges and makes war; since He has received from God the faculty of judging in very righteousness and very judgment, and of apportioning its due to every existing creature. For none of those who have some portion of righteousness and of the faculty of judgment can receive on his soul such copies and impressions of righteousness and judgment as to come short in no point of absolute righteousness and absolute justice, just as no painter of a picture can communicate to the representation all the qualities of the original. This,

I conceive, is the reason why David says, "Before Thee shall no living being be justified.

²⁰ He does not say, no man, or no angel, but no living being, since even if any being partakes of life and has altogether put off mortality, not even then can it be justified in comparison of Thee, who art, as it were, Life itself. Nor is it possible that one who partakes of life and is therefore called living, should become life itself, or that one who partakes of righteousness and, therefore, is called righteous should become equal to righteousness itself. Now it is the function of the Word of God, not only to judge in righteousness, but also to make war in righteousness, that by making war on His enemies by reason and righteousness, so that what is irrational and wicked is destroyed, He may dwell in the soul of him who, for his salvation, so to speak, has become captive to Christ, and may justify that soul and cast out from her all adversaries. We shall, however, obtain a better view of this war which the Word carries on if we remember that He is an ambassador for the truth. while there is another who pretends to be the Word and is not, and one who calls herself the truth and is not, but a lie. Then the Word, arming Himself against the lie, slays it with the breath of His mouth and brings it to naught by the manifestation of His coming. And consider whether these words of the Apostle to the Thessalonians may be understood in an intellectual sense.

²¹ For what is that which is destroyed by the breath of the mouth of Christ, Christ being the Word and Truth and Wisdom, but the lie? And what is that which is brought to naught by the manifestation of Christ's coming, Christ being conceived as wisdom and reason, what but that which announces itself as wisdom, when in reality it is one of those things with which God deals as the Apostle describes, "He taketh the wise, those who are not wise with the true wisdom, in their own craftiness"? To what he says of the rider on the white horse, John adds the wonderful statement: "His eyes are like a flame of fire. For as the flame of fire is bright and illuminating, but at the same time fiery and destructive of material things, so, if I may so say, are the eyes of the Logos with which He sees, and every one who has part in Him; they have not only the inherent quality of laying hold of the things of the mind, but also that of consuming and putting away those conceptions which are more material and gross, since whatever is in any way false flees from the directness and lightness of truth. It is in a very natural order that

after speaking of Him who judges in righteousness and makes war in accordance with His righteous judgments, and then after His warring of His giving light, the writer goes on to say, "On His head are many diadems.

22 For had the lie been one, and of one form only, against which the True and Faithful Word contended, and for conquering which. He was crowned, then one crown alone would naturally have been given Him for the victory. As it is, however, as the lies are many which profess the truth and for warring against which the Word is crowned, the diadems are many which surround the head of the conqueror of them all. As He has overcome every revolting power many diadems mark His victory. Then after the diadems He is said to have a name written which no one knows but He Himself. For there are some things which are known to the Word alone; for the beings which come into existence after Him have a poorer nature than His, and none of them is able to behold all that He apprehends. And perhaps it is the case that only those who have part in that Word know the things which are kept from the knowledge of those who do not partake of Him. Now, in John's vision, the Word of God as He rides on the white horse is not naked: He is clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood, for the Word who was made flesh and therefore died is surrounded with marks of the fact that His blood was poured out upon the earth, when the soldier pierced His side.

23 For of that passion, even should it be our lot some day to come to that highest and supreme contemplation of the Logos, we shall not lose all memory, nor shall we forget the truth that our admission was brought about by His sojourning in our body. This Word of God is followed by the heavenly armies one and all; they follow the Word as their leader, and imitate Him in all things, and chiefly in having mounted, they also, white horses. To him that understands, this secret is open. And as sorrow and grief and wailing fled away at the end of things, so also, I suppose, did obscurity and doubt, all the mysteries of God's wisdom being precisely and clearly opened. Look also at the white horses of the followers of the Word and at the white and pure linen with which they were clothed. As linen comes out of the earth, may not those linen garments stand for the dialects on the earth in which those voices are clothed which make clear announcements of things? We have dealt at some length with the statements found in the Apocalypse about the Word of God; it is important for us to know clearly about Him.

5. *He (This One) Was in the Beginning with God.*

²⁴ To those who fail to distinguish with care the different propositions of the context the Evangelist may appear to be repeating himself. "He was in the beginning with God" may seem to add nothing to "And the Word was with God." We must observe more carefully. In the statement "The Word was with God" we are not told anything of the when or the where; that is added in the fourth axiom. There are four axioms, or, as some call them, propositions, the fourth being "He was in the beginning with God." Now "The Word was with God" is not the same thing as "He was," etc; for here we are told, not only that He was with God, but when and where He was so: "He was in the beginning with God." The "He," too, used as it is for a demonstration, will be considered to refer to the Word, or by a less careful enquirer, to God. What was noted before is now summed up in this designation "He," the notion of the Logos and that of God; and as the argument proceeds the different notions are collected in one; for the notion God is not included in the notion Logos, nor the notion Logos in that of God. And perhaps the proposition before us is a summing up in one of the three which have preceded. Taking the statement that the Word was in the beginning, we have not yet learned that He was with God, and taking the statement that the Word was with God it is not yet clear to us that He was with God in the beginning; and taking the statement that the Word was God, it has neither been shown that He was in the beginning, nor that He was with God.

²⁵ Now when the Evangelist says, "He was in the beginning with God," if we apply the pronoun "He" to the Word and to God (as He is God) and consider that "in the beginning" is conjoined with it, and "with God" added to it, then there is nothing left of the three propositions that is not summed up and brought together in this one. And as "in the beginning" has been said twice, we may consider if there are not two lessons we may learn. First, that the Word was in the beginning, as if He was by Himself and not with any one, and secondly, that He was in the beginning with God. And I consider that there is nothing untrue in saying of Him both that He was in the beginning, and in the beginning with God, for neither was He with God alone, since He was also in the beginning, nor was He in the beginning alone and not with God, since "He was in the beginning with God."

6. How the Word is the Maker of All Things, and Even the Holy Spirit Was Made Through Him.

²⁶ "All things were made through Him. The "through whom "is never found in the first place but always in the second, as in the Epistle to the Romans, "Paul a servant of Christ Jesus, a called Apostle, separated to the Gospel of God which He promised before by His prophets in Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, determined the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we received grace and apostleship, for obedience of the faith among all the nations, for His name's sake. For God promised aforehand by the prophets His own Gospel, the prophets being His ministers, and having their word to speak about Him "through whom. And again God gave grace and apostleship to Paul and to the others for the obedience of the faith among all the nations, and this He gave them through Jesus Christ the Saviour, for the "through whom" belonged to Him. And the Apostle Paul says in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "At the end of the days He spoke to us in His Son, whom He made the heir of all things, 'through whom' also He made the ages," showing us that God made the ages through His Son, the "through whom" belonging, when the ages were being made, to the Only-begotten.

²⁷ Thus, if all things were made, as in this passage also, through the Logos, then they were not made by the Logos, but by a stronger and greater than He. And who else could this be but the Father? Now if, as we have seen, all things were made through Him, we have to enquire if the Holy Spirit also was made through Him. it appears to me that those who hold the Holy Spirit to be created, and who also admit that "all things were made through Him," must necessarily assume that the Holy Spirit was made through the Logos, the Logos accordingly being older than He. And he who shrinks from allowing the Holy Spirit to have been made through Christ must, if he admits the truth of the statements of this Gospel, assume the Spirit to be uncreated. There is a third resource besides these two (that of allowing the Spirit to have been made by the Word, and that of regarding it as uncreated), namely, to assert that the Holy Spirit has no essence of His own beyond the Father and the Son. But on further thought one may perhaps see reason to consider that the Son is second beside the Father, He being the same as the Father, while

manifestly a distinction is drawn between the Spirit and the Son in the passage, "Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man.

²⁸ it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, he shall not have forgiveness, either in this world or in the world to come. We consider, therefore, that there are three hypostases, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; and at the same time we believe nothing to be uncreated but the Father. We therefore, as the more pious and the truer course, admit that all things were made by the Logos, and that the Holy Spirit is the most excellent and the first in order of all that was made by the Father through Christ. And this, perhaps, is the reason why the Spirit is not said to be God's own Son. The Only-begotten only is by nature and from the beginning a Son, and the Holy Spirit seems to have need of the Son, to minister to Him His essence, so as to enable Him not only to exist, but to be wise and reasonable and just, and all that we must think of Him as being. All this He has by participation of the character of Christ, of which we have spoken above. And I consider that the Holy Spirit supplies to those who, through Him and through participation in Him, are called saints, the material of the gifts, which come from God; so that the said material of the gifts is made powerful by God, is ministered by Christ, and owes its actual existence in men to the Holy Spirit.

²⁹ I am led to this view of the charisms by the words of Paul which he writes somewhere, "There are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit, and diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but it is the same God that worketh all in all. The statement that all things were made by Him, and its seeming corollary, that the Spirit must have been called into being by the Word, may certainly raise some difficulty. There are some passages in which the Spirit is placed above Christ; in Isaiah, for example, Christ declares that He is sent, not by the Father only, but also by the Holy Spirit. "Now the Lord hath sent Me," He says, "and His Spirit. and in the Gospel He declares that there is forgiveness for the sin committed against Himself, but that for blasphemy against the Holy Spirit there is no forgiveness, either in this age or in the age to come. What is the reason of this? Is it because the Holy Spirit is of more value than Christ that the sin against Him cannot be forgiven?

³⁰ May it not rather be that all rational beings have part in Christ, and that forgiveness is extended to them when they repent of their sins, while

only those have part in the Holy Spirit who have been found worthy of it, and that there cannot well be any forgiveness for those who fall away to evil in spite of such great and powerful cooperation, and who defeat the counsels of the Spirit who is in them. When we find the Lord saying, as He does in Isaiah, that He is sent by the Father and by His Spirit, we have to point out here also that the Spirit is not originally superior to the Saviour, but that the Saviour takes a lower place than He in order to carry out the plan which has been made that the Son of God should become man. Should any one stumble at our saying that the Saviour in becoming man was made lower than the Holy Spirit, we ask him to consider the words used in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where Jesus is shown by Paul to have been made less than the angels on account of the suffering of death. "We behold Him," he says, "who hath been made a little lower than the angels, Jesus, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.

³¹ And this, too, has doubtless to be added, that the creation, in order to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and not least of all the human race, required the introduction into human nature of a happy and divine power, which should set right what was wrong upon the earth, and that this action fell to the share, as it were, of the Holy Spirit; but the Spirit, unable to support such a task, puts forward the Saviour as the only one able to endure such a conflict. The Father therefore, the principal, sends the Son, but the Holy Spirit also sends Him and directs Him to go before, promising to descend, when the thee comes, to the Son of God, and to work with Him for the salvation of men. This He did. when, in a bodily shape like a dove, He flew to Him after the baptism. He remained on Him, and did not pass Him by, as He might have done with men not able continuously to bear His glory. Thus John, when explaining how he knew who Christ was, spoke not only of the descent of the Spirit on Jesus, but also of its remaining upon him. For it is written that John said: "He who sent me to baptize said, On whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending and abiding upon Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

³² It is not said only, "On whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending," for the Spirit no doubt descended on others too, but "descending and abiding on Him. Our examination of this point has been somewhat extended, since we were anxious to make it clear that if all things were made by Him, then the Spirit also was made through the Word, and is seen to be one

of the "all things" which are inferior to their Maker. This view is too firmly settled to be disturbed by a few words which may be adduced to the opposite effect. If any one should lend credence to the Gospel according to the Hebrews, where the Saviour Himself says, "My mother, the Holy Spirit took me just now by one of my hairs and carried me off to the great mount Tabor," he will have to face the difficulty of explaining how the Holy Spirit can be the mother of Christ when it was itself brought into existence through the Word. But neither the passage nor this difficulty is hard to explain. For if he who does the will of the Father in heaven is Christ's brother and sister and mother, and if the name of brother of Christ may be applied, not only to the race of men, but to beings of diviner rank than they, then there is nothing absurd in the Holy Spirit's being His mother, every one being His mother who does the will of the Father in heaven.

³³ On the words, "All things were made by Him," there is still one point to be examined. The "word" is, as a notion, from "life," and yet we read, "What was made in the Word was life, and the life was the light of men." Now as all things were made through Him, was the life made through Him, which is the light of men, and the other notions under which the Saviour is presented to us? Or must we take the "all things were made by Him" subject to the exception of the things which are in Himself? The latter course appears to be the preferable one. For supposing we should concede that the life which is the light of men was made through Him, since it said that the life "was made" the light of men, what are we to say about wisdom, which is conceived as being prior to the Word? That, therefore, which is about the Word (His relations or conditions) was not made by the Word, and the result is that, with the exception of the notions under which Christ is presented, all things were made through the Word of God, the Father making them in wisdom. "In wisdom hast Thou made them all," it says, not through, but in wisdom.

7. Of Things Not Made Through the Logos.

³⁴ Let us see, however, why the words are added, "And without Him was not anything (Gr. even one thing) made. Some might think it superfluous to add to the words "All things were made through Him," the phrase "Without Him was not anything made. For if everything whatsoever was made through the Logos, then nothing was made without Him. Yet it does not follow from the proposition that without the Logos nothing was made, that all things were

made through the Logos. It is possible that though nothing was made without the Logos, all things were made, not through the Logos only, but some things by Him. We must, therefore, make ourselves sure in what sense the "all things" is to be understood, and in what sense the "nothing. For, without a clear preliminary definition of these terms, it might be maintained that, if all things were made through the Logos, and evil is a part of all things, then the whole matter of sin, and everything that is wicked, that these also were made through the Logos. But this we must regard as false. There is nothing absurd in thinking that creatures were made through the Logos, and also that men's brave deeds have been done through Him, and all the useful acts of those who are now in bliss; but with the sins and misfortunes of men it is otherwise.

³⁵ Now some have held that since evil is not based in the constitution of things—for it did not exist at the beginning and at the end it will have ceased—that, therefore, the evils of which we spoke are the Nothing; and as some of the Greeks say that genera and forms, such as the (general) animal and the man, belong to the category of Nothings, so it has been supposed that all that is not of God is Nothing, and has not even obtained through the Word the subsistence it appears to have. We ask whether it is possible to show from Scripture in any convincing way that this is so. As for the meanings of the word "Nothing" and "Not-being," they would appear to be synonymous, for Nothing can be spoken of as Not-being, and the Not-being can be described as Nothing. The Apostle, however, appears to count the things which are not, not among those which have no existence whatever, but rather among things which are evil. To him the Not-being is evil; "God," he says, "called the things that are not as things that are. And Mardocheus, too, in the Esther of the Septuagint, calls the enemies of Israel "those that are not," saying, "Deliver not Thy sceptre, O Lord, to those that are not. We may also notice how evil men, on account of their wickedness, are said not to be, from the name ascribed to God in Exodus: "For the Lord said to Moses, I am, that is My name.

³⁶ The good God says this with respect of us also who pray that we may be part of His congregation. The Saviour praises him, saying, "None is good but one, God the Father. The good, then, is the same as He who is. Over against good is evil or wickedness, and over against Him who is that which is not, whence it follows that evil and wickedness are that which is not. This, per-

haps, is what has led some to affirm that the devil is not created by God. In respect that he is the devil he is not the work of God, but he who is the devil is a created being, and as there is no other creator but our God, he is a work of God. It is as if we should say that a murderer is not a work of God, while we may say that in respect he is a man, God made him. His being as a man he received from God; we do not assert that he received from God his being as a murderer. All, then, who have part in Him who is, and the saints have part in Him, may properly be called Beings; but those who have given up their part in the Being, by depriving themselves of Being, have become Not-beings.

³⁷ But we said when entering on this discussion, that Not-being and Nothing are synonymous, and hence those who are not beings are Nothing, and all evil is nothing, since it is Not-being, and thus since they are called Not-being came into existence without the Logos, not being numbered among the all things which were made through Him. Thus we have shown, so far as our powers admit, what are the "all things" which were made through the Logos, and what came into existence without Him, since at no time is it Being, and it is, therefore, called "Nothing."

8. Heracleon's View that the Logos is Not the Agent of Creation.

³⁸ It was, I consider, a violent and unwarranted procedure which was adopted by Heracleon, the friend, as it is said, of Valentinus, in discussing this sentence: "All things were made through Him. He excepted the whole world and all that it contains, excluding, as far as his hypothesis goes, from the "all things" what is best in the world and its contents. For he says that the aeon (age), and the things in it, were not made by the Logos; he considers them to have come into existence before the Logos. He deals with the statement, "Without Him was nothing made," with some degree of audacity, nor is he afraid of the warning: "Add not to His words, lest He find thee out and thou prove a liar," for to the "Nothing" he adds: "Of what is in the world and the creation. And as his statements on the passage are obviously very much forced and in the face of the evidence, for what he considers divine is excluded from the all, and what he regards as purely evil is, that and nothing else, the all things, we need not waste our time in rebutting what is, on the face of it, absurd, when, without any warrant from Scripture, he adds to the words, "Without Him was nothing made," the further words, "Of what is in the earth and the creation.

³⁹ In this proposal, which has no inner probability to recommend it, he is asking us, in fact, to trust him as we do the prophets, or the Apostles, who had authority and were not responsible to men for the writings belonging to man's salvation, which they handed to those about them and to those who should come after. He had, also, a private interpretation of his own of the words: "All things were made through Him," when he said that it was the Logos who caused the demiurge to make the world, not, however, the Logos from whom or by whom, but Him through whom, taking the written words in a different sense from that of common parlance. For, if the truth of the matter was as he considers, then the writer ought to have said that all things were made through the demiurge by the Word, and not through the Word by the demiurge. We accept the "through whom," as it is usually understood, and have brought evidence in support of our interpretation, while he not only puts forward a new rendering of his own, unsupported by the divine Scripture, but appears even to scorn the truth and shamelessly and openly oppose it. For he says: "It was not the Logos who made all things, as under another who was the operating agent," taking the "through whom" in this sense, "but another made them, the Logos Himself being the operating agent."

⁴⁰ This is not a suitable occasion for the proof that it was not the demiurge who became the servant of the Logos and made the world; but that the Logos became the servant of the demiurge and formed the world. For, according to the prophet David, "God spake and they came into being, He commanded and they were created. For the unbegotten God commanded the first-born of all creation, and they were created, not only the world and what is therein, but also all other things, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, for all things were made through Him and unto Him, and He is before all things."

9. That the Logos Present in Us is Not Responsible for Our Sins.

⁴¹ One point more on the words: "Without Him was not anything made. The question about evil must receive adequate discussion; what was said of it has not, it is true, a very likely appearance, and yet it appears to me that it ought not to be simply overlooked. The question is whether evil, also, was made through the Logos, taking the Logos, now be it well noted, in the sense of that reason which is in every one, as thus brought into being by the reason which was from the beginning. The Apostle says: "Without the law

sin was dead," and adds, "But when the commandment came sin revived," and so teaches generally about sin that it has no power before the law and the commandment (but the Logos is, in a sense, law and commandment), and there would be no sin were there no law, for, "sin is not imputed where there is no law. And, again, there would be no sin but for the Logos, for "if I had not come and spoken unto them," Christ says, "they had not had sin. For every excuse is taken away from one who wants to make excuse for his sin, if, though the Word is in him and shows him what he ought to do, he does not obey it. It seems, then, that all things, the worse things not excepted, were made by the Logos, and without Him, taking the nothing here in its simpler sense, was nothing made.

⁴² Nor must we blame the Logos if all things were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made, any more than we blame the master who has showed the pupil his duty, when the instruction has been such as to leave the pupil, should he sin, no excuse or room to say that he erred through ignorance. This appears the more plainly when we consider that master and pupil are inseparable. For as master and pupil are correlatives, and belong together, so the Logos is present in the nature of reasonable beings as such, always suggesting what they ought to do, even should we pay no heed to his commands, but devote ourselves to pleasure and allow his best counsels to pass by us unregarded. As the eye is a servant given us for the best purposes, and yet we use it to see things on which it is wrong for us to look, and as we make a wrong use of our hearing when we spend our time in listening to singing competitions and to other forbidden sounds, so we outrage the Logos who is in us, and use Him otherwise than as we ought, when we make Him assist in our transgressions. For He is present with those who sin, for their condemnation, and He condemns the man who does not prefer Him to everything else. Hence we find it written: "The word which I have spoken unto you, the same shall judge you. That is as if He should say:

⁴³ "I, the Word, who am always lifting up my voice in you, I, myself, will judge you, and no refuge or excuse will then be left you. This interpretation, however, may appear somewhat strained, as we have taken the Word in one sense to be the Word in the beginning, who was with God, God the Word, and have now taken it in another sense, speaking of it, not only in reference to the principal works of creation, as in the words, "All things were made through Him," but as related to all the acts of reasonable beings, this last be-

ing the Logos (reason), without whose presence none of our sins are committed. The question arises whether the Logos in us is to be pronounced the same being as that which was in the beginning and was with God, God the Word. The Apostle, certainly, does not appear to make the Logos in us a different being from the Logos who was in the beginning with God. "Say not in thine heart," he says, "who shall go up into heaven; that is to bring Christ down, or who shall go down into the abyss; that is to bring Christ up from the dead. But what saith the Scripture? The Logos is very nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart."

10. "That Which Was Made Was Life in Him, and the Life Was the Light of Men." This Involves the Paradox that What Does Not Derive Life from the Logos Does Not Live at All.

⁴⁴ The Greeks have certain apothegms, called paradoxes, in which the wisdom of their sages is presented at its highest, and some proof. or what appears to be proof, is given. Thus it is said that the wise man alone, and that every wise man, is a priest, because the wise man aloha: and every wise man possesses knowledge as to the service of God. Again, that the wise man alone and that every wise man is free and has received from the divine law authority to do what he himself is minded to do, and this authority they call lawful power of decision. Why should we say more about these so-called paradoxes? Much discussion is devoted to them, and they call for a comparison of the sense of Scripture with the doctrine thus conveyed. so that we may be in a position to determine where religious doctrine agrees with them and where it differs from them. This has been suggested to us by our study of the words, "That which was made was life in Him; "for it appears possible to follow the words of Scripture here and to make out a number of things which partake of the character of the paradoxes and are even more paradoxical than these sentences of the Greeks.

⁴⁵ If we consider the Logos in the beginning, who was with God, God the Word, we shall perhaps be able to declare that only he who partakes of this being, considered in this character, is to be pronounced reasonable ("logical"), and thus we should demonstrate that the saint alone is reasonable. Again, if we apprehend that life has come in the Logos, he, namely, who said, "I am the life," then we shall say that no one is alive who is outside the faith of Christ, that all are dead who are not living to God, that their life is life to sin, and therefore, if I may so express myself, a life of death. Consider

however, whether the divine Scriptures do not in many places teach this; as where the Saviour says, "Or have ye not read that which was spoken at the bush, I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. He is not God of the dead but of the living. And "Before Thee shall no living being be justified. But why need we speak about God Himself or the Saviour? For it is disputed to which of them the voice belongs which says in the prophets, "As I live, saith the Lord."

11. How No One is Righteous or Can Truly Be Said to Live in Comparison with God.

⁴⁶ First let us look at the words, "He is not the God of the dead but of the living. That is equivalent to saying that He is not the God of sinners but of saints. For it was a great gift to the Patriarchs that God in place of His own name should add their name to His own designation as God, as Paul says, "Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God. He is the God, therefore, of the fathers and of all the saints; it might be hard to find a passage to the effect that God is the God of any of the wicked. If, then, He is the God of the saints, and is said to be the God of the living, then the saints are the living and the living are saints; neither is there any saint outside the living, nor when any one is called living is the further implication absent that in addition to his having life he is a holy one. Near akin to this is the lesson to be drawn from the saying, "I shall be well pleasing to the Lord in the land of the living. The good pleasure of the Lord, he appears to say, is in the ranks of the saints, or in the place of the saints, and it is there that he hopes to be. No one pleases God well who has not entered the rank of the saints, or the place of the saints;

⁴⁷ and to that place every one must come who has assumed beforehand, as it were in this life, the shadow and image of true God-pleasing. The passage which declares that before God no living being shall be justified shows that in comparison with God and the righteousness that is in Him none, even of the most finished saints, will be justified. We might take a parable from another quarter and say that no candle can give light before the sun, not that the candle will not give light, only it will not when the sun out-shines it. In the same way every "living" will be justified, only not before God, when it is compared with those who are below and who are in the power of darkness. To them the light of the saints will shine. Here, perhaps, we have the key to the meaning of that verse: "Let your light shine before men. He does not say, Let your light shine before God; had he said so he would have given a com-

mandment impossible of fulfilment, as if he had bidden those lights which have souls to let their light shine before the sun.

⁴⁸ It is not only, therefore, the ordinary mass of the living who will not be justified before God, but even those among the living who are distinguished above the rest, or, to put it more truly, the whole righteousness of the living will not be justified before God, as compared with the righteousness of God, as if I were to call together all the lights which shine on the earth by night, and to say that they could not give light in comparison with the rays of the sun. We rise from these considerations to a higher level when we take the words before our minds, "I live, saith the Lord. Life, in the full sense of the word, especially after what we have been saying on the subject, belongs perhaps to God and none but Him. Is this the reason why the Apostle, after speaking of the supreme excellency of the life of God and being led to the highest expression about it, says about God (showing in this a true understanding of that saying, "I live, saith the Lord"); "who only hath immortality. No living being besides God has life free from change and variation. Why should we be in further doubt? Even Christ did not share the Father's immortality; for He "tasted death for every man."

12. Is the Saviour All that He Is, to All?

⁴⁹ We have thus enquired as to the life of God, and the life which is Christ, and the living who are in a place by themselves, and have seen how the living are not justified before God, and we have noticed the cognate statement, "Who alone hath immortality . We may now take up the assumption which may appear to be involved in this, namely, that whatever being is gifted with reason does not possess blessedness as a part of its essence, or as an inseparable part of its nature. For if blessedness and the highest life were an inseparable characteristic of reasonable being, how could it be truly said of God that He only has immortality? We should therefore remark, that the Saviour is some things, not to Himself but to others, and some things both to Himself and others, and we must enquire if there are some things which He is to Himself and to no other. Clearly it is to others that He is a Shepherd, not a shepherd like those among men who make gain out of their occupation; unless the benefit conferred on the sheep might be regarded, on account of His love to men, as a benefit to Himself also. Similarly it is to others that He is the Way and the Door, and, as all will admit, the Rod. To Himself and to others He is Wisdom and perhaps also Reason (Loges).

⁵⁰ It may be asked whether, as He has in Himself a system of speculations, inasmuch as He is wisdom, there are some of those speculations which cannot be received by any nature that is begotten, but His own, and which He knows for Himself only. Nor should the reverence we owe to the Holy Spirit keep us from seeking to answer this question. For the Holy Spirit Himself receives instruction, as is clear from what is said about the Paraclete and the Holy Spirit, "He shall take of mine and shall declare it to you. Does He, then, from these instructions, take in everything that the Son, gazing at the Father from the first, Himself knows? That would require further consideration. And if the Saviour is some things to others, and some things it may be to Himself, and to no other, or to one only, or to few, then we ask, in so far as He is the life which came in the Loges, whether he is life to Himself and to others, or to others, and if to others, to what others. And are life and the light of men the same thing, for the text says, "That which was made was life in Him and the life was the light of men. But the light of men is the light only of some, not of all, rational creatures; the word "men" which is added shows this. But He is the light of men, and so He is the life of those whose light he is also.

⁵¹ And inasmuch as He is life He may be called the Saviour, not for Himself but to be life to others, whose light also He is. And this life comes to the Logos and is inseparable from Him, once it has come to Him. But the Loges, who cleanses the soul, must have been in the soul first; it is after Him and the cleansing that proceeds from Him, when all that is dead or weak in her has been taken away, that pure life comes to every one who has made himself a fit dwelling for the Loges, considered as God.

13. How the Life in the Logos Copies After the Beginning.

⁵² Here, we must carefully observe, we have two things which are one, and we have to define the difference between them. First, what is before us in The Word in the beginning, then what is implied in The Life in Word. The Word was not made in the beginning; there was no time when the beginning was devoid of the Word, and hence it is said, "In the beginning was the Word. Of life, on the other hand, we read, not that it was as the Word, but that it was made; if at least it be the case that the life is the light of men. For when man was not yet, there was no light of men; for the light of men is conceived only in relation to men. And let no one annoy us with the objection that we have put this under the category of time, though it be the order

of the things themselves, that make them first and second and so on, and even though there should have been no time when the things placed by the Loges third and fourth were not in existence. As, then, all things were made by Him, not all things were by Him, and as without Him was nothing made, not, without Him nothing was, so what was made in Him, not what was in Him, was life. And, again, not what was made in the beginning was the Word, but what was in the beginning was the Word.

⁵³ Some of the copies, it is true, have a reading which is not devoid of probability, "What was made is life in Him. But if life is the same thing as the light of men, then no one who is in darkness is living, and none of the living is in darkness; but every one who is alive is also in light, and every one who is in light is living, so that not he only who is living, but every one who is living, is a son of light; and he who is a son of light is he whose work shines before men.

14. How the Natures of Men are Not So Fixed from the First, But that They May Pass from Darkness to Light.

⁵⁴ We have been discussing certain things which are opposite, and what has been said of them may serve to suggest what has been omitted. We are speaking of life and the light of men, and the opposite to life is death; the opposite to the light of men, the darkness of men. It is therefore plain that he who is in the darkness of men is in death, and that he who works the works of death is nowhere but in darkness. But he who is mindful of God, if we consider what it is to be mindful of Him, is not in death, according to the saying, "In death there is no one who remembers Thee. Are the darkness of men, and death, such as they are by nature? On this point we have another passage, "We were once darkness, but now light in the Lord," even if we be now in the fullest sense saints and spiritual persons. Thus he who was once darkness has become, like Paul, capable of being light in the Lord. Some consider that some natures are spiritual from the first. such as those of Paul and the holy Apostles; but I scarcely see how to reconcile with such a view, what the above text tells us, that the spiritual person was once darkness and afterwards became light. For if the spiritual was once darkness what can the earthy have been?

⁵⁵ But if it is true that darkness became light, as in the text, how is it unreasonable to suppose that all darkness is capable of becoming light? Had not Paul said, "We were once in darkness, but now are we light in the Lord," and

thus implied of those whom they consider to be naturally lost, that they were darkness, or are darkness still, the hypothesis about the different natures might have been admissible. But Paul distinctly says that he had once been darkness but was now light in the Lord, which implies the possibility that darkness should turn into light. But he who perceives the possibility of a change on each side for the better or for the worse, will not find it hard to gain an insight into every darkness of men, or into that death which consists in the darkness of men.

15. Heracleon's View that the Lord Brought Life Only to the Spiritual, Refutation of This.

⁵⁶ Heracleon adopts a somewhat violent course when he arrives at this passage, "What was made in Him was life." Instead of the "In Him" of the text he understands "to those men who are spiritual," as if he considered the Logos and the spiritual to be identical, though this he does not plainly say; and then he proceeds to give, as it were, an account of the origin of the matter and says, "He (the Logos) provided them with their first form at their birth, carrying further and making manifest what had been sown by another, into form and into illumination and into an outline of its own." He did not observe how Paul speaks of the spiritual, and how he refrains from saying that they are men. "A natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; but the spiritual judgeth all things." We maintain that it was not without a meaning that he did not add the word men to the word spiritual. Spiritual is something better than man, for man receives his form either in soul, or in body, or in both together, not in what is more divine than these, namely, in spirit; and it is after he has come to have a prevailing share of this that he is called "spiritual." Moreover, in bringing forward such a hypothesis as this, he furnishes not even the pretence of a proof, and shows himself unable to reach even a moderate degree of plausibility for his argument on the subject. So much, then, for him.

16. The Life May Be the Light of Others Besides.

⁵⁷ Let us suggest another question, namely, whether the life was the light of men only, and not of every being as well that is in blessedness. For if the life were the same thing as the light of men, and if the light of Christ were for men alone, then the life also would be only for men. But such a view is both foolish and impious, since the other Scriptures testify against this interpretation and declare that, when we are somewhat more advanced, we shall be

equal to the angels. The question is to be solved on the principle that when a predicate is applied to certain persons, it is not to be at once taken to apply to them alone. Thus, when the light of men is spoken of, it is not the light of men only; had that been the meaning, a word would have been added to express it; the life, it would have read, was the light of men only. For it is possible for the light of men to be the light of others besides men, just as it is possible that certain animals and certain plants may form the food of men, and that the same animals and plants should be the food of other creatures too. That is an example from common life; it is fitting that another analogy should be adduced from the inspired books.

⁵⁸ Now the question here before us, is why the light of men should not be the light of other creatures also, and we have seen that to speak of the light of men by no means excludes the possibility that the light may be that of other beings besides man, whether inferior to him or like him, Now a name is given to God; He is said to be the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. He, then, who infers from the saying, "The life was the light of men," that the light is for no other than for men, ought also to conclude that the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob is the God of no one else but these three patriarchs. But He is also the God of Elijah, and, as Judith says, of her father Simeon, and the God of the Hebrews. By analogy of reasoning, then, if nothing prevents Him from being the God of others, nothing prevents the light of men from being the light of others besides men.

17. The Higher Powers are Men; And Christ is Their Light Also.

⁵⁹ Another, again, appeals to the text, "Let us make man according to our image and likeness, " and maintains that whatever is made according to God's image and likeness is man. To support this, numberless instances are adduced to show that in Scripture "man "and "angel" are used indifferently, and that the same subject is entitled both angel and man. This is true of the three who were entertained by Abraham, and of the two who came to Sodom; in the whole course of Scripture, persons are styled sometimes men, sometimes angels. Those who hold this view will say that since persons are styled angels who are manifestly men, as when Zechariah says, "The messenger of the Lord, I am with you, saith the Lord Almighty," and as it is written of John the Baptist, "Behold I send My messenger before thy face," the angels (messengers) of God are so called on account of their office, and are not here

called men on account of their nature. It confirms this view that the names applied to the higher powers are not those of species of living beings, but those of the orders, assigned by God to this and to that reasonable being. "Throne" is not a species of living being, nor "dominion," nor "principality," nor "power"; these are names of the businesses to which those clothed with the names have been appointed; the subjects themselves are nothing but men, but the subject has come to be a throne, or a dominion, or a principality, or a power.

⁶⁰ In Joshua, the son of Nun, we read that in Jericho there appeared to Joshua a man who said, "I am captain of the Lord's host, now am I come. The outcome of this is that the light of men must be held to be the same as the light of every being endowed with reason; for every reasonable being is man, since it is according to the image and likeness of God. It is spoken of in three different ways. "the light of men," and simply "the light," and "the true light. It is the light of men either, as we showed before, because there is nothing to prevent us from regarding it as the light of other beings besides men, or because all beings endowed with reason are called men because they are made in the image of God.

18. How God Also is Light, But in a Different Way; And How Life Came Before Light.

⁶¹ The Saviour is here called simply light. But in the Catholic Epistle of this same John we read that God is light. This, it has been maintained, furnishes a proof that the Son is not in substance different from the Father. Another student, however, looking into the matter more closely and with a sounder judgment, will say that the light which shines in darkness and is not overtaken by it, is not the same as the light in which there is no darkness at all. The light which shines in darkness comes upon this darkness, as it were, and is pursued by it, and, in spite of attempts made upon it, is not overtaken. But the light in which there is no darkness at all neither shines on darkness, nor is at first pursued by it, so as to prove victor and to have it recorded that it was not overtaken by its pursuer. The third designation was "the true light. But in proportion as God, since He is the Father of truth, is more and greater than truth, and since He is the Father of wisdom is greater and more excellent than wisdom, in the same proportion He is more than the true light. We may learn, perhaps, in a more suggestive manner, how the Father and the

Son are two lights, from David, who says in the thirty-fifth Psalm, "In Thy light we shall see light.

⁶² This same light of men which shines in darkness, the true light, is called, further on in the Gospel, the light of the world; Jesus says, "I am the light of the world. Nor must we omit to notice that whereas the passage might very well have run, "That which was made was in Him the light of men, and the light of men was life," he chose the opposite order. He puts life before the light of men, even if life and the light of men are the same thing; in thinking of those who have part in life, though that life is also the light of men, we are to come first to the fact that they are living the divine life spoken of before; then we come to their enlightenment. For life must come first if the living person is to be enlightened; it would not be a good arrangement to speak of the illumination of one not yet conceived as living, and to make life come after the illumination. For though "life" and "the light" of men are the same thing, the notions are taken separately. This light of men is also called, by Isaiah, "the light of the Gentiles," where he says, "Behold I have set Thee for a covenant of the generation, for a light of the Gentiles; "and David, placing his confidence in this light, says in the twenty-sixth Psalm, "The Lord is my illumination and my Saviour; whom shall I fear? "

19. The Life Here Spoken of is the Higher Life, that of Reason.

⁶³ As for those who make up a mythology about the aeons and arrange them in syzygies (yokes or pairs), and who consider the Logos and Life to have been emitted by Intellect and Truth, it may not be beside the point to state the following difficulties. How can life, in their system, the yokefellow of the Word, derive his origin from his yokefellow? For "what was made in Him," he says, evidently referring to the Word, mentioned immediately before, "was life. Will they tell us how life, the yokefellow, as they say, of the Word, came into being in the Word, and how life rather than the Word is the light of men. It would be quite natural if men of reasonable minds, who are perplexed with such questions and find the point we have raised hard to dispose of, should turn round upon us and invite us to discuss the reason why it is not the Word that is said to be the light of men, but life which originated in the Word. To such an enquiry we shall reply that the life here spoken of is not that which is common to rational beings and to beings without reason, but that life which is added to us upon the completion of reason in us, our share in that life, being derived from the first reason (Logos).

⁶⁴ It is when we turn away from the life which is life in appearance only, not in truth, and when we yearn to be filled with the true life, that we are made partakers of it, and when it has arisen in us it becomes the foundation of the light of the higher knowledge (gnosis). With some it may be that this life is only potentially and not actually light, with those who do not strive to search out the things of the higher knowledge, while with others it is actually light. With these it clearly is so who act on Paul's injunction, "Seek earnestly the best gifts; "and among the greatest gifts is that which all are enjoined to seek, namely, the word of wisdom, and it is followed by the word of knowledge. This wisdom and this knowledge lie side by side; into the difference between them this is not a fitting occasion to enquire.

20. Different Kinds of Light; And of Darkness.

⁶⁵ "And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness hath not overtaken it. We are still enquiring about the light of men, since it is what was spoken of in the preceding verse, and also, I consider, about darkness, which is named as its adversary, the darkness also being, if the definition of it is correct, that of men. The light of men is a generic notion covering two special things; and with the darkness of men it is the same. He who has gained the light of men and shares its beams will do the work of light and know in the higher sense, being illuminated by the light of the higher knowledge. And we must recognize the analogous case of those on the other side, and of their evil actions, and of that which is thought to be bat is not really knowledge, since those who exercise it have the reason (Logos) not of light but of darkness. And because the sacred word knows the things which produce light, isaiah says: "Because Thy commandments are a light upon the earth," and David says in the Psalm, "The precept of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes. But since in addition to the commandments and the precepts there is a light of higher knowledge, we read in one of the twelve (prophets), "Sow to yourselves for righteousness, reap to yourselves for the fruit of life, make light for yourselves the light of knowledge.

⁶⁶ There is a further light of knowledge in addition to the commandments, and so we read, "Make light for yourselves," not simply light, but what light?-the light of knowledge. For if any light that a man kindles for himself were a light of knowledge, then the added words, "Make light for yourselves, the light of knowledge," would have no meaning. And again that darkness is brought upon men by their evil deeds, we learn from John him-

self, when he says in his epistle, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth," and again, "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now," and again, "He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because darkness hath blinded his eyes. Walking in darkness signifies evil conduct, and to hate one's brother, is not that to fall away from that which is properly called knowledge? But he also who is ignorant of divine things walks in darkness, just because of that ignorance; as David says, "They knew not, they understood not, they walk in darkness.

⁶⁷ Consider, however, this passage, "God is light and in Him is no darkness," and see if the reason for this saying is not that darkness is not one, being either two, because there are two kinds of it, or many, because it is taken distributively, individually with reference to the many evil actions and the many false doctrines; so that there are many darknesses, not one of which is in God. The saying of the Saviour could not be spoken of the Holy One, "Ye are the light of the world; for the Holy One is light of the world (absolute, not particular), and there is not in Him any darkness.

21. Christ is Not, Like God, Quite Free from Darkness: Since He Bore Our Sins.

⁶⁸ Now some one will ask how this statement that there is no darkness in Him can be regarded as a thing peculiar to Him, when we consider that the Saviour also was quite without sin. Could it not be said of Him also that "He is light, and that there is no darkness in Him"? The difference between the two cases has been partly set forth above. We will now, however, go a step further than we did before, and add, that if God made Christ who knew no sin to be sin for us, then it could not be said of Him that there was no darkness in Him. For if Jesus was in the likeness of the flesh of sin and for sin, and condemned sin by taking upon Him the likeness of the flesh of sin, then it cannot be said of Him, absolutely and directly, that there was no darkness in Him. We may add that "He took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses," both infirmities of the soul and sicknesses of the hidden man of our heart. On account of these infirmities and sicknesses which He bore away from us, He declares His soul to be sorrowful and sore troubled, and He is said in Zechariah to have put on filthy garments, which, when He was about to take them off, are said to be sins. "Behold, it is said, I have taken away thy sins.

⁶⁹ Because He had taken on Himself the sins of the people of those who believed in Him, he uses many such expressions as these: "Far from my salvation are the words of my transgressions," and "Thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins were not hid from Thee. And let no one suppose that we say this from any lack of piety towards the Christ of God; for as the Father alone has immortality and our Lord took upon Himself. for His love to men, the death He died for us, so to the Father alone the words apply, "In Him is no darkness," since Christ took upon Himself, for His goodwill towards men, our darknesses. This He did, that by His power He might destroy our death and remove the darkness which is in our soul, so that the saying in Isaiah might be fulfilled, "The people that sat in darkness saw a great light. This light, which came into being in the Logos, and is also life, shines in the darkness of our souls, and it has come where the rulers of this darkness carry on their struggle with the race of men and strive to subdue to darkness those who do not stand firm with all their power; that they might be enlightened the light has come so far, and that they might be called sons of light. And shining in darkness this light is pursued by the darkness, but not overtaken.

22. How the Darkness Failed to Overtake the Light.

⁷⁰ Should any one consider that we are adding something that is not written, namely, the pursuit of the light by the darkness, let him reflect that unless the darkness had pursued the light the words, "The darkness did not overtake it," would have no meaning. John writes for those who have wit to see what is omitted and to supply it as the context requires, and so he wrote, "The darkness did not overtake it." If it did not overtake it, it must first have pursued it, and that the darkness did pursue the light is clear from what the Saviour suffered, and those also who received His teachings, His own children, when darkness was doing what it could against the sons of light and was minded to drive light away from men. But since, if God be for us, no one, however that way minded, can be against us, the more they humbled themselves the more they grew, and they prevailed exceedingly. In two ways the darkness did not overtake the light. Either it was left far behind and was itself so slow, while the light was in its course so sharp and swift, that it was not even able to keep following it, or if the light sought to lay a snare for the darkness, and waited for it in pursuance of the plan it had formed, then darkness, coming near the light, was brought to an end. In either case the darkness did not overtake the light.

23. There is a Divine Darkness Which is Not Evil, and Which Ultimately Becomes Light.

⁷¹In connection with this subject it is necessary for us to point out that darkness is not to be understood, every time it is mentioned, in a bad sense; Scripture speaks of it sometimes in a good sense. The heterodox have failed to observe this distinction, and have accordingly adopted most shameful doctrines about the Maker of the world, and have indeed revolted from Him, and addicted themselves to fictions and myths. We must, therefore, show how and when the name of darkness is taken in a good sense. Darkness and clouds and tempest are said in Exodus to be round about God, and in the seventeenth Psalm, "He made darkness His secret place, His tent round about Him, dark water in clouds of the air. Indeed, if one considers the multitude of speculation and knowledge about God, beyond the power of human nature to take in, beyond the power, perhaps, of all originated beings except Christ and the Holy Spirit, then one may know how God is surrounded with darkness, because the discourse is hid in ignorance which would be required to tell in what darkness He has made His hiding-place when He arranged that the things concerning Him should be unknown and beyond the grasp of knowledge. Should any one be staggered by these expositions, he may be reconciled to them both by the "dark sayings" and by the "treasures of darkness," hidden, invisible, which are given to Christ by God.

⁷²In nowise different, I consider, are the treasures of darkness which are hid in Christ, from what is spoken of in the text, "God made darkness His secret place," and (the saint) "shall understand parable and dark saying. And consider if we have here the reason of the Saviour's saying to His disciples, "What ye have heard in darkness, speak ye in the light. The mysteries committed to them in secret and where few could hear, hard to be known and obscure, He bids them, when enlightened and therefore said to be in the light, to make known to every one who is made light. I might add a still stranger feature of this darkness which is praised, namely, that it hastens to the light and overtakes it, and so at last, after having been unknown as darkness, undergoes for him who does not see its power such a change that he comes to know it and to declare that what was formerly known to him as darkness has now become light.

24. John the Baptist Was Sent. From Where? His Soul Was Sent from a Higher Region.

⁷³ "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He who is sent is sent from somewhere to somewhere; and the careful student will, therefore, enquire from what quarter John was sent, and whither. The "whither" is quite plain on the face of the story; he was sent to Israel, and to those who were willing to hear him when he was staying in the wilderness of Judaea and baptizing by the banks of the Jordan. According to the deeper sense, however, he was sent into the world, the world being understood as this earthly place where men are; and the careful student will have this in view in enquiring from where John was sent. Examining the words more closely, he will perhaps declare that as it is written of Adam, "And the Lord sent him forth out of the Paradise of pleasure to till the earth, out of which he was taken," so also John was sent, either from heaven or from Paradise, or from some other quarter to this place on the earth. He was sent that he might bear witness of the light. There is, however, an objection to this interpretation, which is not to be lightly dismissed. It is written in Isaiah: "Whom shall I send, and who will go to the people?" The prophet answers: "Here am I, -send me."

⁷⁴ He, then, who objects to that rendering of our passage which appears to be the deeper may say that Isaiah was sent not to this world from another place, but after having seen "the Lord sitting on a throne high and lifted up," was sent to the people, to say, "Hearing, ye shall hear and shall not understand," and so on; and that in the same manner John, the beginning of his mission not being narrated, is sent after the analogy of the mission of Isaiah, to baptize, and to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him, and to bear witness of the light. So much we have said of the first sense; and now we adduce certain solutions which help to confirm the deeper meaning about John. In the same passage it is added, "He came for witness, to bear witness of the light. Now, if he came, where did he come from? To those who find it difficult to follow us, we point to what John says afterwards of having seen the Holy Spirit as a dove descending on the Saviour. "He that sent me," he says, "to baptize with water, He said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shall see the Holy Spirit descending and abiding upon Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit and with fire. When did He send him and give him this injunction?"

75 The answer to title question will probably be that when He sent him to begin to baptize, then He who was dealing with him uttered this word. But a more convincing argument for the view that John was sent from another region when he entered into the body, the one object of his entry into this life being that he should bear witness of the truth, may be drawn from the narrative of his birth. Gabriel, when announcing to Zacharias the birth of John, and to Mary the advent of our Saviour among men, says: That John is to be "filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. And we have also the saying, "For behold, when the voice of thy salutation came into mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. He who sedulously guards himself in his dealings with Scripture against forced, or casual, or capricious procedure, must necessarily assume that John's soul was older than his body, and subsisted by itself before it was sent on the ministry of the witness of the light. Nor must we overlook the text, "This is Elijah which is to come. For if that general doctrine of the soul is to be received, namely, that it is not sown at the same time with the body, but is before it, and is then, for various causes, clothed with flesh and blood; then the words "sent from God" will not appear to be applicable to John alone.

76 The most evil of all, the man of sin, the son of perdition, is said by Paul to be sent by God: "God sendeth them a working of error that they should believe a lie; that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But our present question may, perhaps, be solved in this way, that as every man is a man of God, simply because God created him, but not every man is called a man of God, but only he who has devoted himself to God, such as Elijah and those who are called men of God in the Scriptures, thus every man might be said in ordinary language to be sent from God, but in the absolute sense no one is to be spoken of in this way who has not entered this life for a divine ministry and in the service of the salvation of mankind. We do not find it said of any one but the saints that he is sent by God. It is said of Isaiah as we showed before; it is also said of Jeremiah, "To whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go"; and it is said of Ezekiel, "I send thee to nations that are rebellious and have not believed in Me. The examples, however, do not expressly speak of a mission from the region outside life into life, and as it is a mission into life that we are enquiring about, they may seem to have little bearing on our subject.

⁷⁷ But there is nothing absurd in our transferring the argument derived from them to our question. They tell us that it is only the saints, and we were speaking of them, whom God is said to send, and in this sense they may be applied to the case of those who are sent into this life.

25. Argument from the Prayer of Joseph, to Show that the Baptist May Have Been an Angel Who Became a Man.

⁷⁸ As we are now engaged with what is said of John, and are asking about his mission, I may take the opportunity to state the view which I entertain about him. We have read this prophecy about him, "Behold, I send My messenger (angel) before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee;" and at this we ask if it can be one of the holy angels who is sent down on this ministry as forerunner of our Saviour. No wonder if, when the first-born of all creation was assuming a human body, some of them should have been filled with love to man and become admirers and followers of Christ, and thought it good to minister to his kindness towards man by having a body like that of men. And who would not be moved at the thought of his leaping for joy when yet in the belly, surpassing as he did the common nature of man? Should the piece; entitled "The prayer of Joseph," one of the apocryphal works current among the Hebrews, be thought worthy of credence, this dogma will be found in it clearly expressed. Those at the beginning, it is represented, having some marked distinction beyond men, and being much greater than other souls, because they were angels, they have come down to human nature. Thus Jacob says: "I, Jacob, who speak to you, arid Israel, I am an angel of God, a ruling spirit, and Abraham and Isaac were created before every work of God;

⁷⁹ and I am Jacob, called Jacob by men, but my name is Israel, called Israel by God, a man seeing God, because I am the first-born of every creature which God caused to live. And he adds: "When I was coming from Mesopotamia of Syria, Uriel, the angel of God, came forth, and said, I have come down to the earth and made my dwelling among men, and I am called Jacob by name. He was wroth with me and fought with me and wrestled against me, saying that his name and the name of Him who is before every angel should be before my name. And I told him his name and how great he was among the sons of God; Art not thou Uriel my eighth, and I am Israel and archangel of the power of the Lord and a chief captain among the sons of God? Am not I Israel, the first minister in the sight of God, and I invoked

my God by the inextinguishable name? "It is likely that this was really said by Jacob, and was therefore written down, and that there is also a deeper meaning in what we are told, "He supplanted his brother in the womb. Consider whether the celebrated question about Jacob and Esau has a solution. We read, "The children being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth, it was said, "The elder shall serve the younger.

⁸⁰ Even as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated. What shall we say, then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. If, then, when they were not yet born, and had not done any-thing either good or evil, in order that God's purpose according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, if at such a period this was said, how if we do not go back to the works done before this life, can it be said that there is no unrighteousness with God when the elder serves the younger and is hated (by God) before he has done anything worthy of slavery or of hatred? We have made something of a digression in introducing this story about Jacob and appealing to a writing which we cannot well treat with contempt; but it certainly adds weight to our argument about John, to the effect that as Isaiah's voice declares he is an angel who assumed a body for the sake of bearing witness to the light. So much about John considered as a man.

26. John is Voice, Jesus is Speech. Relation of These Two to Each Other.

⁸¹ Now we know voice and speech to be different things. The voice can be produced without any meaning and with no speech in it, and similarly speech can be reported to the mind without voice, as when we make mental excursions, within ourselves. And thus the Saviour is, in one view of Him, speech, and John differs from Him; for as the Saviour is speech, John is voice. John himself invites me to take this view of him, for to those who asked who he was, he answered, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord! make His paths straight!" This explains, perhaps, how it was that Zacharias lost his voice at the birth of the voice which points out the Word of God, and only recovered it when the voice, forerunner of the Word, was born. A voice must be perceived with the ears if the mind is afterwards to receive the speech which the voice indicates. Hence, John is, in point of his birth, a little older than Christ, for our voice comes to us before our speech. But John also points to Christ; for speech is brought forward by

the voice. And Christ is baptized by John, though John declares himself to have need to be baptized by Christ; for with men speech is purified by voice, though the natural way is that speech should purify the voice which indicates it. In a word, when John points out Christ, it is man pointing out God, the Saviour incorporeal, the voice pointing out the Word.

27. Significance of the Names of John and of His Parents.

⁸² The force that is in names may be applied in many matters, and it may be worth our while to ask at this point what is the significance of the names John and Zacharias. The relatives wish, as the giving of a name is a thing not to be lightly disposed of, to call the child Zacharias, and are surprised that Elisabeth should want him to be called John. Zacharias then writes, "His name is John," and is at once freed from his troublesome silence. On examining the names, then, we find "Joannes" to be "Joa" without the "nes." The New Testament gives Hebrew names a Greek form and treats them as Greek words; Jacob is changed into Jacobus, Symeon into Simon, and Joannes is the same as Joa. Zacharias is said to be memory, add Elisabeth "oath of my God," or "strength of my God." John then came into the world from grace of God (=Joa=Joannes), and his parents were Memory (about God) and the Oath of our God, about the fathers. Thus was he born to make ready for the Lord a people fit for Him, at the end of the Covenant now grown old, which is the end of the Sabbatic period. Hence it is not possible that the rest after the Sabbath should have come into existence from the seventh of our God; on the contrary, it is our Saviour who, after the pattern of His own rest, caused us to be made in the likeness of His death, and hence also of His resurrection.

28. The Prophets Bore Witness to Christ and Foretold Many Things Concerning Him.

⁸³ "He came for a witness that He might bear witness of the light, that all through Him might believe. Some of the dissenters from the Church's doctrine, men who profess to believe in Christ, have desired another being, as indeed their system requires, besides the Creator, and hence cannot allow His coming to the world to have been foretold by the prophets. They therefore endeavour to get rid of the testimonies of the prophets about Christ, and say that the Son of God has no need of witnesses, but that He brings with Him His own evidence, partly in the sound words full of power which He proclaimed and partly in the wonderful works He did, which were suffi-

cient at once to convince any one whatever. Then they say: If Moses is believed on account of his word and his works, and has no need of any witnesses to announce him beforehand, and if the prophets were received, every one of them, by these people, as messengers from God, how should not one who is much greater than Moses and the prophets accomplish His mission and benefit the human race, without prophets to bear witness about Him? They regard it as superfluous that He should have been foretold by the prophets, since the prophets were concerned, as these opponents would say, that those who believed in Christ should not receive Him as a new God, and therefore did what they could to bring them to that same God whom Moses and the prophets taught before Jesus.

⁸⁴ To this we must say that as there are many causes which may lead men to believe, since men who are not moved by one argument may be by another, so God is able to provide for men a number of occasions, any of which may cause their minds to open to the truth that God, who is over all, has taken on Himself human nature. It is manifest to all, how some are brought by the prophetic writings to the admiration of Christ. They are astounded at the voices of so many prophets before Him, which establish the place of His birth, the country of His upbringing, the power of His teaching, His working of wonderful works, and His human passion brought to a close by His resurrection. We must notice, too, that Christ's stupendous acts of power were able to bring to the faith those of Christ's own time, but that they lost their demonstrative force with the lapse of years and began to be regarded as mythical. Greater evidential value than that of the miracles then performed attaches to the comparison which we now make between these miracles and the prophecy of them; this makes it impossible for the student to cast any doubt on the former. The prophetic testimonies do not declare merely the advent of the Messiah; it is by no means the case that they teach this and nothing else. They teach a great deal of theology.

⁸⁵ The relation of the Father to the Son and of the Son to the Father may be learned not less from what the prophets announce about Christ, than from the Apostles narrating the splendours of the Son of God. A parallel case, which we may venture to adduce, is that of the martyrs, who were honoured by the witness they bore Him, and by no means conferred any favour on Him by their witnessing for the Son of God. And how is it if, as many of Christ's true disciples were honoured by having thus to witness for Him, so

the prophets received from God as their special gift that of understanding about Christ and announcing Him before, and that they taught not only those living after Christ's advent how they should regard the Son of God, but those also who lived in the generations before Him? As he who in these times does not know the Son has not the Father either, so also we are to understand it was in these earlier times. Hence "Abraham rejoiced to see the day of Christ, and he saw it and was glad. He, therefore, who declares that they are not to testify about Christ is seeking to deprive the chorus of the prophets of the greatest gift they have; for what office of equal importance would be left to prophecy, inspired as it is by the Holy Spirit, if all connection with the economy of our Lord and Master were taken away from it?

⁸⁶ For as these have their faith well ordered who approach the God of the universe through Mediator and High-Priest and Paraclete, and as his religion is a halting one who does not go in through the door to the Father, so also in the case of men of old time. Their religion was sanctified and made acceptable to God by their knowledge and faith and expectation of Christ. For we have observed that God declares Himself to be a witness and exhorts them all to declare the same about Christ, and to be imitators of Him, bearing witness of Him to all who require it. For he says, "Be witnesses for Me, and I am witness, saith the Lord God, and My servant whom I have chosen. Now every one who bears witness to the truth, whether he support it by words or deeds, or in whatever way, may properly be called a witness (martyr); but it has come to be the custom of the brotherhood, since they are struck with admiration of those who have contended to the death for truth and valour, to keep the name of martyr more properly for those who have borne witness to the mystery of godliness by shedding their blood for it. The Saviour gives the name of martyr to every one who bears witness to the truth He declares; thus at the Ascension He says to His disciples: "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in Judaea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

⁸⁷ The leper who was cleansed had still to bring the gift which Moses commanded for a testimony to those who did not believe in the Christ. In the same way the martyrs bear witness for a testimony to the unbelieving, and so do all the saints whose deeds shine before men. They spend their life rejoicing in the cross of Christ and bearing witness to the true light.

*29. The Six Testimonies of the Baptist Enumerated. Jesus' "Come and See."
Significance of the Tenth Hour.*

⁸⁸ Accordingly John came to bear witness of the light, and in his witness-bearing he cried, saying, "He that cometh after me exists before me; for He was before me; for of His fulness we have all received and grace for grace, for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. This whole speech is from the mouth of the Baptist bearing witness to the Christ. Some take it otherwise, and consider that the words from "for of His fulness" to "He hath declared Him" are from the writer, John the Apostle. The true state of the case is that John's first testimony begins, as we said before, "He that cometh after me," and ends, "He hath declared Him," and his second testimony is that spoken to the priests and levites sent from Jerusalem, whom the Jews had sent. To them he confesses and does not deny the truth, namely, that he is not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet, but "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as saith Isaiah the prophet. After this there is another testimony of the same Baptist to Christ, still teaching His superior nature, which goes forth into the whole world and enters into reasonable souls.

⁸⁹ He says, "There standeth One among you whom you know not, even He that cometh after me, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to un-loose. Consider if, since the heart is in the middle of the whole body, and the ruling principle in the heart, the saying, "There standeth One among you whom you know not," can be understood of the reason which is in every man. John's fourth testimony of Christ after these points to His human sufferings. He says, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man who exists before me, for He was before me. And I knew Him not, but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And the fifth testimony is recorded in the words, "I beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and it abode upon Him, and I knew Him not, but He that sent me to baptize with water, He said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shall see the Spirit descending and abiding upon Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and borne witness that this is the Son of God. In the sixth place John witnesses of Christ to the two dis-

ciples: "He looked on Jesus as He walked and saith, Behold the Lamb of God.": After this testimony the two disciples who heard it followed Jesus;

⁹⁰ and Jesus turned and beheld them following, and saith unto them, "What seek ye?" Perhaps it is not without significance that after six testimonies John ceases from his witness-bearing and Jesus brings forward in the seventh place His "What seek ye?" Very becoming in those who have been helped by John's testimony is the speech in which they address Christ as their Master, and declare their wish to see the dwelling of the Son of God; for they say to Him, "Rabbi," which answers to "Master," in our language, "where dwellest Thou?" And since every one that seeketh findeth, when John's disciples seek Jesus' dwelling, Jesus shows it to them, saying, "Come and see. By the word "Come" He exhorts them perhaps to the practical part of life, while the "see" is to suggest to them that that speculation which comes in the train of right conduct will be vouchsafed to those who desire it; in Jesus' dwelling they will have it. After they had asked where Jesus dwells, and had followed the Master and had seen, they desired to stay with Him and to spend that day with the Son of God. Now the number ten is a sacred one, not a few mysteries being indicated by it; and so we are to understand that the mention of the tenth hour as that at which these disciples turned in with Jesus, is not without significance. Of these disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, is one;

⁹¹ and he having profited by this day with Jesus and having found his own brother Simon (perhaps he had not found him before), told him that he had found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, Christ. It is written that "he that seeketh findeth. Now he had sought where Jesus dwelt, and had followed Him and looked upon His dwelling; he stays with the Lord "at the tenth hour," and finds the Son of God, the Word, and Wisdom, and is ruled by Him as King. That is why he says, "We have found the Messiah," and this a thing which every one can say who has found this Word of God and is ruled as by a king, by His Divinity. As a fruit he at once brings his brother to Christ, and Christ deigned to look upon Simon, that is to say, by looking at him to visit and enlighten his ruling principle; and Simon by Jesus' looking at him was enabled to grow strong, so as to earn a new name from that work of firmness and strength, and to be called Peter,

30. How John Was a Witness of Christ, and Specially of "The Light."

⁹² It may be asked why we should have gone through all this when the verse before us is, "He came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light. But it was necessary to give John's testimonies to the light, and to show the order in which they took place, and also, in order to show how effective John's testimony proved, to set forth the help it afforded afterwards to those to whom he bore it. But before all these testimonies there was an earlier one when the Baptist leaped in the womb of Elisabeth at the greeting of Mary. That was a testimony to Christ and attested His divine conception and birth. And what more need I say? John is everywhere a witness and forerunner of Christ. He anticipates His birth and dies a little before the death of the Son of God, and thus witnesses not only for those at the time of the birth, but to those who were expecting the freedom which was to come for man through the death of Christ. Thus, in all his life, he is a little before Christ, and everywhere makes ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him. And John's testimony precedes also the second and diviner coming of Christ, for we read, "If ye will receive it, this is Elijah which is to come. He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

⁹³ Now, there was a beginning, in which the Word was,-and we saw from Proverbs that that beginning was wisdom.-and the Word was in existence, and in the Word life was made, and the life was the light of men; and all this being so, I ask why the man who came, sent from God, whose name was John, why he came for witness to bear witness especially of the light? Why did he not come to bear witness of the life, or of the Word, or about the beginning. or about any other of the many aspects in which Christ appears? Consider here the texts, "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light," and "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness overtook it not," and consider how those who are in darkness, that is, men, have need of light. For if the light of men shines in darkness, and there is no active power in darkness to attain to it, then we must partake of other aspects of Christ; at present we have no real share of Him at all. For what share have we of life, we who are still in the body of death, and whose life is hid with Christ in God? "For when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. It was not possible, therefore, that he who came should bear witness about a life which is still hid with Christ in God.

⁹⁴ Nor did he come for witness to bear witness of the Word, for we know the Word who was in the beginning with God and who is God the Word; for the Word was made flesh on the earth. And though the witness had been, at least apparently, about the Word, it would in fact have been about the Word made flesh and not about the word of God. He did not come, therefore, to bear witness of the Word. And how could there be any witness-bearing about wisdom, to those who, even if they appear to know something, cannot understand pure truth, but behold it through a glass and in an enigma? It is likely, however, that before the second and diviner advent of Christ, John or Elias will come to bear witness about life a little before Christ our life is made manifest, and that then they will bear witness about the Word, and offer also their testimony about wisdom. Some inquiry is necessary whether a testimony such as that of John is to precede each of the aspects of Christ. So much for the words, "He came for witness, to bear witness of the light. What we are to understand by the further words, "That all might believe through Him," may be considered later.

BOOK 4

(Three Leaves from the Beginning.)

1. He who distinguishes in himself voice and meaning and things for which the meaning stands, will not be offended at rudeness of language if, on enquiry, he finds the things spoken of to be sound. The more may this be so when we remember how the holy men acknowledge their speech and their preaching to be not in persuasion of the wisdom of words, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power....

[Then, After Speaking of the Rudeness of Style of the Gospel, He Proceeds:]

2. The Apostles are not unaware that in some things they give offence, and that in some respects their culture is defective, and they confess themselves accordingly to be rude in speech but not in knowledge; for we must consider that the other Apostles would have said this, too, as well as Paul. As for the text, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us," we interpret it in this way. By "treasures" we understand here, as in other passages, the treasure of knowledge (gnosis) and of hidden wisdom. By "earthen vessels" we understand the humble diction of the Scriptures, which the Greek might so readily be led to despise, and in which the excellency of God's power appears so clearly. The mystery of

the truth and the power of the things said were not hindered by the humble diction from travelling to the ends of the earth, nor from subduing to the word of Christ, not only the foolish things of the world, but sometimes its wise things, too. For we see our calling, not that no wise man according to the flesh, but that not many wise according to the flesh. But Paul, in his preaching of the Gospel, is a debtor to deliver the word not to Barbarians only, but also to Greeks, and not only to the unwise, who would easily agree with him, but also to the wise.

For he was made sufficient by God to be a minister of the New Covenant, wielding the demonstration of the spirit and of power, so that when the believers agreed with him their belief should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. For, perhaps, if the Scripture possessed, like the works the Greeks admire, elegance and command of diction, then it would be open to suppose that not the truth of them had laid hold of men, but that the apparent sequence and splendour of language had carried off the hearers, and had carried them off by guile.

BOOK 5

From the Preface.

¹ You are not content to fulfil the office, when I am present with you, of a taskmaster to drive me to labour at theology; even when I am absent you demand that I should spend most of my time on you and on the task I have to do for you. I, for my part, am inclined to shrink from toil, and to avoid that danger which threatens from God those who give themselves to writing on divinity; thus I would take shelter in Scripture in refraining from making many books. For Solomon says in Ecclesiastes, "My son, beware of making many books; there is no end of it, and much study is a weariness of the flesh." For we, except that text have some hidden meaning which we do not yet perceive, have directly transgressed the injunction, we have not guarded ourselves against making many books. [Then, after saying that this discussion of but a few sentences of the Gospel have run to four volumes, he goes on:]

2. How Scripture Warns Us Against Making Many Books.

² For, to judge by the words of the phrase, "My son, beware of making many books," two things appear to be indicated by it: first, that we ought not to possess many books, and then that we ought not to compose many books. If

the first is not the meaning the second must be, and if the second is the meaning the first does not necessarily follow. In either case we appear to be told that we ought not to make many books. I might take my stand on this dictum which now confronts us, and send you the text as an excuse, and I might appeal in support of this position to the fact that not even the saints found leisure to compose many books; and thus I might cry off from the bargain we made with each other, and give up writing what I was to send to you. You, on your side, would no doubt feel the force of the text I have cited, and might, for the future, excuse me. But we must treat Scripture conscientiously, and must not congratulate ourselves because we see the primary meaning of a text, that we understand it altogether. I do not, therefore, shrink from bringing forward what excuse I think I am able to offer for myself, and to point out the arguments, which you would certainly use against me, if I acted contrary to our agreement. And in the first place, the Sacred History seems to agree with the text in question, inasmuch as none of the saints composed several works, or set forth his views in a number of books. I will take up this point: when I proceed to write a number of books, the critic will remind me that even such a one as Moses left behind him only five books.

3. *The Apostles Wrote Little.*

³ But he who was made fit to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum, did not write epistles to all the churches he taught, and to those to whom he did write he sent no more than a few lines. And Peter, on whom the Church of Christ is built, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail left only one epistle of acknowledged genuineness. Suppose we allow that he left a second; for this is doubtful. What are we to say of him who leaned on Jesus' breast, namely, John, who left one Gospel, though confessing that he could make so many that the world would not contain them? But he wrote also the Apocalypse, being commanded to be silent and not to write the voices of the seven thunders. But he also left an epistle of very few lines. Suppose also a second and a third, since not all pronounce these to be genuine; but the two together do not amount to a hundred lines.

⁴ [Then, after enumerating the prophets and Apostles, and showing how each wrote only a little, or not even a little, he goes on:] ⁵ 4. I feel myself growing dizzy with all this, and wonder whether, in obeying you, I have not

been obeying God, nor walking in the footsteps of the saints, unless it be that my too great love to you, and my unwillingness to cause you any pain, has led me astray and caused me to think of all these excuses. We started from the words of the preacher, where he says: "My son, beware of making many books. With this I compare a saying from the Proverbs of the same Solomon, "In the multitude of words thou shalt not escape sin; but in sparing thy lips thou shalt be wise. Here I ask whether speaking many words of whatever kind is a multitude of words (in the sense of the preacher), even if the many words a man speaks are sacred and connected with salvation. If this be the case, and if he who makes use of many salutary words is guilty of "multitude of words," then Solomon himself did not escape this sin, for "he spoke three thousand proverbs, and five thousand songs, and he spoke of trees from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall, he spoke also of beasts and of fowl, and of creeping things and of fishes. How, I may ask, can any one give any course of instruction, without a multitude of words, using the phrase in its simplest sense?

«Does not Wisdom herself say to those who are perishing, "I stretched out my words, and ye heeded not"? Do we not find Paul, too, extending his discourse from morning to midnight, when Eutychus was borne down with sleep and fell down, to the dismay of the hearers. who thought he was killed? If, then, the words are true, "In much speaking thou wilt not escape sin," and if Solomon was yet not guilty of great sin when he discoursed on the subjects above mentioned, nor Paul when he prolonged his discourse till midnight, then the question arises, What is that much speaking which is referred to? and then we may pass on to consider what are the many books. Now the entire Word of God, who was in the beginning with God, is not much speaking, is not words; for the Word is one, being composed of the many speculations (theoremata), each of which is a part of the Word in its entirety. Whatever words there be outside of this one, which promise to give any description and exposition, even though they be words about truth, none of these, to put it in a somewhat paradoxical way, is Word or Reason, they are all words or reasons. They are not the monad, far from it; they are not that which agrees and is one in itself, by their inner divisions and conflicts unity has departed from them, they have become numbers, perhaps infinite numbers.

7 We are obliged, therefore, to say that whoever speaks that which is foreign to religion is using many words, while he who speaks the words of truth, even should he go over the whole field and omit nothing, is always speaking the one word. Nor are the saints guilty of much speaking, since they always have the aim in view which is connected with the one word. It appears, then, that the much speaking which is condemned is judged to be so rather from the nature of the views propounded, than from the number of the words pronounced. Let us see if we cannot conclude in the same way that all the sacred books are one book, but that those outside are the "many books" of the preacher. The proof of this must be drawn from Holy Scripture, and it will be most satisfactorily established if I am able to show that it is not only one book, taking the word now in its commoner meaning, that we find to be written about Christ. Christ is written about even in the Pentateuch; He is spoken of in each of the Prophets, and in the Psalms, and, in a word, as the Saviour Himself says, in all the Scriptures. He refers us to them all, when He says: "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Me.

8 And if He refers us to the Scriptures as testifying of Him, it is not to one that He sends us, to the exclusion of another, but to all that speak of Him, those which, in the Psalms, He calls the chapter of the book, saying, "In the chapter of the book it is written of Me. If any one proposes to take these words, "In the chapter of the book it is written of Me," literally, and to apply them to this or that special passage where Christ is spoken of, let him tell us on what principle he warrants his preference for one book over another. If any one supposes that we are doing something of this kind ourselves. and applying the words in question to the book of Psalms, we deny that we do so, and we would urge that in that case the words should have been, "In this book it is written of Me. But He speaks of all the books as one chapter, thus sum-ruing up in one all that is spoken of Christ for our instruction. In fact the book was seen by John, "written within and without, and sealed; and no one could open it to read it, and to loose the seals thereof, but the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, who has the key of David, he that openeth and none shall shut, and that shutteth and none shall open. For the book here spoken of means the whole of Scripture;

9 and it is written within (lit. in front), on account of the meaning which is obvious, and on the back, on account of its remoter and spiritual sense.

Observe, in addition to this, if a proof that the sacred writings are one book, and those of an opposite character many. may not be found in the fact that there is one book of the living from which those who have proved unworthy to be in it are blotted out, as it is written: "Let them be blotter out of the book of the living," while of those who are to undergo the judgment, there are books in the plural, as Daniel says: "The judgment was set, and the books were opened. But Moses also bears witness to the unity of the sacred book, when he says: "If Thou forgive the people their sins, forgive, but if not, then wipe me out of the book which Thou hast written. The passage in Isaiah, too, I read in the same way. It is not peculiar to his prophecy that the words of the book should be sealed, and should neither be read by him who does not know letters, because he is ignorant of letters, nor by him who is learned, because the book is sealed. This is true of every writing, for every written work needs the reason (Logos) which closed it to open it. "He shall shut, and none shall open," and when He opens no one can cast doubt on the interpretation He brings.

¹⁰ Hence it is said that He shall open and no man shall shut. I infer a similar lesson from the book spoken of in Ezekiel, in which was written lamentation, and a song, and woe. For the whole book is full of the woe of the lost, and the song of the saved, and the lamentation of those between these two. And John, too, when he speaks of his eating the one roll, in which both front and back were written on, means the whole of Scripture, one book which is, at first, most sweet when one begins, as it were, to chew it, but bitter in the revelation of himself which it makes to the conscience of each one who knows it. I will add to the proof of this an apostolic saying which has been quite misunderstood by the disciples of Marcion, who, therefore, set the Gospels at naught. The Apostle says: "According to my Gospel in Christ Jesus; "he does not speak of Gospels in the plural, and, hence, they argue that as the Apostle only speaks of one Gospel in the singular, there was only one in existence. But they fail to see that, as He is one of whom all the evangelists write, so the Gospel, though written by several hands, is, in effect, one. And, in fact, the Gospel, though written by four, is one.

¹¹ From these considerations, then, we learn what the one book is, and what the many books, and what I am now concerned about is, not the quantity I may write, but the effect of what I say, lest, if I fail in this point, and set forth anything against the truth itself, even in one of my writings, I

should prove to have transgressed the commandment, and to be a writer of "many books. Yet I see the heterodox assailing the holy Church of God in these days, under the pretence of higher wisdom, and bringing forward works in many volumes in which they offer expositions of the evangelical and apostolic writings, and I fear that if I should be silent and should not put before our members the saving and true doctrines, these teachers might get a hold of curious souls, which, in the absence of wholesome nourishment, might go after food that is forbidden, and, in fact, unclean and horrible. It appears to me, therefore, to be necessary that one who is able to represent in a genuine manner the doctrine of the Church, and to refute those dealers in knowledge, falsely so-called, should take his stand against historical fictions, and oppose to them the true and lofty evangelical message in which the agreement of the doctrines, found both in the so-called Old Testament and in the so-called New, appears so plainly and fully.

12 You yourself felt at one time the lack of good representatives of the better cause, and were impatient of a faith which was at issue with reason and absurd, and you then, for the love you bore to the Lord, gave yourself to composition from which, however, in the exercise of the judgment with which you are endowed, you afterwards desisted. This is the defence which I think admits of being made for those who have the faculty of speaking and writing. But I am also pleading my own cause, as I now devote myself with what boldness I may to the work of exposition; for it may be that I am not endowed with that habit and disposition which he ought to have who is fitted by God to be a minister of the New Covenant, not of the letter but of the spirit.

BOOK 6

1. The Work is Taken Up After a Violent Interruption, Which Has Driven the Writer from Alexandria. He Addresses Himself to It Again, with Thanks for His Deliverance, and Prayer for Guidance.

1 When a house is being built which is to be made as strong as possible, the building takes place in fine weather and in calm, so that nothing may hinder the structure from acquiring the needed solidity. And thus it turns out so strong and stable that it is able to withstand the rush of the flood. and the dashing of the river, and all the agencies accompanying a storm which are apt to find out what is rotten in a building and to show what parts of it have been properly put together. And more particularly should that house which

is capable of sheltering the speculations of truth, the house of reason, as it were, in promise or in letters, be built at a time when God can add His free co-operation to the projector of so noble a work, when the soul is quiet and in the enjoyment of that peace which passes all understanding, when she is turned away from all disturbance and not buffeted by any billows. This, it appears to me, was well understood by the servants of the prophetic spirit and the ministers of the Gospel message; they made themselves worthy to receive that peace which is in secret from Him who ever gives it to them that are worthy and who said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you.

2 And look if some similar lesson is not taught under the surface with regard to David and Solomon in the narrative about the temple. David, who fought the wars of the Lord and stood firm against many enemies, his own and those of Israel, desired to build a temple for God. But God, through Nathan, prevents him from doing so, and Nathan says to him, "Thou shalt not build me an house, because thou art a man of blood. But Solomon, on the other hand, saw God in a dream, and in a dream received wisdom, for the reality of the vision was kept for him who said, "Behold a greater than Solomon is here. The time was one of the profoundest peace, so that it was possible for every man to rest under his own vine and his own fig-tree, and Solomon's very name was significant of the peace which was in his days, for Solomon means peaceful; and so he was at liberty to build the famous temple of God. About the time of Ezra, also, when "truth conquers wine and the hostile king: and women," the temple of God is restored again. All this is said by way of apology to you, reverend Ambrosius. It is at your sacred encouragement that I have made up my mind to build up in writing: the tower of the Gospel;

3 and I have therefore sate down to count the cost, if I have sufficient to finish it, lest I should be mocked by the beholders, because I laid the foundation but was not able to finish the work. The result of my counting, it is true, has been that I do not possess what is required to finish it; yet I have put my trust in God, who enriches us with all wisdom and all knowledge. If we strive to keep His spiritual laws we believe that He does enrich us; He will supply what is necessary so that we shall get on with our building, and shall even come to the parapet of the structure. That parapet it is which keeps from falling those who go up on the house of the Word; for people only fall off those

houses which have no parapet, so that the buildings themselves are to blame for their fall and for their death. We proceeded as far as the fifth volume in spite of the obstacles presented by the storm in Alexandria, and spoke what was given us to speak, for Jesus rebuked the winds and the waves of the sea. We emerged from the storm, we were brought out of Egypt, that God delivering us who led His people forth from there.

⁴ Then, when the enemy assailed us with all bitterness by his new writings, so directly hostile to the Gospel, and stirred up against us all the winds of wickedness in Egypt, I felt that reason called me rather to stand fist for the conflict, and to save the higher part in me, lest evil counsels should succeed in directing the storm so as to overwhelm my soul, rather to do this than to finish my work at an unsuitable season, before my mind had recovered its calm. Indeed, the ready writers who usually attended me brought my work to a stand by failing to appear to take down my words. But now that the many fiery darts directed against me have lost their edge, for God extinguished them, and my soul has grown accustomed to the dispensation sent me for the sake of the heavenly word, and has learned from necessity to disregard the snares of my enemies, it is as if a great calm had settled on me, and I defer no longer the continuation of this work. I pray that God will be with me, and will speak as a teacher in the porch of my soul, so that the building I have begun of the exposition of the Gospel of John may arrive at completion. May God hear my prayer and grant that the body of the whole work may now be brought together, and that no interruption may intervene which might prevent me from following the sequence of Scripture.

⁵ And be assured that it is with great readiness that I now make this second beginning and enter on my sixth volume, because what I wrote before at Alexandria has not, I know not by what chance, been brought with me. I feared I might neglect this work, if I were not engaged on it at once, and therefore thought it better to make use of this present time and begin without delay the part which remains. I am not certain if the part formerly written will come to light, and would be very unwilling to waste time in waiting to see if it does. Enough of preamble, let us now attend to our text.

2. How the Prophets and Holy Men of the Old Testament Knew the Things of Christ.

⁶ "And this is the witness of John. This is the second recorded testimony of John the Baptist to Christ. The first begins with "This was He of whom I said, He that cometh after me," and goes down to "The only-begotten Son of

God who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him. Heracleon supposes the words, "No one has seen God at any time," etc., to have been spoken, not by the Baptist, but by the disciple. But in this he is not sound. He himself allows the words, "Of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace; for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," to have been spoken by the Baptist. And does it not follow that the person who received of the fulness of Christ, and a second grace in addition to that he had before, and who declared the law to have been given by Moses, but grace and truth to have come through Jesus Christ, is it not clear that this is the person who understood, from what he received from the fulness of Christ, how "no one hath seen God at any time," and how "the only-begotten who is in the bosom of the Father" had delivered the declaration about God to him and to all those who had received of His fulness?

7 He was not declaring here for the first time Him that is in the bosom of the Father, as if there had never before been any one fit to receive what he told His Apostles. Does he not teach us that he was before Abraham, and that Abraham rejoiced and was glad to see his day? The words "Of his fulness all we received," and "Grace for grace," show, as we have already made clear, that the prophets also received their gift from the fulness of Christ and received a second grace in place of that they had before; for they also, led by the Spirit, advanced from the introduction they had in types to the vision of truth. Hence not all the prophets, but many of them, desired to see the things, which the Apostles saw. For if there was a difference among the prophets, those who were perfect and more distinguished of them did not desire to see what the Apostles saw, but actually beheld them, while those who rose less fully than these to the height of the Word were filled with longing for the things which the Apostles knew through Christ. The word "saw" we have not taken in a physical sense, and the word "heard" we have taken to refer to a spiritual communication; only he who has ears is prepared to hear the words of Jesus—a thing which does not happen too frequently.

8 There is the further point, that the saints before the bodily advent of Jesus had an advantage over most believers in their insight into the mysteries of divinity, since the Word of God was their teacher before He became flesh, for He was always working, in imitation of His Father, of whom He says, "My father worketh hitherto. On this point we may adduce the words He addresses to the Sadducees, who do not believe the doctrine of the resurrection.

"Have you not read," He says, "what is said by God at the Bush, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; He is not the God of the dead but of the living. If, then, God is not ashamed to be called the God of these men, and if they are counted by Christ among the living, and if all believers are sons of Abraham, since all the Gentiles are blessed with faithful Abraham, who is appointed by God to be a father of the Gentiles, can we hesitate to admit that those living persons made acquaintance with the learning of living men, and were taught by Christ who was born before the daystar, before He became flesh? And for this cause they lived, because they had part in Him who said, "I am the life," and as the heirs of so great promises received the vision, not only of angels, but of God in Christ.

9 For they saw, it may be, the image of the invisible God, since he who hath seen the Son hath seen the Father, and so they are recorded to have known God, and to have heard God's words worthily, and, therefore, to have seen God and heard Him. Now, I consider that those who are fully and really sons of Abraham are sons of his actions, spiritually understood, and of the knowledge which was made manifest to him. What he knew and what he did appears again in those who are his sons, as the Scripture teaches those who have ears to hear, "If ye were the children of Abraham, ye would do the works of Abraham. And if it is a true proverb which says, "A wise man will understand that which proceeds from his own mouth, and on his lips he will bear prudence," then we must at once repudiate some things which have been said about the prophets, as if they were not wise men, and did not understand what proceeded from their own mouths. We must believe what is good and true about the prophets, that they were sages, that they did understand what proceeded from their mouths, and that they bore prudence on their lips. It is clear indeed that Moses understood in his mind the truth (real meaning) of the law, and the higher interpretations of the stories recorded in his books.

10 Joshua, too, understood the meaning of the allotment of the land after the destruction of the nine and twenty kings, and could see better than we can the realities of which his achievements were the shadows. It is clear, too, that Isaiah saw the mystery of Him who sat upon the throne, and of the two seraphim, and of the veiling of their faces and their feet, and of their wings, and of the altar and of the tongs. Ezekiel, too, understood the true significance of the cherubim and of their goings, and of the firmament that was above them, and of Him that sat on the throne, than all which what could

be loftier or more splendid? I need not enter into more particulars; the point I aim at establishing is clear enough already, namely, that those who were made perfect in earlier generations knew not less than the Apostles did of what Christ revealed to them, since the same teacher was with them as He who revealed to the Apostles the unspeakable mysteries of godliness. I will add but a few points, and then leave it to the reader to judge and to form what views he pleases on this subject. Paul says in his Epistle to the Romans, "Now, to him who is able to establish you according to my Gospel, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal, but is now made manifest by the prophetic Scriptures and the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹¹ For if the mystery concealed of old is made manifest to the Apostles through the prophetic writings, and if the prophets, being wise men, understood what proceeded from their own mouths, then the prophets knew what was made manifest to the Apostles. But to many it was not revealed, as Paul says, "In other generations it was not made known to the sons of men as it hath now been revealed unto His holy Apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and members of the same body. Here an objection may be raised by those who do not share the view we have propounded; and it becomes of importance to define what is meant by the word "revealed. It is capable of two meanings: firstly, that the thing in question is understood, but secondly, if a prophecy is spoken of, that it is accomplished. Now, the fact that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs and members of the same body, and partakers of the promise, was known to the prophets to this extent, that they knew the Gentiles were to fellow-heirs and members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ. When this should be, and why, and what Gentiles were spoken of, and how, though strangers from the covenants. and aliens to the promises, they were yet to be members of one body and sharers of the blessings; all this was known to the prophets, being revealed to them.

¹² But the things prophesied belong to the future, and are not revealed to those who know them, but do not witness their fulfilment, as they are to those who have the event before their eyes. And this was the position of the Apostles. Thus, I conceive. they knew the events no more than the fathers and the prophets did; and yet it is truly said of them that "what to other generations was not revealed was now revealed to the Apostles and prophets, that

the Gentiles were fellow-heirs and members of the same body, and partakers in the promise of Christ. For, in addition to knowing these mysteries, they saw the power at work in the accomplished fact. The passage, "Many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things ye see and did not see them; and to hear the things ye hear and did not hear them," may be interpreted in the same way. They also desired to see the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, and of His coming down to carry out the design of His suffering for the salvation of many, actually put in operation. This may be illustrated from another quarter. Suppose one of the Apostles to have understood the "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter," but not to witness the glorious bodily appearing of Jesus to the faithful.

¹³ which is promised, although He desired to see it and suppose another had not only not marked and seen what that Apostle marked and saw, but had a much feebler grasp of the divine hope, and yet is present at the second coming of our Saviour, which the Apostle, as in the parallel above, had desired, but had not seen. We shall not err from the truth if we say that both of these have seen what the Apostle, or indeed the Apostles, desired to see, and yet that they are not on that account to be deemed wiser or more blessed than the Apostles. In the same way, also, the Apostles are not to be deemed wiser than the fathers, or than Moses and the prophets, than those in fact who, for their virtue, were found worthy of epiphanies and of divine manifestations and of revelations of mysteries.

3. "Grace and Truth Came Through Jesus Christ." These Words Belong to the Baptist, Not the Evangelist. What the Baptist Testifies by Them.

¹⁴ We have lingered rather long over these discussions, but there is a reason for it. There are many who, under the pretence of glorifying the advent of Christ, declare the Apostles to be wiser than the fathers or the prophets; and of these teachers some have invented a greater God for the later period, while some, not venturing so far, but moved, according to their own account of the matter, by the difficulty connected with doctrine, cancel the whole of the gift conferred by God on the fathers and the prophets, through Christ, through whom all things were made. If all things were made through Him, clearly so must the splendid revelations have been which were made to the fathers and prophets, and became to them the symbols of the sacred mysteries of religion. Now the true soldiers of Christ must always be prepared to do battle for the truth, and must never, so far as lies with them, allow false con-

victions to creep in. We must not, therefore, neglect this matter. It may be said that John's earlier testimony to Christ is to be found in the words, "He who cometh after me exists before me, for He was before me," and that the words, "For of His fulness we all received, and grace for grace," are in the mouth of John the disciple. Now, we must show this exposition to be a forced one, and one which does violence to the context;

¹⁵ it is rather a strong proceeding to suppose the speech of the Baptist to be so suddenly and, as it were, inopportunately interrupted by that of the disciple, and it is quite apparent to any one who can judge, in whatever small degree, of a context, that the speech goes on continuously after the words, "This is He of whom I spoke, He that cometh after me exists before me, for He was before me. The Baptist brings a proof that Jesus existed before him because He was before him, since He is the first-born of all creation; he says, "For of His fulness all we received. That is the reason why he says, "He exists before me, for He was before me. That is how I know that He is first and in higher honour with the Father, since of His fulness both I and the prophets before me received the more divine prophetic grace instead of the grace we received at His hands before in respect of our election. That is why I say, "He exists before me, for He was before me," because we know what we have received from His fulness; namely, that the law was given through Moses, not by Moses, while grace and truth not only were given but came into existence through Jesus Christ. For His God and Father both gave the law through Moses, and made grace and truth through Jesus Christ, that grace and truth which came to man.

¹⁶ If we give a reasonable interpretation to the words, "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ," we shall not be alarmed at the possible discrepancy with them of that other saying, "I am the way and the truth and the life. If it is Jesus who says, "I am the truth," then how does the truth come through Jesus Christ, since no one comes into existence through himself? We must recognize that this very truth, the essential truth, which is prototypical, so to speak, of that truth which exists in souls endowed with reason, that truth from which, as it were, images are impressed on those who care for truth, was not made through Jesus Christ, nor indeed through any one, but by God;-just as the Word was not made through any one which was in the beginning with the Father;-and as wisdom which God created the beginning of His ways was not made through any one, so the truth also was not

made through any one. That truth, however, which is with men came through Jesus Christ, as the truth in Paul and the Apostles came through Jesus Christ. And it is no wonder, since truth is one, that many truths should flow from that one. The prophet David certainly knew many truths, as he says, "The Lord searcheth out truths," for the Father of truth searches out not the one truth but the many through which those are saved who possess them. And as with the one truth and many truths, so also with righteousness and righteousnesses.

¹⁷ For the very essential righteousness is Christ, "Who was made to us of God wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. But from that righteousness is formed the righteousness which is in each individual. so that there are in the saved many righteousnesses, whence also it is written, "For the Lord is righteous, and He loved righteousnesses. This is the reading in the exact copies, and in the other versions besides the Septuagint, and in the Hebrew. Consider if the other things which Christ is said to be in a unity admit of being multiplied in the same way and spoken of in the plural. For example, Christ is our life as the Saviour Himself says, "I am the way and the truth and the life. The Apostle, too, says, "When Christ our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. And in the Psalms again we find, "Thy mercy is better than life; "for it is on account of Christ who is life in every one that there are many lives. This, perhaps, is also the key to the passage, "If ye seek a proof of the Christ that speaketh in me. For Christ is found in every saint, and so from the one Christ there come to be many Christs, imitators of Him and formed after Him who is the image of God; whence God says through the prophet, "Touch not my Christs. Thus we have explained in passing the passage which we appeared to have omitted from our exposition, viz.:

¹⁸ "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ; "and we have also shown that the words belong to John the Baptist and form part of his testimony to the Son of God.

4. John Denies that He is Elijah or "The" Prophet. Yet He Was "A" Prophet.

¹⁹ Now let us consider John's second testimony. Jews from Jerusalem, kindred to John the Baptist, since he also belonged to a priestly race, send priests and levites to ask John who he is. In saying, "I am not the Christ," he made a confession of the truth. The words are not, as one might suppose, a negation; for it is no negation to say, in the honour of Christ, that one is not

Christ. The priests and levites sent from Jerusalem, having there heard in the first place that he is not the expected Messiah, put a question about the second great personage whom they expected, namely, Elijah, whether John were he, and he says he is not Elijah, and by his "I am not" makes a second confession of the truth. And, as many prophets had appeared in Israel, and one in particular was looked for according to the prophecy of Moses, who said, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear; and it shall come to pass that every soul that shall not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people," they, therefore, ask a third question, not whether he is a prophet, but whether he is the prophet. Now, they did not apply this name to the Christ, but supposed the prophet to be a second figure beside the Christ.

²⁰ But John, on the contrary, who knew that He whose forerunner he was was both the Christ and the prophet thus foretold, answered "No; "whereas, if they had asked if he was a prophet, he would have answered "Yes; " for he was not unconscious that he was a prophet. In all these answers John's second testimony to Christ was not yet completed; he had still to give his questioners the answer they were to take back to those who sent them, and to declare himself in the terms of the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

5. There Were Two Embassies to John the Baptist; The Different Characters of These.

²¹ Here the enquiry suggests itself whether the second testimony is concluded, and whether there is a third, addressed to those who were sent from the Pharisees. They wished to know why he baptized, if he was neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet; and he said: "I baptize with water; but there standeth one among you whom you know not, He that cometh after me, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose. Is this a third testimony, or is this which they were to report to the Pharisees a part of the second? As far as the words allow me to conjecture I should say that the word to the emissaries of the Pharisees was a third testimony. It is to be observed, however, that the first testimony asserts the divinity of the Saviour, while the second disposes of the suspicion of those who were in doubt whether John could be the Christ, and the third declares one who was already present with men although they saw Him not, and whose coming was no longer in the future. Before going on to the subsequent testimonies in which he points out Christ and witnesses to Him, let us look at the second and third, word for

word, and let us, in the first place, observe that there are two embassies to the Baptist, one "from Jerusalem" from the Jews, who send priests and levites, to ask him, "Who art thou?"

²² "the second sent by the Pharisees, who were in doubt about the answer which had been made to the priests and levites. Observe how what is said by the first envoys is in keeping with the character of priests and levites, and shows gentleness and a willingness to learn. "Who art thou?" they say, and "What then? art thou Elijah?" and "Art thou that prophet?" and then, "Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself?" There is nothing harsh or arrogant in the enquiries of these men; everything agrees well with the character of true and careful servants of God; and they raise no difficulties about the replies made to them. Those, on the contrary, who are sent from the Pharisees assail the Baptist, as it were, with arrogant and unsympathetic words: "Why then baptizest thou if thou be not the Christ nor Elijah nor the prophet?" This mission is sent scarcely for the sake of information, as in the former case of the priests and levites, but rather to debar the Baptist from baptizing, as if it were thought that no one was entitled to baptize but Christ and Elijah and the prophet. The student who desires to understand the Scripture must always proceed in this careful way; he must ask with regard to each speech, who is the speaker and on what occasion it was spoken.

²³ Thus only can we discern how speech harmonizes with the character of the speaker, as it does all through the sacred books.

6. Messianic Discussion with John the Baptist.

²⁴ Then the Jews sent priests and levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou And he confessed and denied not; and he confessed, I am not the Christ. What legates should have been sent from the Jews to John, and where should they have been sent from? Should they not have been men held to stand by the election of God above their fellows, and should they not have come from that place which was chosen out of the whole of the earth, though it is all called good, from Jerusalem where was the temple of God? With such honour, then, do they enquire of John. In the case of Christ nothing of this sort is reported to have been done by the Jews; but what the Jews do to John, John does to Christ, sending his own disciples to ask him, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" John confesses to those sent to him, and denies not, and he afterwards declares, "I am the

voice of one crying in the wilderness; "but Christ, as having a greater testimony than John the Baptist, makes His answer by words and deeds, saying. "Go and tell John those things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. On this passage I shall, if God permit, enlarge in its proper place.

²⁵ Here, however, it might be asked reasonably enough why John gives such an answer to the question put to him. The priests and levites do not ask him, "Art thou the Christ?" but "Who art thou?" and the Baptist's reply to this question should have been, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. The proper reply to the question, "Art thou the Christ?" is, "I am not the Christ;" and to the question, "Who art thou?" - "The voice of one crying in the wilderness. To this we may say that he probably discerned in the question of the priests and levites a cautious reverence, which led them to hint the idea in their minds that he who was baptizing might be the Christ, but withheld them from openly saying so, which might have been presumptuous. He quite naturally, therefore, proceeds in the first place to remove any false impressions they might have taken up about him, and declares publicly the true state of the matter, "I am not the Christ. Their second question, and also their third, show that they had conceived some such surmise about him. They supposed that he might be that second in honour to whom their hopes pointed, namely, Elijah, who held with them the next position after Christ; and so when John had answered, "I am not the Christ," they asked, "What then? Art thou Elijah?" And he said, "I am not.

²⁶ They wish to know, in the third place, if he is the prophet, and on his answer, "No," they have no longer any name to give the personage whose advent they expected, and they say, "Who art thou, then, that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?" Their meaning is: "You are not, you say, any of those personages whose advent Israel hopes and expects, and who you are, to baptize as you do, we do not know; tell us, therefore, so that we may report to those who sent us to get light ripen this point. We add, as it has some bearing on the context, that the people were moved by the thought that the period of Christ's advent was near. It was in a manner imminent in the years from the birth of Jesus and a little before, down to the publication of the preaching. Hence it was, in all likelihood, that as the scribes and lawyers had deduced the time from Holy Scripture and

were expecting the Coming One, the idea was taken up by Theudas, who came forward as the Messiah and brought together a considerable multitude, and after him by the famous Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing. Thus the coming of the Messiah was more warmly expected and discussed, and it was natural enough for the Jews to send priests and levites from Jerusalem to John, to ask him, "Who art thou?" and learn if he professed to be the Christ.

7. Of the Birth of John, and of His Alleged Identity with Elijah. Of the Doctrine of Transcorporation.

27 "And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elijah? and he said, I am not. No one can fail to remember in this connection what Jesus says of John, "If ye will receive it, this is Elijah which is to come. How, then, does John come to say to those who ask him, "Art thou Elijah?" - "I am not. And how can it be true at the same time that John is Elijah who is to come, according to the words of Malachi, "And behold I send unto you Elijah the Tishbite, before the great and notable day of the Lord come, who shall restore the heart of the father to the son, and the heart of a man to his neighbour, lest I come, and utterly smite the earth. The words of the angel of the Lord, too, who appeared to Zacharias, as he stood at the right hand of the altar of incense, are somewhat to the same effect as the prophecy of Malachi: "And thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And a little further on: "And he shall go before His face in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him. As for the first point, one might say that John did not know that he was Elijah.

28 This will be the explanation of those who find in our passage a support for their doctrine of transcorporation, as if the soul clothed itself in a fresh body and did not quite remember its former lives. These thinkers will also point out that some of the Jews assented to this doctrine when they spoke about the Saviour as if He was one of the old prophets, and had risen not from the tomb but from His birth. His mother Mary was well known, and Joseph the carpenter was supposed to be His father, add it could readily be supposed that He was one of the old prophets risen from the dead. The same person will adduce the text in Genesis. "I will destroy the whole resurrection," and will thereby reduce those who give themselves to finding in Scripture solutions of false probabilities to a great difficulty in respect of this doctrine. Another, however, a churchman, who repudiates the doctrine of

transcorporation as a false one, and does not admit that the soul of John ever was Elijah, may appeal to the above-quoted words of the angel, and point out that it is not the soul of Elijah that is spoken of at John's birth, but the spirit and power of Elijah. "He shall go before him," it is said, "in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.

²⁹ Now it can be shown from thousands of texts that the spirit is a different thing from the soul, and that what is called the power is a different thing from both the soul and the spirit. On these points I cannot now enlarge; this work must not be unduly expanded. To establish the fact that power is different from spirit. it will be enough to cite the text, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. As for the spirits of the prophets, these are given to them by God, and are spoken of as being in a manner their property (slaves), as "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. and "The spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha. Thus, it is said, there is nothing absurd in supposing that John, "in the spirit and power of Elijah," turned the hearts of the fathers to the children, and that it was on account of this spirit that he was called "Elijah who was to come. And to reinforce this view it may be argued that if the God of the universe identified Himself with His saints to such an extent as to be called the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, much more might the Holy Spirit so identify Himself with the prophets as to be called their spirit, so that when the spirit is spoken of it might be the spirit of Elijah or the spirit of Isaiah.

³⁰ Our churchman, to go on with his views, may further say that those who supposed Jesus to be one of the prophets risen from the dead were probably misled, partly by the doctrine above mentioned, and partly by supposing Him to be one of the prophets, and that as for this misconception that He was one of the prophets, these persons probably fell into their error from not knowing about Jesus' supposed father and actual mother, and considering that He had risen from the tombs. As for the text in Genesis about the resurrection, the churchman will rejoin with a text to an opposite effect, "God hath raised up for me another seed in place of Abel whom Cain slew;" showing that the resurrection occurs in Genesis. As for the first difficulty which was raised, our churchman will meet the view of the believers in transcorporation by saying that John is no doubt, in a certain sense, as he has already shown, Elijah who is to come; and that the reason why he met the enquiry of

the priests and levites with "I am not," was that he divined the object they had in view in making it. For the enquiry laid before John by the priests and levites was not intended to bring out whether the same spirit was in both, but whether John was that very Elijah who was taken up, and who now appeared according to the expectation of the Jews without being born (for the emissaries, perhaps, did not know about John's birth);

³¹and to such all enquiry he naturally answered, "I am not; "for he who was called John was not Elijah who was taken up, and had not changed his body for his present appearance. Our first scholar, whose view of transcorporation we have seen based upon our passage, may go on with a close examination of the text, and urge against his antagonist, that if John was the son of such a man as the priest Zacharias, and if he was born when his parents were both aged, contrary to all human expectation, then it is not likely that so many Jews at Jerusalem would be so ignorant about him, or that the priests and levites whom they sent would not be acquainted with the facts of his birth. Does not Luke declare that "fear came upon all those who lived round about,"-clearly round about Zacharias and Elisabeth-and that "all these things were noised abroad throughout the whole hill country of Judaea"? And if John's birth from Zacharias was a matter of common knowledge, and the Jews of Jerusalem yet sent priests and levites to ask, "Art thou Elijah?" then it is clear that in saying this they assumed the doctrine of transcorporation to be true, and that it was a current doctrine of their country, and not foreign to their secret teaching. John therefore says, I am not Elijah, because he does not know about his own former life. These thinkers, accordingly, entertain an opinion which is by no means to be despised.

³²Our churchman, however, may return to the charge, and ask if it is worthy of a prophet, who is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, who is predicted by Isaiah, and whose birth was foretold before it took place by so great an angel, one who has received of the fulness of Christ, who shares in such a grace, who knows truth to have come through Jesus Christ, and has taught such deep things about God and about the only-begotten, who is in the bosom of the Father, is it worthy of such a one to lie, or even to hesitate, out of ignorance of what he was. For with respect to what was obscure, he ought to have refrained from confessing, and to have neither affirmed nor denied the proposition put before him. If the doctrine in question really was widely current, ought not John to have hesitated to pronounce upon it, lest his soul

had actually been in Elijah? And here our churchman will appeal to history, and will bid his antagonists ask experts of the secret doctrines of the Hebrews, if they do really entertain such a belief. For if it should appear that they do not, then the argument based on that supposition is shown to be quite baseless. Our churchman, however, is still free to have recourse to the solution given before, and to insist that attention be paid to the meaning with which the question was put.

³³ For if, as I showed, the senders knew John to be the child of Zacharias and Elisabeth, and if the messengers still more, being men of priestly race, could not possibly be ignorant of the remarkable manner in which their kinsman Zacharias had received his son, then what could be the meaning of their question, "Art thou Elijah?" Had they not read that Elijah had been taken up into heaven, and did they not expect him to appear? Then, as they expect Elijah to come at the consummation before Christ, and Christ to follow him, perhaps their question was meant less in a literal than in a tropical sense: Are you he who announces beforehand the word which is to come before Christ, at the consummation? To this he very properly answers, "I am not. The adversary, however, tries to show that the priests could not be ignorant that the birth of John had taken place in so remarkable a manner, because "all these things had been much spoken of in the hill country of Judaea;" and the churchman has to meet this. He does so by showing that a similar mistake was widely current about the Saviour Himself; for "some said that He was John the Baptist, others Elijah, others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. So the disciples told the Lord when He was in the parts of Caesarea Philippi, and questioned them on that subject. And Herod, too, said, "John whom I beheaded, he is risen from the dead;

³⁴ "so that he appears not to have known what was said about Christ, as reported in the Gospel, "Is not this the son of the carpenter, is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us?" Thus in the case of the Saviour, while many knew of His birth from Mary, others were under a mistake about Him; and so in the case of John, there is no wonder if, while some knew of his birth from Zacharias, others were in doubt whether the expected Elijah had appeared in him or not. There was not more room for doubt about John, whether he was Elijah, than about the Saviour, whether He was John. Of the two, the question of the outward form of Elijah could be disposed of from

the words of Scripture, though not from actual observation, for we read, "He was a hairy man, and girt with a leather girdle about his loins. John's outward appearance, on the contrary, was well known, and was not like that of Jesus; and yet there were those who surmised that John had risen from the dead, and taken the name of Jesus.

³⁵ As for the change of name, a thing which reminds us of mysteries, I do not know how the Hebrews came to tell about Phinehas, son of Eleazar, who admittedly prolonged his life to the time of many of the judges, as we read in the Book of Judges, to tell about him what I now mention. They say that he was Elijah, because he had been promised immortality (in Numbers), on account of the covenant of peace granted to him because he was jealous with a divine jealousy, and in a passion of anger pierced the Midianitish woman and the Israelite, and stayed the wrath of God as it is called, as it is written, "Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them. No wonder, then, if those who conceived Phinehas and Elijah to be the same person, whether they judged soundly in this or not. for that is not now the question, considered John and Jesus also to be the same. This, then, they doubted, and desired to know if John and Elijah were the same. At another time than this, the point would certainly call for a careful enquiry, and the argument would have to be well weighed as to the essence of the soul, as to the principle of her composition, and as to her entering into this body of earth.

³⁶ We should also have to enquire into the distributions of the life of each soul, and as to her departure from this life, and whether it is possible for her to enter into a second life in a body or not, and whether that takes place at the same period, and after the same arrangement in each case, or not; and whether she enters the same body, or a different one, and if the same, whether the subject remains the same while the qualities are changed, or if both subject and qualities remain the same, and if the soul will always make use of the same body or will change it. Along with these questions, it would also be necessary to ask what transcorporation is, and how it differs from incorporation, and if he who holds transcorporation must necessarily hold the world to be eternal. The views of these scholars must also be taken into account, who consider that, according to the Scriptures, the soul is sown along with the body, and the consequences of such a view must also be looked at.

In fact the subject of the soul is a wide one, and hard to be unravelled, and it has to be picked out of scattered expressions of Scripture. It requires, therefore, separate treatment. The brief consideration we have been led to give to the problem in connection with Elijah and John may now suffice; we go on to what follows in the Gospel.

8. John is a Prophet, But Not the Prophet.

³⁷ "Art thou that prophet? And he answered No. If the law and the prophets were until John, what can we say that John was but a prophet? His father Zacharias, indeed, says, filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesying, "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the Lord to prepare His ways. (One might indeed get past this passage by laying stress on the word called: he is to be called, he is not said to be, a prophet. And still more weighty is it that the Saviour said to those who considered John to be a prophet, "But what went ye out to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. The words, Yea, I say unto you, manifestly affirm that John is a prophet, and that is nowhere denied afterwards. If, then, he is said by the Saviour to be not only a prophet but "more than a prophet," how is it that when the priests and levites come and ask him, "Art thou the Prophet?" he answers No! On this we must remark that it is not the same thing to say, "Art thou the Prophet?" and "Art thou a prophet?" The distinction between the two expressions has already been observed, when we asked what was the difference between the God and God, and between the Logos and Logos. Now it is written in Deuteronomy, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like me;

³⁸ Him shall ye hear, and it shall be that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among His people," There was, therefore, an expectation of one particular prophet having a resemblance to Moses in mediating between God and the people and receiving a new covenant from God to give to those who accepted his teaching; and in the case of each of the prophets, the people of Israel recognized that he was not the person of whom Moses spoke. As, then, they doubted about John, whether he were not the Christ, so they doubted whether he could not be the prophet. And there is no wonder that those who doubted about John whether he were the Christ, did not understand that the Christ and the prophet are the same person; their doubt as to John necessarily implied that they were not clear on this point. Now the difference between "the prophet" and "a prophet" has escaped

the observation of most students; this is the case with Heracleon, who says, in these very words: "As, then, John confessed that he was not the Christ, and not even a prophet, nor Elijah. If he interpreted the words before us in such a way, he ought to have examined the various passages to see whether in saying that he is not a prophet nor Elijah he is or is not saying what is true. He devotes no attention, however, to these passages, and in his remaining commentaries he passes over such points without any enquiry.

³⁹ In the sequel, too, his remarks, of which we shall have to speak directly, are very scanty, and do not testify to careful study.

9. John I 22.

⁴⁰ "They said therefore unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? "This speech of the emissaries amounts to the following: We had a surmise what you were and came to learn if it was so, but now we know that you are not that. It remains for us, therefore, to hear your account of yourself, so that we may report your answer to those who sent us.

10. Of the Voice John the Baptists is.

⁴¹ "He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet. As He who is peculiarly the Son of God, being no other than the Logos, yet makes use of Logos (reason)-for He was the Logos in the beginning, and was with God, the Logos of God-so John, the servant of that Logos, being, if we take the Scripture to mean what it says, no other than a voice, yet uses his voice to point to the Logos. He, then, understanding in this way the prophecy about himself spoken by Isaiah the prophet, says he is a voice, not crying in the wilderness, but "of one crying in the wilderness," of Him, namely, who stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He it was, too, who said, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and all the crooked shall be made straight. For as we read in Exodus that God said to Moses, "Behold I have given thee for a God to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet; "so we are to understand-the cases are at least analogous if not altogether similar-it is with the Word in the beginning, who is God, and with John. For John's voice points to that word and demonstrates it.

⁴² It is therefore a very appropriate punishment that falls on Zacharias on his saying to the angel, "Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife well stricken in years. For his want of faith with regard to the birth of the voice, he is himself deprived of his voice, as the angel Gabriel says to him, "Behold, thou shalt be silent and not able to speak until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou hast not believed my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. And afterwards when he had "asked for a writing tablet and written, His name is John; and they all marvelled," he recovered his voice; for "his mouth was opened immediately and his tongue, and he spake, blessing God. We discussed above how it is to be understood that the Logos is the Son of God, and went over the ideas connected with that; and a similar sequence of ideas is to be observed at this point. John came for a witness; he was a man sent from God to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe; he was that voice, then, we are to understand, which alone was fitted worthily to announce the Logos. We shall understand this aright if we call to mind what was adduced in our exposition of the texts:

⁴³ "That all might believe through Him," and "This is he of whom it is written, Behold I send My messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. There is fitness, too, in his being said to be the voice, not of one saying in the wilderness, but of one crying in the wilderness. He who cries, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," also says it; but he might say it without crying it. But he cries and shouts it, that even those may hear who are at a distance from the speaker, and that even the deaf may understand the greatness of the tidings, since it is announced in a great voice; and he thus brings help, both to those who have departed from God and to those who have lost the acuteness of their hearing. This, too, was the reason why "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. Hence, too, "John beareth witness of Him, and cried, saying," "Hence also God commands Isaiah to cry, with the voice of one saying, Cry. And I said, What shall I cry? "The physical voice we use in prayer need not be great nor startling; even should we not lift up any great cry or shout, God will yet hear us. He says to Moses, "Why criest thou unto Me? "when Moses had not cried audibly at all. It is not recorded in Exodus that he did so;

⁴⁴ but Moses had cried mightily to God in prayer with that voice which is heard by God alone. Hence David also says, "With my voice I cried unto the

Lord, and He heard me. And one who cries in the desert has need of a voice, that the soul which is deprived of God and deserted of truth-and what more dreadful desert is there than a soul deserted of God and of all virtue, since it still goes crookedly and needs instruction-may be exhorted to make straight the way of the Lord. And that way is made straight by the man who, far from copying the serpent's crooked journey: while he who is of the contrary disposition perverts his way. Hence the rebuke directed to a man of this kind and to all who resemble him, "Why pervert ye the right ways of the Lord? "

11. Of the Way of the Lord, How It is Narrow, and How Jesus is the Way.

⁴⁵Now the way of the Lord is made straight in two fashions. First, in the way of contemplation, when thought is made clear in truth without any mixture of falsehood; and then in the way of conduct, after the sound contemplation of what ought to be done, when action is produced which harmonizes with sound theory of conduct. And that we may the more clearly understand the text, "Make straight the way of the Lord," it will be well to compare with it what is said in the Proverbs, "Depart not, either to the right hand or to the left. For he who deviates in either direction has given up keeping his path straight, and is no longer worthy of regard, since he has gone apart from the straightness of the journey, for "the Lord is righteous, and loves righteousness, and His face beholds straightness. Hence he who is the object of regard, and receives the benefit that comes from this oversight, says, "The light of Thy countenance was shown upon us, O Lord. Let us stand, then, as Jeremiah exhorts, upon the ways, and let us see and ask after the ancient ways of the Lord, and let us see which is the good way, and walk in it. Thus did the Apostles stand and ask for the ancient ways of the Lord; they asked the Patriarchs and the Prophets, enquiring into their writings, and when they came to understand these writings they saw the good way, namely, Jesus Christ, who said, "I am the way.

⁴⁶and they walked in it. For it is a good way that leads the good man to the good father, the man who, from the good treasure of his heart, brings forth good things, and who is a good and faithful servant. This way is narrow, indeed, for the many cannot bear to walk in it and are lovers of their flesh; but it is also hard-pressed by those who use violence to walk in it, for it is not called afflicting, but afflicted. For that way which is a living way, and feels the qualities of those who tread it, is pressed and afflicted, when he travels on it who has not taken off his shoes from off his feet. nor truly real-

ized that the place on which he stands. or indeed treads, is holy ground. And it will lead to Him who is the life, and who says, "I am the life. For the Saviour, in whom all virtues are combined, has many aspects. To him who, though by no means near the end, is yet advancing, He is the way; to him who has put off all that is dead He is the life. He who travels on this way is told to take nothing with him on it, since it provides bread and all that is necessary for life, enemies are powerless on it, and he needs no staff, and since it is holy, he needs no shoes.

12. Heracleon's View of the Voice, and of John the Baptist.

⁴⁷ The words, however, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness," etc., may be taken as equivalent to "I am He of whom the 'voice in the wilderness' is written. Then John would be the person crying, and his voice would be that crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord. Heracleon, discussing John and the prophets, says, somewhat slanderously, that "the Word is the Saviour; the voice, that in the wilderness which John interpreted; the sound is the whole prophetic order. To this we may reply by reminding him of the text, "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle," and that which says that though a man have knowledge of mysteries, or have prophecy but wants love, he is a sounding or a tinkling cymbal. If the prophetic voice be nothing but sound, how does our Lord come to refer us to it as where He says, "Search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and these are they which bear witness," and "If ye believed Moses, ye would believe Me," and "Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you, saying, This people honours me with their lips"?

⁴⁸ I do not know if any one can reasonably admit that the Saviour thus spoke in praise of an uncertain sound, or that there is any preparation to be had from the Scriptures to which we are referred as from the voice of a trumpet, for our war against opposing powers, should their sound give an uncertain voice. If the prophets had not love, and if that is why they were sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, then how does the Lord send us to their sound, as these writers will have it, as if we could get help from that? He asserts, indeed, that a voice, when well fitted to speech, becomes speech, as if one should say that a woman is turned into a man; and the assertion is not supported by argument. And, as if he were in a position to put forth a dogma on the subject and to get on in this way, he declares that sound can be changed in a similar way into voice, and the voice, which is changed into

speech, he says, is in the position of a disciple, while sound passing into voice is in that of a slave. If he had taken any kind of trouble to establish these points we should have had to devote some attention to refuting them; but as it is, the bare denial is sufficient refutation. There was a point some way back which we deferred taking up, that, namely, of the motive of John's speeches. We may now take it up.

⁴⁹ The Saviour, according to Heracleon, calls him both a prophet and Elijah, but he himself denies that he is either of these. When the Saviour, Heracleon says, calls him a prophet and Elijah, He is speaking not of John himself, but of his surroundings; but when He calls him greater than the prophets and than those who are born of women, then He is describing the character of John himself. When John, on the other hand, is asked about himself, his answers relate to himself, not to his surroundings. This we have examined as carefully as possible, comparing each of the terms in question with the statements of Heracleon, lest he should not have expressed himself quite accurately. For how it comes that the statements that he is Elijah and that he is a prophet apply to those about him, but the statement that he is the voice of one crying in the wilderness, to himself, no attempt whatever is made to show Heracleon only gives an illustration, namely, this: His surroundings were, so to speak, his clothes, and other than himself, and when he was asked about his clothes, if he; were his clothes, he could not answer "Yes. Now that his being Elijah, who was to come, was his clothes, is scarcely consistent, so far as I can see, with Heracleon's views; it might consist, perhaps, with the exposition we ourselves gave of the words, "In the spirit and power of Elijah;

⁵⁰ "it might, in a sense, be said that this spirit of Elijah is equivalent to the soul of John. He then goes on to try to determine why those who were sent by the Jews to question John were priests and levites, and he answers by no means badly, that it was incumbent on such persons, being devoted to the service of God, to busy themselves and to make enquiries about such matters. When he goes on, however, to say that it was "because John was of the levitical tribe, this is less well considered. We raised the question ourselves above, and saw that if the Jews who were sent knew John's birth, it was not open to them to ask if he was Elijah. Then, again, in dealing with the question, "Art thou the prophet? "Heracleon does not regard the addition of the article as having any special force, and says, "They asked him if he were a prophet,

wishing to know this more general fact. Again, not Heracleon alone, but, so far as I am informed, all those who diverge from our views, as if they had not been able to deal with a trifling ambiguity and to draw the proper distinction, suppose John to be greater than Elijah and than all the prophets. The words are, "Of those born of women there is none greater than John; "but this admits of two meanings, that John is greater than they all, or again, that some of them are equal to him.

⁵¹ For though many of the prophets were equal to him, still it might be true in respect of the grace bestowed on him, that none of them was greater than he. He regards it as confirming the view that John was greater, that "he is predicted by Isaiah; "for no other of all those who uttered prophecies was held worthy by God of this distinction. This, however, is a venturesome statement and implies some disrespect of what is called the Old Testament, and total disregard of the fact that Elijah himself was the subject of prophecy. For Elijah is prophesied by Malachi, who says, "Behold, I send unto you Elijah, the Tishbite, who shall restore the heart of the father to the son. Josiah, too, as we read in third Kings, was predicted by name by the prophet who came out of Judah; for he said, Jeroboam also being present at the altar, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold a son is born to David, his name is Josiah. There are some also who say that Samson was predicted by Jacob, when he said, "Dan shall judge his own people, he is as one tribe in Israel," for Samson who judged Israel was of the tribe of Dan. So much by way of evidence of the rashness of the statement that John alone was the subject of prophecy, made by Heracleon in his attempted explanation of the words, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness."

13. John I 24, 25. Of the Baptism of John, that of Elijah, and that of Christ.

⁵² And they that were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, "Why baptizest thou then, if thou art not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet? "Those who sent from Jerusalem the priests and levites who asked John these questions, having learned who John was not, and who he was, preserve a decent silence, as if tacitly assenting and indicating that they accepted what was said, and saw that baptism was suited to a voice crying in the wilderness for the preparing of the way of the Lord. But the Pharisees being, as their name indicates, a divided and seditious set of people, show that they do not agree with the Jews of the metropolis and with the ministers of the service of God, the priests and levites. They send envoys who

deal in rebukes, and so far as their power extends debar him from baptizing; their envoys ask, Why baptizest thou, then, if thou art not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet? And if we were to stitch together into one statement what is written in the various Gospels, we should say that at this time they spoke as is here reported, but that at a later time, when they wished to receive baptism, they heard the address of John: "Generations of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance.

⁵³ This is what the Baptist says in Matthew, when he sees many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, without, it is clear, having the fruits of repentance, and pharisaically boasting in themselves that they had Abraham for their father. For this they are rebuked by John, who has the zeal of Elijah according to the communication of the Holy Spirit. For that is a rebuking word, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father," and that is the word of a teacher, when he speaks of those who for their stony hearts are called unbelieving stones, and says that by the power of God these stones may be changed into children of Abraham; for they were present to the eyes of the prophet and did not shrink from his divine glance. Hence his words: "I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. And since they came to his baptism without having done fruits meet for repentance, he says to them most appropriately, "Already is the axe laid to the root of the tree; every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. This is as much as to say to them:

⁵⁴ Since you have come to baptism without having done fruits meet for repentance, you are a tree that does not bring forth good fruit and which has to be cut down by the most sharp and piercing axe of the Word which is living and powerful and sharper than every two-edged sword. The estimation in which the Pharisees held themselves is also set forth by Luke in the passage: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. And the Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. The result of this speech is that the publican goes down to his house justified rather than the Pharisee, and the lesson is drawn, that every one who exalts himself is abased. They came, then, in the character in which the Saviour's reproving words described them, as hypocrites to

John's baptism, nor does it escape the Baptist's observation that they have the poison of vipers under their tongue and the poison of asps, for "the poison of asps is under their tongue," The figure of serpents rightly indicates their temper, and it is plainly revealed in their better question: "Why baptizest thou then, if thou art not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?"

⁵⁵ "To these I would fain reply, if it be the case that the Christ and Elijah and the prophet baptize, but that the voice crying in the wilderness has no authority to do so, "Most harshly, my friends, do you question the messenger sent before the face of Christ to prepare His way before Him. The mysteries which belong to this point are all hidden to you; for Jesus being, whether you will or not, the Christ, did not Himself baptize but His disciples, He who was Himself the prophet. And how have you come to believe that Elijah who is to come will baptize? "He did not baptize the logs upon the altar in the times of Ahab, though they needed such a bath to be burned up, what time the Lord appeared in fire. No, he commands the priests to do this for him, and that not only once; for he says, "Do it a second time," upon which they did it a second time, and "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time. If, then, he did not at that time himself baptize but left the work to others, how was he to baptize at the time spoken of by Malachi? Christ, then, does not baptize with water, but His disciples. He reserves for Himself to baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

⁵⁶ Now Heracleon accepts the speech of the Pharisees as distinctly implying that the office of baptizing belonged to the Christ and Elijah and to every prophet, for he uses these words, "Whose office alone it is to baptize. He is refuted by what we have just said, and especially by the consideration that he takes the word "prophet" in a general sense; for he cannot show that any of the prophets baptized. He adds, not incorrectly, that the Pharisees put the question from malice, and not from a desire to learn.

14. Comparison of the Statements of the Four Evangelists Respecting John the Baptist, the Prophecies Regarding Him, His Addresses to the Multitude and to the Pharisees, Etc.

⁵⁷ We deem it necessary to compare with the expression of the passage we are considering the similar expressions found elsewhere in the Gospels. This we shall continue to do point by point to the end of this work, so that terms which appear to disagree may be shown to be in harmony, and that the peculiar meanings present in each may be explained. This we shall do in the

present passage. The words, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord," are placed by John, who was a disciple, in the mouth of the Baptist. In Mark, on the other hand, the same words are recorded at the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in accordance with the Scripture of Isaiah, as thus: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send My messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Now the words, "Make straight the way of the Lord," added by John, are not found in the prophet. Perhaps John was seeking to compress the "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God," and so wrote, "Make straight the way of the Lord;

⁵⁸ "while Mark combined two prophecies spoken by two different prophets in different places, and made one prophecy out of them, "As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold I send My messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. The words, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness," are written immediately after the narrative of Hezekiah's recovery from his sickness, while the words, "Behold I send My messenger before thy face," are written by Malachi. What John does here, abbreviating the text he quotes, we find done by Mark also at another point. For while the words of the prophet are, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God," Mark writes, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. And John practises a similar abbreviation in the text, "Behold I send My messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee," when he does not add the words "before thee," as in the original. Coming now to the statement, "They were sent from the Pharisees and they asked Him," we have been led by our examination of the passage to prefix the enquiry of the Pharisees—which Matthew does not mention—to the occurrence recorded in Matthew, when John saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, and said to them, "Ye generations of vipers," etc.

⁵⁹ For the natural sequence is that they should first enquire and then come. And we have to observe how, when Matthew reports that there went out to John Jerusalem and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, to be baptized by him in Jordan, confessing their sins, it was not these people

who heard from the Baptist any word of rebuke or refutation, but only those many Pharisees and Sadducees whom he saw coming. They it was who were greeted with the address, "Ye offspring of vipers," etc. Mark, again, does not record any words of reproof as having been used by John to those who came to him, being all the country of Judaea and all of them of Jerusalem, who were baptized by him in the Jordan and confessed their sins. This is because Mark does not mention the Pharisees and Sadducees as having come to John. A further circumstance which we must mention is that both Matthew and Mark state that, in the one case, all Jerusalem and all Judaea, and the whole region round about Jordan, in the other, the whole land of Judaea and all they of Jerusalem, were baptized, confessing their sins; but when Matthew introduces the Pharisees and Sadducees as coming to the baptism, he does not say that they confessed their sins, and this might very likely and very naturally be the reason why they were addressed as "offspring of vipers.

⁶⁰ Do not suppose, reader, that there is anything improper in our adducing in our discussion of the question of those who were sent from the Pharisees and put questions to John, the parallel passages from the other Gospels too. For if we have indicated the proper connection between the enquiry of the Pharisees, recorded by the disciple John, and their baptism which is found in Matthew, we could scarcely avoid inquiring into the passages in question, nor recording the observations made on them. Luke, like Mark, remembers the passage, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness," but for his part treats it as follows: "The word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. And he came into all the region round about Jordan preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Luke, however, added the continuation of the prophecy: "Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough ways smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. He writes, like Mark, "Make His ways straight; "curtailing, as we saw before, the text, "Make straight the ways of our God.

⁶¹ In the phrase, "And all the crooked shall become straight," he leaves out the "all," and the word "straight" he converts from a plural into a singular. Instead of the phrase, moreover, "The rough land into a plain," he gives, "The rough ways into smooth ways," and he leaves out "And the glory of the

Lord shall be revealed," and gives what follows, "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. These observations are of use as showing how the evangelists are accustomed to abbreviate the sayings of the prophets. It has also to be observed that the speech, "Offspring of vipers," etc., is said by Matthew to have been spoken to the Pharisees and Sadducees when coming to baptism, they being a different set of people from those who confessed their sins, and to whom no words of this kind were spoken. With Luke, on the contrary, these words were addressed to the multitudes who came out to be baptized by John, and there were not two divisions of those who were baptized, as we found in Matthew. But Matthew, as the careful observer will see, does not speak of the multitudes in the way of praise, and he probably means the Baptist's address, Offspring of vipers, etc., to be understood as addressed to them also. Another point is, that to the Pharisees and Sadducees he says, "Bring forth a fruit," in the singular, "worthy of repentance," but to the multitudes he uses the plural, "Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.

⁶² Perhaps the Pharisees are required to yield the special fruit of repentance, which is no other than the Son and faith in Him, while the multitudes, who have not even a beginning of good things, are asked for all the fruits of repentance, and so the plural is used to them. Further, it is said to the Pharisees, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father. For the multitudes now have a beginning, appearing as they do to be introduced into the divine Word, and to approach the truth; and thus they begin to say within themselves, "We have Abraham for our father. The Pharisees, on the contrary, are not beginning to this, but have long held it to be so. But both classes see John point to the stones aforesaid and declare that even from these children can be raised up to Abraham, rising up out of unconsciousness and deadness. And observe how it is said to the Pharisees, according to the word of the prophet, "Ye have eaten false fruit," and they have false fruit,—"Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire," while to the multitudes which do not bear fruit at all, "Every tree which bringeth not forth fruit is hewn down. For that which has no fruit at all has not good fruit, and, therefore, it is worthy to be hewn down. But that which bears fruit has by no means good fruit, whence it also calls for the axe to lay it low.

⁶³ But, if we look more closely into this about the fruit, we shall find that it is impossible that that which has just begun to be cultivated, even should it

not prove fruitless, should bear the first good fruits. The husbandman is content that the tree just coming into cultivation should bear him at first such fruits as it may; afterwards, when he has pruned and trained it according to his art, he will receive, not the fruits it chanced to bear at first, but good fruits. The law itself favours this interpretation, for it says that the planter is to wait for three years, having the trees pruned and not eating the fruit of them. "Three years. it says, "the fruit shall be unpurified to you, and shall not be eaten, but in the fourth year all the fruit shall be holy, for giving praise unto the Lord. This explains how the word "good" is omitted from the address to the multitudes, "Every tree, therefore, which bears not fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. The tree which goes on bearing such fruit as it did at first, is a tree which does not bear good fruit, and is, therefore, cut down, and cast into the fire, since, when the three years have passed and the fourth comes round, it does not bear good fruit, for praise unto the Lord.

⁶⁴ In thus adducing the passages from the other Gospels I may appear to be digressing, but I cannot think it useless, or without bearing on our present subject. For the Pharisees send to John, after the priests and levites who came from Jerusalem, men who came to ask him who he was, and enquire, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet? After making this enquiry they straightway come for baptism, as Matthew records, and then they hear words suited to their quackery and hypocrisy. But the words addressed to them were very similar to those spoken to the multitudes, and hence the necessity to look carefully at both speeches, and to compare them together. It was while we were so engaged that various points arose in the sequence of the matter, which we had to consider. To what has been said we must add the following. We find mention made in John of two orders of persons sending: the one, that of the Jews from Jerusalem sending priests and levites; the other, that of the Pharisees who want to know why he baptizes. And we found that, after the enquiry, the Pharisees present themselves for baptism. May it not be that the Jews, who had sent the earlier mission from Jerusalem, received John's words before those who sent the second mission, namely, the Pharisees, and hence arrived before them?

⁶⁵ For Jerusalem and all Judaea, and, in consequence, the whole region round about Jordan, were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins; or, as Mark says. "There went out to him the whole land of Judaea, and all they of Jerusalem, and were baptized of him in the river

Jordan, confessing their sins. Now, neither does Matthew introduce the Pharisees and Sadducees, to whom the words, "Offspring of vipers," etc., are addressed; nor does Luke introduce the multitudes who meet with the same rebuke, as confessing their sins. And the question may be raised how, if the whole city of Jerusalem, and the whole of Judaea, and the whole region round about Jordan, were baptized of John in Jordan, the Saviour could say, "John the Baptist came neither eating nor drinking, and ye say he hath a devil; "and how could He say to those who asked Him, "By what authority doest thou these things? I also will ask you one word, which if ye tell me, I also will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or of men? And they reason, and say, If we shall say, From heaven, He will say, Why did ye not believe him? "The solution of the difficulty is this.

⁶⁶ The Pharisees, addressed by John, as we saw before, with his "Offspring of vipers," etc., came to the baptism, without believing in him, probably because they feared the multitudes, and, with their accustomed hypocrisy towards them, deemed it right to undergo the washing, so as not to appear hostile to those who did so. Their belief was, then, that he derived his baptism from men, and not from heaven, but, on account of the multitude, lest they should be stoned, they are afraid to say what they think. Thus there is no contradiction between the Saviour's speech to the Pharisees and the narratives in the Gospels about the multitudes who frequented' John's baptism. It was part of the effrontery of the Pharisees that they declared John to have a devil, as, also, that they declared Jesus to have performed His wonderful works by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

15. How the Baptist Answers the Question of the Pharisees and Exalts the Nature of Christ. Of the Shoe-Latchet Which He is Unable to Untie.

⁶⁷ John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but in the midst of you standeth one whom ye know not, even He who cometh after me, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose. Heracleon considers that John's answers to those sent by the Pharisees refer not to what they asked, but to what he wished, not observing that he accuses the prophet of a want of manners, by making him, when asked about one thing, answer about another; for this is a fault to be guarded against in conversation. We assert, on the contrary, that the reply accurately takes up the question. It is asked," Why baptizest thou then, if thou art not the Christ? "And what other answer

could be given to this than to show that his baptism was in its nature a bodily thing? I, he says, "baptize with water; "this is his answer to, "Why baptizest thou. And to the second part of their question, "If thou art not the Christ," he answers by exalting the superior nature of Christ, that He has such virtue as to be invisible in His deity, though present to every man and extending over the whole universe. This is what is indicated in the words, "There standeth one among you. The Pharisees, moreover, though expecting the advent of Christ, saw nothing in Him of such a nature as John speaks of; they believed Him to be simply a perfect and holy man.

⁶⁸John, therefore, rebukes their ignorance of His superiority, and adds to the words, "There standeth one among you," the clause, "whom ye know not. And, lest any one should suppose the invisible One who extends to every man, or, indeed, to the whole world, to be a different person from Him who became man, and appeared upon the earth and conversed with men, he adds to the words, "There standeth one among you whom you know not," the further words, "Who cometh after me," that is, He who is to be manifested after me. By whose surpassing excellence he well understood that his own nature was far surpassed, though some doubted whether he might be the Christ; and, therefore, desiring to show how far he is from attaining to the greatness of the Christ, that no one should think of him beyond what he sees or hears of him, he goes on: "The latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose. By which lie conveys, as in a riddle, that he is not fit to solve and to explain the argument about Christ's assuming a human body, an argument tied up and hidden (like a shoe-tie) to those who do not understand it,-so as to say anything worthy of such an advent, compressed, as it was, into so short a space.

16. Comparison of John's Testimony to Jesus in the Different Gospels.

⁶⁹It may not be out of place, as we are examining the text, "I baptize with water," to compare the parallel utterances of the evangelists with this of John. Matthew reports that the Baptist, when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, after the words of rebuke which we have already studied, went on: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." This agrees with the words in John, in which the Baptist declares himself to those sent by the Pharisees, on the subject of his baptizing with water. Mark,

again, says, "John preached, saying, There cometh after me He that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." And Luke says that, as the people were in expectation, and all were reasoning in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ, John answered them all, saying. "I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh one mightier than I, whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to unloose; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

17. Of the Testimony of John to Jesus in Matthew's Gospel,

⁷⁰ These, then, are the parallel passages of the four; let us try to see as clearly as we can what is the purport of each and wherein they differ from each other. And we will begin with Matthew, who is reported by tradition to have published his Gospel before the others, to the Hebrews, those, namely, of the circumcision who believed. I, he says, baptize you with water unto repentance, purifying you, as it were, and turning you away from evil courses and calling you to repentance; for I am come to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him, and by my baptism of repentance to prepare the ground for Him who is to come after me, and who will thus benefit you much more effectively and powerfully than my strength could. For His baptism is not that of the body only; He fills the penitent with the Holy Ghost, and His diviner fire does away with everything material and consumes everything that is earthy, not only from him who admits it to his life, but even from him who hears of it from those who have it. So much stronger than I is He who is coming after me, that I am not able to bear even the outskirts of the powers round Him which are furthest from Him (they are not open and exposed, so that any one could see them), nor even to bear those who support them. I know not of which I should speak.

⁷¹ Should I speak of my own great weakness, which is not able to bear even these things about Christ which in comparison with the greater things in Him are least, or should I speak of His transcendent Deity, greater than all the world? If I who have received such grace, as to be thought worthy of prophecy predicting my arrival in this human life, in the words, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness," and "Behold I send my messenger before thy face; "if I whose birth Gabriel who stands before God announced to my father so advanced in years, so much against his expectation, I at whose name Zacharias recovered his voice and was enabled to use it to prophesy, I to

whom my Lord bears witness that among them that are born of women there is none greater than I, I am not able so much as to bear His shoes! And if not His shoes, what can be said about His garments? Who is so great as to be able to guard His coat? Who can suppose that He can understand the meaning contained in His tunic which is without seam from the top because it is woven throughout? It is to be observed that while the four represent John as declaring himself to have come to baptize with water. Matthew alone adds the words "to repentance," teaching that the benefit of baptism is connected with the intention of the baptized person;

⁷² to him who repents it is salutary, but to him who comes to it without repentance it will turn to greater condemnation. And here we must note that as the wonderful works done by the Saviour in the cures He wrought, which are symbolical of those who at any time are set free by the word of God from all sickness or disease, though they were done to the body and brought a bodily relief, yet also called those who were benefited by them to an exercise of faith, so the washing with water which is symbolic of the soul cleansing herself from every stain of wickedness, is no less in itself to him who yields himself to the divine power of the invocation of the Adorable Trinity, the beginning and source of divine gifts; for "there are diversities of gifts. This view receives confirmation from the narrative recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, which shows the Spirit to have descended so manifestly on those who receive baptism, after the water had prepared the way for him in those who properly approached the rite. Simon Magus, astonished at what he saw, desired to receive from Peter this gift, but though it was a good thing he desired, he thought to attain it by the mammon of unrighteousness. We next remark in passing that the baptism of John was inferior to the baptism of Jesus which was given through His disciples.

⁷³ Those persons in the Acts who were baptized to John's baptism and who had not heard if there was any Holy Ghost are baptized over again by the Apostle, Regeneration did not take place with John, but with Jesus through His disciples it does so, and what is called the layer of regeneration takes place with renewal of the Spirit; for the Spirit now comes in addition since it comes from God and is over and above the water and does not come to all after the water. So here, then, our examination of the statements in the Gospel according to Matthew.

18. Of the Testimony in Mark. What is Meant by the Saviour's Shoes and by Untying His Shoe-Latchets.

⁷⁴Now let us consider what is stated by Mark. Mark's account of John's preaching agrees with the other. The words are, "There cometh after me He that is mightier than I," which amounts to the same thing as "He that cometh after me is mightier than I. There is a difference, however, in what follows, "The latchets of His shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. For it is one thing to bear a person's shoes,-they must, it is evident, have been untied already from the feet of the wearer,-and it is another thing to stoop down and untie the latchet of his shoes. And it follows, since believers cannot think that either of the Evangelists made any mistake or misrepresentation, that the Baptist must have made these two utterances at different times and have meant them to express different things. It is not the case, as some suppose. that the reports refer to the same incident and turned out differently because of a loose-ness of memory as to some of the facts or words. Now it is a great thing to bear the shoes of Jesus, a great thing to stoop down to the bodily features of His mission, to that which took place in some lower region, so as to contemplate His image in the lower sphere, and to untie each difficulty connected with the mystery of His incarnation, such being as it were His shoe-latchets. For the fetter of obscurity is one as the key of knowledge also is one;

⁷⁵not even He who is greatest among those born of women is sufficient of Himself to loose such things or to open them, for He who tied and locked at first, He also grants to whom He will to loose His shoe-latchet and to unlock what He has shut. If the passage about the shoes has a mystic meaning we ought not to scorn to consider it. Now I consider that the inhumanisation when the Son of God assumes flesh and bones is one of His shoes, and that the other is the descent to Hades, whatever that Hades be, and the journey with the Spirit to the prison. As to the descent into Hades, we read in the sixteenth Psalm, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades," and as for the journey in prison with the Spirit we read in Peter in his Catholic Epistle, "Put to death," he says, "in the flesh, but quickened in the Spirit; in which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which at one time were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God once waited in the days of Noah while the ark was a preparing. He, then, who is able worthily to set forth the

meaning of these two journeys is able to untie the latchet of the shoes of Jesus;

⁷⁶ he, bending down in his mind and going with Jesus as He goes down into Hades, and descending from heaven and the mysteries of Christ's deity to the advent He of necessity made with us when He took on man (as His shoes). Now He who put on man also put on the dead, for "for this end Jesus both died and revived, that He might be Lord both of dead and living. This is why He put on both living and dead, that is, the inhabitants of the earth and those of Hades, that He might be the Lord of both dead and living. Who, then, is able to stoop down and untie the latchet of such shoes, and having untied them not to let them drop, but by the second faculty he has received to take them up and bear them, by bearing the meaning of them in his memory?

19. Luke and John Suggest that One May Loose the Shoe-Latches of the Logos Without Stooping Down.

⁷⁷ We must not, however, omit to ask how it comes that Luke and John give the speech without the phrase "to stoop down." He, perhaps, who stoops down may be held to unloose in the sense which we have stated. On the other hand, it may be that one who fixes his eyes on the height of the exaltation of the Logos, may find the loosing of those shoes which when one is seeking them seem to be bound, so that He also looses those shoes which are separable from the Logos, and beholds the Logos divested of inferior things, as He is, the Son of God.

20. The Difference Between Not Being "Sufficient" And Not Being "Worthy."

⁷⁸ John records that the Baptist said he was not worthy, Mark that he was not sufficient, and these two are not the same. One who was not worthy might yet be sufficient, and one who was worthy might not be sufficient. For even if it be the case that gifts are bestowed to profit withal and not merely according to the proportion of faith, yet it would seem to be the part of a God who loves men and who sees before what harm must come from the rise of self-opinion or conceit, not to bestow sufficiency even on the worthy. But it belongs to the goodness of God by conferring bounties to conquer the object of His bounty, taking in advance him who is destined to be worthy, and adorning him even before he becomes worthy with sufficiency, so that after his sufficiency he may come to be worthy; he is not first to be worthy and then to anticipate the giver and take His gifts before the time and so arrive at be-

ing sufficient. Now with the three the Baptist says he is not sufficient, while in John he says he is not worthy. But it may be that he who formerly declared that he was not sufficient became sufficient afterwards, even though perhaps he was not worthy, or again that while he was saying he was not worthy, and was in fact not worthy, he arrived at being worthy, unless one should say that human nature can never come to perform worthily this loosing or this bearing, axed that John, therefore, says truly that he never became sufficient to loose the latches of the Saviour's shoes, nor worthy of it either. However much we take into our minds there are still left things not yet understood; for, as we read in the wisdom of Jesus, son of Sirach, "When a man hath done, then he beginneth, and when he leaveth off, then he shall he doubtful."

21. The Fourth Gospel Speaks of Only One Shoe, the Others of Both. The Significance of This.

⁷⁹ As to the shoes, too, which are spoken of in the three Gospels, we have a question to consider; we must compare them with the single shoe named by the disciple John. "I am not worthy," we read there, "to untie the latchet of His shoe." Perhaps he was conquered by the grace of God, and received the gift of doing that which of himself he would not have been worthy to do, of untying, namely, the latchet of one of the shoes, namely, after he had seen the Saviour's sojourn among men, of which he bears witness. But he did not know the things which were to follow, namely, whether Jesus was to come to that place also, to which he was to go after being beheaded in prison, or whether he was to look for another; and hence he alludes enigmatically to that doubt which was afterwards cleared up to us, and says, "I am not worthy to untie His shoe-latchet." If any one considers this to be a superfluous speculation, he can combine in one the speech about the shoes and that about the shoe, as if John said, I am by no means worthy to loose His shoestring, not even at the beginning, the string of one of His shoes. Or the following may be a way to combine what is said in the Four. If John understands about Jesus sojourn here, but is in doubt about the future, then he says with perfect truth that he is not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoes; for though he loosed that of one shoe, he did not loose both. And on the other hand, what he says about the latchet of the shoe is quite true also; since as we saw he is still in doubt whether Jesus is He that was to come, or whether another is to be looked for, in that other region.

22. How the Word Stands in the Midst of Men Without Being Known of Them.

⁸⁰ As for the saying, "There standeth one among you whom you know not," we are led by it to consider the Son of God, the Word, by whom all things were made, since He exists in substance throughout the underlying nature of things, being the same as wisdom. For He permeated, from the beginning, all creation, so that what is made at any time should be made through Him, and that it might be always true of anything soever, that "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made;" and this saying also, "By wisdom didst thou make them all. Now, if He permeates all creation, then He is also in those questioners who ask, "Why baptizest thou, if thou art not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" "In the midst of them stands the Word, who is the same and steadfast, being everywhere established by the Father. Or the words, "There standeth among you," may he understood to say, In the midst of you men, because you are reasonable beings, stands He who is proved by Scripture to be the sovereign principle in the midst of every body, and so to be present in your heart. Those, therefore, who have the Word in the midst of them, but who do not consider His nature, nor from what spring and principle He came, nor how He gave them the nature they have, these, while having Him in the midst of them, know Him not. But John knew Him:

⁸¹ for the words, "Whom you know not," used in reproach to the Pharisees, show that he well knew the Word whom they did not know. And the Baptist, therefore, knowing Him, saw Him coming after himself, who was now in the midst of them, that is to say, dwelling after him and the teaching he gave in his baptism, in those who, according to reason (or the Word), submitted to that purifying rite. The word "after," however, has not the same meaning here as it has when Jesus commands us to come "after" Him; for in this case we are bidden to go after Him, so that, treading in His steps, we may come to the Father; but in the other case, the meaning is that after the teachings of John (since "He came in order that all men through Him might believe"), the Word dwells with those who have prepared themselves, purified as they are by the lesser words for the perfect Word. Firstly, then, stands the Father, being without any turning or change; and then stands also His Word, always carrying on His work of salvation, and even when He is in the midst of men, not comprehended, and not even seen. He stands, also, teach-

ing, and inviting all to drink from His abundant spring, for "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink."

23. Heracleon's View of This Utterance of John the Baptist, and Interpretation of the Shoe of Jesus.

⁸² But Heracleon declares the words, "There standeth one among you," to be equivalent to "He is already here, and He is in the world and in men, and He is already manifest to you all. By this He does away with the meaning which is also present in the words, that the Word had permeated the whole world. For we must say to him, When is He not present, and when is He not in the world? Does not this Gospel say, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. And this is why those to whom the Logos is He "whom you know not," do not know Him: they have never gone out of the world, but the world does not know Him. But at what time did He cease to be among men? Was He not in Isaiah, when He said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me," and "I became manifest to those who sought me not. Let them say, too, if He was not in David when he said, not from himself, "But I was established by Him a king in Zion His holy hill," and the other words spoken in the Psalms in the person of Christ. And why should I go over the details of this proof, truly they are hard to be numbered, when I can show quite clearly that He was always in men?

⁸³ And that is enough to show Heracleon's interpretation of "There standeth in the midst of you," to be unsound, when he says it is equivalent to "He is already here, and He is in the world and in men. We are disposed to agree with him when he says that the words, "Who cometh after me," show John to be the forerunner of Christ, for he is in fact a kind of servant running before his master. The words, however, "Whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to unloose," receive much too simple an interpretation when it is said that "in these words the Baptist confesses that he is not worthy even of the least honourable ministration to Christ. After this interpretation he adds, not without sense, "I am not worthy that for my sake He should come down from His greatness and should take flesh as His footgear, concerning which I am not able to give any explanation or description, nor to unloose the arrangement of it. In understanding the world by his shoe, Heracleon shows some largeness of mind, but immediately after he verges on impiety in declaring that all this is to be understood of that person whom John here has

in his mind. For he considers that it is the demiurge of the world who confesses by these words that he is a lesser person than the Christ; and this is the height of impiety.

⁸⁴ For the Father who sent Him, He who is the God of the living as Jesus Himself testifies, of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, and He who is greater than heaven and earth for the reason that He is the Maker of them, He also alone is good and is greater than He who was sent by Him. And even if, as we said, Heracleon's idea was a lofty one, that the whole world was the shoe of Jesus, yet I think we ought not to agree with him. For how can it be harmonized with such a view, that "Heaven is My throne and the earth My footstool," a testimony which Jesus accepts as said of the Father? "Swear not by heaven," He says, "for it is God's throne, nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet. How, if he takes the whole world to be the shoe of Jesus, can he also accept the text, "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" saith the Lord. It is also worth while to enquire, whether as the Word and wisdom permeated the whole world, and as the Father was in the Son, the words are to be understood as above or in this way, that He who first of all was girded about with the whole creation, in addition to the Son's being in Him, granted to the Saviour, as being second after Him and being God the Word, to pervade the whole creation.

⁸⁵ To those who have it in them to take note of the uninterrupted movement of the great heaven, how it carries with it from East to West so great a multitude of stars, to them most of all it will seem needful to enquire what that force is, how great and of what nature, which is present in the whole world. For to pronounce that force to be other than the Father and the Son, that perhaps might be inconsistent with piety. ⁸⁶ 24. The Name of the Place Where John Baptized is Not Bethany, as in Most Copies, But Bethabara. Proof of This. Similarly "Gergesa" Should Be Read for "Gerasa," In the Story of the Swine. Attention is to Be Paid to the Proper Names in Scripture, Which are Often Written Inaccurately, and are of Importance for Interpretation. ⁸⁷ "These things were done in Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. We are aware of the reading which is found in almost all the copies, "These things were done in Bethany. This appears, moreover, to have been the reading at an earlier time; and in Heracleon we read "Bethany. We are convinced, however, that we should not read "Bethany," but "Bethabara. We have visited the places to enquire as to the footsteps of Jesus and His dis-

ciples, and of the prophets. Now, Bethany, as the same evangelist tells us, was the town of Lazarus, and of Martha and Mary; it is fifteen stadia from Jerusalem, and the river Jordan is about a hundred and eighty stadia distant from it. Nor is there any other place of the same name in the neighbourhood of the Jordan, but they say that Bethabara is pointed out on the banks of the Jordan, and that John is said to have baptized there. The etymology of the name, too, corresponds with the baptism of him who made ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him; for it yields the meaning "House of preparation," while Bethany means "House of obedience. Where else was it fitting that he should baptize, who was sent as a messenger before the face of the Christ, to prepare His way before Him, but at the House of preparation?

⁸⁸ And what more fitting home for Mary, who chose the good part, which was not taken away from her, and for Martha, who was cumbered for the reception of Jesus, and for their brother, who is called the friend of the Saviour, than Bethany, the House of obedience? Thus we see that he who aims at a complete understanding of the Holy Scriptures must not neglect the careful examination of the proper names in it. In the matter of proper names the Greek copies are often incorrect, and in the Gospels one might be misled by their authority. The transaction about the swine, which were driven down a steep place by the demons and drowned in the sea, is said to have taken place in the country of the Gerasenes. Now, Gerasa is a town of Arabia, and has near it neither sea nor lake. And the Evangelists would not have made a statement so obviously and demonstrably false; for they were men who informed themselves carefully of all matters connected with Judaea. But in a few copies we have found, "into the country of the Gadarenes;" and, on this reading, it is to be stated that Gadara is a town of Judaea, in the neighbourhood of which are the well-known hot springs, and that there is no lake there with overhanging banks, nor any sea.

⁸⁹ But Gergesa, from which the name Gergesenes is taken, is an old town in the neighbourhood of the lake now called Tiberias, and on the edge of it there is a steep place abutting on the lake, from which it is pointed out that the swine were cast down by the demons. Now, the meaning of Gergesa is "dwelling of the casters-out," and it contains a prophetic reference to the conduct towards the Saviour of the citizens of those places, who "besought Him to depart out of their coasts. The same inaccuracy with regard to proper names is also to be observed in many passages of the law and the prophets, as

we have been at pains to learn from the Hebrews, comparing our own copies with theirs which have the confirmation of the versions, never subjected to corruption, of Aquila and Theodotion and Symmachus. We add a few instances to encourage students to pay more attention to such points. One of the sons of Levi, the first, is called Geson in most copies, instead of Gerson. His name is the same as that of the first-born of Moses; it was given appropriately in each case, both children being born, because of the sojourn in Egypt, in a strange land. The second son of Juda, again, has with us the name Anan, but with the Hebrews Onan, "their labour. Once more, in the departures of the children of Israel in Numbers, we find, "They departed from Sochoth and pitched in Buthan; "but the Hebrew, instead of Buthan, reads Aiman.

⁹⁰ And why should I add more points like these, when any one who desires it can examine into the proper names and find out for himself how they stand? The place-names of Scripture are specially to be suspected where many of them occur in a catalogue, as in the account of the partition of the country in Joshua, and in the first Book of Chronicles from the beginning down to, say, the passage about Dan, and similarly in Ezra. Names are not to be neglected, since indications may be gathered from them which help in the interpretation of the passages where they occur. We cannot, however, leave our proper subject to examine in this place into the philosophy of names.

25. Jordan Means "Their Going Down." Spiritual Meanings and Application of This.

⁹¹ Let us look at the words of the Gospel now before us. "Jordan" means "their going down. The name "Jared" is etymologically akin to it, if I may say so; it also yields the meaning "going down; "for Jared was born to Maleleel, as it is written in the Book of Enoch-if any one cares to accept that book as sacred-in the days when the sons of God came down to the daughters of men. Under this descent some have supposed that there is an enigmatical reference to the descent of souls into bodies, taking the phrase "daughters of men" as a tropical expression for this earthly tabernacle. Should this be so, what river will "their going down" be, to which one must come to be purified, a river going down, not with its own descent, but "theirs," that, namely, of men, what but our Saviour who separates those who received their lots from Moses from those who obtained their own portions through Jesus (Joshua)? His current, flowing in the descending stream, makes glad, as we find in the Psalms, the city of God, not the visible Jerusalem-for it has no

river beside it-but the blameless Church of God, built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus our Lord being the chief corner-stone.

⁹² Under the Jordan, accordingly, we have to understand the Word of God who became flesh and tabernacled among us, Jesus who gives us as our inheritance the humanity which He assumed, for that is the head corner-stone, which being taken up into the deity of the Son of God, is washed by being so assumed, and then receives into itself the pure and guileless dove of the Spirit, bound to it and no longer able to fly away from it. For "Upon whomsoever," we read, "thou shalt see the Spirit descending and abiding upon Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. Hence, he who receives the Spirit abiding on Jesus Himself is able to baptize those who come to him in that abiding Spirit. But John baptizes beyond Jordan, in the regions verging on the outside of Judaea, in Bethabara, being the forerunner of Him who came to call not the righteous but sinners, and who taught that the whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. For it is for forgiveness of sins that this washing is given.

26. The Story of Israel Crossing Jordan Under Joshua is Typical of Christian Things, and is Written for Our Instruction.

⁹³ Now, it may very well be that some one not versed in the various aspects of the Saviour may stumble at the interpretation given above of the Jordan; because John says, "I baptize with water, but He that cometh after me is stronger than I; He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit. To this we reply that, as the Word of God in His character as something to be drunk is to one set of men water, and to another wine, making glad the heart of man, and to others blood, since it is said, "Except ye drink My blood, ye have no life in you," and as in His character as food He is variously conceived as living bread or as flesh, so also He, the same person, is baptism of water, and baptism of Holy Spirit and of fire, and to some, also, of blood. It is of His last baptism, as some hold, that He speaks in the words, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" And it agrees with this that the disciple John speaks in his Epistle of the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, as being one. And again He declares Himself to be the way and the door, but clearly He is not the door to those to whom He is the way, and He is no longer the way to those to whom He is the door.

⁹⁴ All those, then, who are being initiated in the beginning of the oracles of God, and come to the voice of him who cries in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord," the voice which sounds beyond Jordan at the house of preparation, let them prepare themselves so that they may be in a state to receive the spiritual word, brought home to them by the enlightenment of the Spirit. As we are now, as our subject requires, bringing together all that relates to the Jordan, let us look at the "river. God, by Moses, carried the people through the Red Sea, making the water a wall for them on the right hand and on the left, and by Joshua He carried them through Jordan. Now, Paul deals with this Scripture, and his warfare is not according to the flesh of it, for he knew that the law is spiritual in a spiritual sense. And he shows us that he understood what is said about the passage of the Red Sea; for he says in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, "I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, how that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of the spiritual rock which followed them, and the rock was Christ.

⁹⁵ In the spirit of this passage let us also pray that we may receive from God to understand the spiritual meaning of Joshua's passage through Jordan. Of it, also, Paul would have said, "I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, that all our fathers went through Jordan, and were all baptized into Jesus in the spirit and in the river. And Joshua, who succeeded Moses, was a type of Jesus Christ, who succeeds the dispensation through the law, and replaces it by the preaching of the Gospel. And even if those Paul speaks of were baptized in the cloud and in the sea, there is something harsh and salt in their baptism. They are still in fear of their enemies, and crying to the Lord and to Moses, saying, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou brought us forth to slay us in the wilderness? Why hast thou dealt thus with us, to bring us forth out of Egypt? "But the baptism to Joshua, which takes place in quite sweet and drinkable water, is in many ways superior to that earlier one, religion having by this time grown clearer and assuming a becoming order. For the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God is carried in procession by the priests and levites, the people following the ministers of God, it, also, accepting the law of holiness. For Joshua says to the people, "Sanctify yourselves against tomorrow; the Lord will do wonders among you.

⁹⁶ And he commands the priests to go before the people with the ark of the covenant, wherein is plainly showed forth the mystery of the Father's economy about the Son, which is highly exalted by Him who gave the Son this office; "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. This is pointed out by what we find in the book called Joshua, "In that day I will begin to exalt thee before the children of Israel. And we hear our Lord Jesus saying to the children of Israel, "Come hither and hear the words of the Lord your God. Hereby ye shall know that the living God is in (among) you; "for when we are baptized to Jesus, we know that the living God is in us. And, in the former case, they kept the passover in Egypt, and then began their journey, but with Joshua, after crossing Jordan on the tenth day of the first month they pitched their camp in Galgala; for a sheep had to be procured before invitations could be issued to the banquet after Joshua's baptism. Then the children of Israel, since the children of those who came out of Egypt had not received circumcision, were circumcised by Joshua with a very sharp stone;

⁹⁷ the Lord declares that He takes away the reproach of Egypt on the day of Joshua's baptism, when Joshua purified the children of Israel. For it is written: "And the Lord said to Joshua, the son of Nun, This day have I taken away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Then the children of Israel kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month, with much greater gladness than in Egypt, for they ate unleavened bread of the corn of the holy land, and fresh food better than manna. For when they received the land of promise God did not entertain them with scantier food, nor when such a one as Joshua was their leader do they get inferior bread. This will be plain to him who thinks of the true holy land and of the Jerusalem above. Hence it is written in this same Gospel: Your fathers did eat bread in the wilderness, and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. For the manna, though it was given by God, yet was bread of travel, bread supplied to those still under discipline, well fitted for those who were under tutors and governors. And the new bread Joshua managed to get from corn they cut in the country, in the land of promise, others having laboured and his disciples reaping,-that was bread more full of life, distributed as it was to those who, for their perfection, were able to receive the inheritance of their fathers.

⁹⁸ Hence, he who is still under discipline to that bread may receive death as far as it is concerned, but he who has attained to the bread that follows that, eating it, shall live for ever. All this has been added, not, I conceive, without appropriateness, to our study of the baptism at the Jordan, administered by John at Bethabara.

27. Of Elijah and Elisha Crossing the Jordan.

⁹⁹ Another point which we must not fail to notice is that when Elijah was about to be taken up in a whirlwind, as if to heaven, he took his mantle and wrapped it together and smote the water, which was divided hither and thither, and they went over both of them, that is, he and Elisha. His baptism in the Jordan made him fitter to be taken up, for, as we showed before, Paul gives the name of baptism to such a remarkable passage through the water. And through this same Jordan Elisha receives, through Elijah, the gift he desired, saying, "Let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." What enabled him to receive this gift of the spirit of Elijah was, perhaps, that he had passed through Jordan twice, once with Elijah, and the second time, when, after receiving the mantle of Elijah, he smote the water and said, "Where is the God of Elijah, even He? And he smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither."

28. Naaman the Syrian and the Jordan. No Other Stream Has the Same Healing Power.

¹⁰⁰ Should any one object to the expression "He smote the water," on account of the conclusion we arrived at above with respect to the Jordan, that it is a type of the Word who descended for us our descending, we rejoin that with the Apostle the rock is plainly said to be Christ, and that it is smitten twice with the rod, so that the people may drink of the spiritual rock which follows them. The "smiting" in this new difficulty is that of those who are fond of suggesting something that contradicts the conclusion even before they have learned what the question is which is in hand. From such God sets us free, since, on the one hand, He gives us to drink when we are thirsty, and on the other He prepares for us, in the immense and trackless deep, a road to pass over, namely, by the dividing of His Word, since it is by the reason which distinguishes (divides) that most things are made plain to us. But that we may receive the right interpretation about this Jordan, so good to drink, so full of grace, it may be of use to compare the cleansing of Naaman the Syrian from his leprosy, and what is said of the rivers of religion of the en-

emies of Israel. It is recorded of Naaman that he came with horse and chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.

¹⁰¹ And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go, wash seven times in the Jordan, and thy flesh shall come again unto thee, and thou shalt be cleansed. Then Naaman is angry; he does not see that our Jordan is the cleanser of those who are impure from leprosy, from that impurity, and their restorer to health; it is the Jordan that does this, and not the prophet; the office of the prophet is to direct to the healing agency. Naaman then says, not understanding the great mystery of the Jordan, "Behold, I said that he will certainly come out to me, and will call upon the name of the Lord his God, and lay his hand upon the place, and restore the leper. For to put his hand on the leprosy and cleanse it is a work belonging to our Lord Jesus only; for when the leper appealed to Him with faith, saying, "If Thou wilt Thou canst make me clean," He not only said, "I will, be thou clean," but in addition to the word He touched him, and he was cleansed from his leprosy. Naaman, then, is still in error, and does not see how far inferior other rivers are to the Jordan for the cure of the suffering; he extols the rivers of Damascus, Arbana, and Pharpha, saying, "Are not Arbana and Pharpha, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Shall I not wash in them and be clean?"

¹⁰² "For as none is good but one, God the Father, so among rivers none is good but the Jordan, nor able to cleanse from his leprosy him who with faith washes his soul in Jesus. And this, I suppose, is the reason why the Israelites are recorded to have wept when they sat by the rivers of Babylon and remembered Zion; those who are carried captive, on account of their wickedness, when they taste other waters after sacred Jordan, are led to remember with longing their own river of salvation. Therefore it is said of the rivers of Babylon, "There we sat down," clearly because they were unable to stand, "and wept. And Jeremiah rebukes those who wish to drink the waters of Egypt, and desert the water which comes down from heaven, and is named from its so coming down-namely, the Jordan. He says, "What hast thou to do with the way of Egypt, to drink the water of Geon, and to drink the water of the river," or, as it is in the Hebrew, "to drink the water of Sion." Of which water we have now to speak.

29. The River of Egypt and Its Dragon, Contrasted with the Jordan.

¹⁰³ But that the Spirit in the inspired Scriptures is not speaking mainly of rivers to be seen with the eyes, may be gathered from Ezekiel's prophecies

against Pharaoh, king of Egypt: "Behold I am against thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great dragon, seated in the midst of rivers, who sayest, Mine are the rivers, and I made them. And I will put traps in thy jaws, and I will make the fishes of the river to stick to thy fins, and I will bring thee up from the midst of thy river, and all the fish of the river, and I will cast thee down quickly and all the fish of the river; thou shalt fall upon the face of thy land, and thou shalt not be gathered together, and thou shalt not be adorned." For what real bodily dragon has ever been reported as having been seen in the material river of Egypt? But consider if the river of Egypt be not the dwelling of the dragon who is our enemy, who was not even able to kill the child Moses. But as the dragon is in the river of Egypt, so is God in the river which makes glad the city of God; for the Father is in the Son. Hence those who come to wash themselves in Him put away the reproach of Egypt, and become more fit to be restored. They are cleansed from that foulest leprosy, receive a double portion of spiritual gifts, and are made ready to receive the Holy Spirit, since the spiritual dove does not light on any other stream. Thus we have conside

BOOK 10

¹ Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. X 1. Jesus Comes to Capernaum. Statements of the Four Evangelists Regarding This. "After this [John 2:12-25] He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples; and there they abode not many days. And the passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and He found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting, and He made a sort of scourge of cords, and cast them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen, and He poured out the small money of the changers and overthrew their tables, and to those that sold the doves He said, Take these things hence; make not My Father's house a house of merchandize. Then His disciples remembered that it was written, that the zeal of your house shall eat me up. The Jews therefore answered and said to Him, What sign showest Thou unto us, that You do such things? Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews therefore answered, Forty-six years was this temple in building, and will you raise it up in three days? But He spoke of the temple of His body. When therefore He rose from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus said. Now when He was at Jeru-

saalem at the passover at the feast, many believed in His name, beholding His signs which He did. But Jesus Himself did not trust Himself to them, for that He knew all men, and because He had no need that any should bear witness concerning man. For He Himself knew what was in man."

² The numbers which are recorded in the book of that name obtained a place in Scripture in accordance with some principle which determines their proportion to each thing. We ought therefore to enquire whether the book of Moses which is called Numbers teaches us, should we be able to trace it out, in some special way, the principle with regard to this matter. This remark I make to you at the outset of my tenth book, for in many passages of Scripture I have observed the number ten to have a peculiar privilege, and you may consider carefully whether the hope is justified that this volume will bring you from God some special benefit. That this may prove to be the case, we will seek to yield ourselves as fully as we can to God, who loves to bestow His choicest gifts. The book begins at the words: "After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples, and there they abode not many days. The other three Evangelists say that the Lord, after His conflict with the devil, departed into Galilee. Matthew and Luke represent that he was first at Nazara, and then left them and came and dwelt in Capernaum. Matthew and Mark also state a certain reason why He departed there, namely, that He had heard that John was cast into prison. The words are as follows: Matthew says, "Then the devil leaves Him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto Him.

³ But when He heard that John was delivered up, He departed into Galilee, and leaving Nazareth He came and dwelt at Capernaum on the sea-shore in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali; and after the quotation from Isaiah: "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Mark has the following: "And He was in the desert forty days and forty nights tempted by Satan, and He was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto Him. But after John was delivered up Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of God, that the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe in the Gospel. Then after the narrative about Andrew and Peter and James and John, Mark writes: "And He entered into Capernaum, and straightway on the Sabbath He was teach-

ing in the synagogue. Luke has, "And having finished the temptation the devil departed from Him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and a fame went out concerning Him into all the region round about, and He taught in their synagogues being glorified of all. And He came to Nazara, where He had been brought up, and He entered as His custom was into the synagogue on the Sabbath day.

⁴ Then Luke gives what He said at Nazara, and how those in the synagogue were enraged at Him and cast Him out of the city and brought Him to the brow of the hill on which their cities were built, to cast Him down headlong, and how going through the midst of them the Lord went His way; and with this he connects the statement, "And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath day." ⁵ 2. The Discrepancy Between John and the First Three Gospels at This Part of the Narrative, Literally Read, the Narratives Cannot Be Harmonized: They Must Be Interpreted Spiritually. The truth of these matters must lie in that which is seen by the mind. If the discrepancy between the Gospels is not solved, we must give up our trust in the Gospels, as being true and written by a divine spirit, or as records worthy of credence, for both these characters are held to belong to these works. Those who accept the four Gospels, and who do not consider that their apparent discrepancy is to be solved anagogically (by mystical interpretation), will have to clear up the difficulty, raised above, about the forty days of the temptation, a period for which no room can be found in any way in John's narrative; and they will also have to tell us when it was that the Lord came to Capernaum. If it was after the six days of the period of His baptism, the sixth being that of the marriage at Cana of Galilee, then it is clear that the temptation never took place, and that He never was at Nazara, and that John was not yet delivered up. Now, after Capernaum, where He abode not many days, the passover of the Jews was at hand, and He went up to Jerusalem, where He cast the sheep and oxen out of the temple, and poured out the small change of the bankers.

⁶ In Jerusalem, too, it appears that Nicodemus, the ruler and Pharisee, first came to Him by night, and heard what we may read in the Gospel. "After these things, [John 3:23-26] Jesus came, and His disciples, into the land of Judæa, and there He tarried with them and baptized, at the same time at which John also was baptizing in Ænon near Salim, because there were many waters there, and they came and were baptized; for John was not

yet cast into prison. On this occasion, too, there was a questioning on the part of John's disciples with the Jews about purification, and they came to John, saying of the Saviour, "Behold, He baptizes, and all come to Him. They had heard words from the Baptist, the exact tenor of which it is better to take from Scripture itself. Now, if we ask when Christ was first in Capernaum, our respondents, if they follow the words of Matthew, and of the other two, will say, After the temptation, when, "leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea. But how can they show both the statements to be true, that of Matthew and Mark, that it was because He heard that John was delivered up that He departed into Galilee, and that of John, found there, after a number of other transactions, subsequent to His stay at Capernaum, after His going to Jerusalem, and His journey from there to Judæa, that John was not yet cast into prison, but was baptizing in Ænon near Salim?

7 There are many other points on which the careful student of the Gospels will find that their narratives do not agree; and these we shall place before the reader, according to our power, as they occur. The student, staggered at the consideration of these things, will either renounce the attempt to find all the Gospels true, and not venturing to conclude that all our information about our Lord is untrustworthy, will choose at random one of them to be his guide; or he will accept the four, and will consider that their truth is not to be sought for in the outward and material letter. 83. What We are to Think of the Discrepancies Between the Different Gospels. We must, however, try to obtain some notion of the intention of the Evangelists in such matters, and we direct ourselves to this. Suppose there are several men who, by the spirit, see God, and know His words addressed to His saints, and His presence which He vouchsafes to them, appearing to them at chosen times for their advancement. There are several such men, and they are in different places, and the benefits they receive from above vary in shape and character. And let these men report, each of them separately, what he sees in spirit about God and His words, and His appearances to His saints, so that one of them speaks of God's appearances and words and acts to one righteous man in such a place, and another about other oracles and great works of the Lord, and a third of something else than what the former two have dealt with. And let there be a fourth, doing with regard to some particular matter something of the same kind as these three. And let the four agree with each

other about something the Spirit has suggested to them all, and let them also make brief reports of other matters besides that one; then their narratives will fall out something on this wise: God appeared to such a one at such a time and in such a place, and did to him thus and thus;

9 as if He had appeared to him in such a form, and had led him by the hand to such a place, and then done to him thus and thus. The second will report that God appeared at the very time of the foresaid occurrences, in a certain town, to a person who is named, a second person, and in a place far removed from that of the former account, and he will report a different set of words spoken at the same time to this second person. And let the same be supposed to be the case with the third and with the fourth. And let them, as we said, agree, these witnesses who report true things about God, and about His benefits conferred on certain men, let them agree with each other in some of the narratives they report. He, then, who takes the writings of these men for history, or for a representation of real things by a historical image, and who supposes God to be within certain limits in space, and to be unable to present to several persons in different places several visions of Himself at the same time, or to be making several speeches at the same moment, he will deem it impossible that our four writers are all speaking truth.

10 To him it is impossible that God, who is in certain limits in space, could at the same set time be saying one thing to one man and another to another, and that He should be doing a thing and the opposite thing as well, and, to put it bluntly, that He should be both sitting and standing, should one of the writers represent Him as standing at the time, and making a certain speech in such a place to such a man, while a second writer speaks of Him as sitting. 11 4. *Scripture Contains Many Contradictions, and Many Statements Which are Not Literally True, But Must Be Read Spiritually and Mystically.* In the case I have supposed where the historians desire to teach us by an image what they have seen in their mind, their meaning would be found, if the four were wise, to exhibit no disagreement; and we must understand that with the four Evangelists it is not otherwise. They made full use for their purpose of things done by Jesus in the exercise of His wonderful and extraordinary power; they use in the same way His sayings, and in some places they tack on to their writing, with language apparently implying things of sense, things made manifest to them in a purely intellectual way. I do not condemn them if they even sometimes dealt freely with things which

to the eye of history happened differently, and changed them so as to subserve the mystical aims they had in view; so as to speak of a thing which happened in a certain place, as if it had happened in another, or of what took place at a certain time, as if it had taken place at another time, and to introduce into what was spoken in a certain way some changes of their own. They proposed to speak the truth where it was possible both materially and spiritually, and where this was not possible it was their intention to prefer the spiritual to the material. The spiritual truth was often preserved, as one might say, in the material falsehood.

¹² As, for example, we might judge of the story of Jacob and Esau. [Genesis xxvii] Jacob says to Isaac, "I am Esau your firstborn son," and spiritually he spoke the truth, for he already partook of the rights of the first-born, which were perishing in his brother, and clothing himself with the goatskins he assumed the outward semblance of Esau, and was Esau all but the voice praising God, so that Esau might afterward find a place to receive a blessing. For if Jacob had not been blessed as Esau, neither would Esau perhaps have been able to receive a blessing of his own. And Jesus too is many things, according to the conceptions of Him, of which it is quite likely that the Evangelists took up different notions; while yet they were in agreement with each other in the different things they wrote. Statements which are verbally contrary to each other, are made about our Lord, namely, that He was descended from David and that He was not descended from David. The statement is true, "He was descended from David," as the Apostle says, [Romans 1:3] "born of the seed of David according to the flesh," if we apply this to the bodily part of Him; but the self-same statement is untrue if we understand His being born of the seed of David of His diviner power; for He was declared to be the Son of God with power.

¹³ And for this reason too, perhaps, the sacred prophecies speak of Him now as a servant, and now as a Son. They call Him a servant on account of the form of a servant which he wore, and because He was of the seed of David, but they call Him the Son of God according to His character as first-born. Thus it is true to call Him man and to call Him not man; man, because He was capable of death; not man, on account of His being diviner than man. Marcion, I suppose, took sound words in a wrong sense, when he rejected His birth from Mary, and declared that as to His divine nature He was not born of Mary, and hence made bold to delete from the Gospel the passages which

have this effect. And a like fate seems to have overtaken those who make away with His humanity and receive His deity alone; and also those opposites of these who cancel His deity and confess Him as a man to be a holy man, and the most righteous of all men.

¹⁴ And those who hold the doctrine of Dokesis, not remembering that He humbled Himself even unto death [Philippians 2:8] and became obedient even to the cross, but only imagining in Him the absence of suffering, the superiority to all such accidents, they do what they can to deprive us of the man who is more just than all men, and are left with a figure which cannot save them, for as by one man came death, so also by one man is the justification of life. We could not have received such benefit as we have from the Logos had He not assumed the man, had He remained such as He was from the beginning with God the Father, and had He not taken up man, the first man of all, the man more precious than all others, purer than all others and capable of receiving Him. But after that man we also shall be able to receive Him, to receive Him so great and of such nature as He was, if we prepare a place in proportion to Him in our soul. So much I have said of the apparent discrepancies in the Gospels, and of my desire to have them treated in the way of spiritual interpretation.

¹⁵ 5. Paul Also Makes Contradictory Statements About Himself, and Acts in Opposite Ways at Different Times. On the same passage one may also make use of such an example as that of Paul, who at one place [Romans 7:14] says that he is carnal, sold under sin, and thus was not able to judge anything, while in another place he is the spiritual man who is able to judge all things and himself to be judged by no man. Of the carnal one are the words, "Not what I would that do I practise, but what I hate that do I. And he too who was caught up to the third heaven and heard unspeakable words is a different Paul from him who says, Of such an one I will glory, but of myself I will not glory. If he becomes [1 Corinthians 9:20-22] to the Jews as a Jew that he may gain the Jews, and to those under the law as under the law that he may gain those under the law, and to them that are without law as without law, not being without law to God, but under law to Christ, that he may gain those without law, and if to the weak he becomes weak that he may gain the weak, it is clear that these statements must be examined each by itself, that he becomes a Jew, and that sometimes he is under the law and at another time without law, and that sometimes he is weak.

¹⁶ Where, for example, he says something by way of permission [1 Corinthians 7:6] and not by commandment, there we may recognize that he is weak; for who, he says, [2 Corinthians 11:29] is weak, and I am not weak? When he shaves his head and makes an offering, or when he circumcises Timothy, [Acts 16:3] he is a Jew; but when he says to the Athenians, [Acts 17:23] "I found an altar with the inscription, To the unknown God. That, then, which you worship not knowing it, that declare I unto you," and, "As also some of your own poets have said, For we also are His offspring," then he becomes to those without the law as without the law, adjuring the least religious of men to espouse religion, and turning to his own purpose the saying of the poet, "From Love do we begin; his race are we. And instances might perhaps be found where, to men not Jews and yet under the law, he is under the law.

¹⁷ 6. Different Accounts of the Call of Peter, and of the Imprisonment of the Baptist. The Meaning of "Capernaum. These examples may be serviceable to illustrate statements not only about the Saviour, but about the disciples too, for here also there is some discrepancy of statement. For there is a difference in thought perhaps between Simon who is found by his own brother Andrew, and who is addressed "You shall be called Cephas," [John 1:41] and him who is seen by Jesus when walking by the sea of Galilee, along with his brother, and addressed conjointly with that brother, "Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men. There was some fitness in the fact that the writer who goes more to the root of the matter and tells of the Word becoming flesh, and hence does not record the human generation of the Word who was in the beginning with God, should not tell us of Simon's being found at the seashore and called away from there, but of his being found by his brother who had been staying with Jesus at the tenth hour, and of his receiving the name Cephas in connection with his being thus found out. If he was seen by Jesus when walking by the sea of Galilee, it would scarcely be on a later occasion that he was addressed, "You are Peter and upon this rock I will build My church. With John again the Pharisees know Jesus to be baptizing with His disciples, adding this to His other great activities;

¹⁸ but the Jesus of the three does not baptize at all. John the Baptist, too, with the Evangelist of the same name, goes on a long time without being cast into prison. With Matthew, on the contrary, he is put in prison almost at the time of the temptation of Jesus, and this is the occasion of Jesus retiring

to Galilee, to avoid being put in prison. But in John there is nothing at all about John's being put in prison. Who is so wise and so able as to learn all the things that are recorded about Jesus in the four Evangelists, and both to understand each incident by itself, and have a connected view of all His sojournings and words and acts at each place? As for the passage presently before us, it gives in the order of events that on the sixth day the Saviour, after the business of the marriage at Cana of Galilee, went down with His mother and His brothers and His disciples to Capernaum, which means "field of consolation. For after the feasting and the wine it was fitting that the Saviour should come to the field of consolation with His mother and His disciples, to console those whom He was training for disciples and the soul which had conceived Him by the Holy Ghost, with the fruits which were to stand in that full field.

197. Why His Brothers are Not Called to the Wedding; And Why He Abides at Capernaum Not Many Days. But we must ask why His brothers are not called to the wedding: they were not there, for it is not said they were; but they go down to Capernaum with Him and His mother and His disciples. We must also examine why on this occasion they do not "go in to" Capernaum, nor "go up to," but "go down to" it. Consider if we must not understand by His brothers here the powers which went down along with Him, not called to the wedding according to the explanations given above, since it is in lower and humbler places than those who are called disciples of Christ, and in another way, that these brothers receive assistance. For if His mother is called, then there are some bearing fruit, and even to these the Lord goes down with the servants and disciples of the Word, to help such persons, His mother also being with Him. Those indeed who are called Capernaum appear not to be able to allow Jesus and those who went down with Him to make a longer stay with them: hence they remain with them not many days. For the lower field of consolation does not admit the illumination of many doctrines, but is only capable of a few.

20 To get a clear view of the difference between those who receive Jesus for longer and for shorter time, we may compare with this, "They abode there not many days," the words recorded in Matthew as spoken by Christ when risen from the dead to His disciples who were being sent out to teach all nations, "Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. To those who are to know all that human nature can know while it still is here, is said

with emphasis, "I am with you; and as the rise of each new day upon the field of contemplation brings more days before the eyes of the blessed, therefore He says, "All the days till the end of the world. As for those in Capernaum, on the contrary, to whom they go down as to the more needy, not only Jesus, but also His mother and His brothers and His disciples "abode there not many days."

218. How Christ Abides with Believers to the End of the Age, and Whether He Abides with Them After that Consummation. Some may very likely and not unreasonably ask, whether, when all the days of this age are over, there will no longer be any one to say, "Lo, I am with you," with those, namely, who received Him till the fulfilment of the age, for the "until" seems to indicate a certain limit of time. To this we must say that the phrase, "I am with you," is not the same as "I am in you. We might say more properly that the Saviour was not in His disciples but with them, so long as they had not arrived in their minds at the consummation of the age. But when they see to be at hand, as far as their effort is concerned, the consummation of the world which is crucified to them, then Jesus will be no longer with them, but in them, and they will say, "It is no longer I that live but Christ that lives in me," [Galatians 2:20] and "If you seek a proof of Christ that speaks in me. [2 Corinthians 13:3] In saying this we are keeping for our part also to the ordinary interpretation which makes the "always" the time down to the consummation of the age, and are not asking more than is attainable to human nature as it is here. That interpretation may be adhered to and justice yet be done to the "I.

22 He who is with His disciples who are sent out to teach all the nations, until the consummation, may be He who emptied Himself and took the form of a servant, and yet afterwards may be another in point of state; afterwards He may be such as He was before He emptied Himself, until all His enemies are made by His Father the footstool of His feet; and after this, when the Son has delivered up the kingdom to God and the Father, it may be the Father who says to them, "Behold, I am with you. But whether it is "all the days" up to that time, or simply "all the days," or not "all days" but "every day," any one may consider that likes. Our plan does not allow us at present to digress so far. 239. Heracleon Says that Jesus is Not Stated to Have Done Anything at Capernaum. But in the Other Gospels He Does Many Things There. But Heracleon, dealing with the words, "After this He went down to

Capernaum," declares that they indicate the introduction of another transaction, and that the word "went down" is not without significance. "Capernaum," he says, "means these farthest-out parts of the world, these districts of matter, into which He descended, and because the place was not suitable, he says, He is not reported either to have done anything or said anything in it. Now if the Lord had not been reported in the other Gospels either as having done or said anything at Capernaum, we might perhaps have hesitated whether this view ought or ought not to be received. But that is far from being the case. Matthew says our Lord left Nazareth and came and dwelt at Capernaum on the seaside, and that from that time He began to preach, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And Mark, starting in his narrative from the temptation by the devil, relates that after John was cast into prison, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the Gospel of God, and after the call of the four fishermen to the Apostleship, "they enter into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day He taught in the synagogue, and they were astonished at His doctrine.

²⁴ And Mark records an action of Jesus also which took place at Capernaum, for he goes on to say, "In their synagogue there was a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, Ah! What have we to do with You, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? We know You who You are, the Son of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold your peace and come out of him; and the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed. And at Capernaum Simon's mother-in-law is cured of her fever. And Mark adds that when evening had come all those were cured who were sick and who were possessed with demons. Luke's report is very like Mark's about Capernaum. He says, "And He came to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath day, and they were astonished at His teachings, for His word was with power. And in the synagogue there was a man having a spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, Ah! What have we to do with You, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know You who You are, the holy one of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold your peace and come out of him. Then the demon having thrown him down in the midst, went out of him, doing him no harm.

²⁵ And then Luke reports how the Lord rose up from the synagogue and went into the house of Simon, and rebuked the fever in his mother-in-law,

and cured her of her disease; and after this cure, "when the sun was setting," he says, "all, as many as had persons sick with various diseases, brought them to Him, and He laid his hands on each one of them and cured them. And demons also went out from many, crying and saying, You are the Son of God, and He rebuked them and suffered them not to speak because they knew that He was the Christ. We have presented all these statements as to the Saviour's sayings and doings at Capernaum in order to refute Heracleon's interpretation of our passage, "Hence He is not said to have done or to have spoken anything there. He must either give two meanings to Capernaum, and show us his reasons for them, or if he cannot do this he must give up saying that the Saviour visited any place to no purpose. We, for our part, should we come to passages where even a comparison of the other Gospels fails to show that Jesus' visit to this place or that was not accompanied by any results, will seek with the divine assistance to make it clear that His coming was not in vain.

26 10. Significance of Capernaum. Matthew for his part adds, that when the Lord had entered into Capernaum the centurion came to him, saying, "My boy is lying in my house sick of the palsy, grievously tormented," and after telling the Lord some more about him, received the reply, "Go, and as you have believed, so be it unto you. And Matthew then gives us the story of Peter's mother-in-law, in close agreement with the other two. I conceive it to be a creditable piece of work and becoming to one who is anxious to hear about Christ, to collect from the four Gospels all that is related about Capernaum, and the discourses spoken, and the works done there, and how many visits the Lord paid to the place, and how, at one time, He is said to have gone down to it, and at another to have entered into it, and where He came from when He did so. If we compare all these points together, we shall not go astray in the meaning we ascribe to Capernaum. On the one hand, the sick are healed, and other works of power are done there, and on the other, the preaching, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, begins there, and this appears to be a sign, as we showed when entering on this subject, of some more needy place of consolation, made so perhaps by Jesus, who comforted men by what He taught and by what He did there, in that place of consolation.

27 For we know that the names of places agree in their meaning with the things connected with Jesus; as Gergesa, where the citizens of these parts be-

sought Him to depart out of their coasts, means, "The dwelling of the casters-out. And this, also, we have noticed about Capernaum, that not only did the preaching, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," begin there, but that according to the three Evangelists Jesus performed there His first miracles. None of the three, however, added to the first wonders which he records as done in Capernaum, that note attached by John the disciple to the first work of Jesus, "This beginning of His signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee. For that which was done in Capernaum was not the beginning of the signs, since the leading sign of the Son of God was good cheer, and in the light of human experience it is also the most representative of Him. For the Word of God does not show forth His own beauty so much in healing the sick, as in His tendering the temperate draught to make glad those who are in good health and are able to join in the banquet.

28 11. Why the Passover is Said to Be that of the "Jews. Its Institution: and the Distinction Between "Feasts of the Lord" And Feasts Not So Spoken of. "And the passover of the Jews was at hand. [John 2:13] Inquiring into the accuracy of the most wise John (on this passage), I put myself the question, What is indicated by the addition "of the Jews"? Of what other nation was the passover a festival? Would it not have been enough to say, "And the passover was at hand"? It may, however, be the case that the human passover is one thing when kept by men not as Scripture intended, and that the divine passover is another thing, the true passover, observed in spirit and truth by those who worship God in spirit and in truth; and then the distinction indicated in the text may be that between the divine passover and that said to be of the Jews. We should attend to the passover law and observe what the Lord says of it when it is first mentioned in Scripture. [Exodus 12:1-3] "And the Lord spoke unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month is to you the beginning of months, it is the first for you among the months of the year. Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, On the tenth of this month shall every man take a sheep, according to the houses of your families;

29 then after some directions in which the word passover does not occur again, he adds, "Thus shall you eat it, your loins girt and your shoes on your feet, and your staves in your hands, and you shall eat it with haste. It is the passover of the Lord. He does not say, "It is your passover. And a little further on He names the festival again in the same way, "And it shall come to pass,

when your sons say to you, What is this service? And you shall say to them, It is the sacrifice, the passover of the Lord, how He guarded the houses of the children of Israel. And again, a little further on, "And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, This is the law of the passover. No alien shall eat of it. And again in a little, "But if a proselyte come to you, and keep the passover of the Lord, every male of him shall be circumcised. Observe that in the law we never find it said, "Your passover; but in all the passages quoted the phrase occurs once without any adjunct, while we have three times "The passover of the Lord. To make sure that there is such a distinction between the passover of the Lord and the passover of the Jews, we may consider the way in which Isaiah speaks of the matter: [Isaiah 1:13] "Your new moons and your Sabbaths and your great day I cannot bear;

³⁰ your fast and your holiday and your new moons and your feasts my soul hates. The Lord does not call them His own, these observances of sinners (they are hated of His soul, if such there be); neither the new moons, nor the Sabbaths, nor the great day, nor the fast, nor the festivals. And in the legislation about the Sabbath in Exodus, we read, "And Moses said to them, This is the word which the Lord spoke, The Sabbath is a holy rest unto the Lord. And a little further on, "And Moses said, Eat ye; for today is a Sabbath unto the Lord. And in Numbers, before the sacrifices which are offered at each festival, as if all the festivals came under the law of the continuous and daily sacrifice, we find it written, "And the Lord spoke unto Moses, Announce to the children of Israel, and thus shall you say unto them, My gifts, My offerings, My fruits for a smell of sweet savour, you shall observe to offer unto Me at My festivals. And you shall say unto them, These are the offerings which you shall offer unto the Lord. The festival set forth in Scripture He calls His own, not those of the people receiving the law, He speaks of His gifts, His offerings. A similar way of speaking is that in Exodus with regard to the people; it is said by God to be His own people, when it does not sin;

³¹ but in the section about the calf He abjures it and calls it the people of Moses. [Exodus 8:21-23] On the one hand, "You shall say to Pharaoh, Thus says the Lord, Let My people go, that they may serve Me in the wilderness. But if you will not let My people go, behold, I will send against you and against your servants, and against your people and against your houses, the dog-fly; and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of the dog-fly, and on the land on which they are, against it will I send them. And I will glorify on

that day the land of Gesem, on which My people are; on it there shall be no dog-fly, that you may know that I am the Lord, the Lord of all the earth. And I will make a distinction between My people and your people. To Moses, on the other hand, He says, [Exodus 32:7] "Go, descend quickly, for your people has transgressed, which you led out of the land of Egypt. As, then, the people when it does not sin is the people of God, but when it sins is no longer spoken of as His, thus, also, the feasts when they are hated by the Lord's soul are said to be feasts of sinners, but when the law is given regarding them, they are called feasts of the Lord.

³² Now of these feasts passover is one, which in the passage before us is said to be that not of the Lord, but of the Jews. In another passage, too, [Leviticus 23:2] we find it said, "These are the feasts of the Lord, which you shall call chosen, holy. From the mouth of the Lord Himself, then, we see that there is no gainsaying our statement on this point. Some one, no doubt, will ask about the words of the Apostle, where he writes to the Corinthians: [1 Corinthians 5:7] "For our Passover also was sacrificed for us, namely, Christ; he does not say, "The Passover of the Lord was sacrificed, even Christ. To this we must say, either that the Apostle simply calls the passover our passover because it was sacrificed for us, or that every sacrifice which is really the Lord's, and the passover is one of these, awaits its consummation not in this age nor upon earth, but in the coming age and in heaven when the kingdom of heaven appears. As for those feasts, one of the twelve prophets says, [Hosea 9:5] "What will you do in the days of assembly, and in the days of the feast of the Lord? But Paul says in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "But you have come unto Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to ten thousands of angels, the assembly and church of the firstborn, who are written in heaven. And in the Epistle to the Colossians:

³³ "Let no one judge you in meat and in drink, or in respect of a feast-day or a new moon, or a sabbath-day; which are a shadow of the things to come."

³⁴ 12. Of the Heavenly Festivals, of Which Those on Earth are Typical. Now in what manner, in those heavenly things of which the shadow was present to the Jews on earth, those will celebrate festivals who have first been trained by tutors and governors under the true law, until the fullness of the time should come, namely, above, when we shall be able to receive into ourselves the perfect measure of the Son of God, this it is the work of that wisdom to make plain which has been hidden in a mystery; and it also may show to our

thought how the laws about meats are symbols of those things which will there nourish and strengthen our soul. But it is vain to think that one desiring to work out in his fancy the great sea of such ideas, even if he wished to show how local worship is still a pattern and shadow of heavenly things, and that the sacrifices and the sheep are full of meaning, that he should advance further than the Apostle, who seeks indeed to lift our minds above earthly views of the law, but who does not show us to any extent how these things are to be. Even if we look at the festivals, of which passover is one, from the point of view of the age to come, we have still to ask how it is that our passover is now sacrificed, namely, Christ, and not only so, but is to be sacrificed hereafter.

³⁵13. *Spiritual Meaning of the Passover.* A few points may be added in connection with the doctrines now under consideration, though it would require a special discussion in many volumes to treat of all the mystical statements about the law, and specially of those connected with the festivals, and more particularly still with the passover. The passover of the Jews consists of a sheep which is sacrificed, each taking a sheep according to his father's house; and the passover is accompanied by the slaughter of thousands of rams and goats, in proportion to the number of the houses of the people. But our Passover is sacrificed for us, namely, Christ. Another feature of the Jewish festival is unleavened bread; all leaven is made to disappear out of their houses; but "we keep the feast [1 Corinthians 5:8] not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Whether there be any passover and any feast of leaven beyond the two we have mentioned, is a point we must examine more carefully, since these serve for a pattern and a shadow of the heavenly ones we spoke of, and not only such things as food and drink and new moons and sabbaths, but the festivals also, are a shadow of the things to come. In the first place, when the Apostle says, "Our passover is sacrificed, Christ," one may feel with regard to this such doubts as these.

³⁶If the sheep with the Jews is a type of the sacrifice of Christ, then one should have been offered and not a multitude, as Christ is one; or if many sheep were offered it is to follow out the type, as if many Christs were sacrificed. But not to dwell on this, we may ask how the sheep, which was the victim, contains an image of Christ, when the sheep was sacrificed by men who were observing the law, but Christ was put to death by transgressors of the

law, and what application can be found in Christ of the direction, [Exodus 12:8] "They shall eat the flesh this night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread on bitter herbs shall they eat," and "Eat not of it raw, nor sodden with water, but roast with fire; the head with the feet and the entrails; you shall not set any of it apart till the morning, and a bone thereof you shall not break. But that which is left thereof till the morning you shall burn. The sentence, "A bone of it you shall not break," John appears to have made use of in his Gospel, as applying to the transactions connected with Christ, and connecting with them the occasion spoken of in the law when those eating the sheep are bidden not to break a bone of it. He writes as follows: The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who was crucified with him;

³⁷ but when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they broke not His legs, but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and straightway there came out blood and water. And he that has seen has borne witness and his witness is true, and he knows that he says truth that you also may believe. And these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "A bone of Him you shall not break. There are a myriad other points besides this in the Apostle's language which would call for inquiry, both about the passover and the unleavened bread, but they would have to be dealt with, as we said above, in a special work of great length. At present we can only give an epitome of them as they bear on the text presently before us, and aim at a short solution of the principal problem. We call to mind the words, "This is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world," for it is said of the passover, [Exodus 12:5] "You shall take it of the lambs or of the goats. The Evangelist here agrees with Paul, and both are involved in the difficulties we spoke of above. But on the other hand we have to say that if the Word became flesh, and the Lord says, [John 6:53] "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

³⁸ He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood, has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed and My blood is drink indeed. He that eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him,"— then the flesh thus spoken of is that of the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world; and this is the blood, some of which was to be put on the two side posts of the door, and on the lintels in the houses, in which we eat the passover. Of the flesh of this Lamb it is necessary that we should eat in

the time of the world, which is night, and the flesh is to be roast with fire, and eaten with unleavened bread; for the Word of God is not flesh and flesh only. He says, in fact, Himself, [John 6:48-50] "I am the bread of life," and "This is the bread of life which came down from heaven, that a man should eat of it, and not die. I am the bread of life that came down from heaven; if a man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. We must not overlook, however, that by a loose use of words, any food is called bread, as we read in Moses in Deuteronomy, "Forty days He ate no bread and drank no water," instead of, He took no food, either wet or dry.

³⁹ I am led to this observation by John's saying, "And the bread which I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world. Again, we eat the flesh of the Lamb, with bitter herbs, and unleavened bread, when we repent of our sins and grieve with the sorrow which is according to God, a repentance which operates for our salvation, and is not to be repented of; or when, on account of our trials, we turn to the speculations which are found to be those of truth, and are nourished by them. We are not, however, to eat the flesh of the Lamb raw, as those do who are slaves of the letter, like irrational animals, and those who are enraged at men truly reasonable, because they desire to understand spiritual things; truly, they share the nature of savage beasts. But we must strive to convert the rawness of Scripture into well-cooked food, not letting what is written grow flabby and wet and thin, as those do who have itching ears, [2 Timothy 4:3-4] and turn away their ears from the truth; their methods tend to a loose and flabby conduct of life.

⁴⁰ But let us be of a fervent spirit and keep hold of the fiery words given to us of God, such as Jeremiah received from Him who spoke to him, [Jeremiah 5:14] "Behold, I have made My words in your mouth like fire," and let us see that the flesh of the Lamb be well cooked, so that those who partake of it may say, as Christ speaks in us, "Our heart burned by the way, as He opened to us the Scriptures. [Luke 24:32] Further, if it is our duty to enquire into such a point as the roasting of the flesh of the Lamb with fire, we must not forget the parallel of what Jeremiah suffered on account of the words of God, as he says: "And it was as a glowing fire, burning in my bones, and I am without any strength, and I cannot bear it. But, in this eating, we must begin at the head, that is to say, at the principal and the most essential doctrines about heavenly things, and we must end at the feet, the last branches of learning which enquire as to the final nature in things, or about more ma-

terial things, or about things under the earth, or about wicked spirits and unclean demons. For it may be that the account of these things is not obvious, like themselves, but is laid away among the mysteries of Scripture, so that it may be called, tropically, the feet of the Lamb.

⁴¹ Nor must we fail to deal with the entrails, which are within and hidden from us; we must approach the whole of Scripture as one body, we must not lacerate nor break through the strong and well-knit connections which exist in the harmony of its whole composition, as those do who lacerate, so far as they can, the unity of the Spirit that is in all the Scriptures. But this aforesaid prophecy of the Lamb is to be our nourishment only during the night of this dark life of ours; what comes after this life is, as it were, the dawn of day, and why should we leave over till then the food which can only be useful to us now? But when the night is passed, and the day which succeeds it is at hand, then we shall have bread to eat which has nothing to do with the leavened bread of the older and lower state of things, but is unleavened, and that will serve our turn until that which comes after the unleavened bread is given us, the manna, which is food for angels rather than men. Every one of us, then, may sacrifice his lamb in every house of our fathers; and while one breaks the law, not sacrificing the lamb at all, another may keep the commandment entirely, offering his sacrifice, and cooking it aright, and not breaking a bone of it.

⁴² This, then, in brief, is the interpretation of the Passover sacrificed for us, which is Christ, in accordance with the view taken of it by the Apostles, and with the Lamb in the Gospel. For we ought not to suppose that historical things are types of historical things, and material things of material, but that material things are typical of spiritual things, and historical things of intellectual. It is not necessary that our discourse should now ascend to that third passover which is to be celebrated with myriads of angels in the most perfect and most blessed exodus; we have already spoken of these things to a greater extent than the passage demands. ⁴³ 14. In the First Three Gospels the Passover is Spoken of Only at the Close of the Ministry; In John at the Beginning. Remarks on This. Heracleon on the Passover. We must not, however, fail to enquire into the statement that the passover of the Jews was at hand, when the Lord was at Capernaum with His mother and His brothers and His disciples. In the Gospel according to Matthew, after being left by the devil, and after the angels came and ministered to Him, when He heard that

John was delivered up He withdrew into Galilee, and leaving Nazara He came and dwelt in Capernaum. Then He began to preach, and chose the four fishermen for His Apostles, and taught in the synagogues of the whole of Galilee and healed those who were brought to Him. Then He goes up into the mountain and speaks the beatitudes and what follows them; and after finishing that instruction He comes down from the mountain and enters Capernaum a second time. [Matthew viii] Then He embarked in a ship and crossed over to the other side to the country of the Gergesenes. On their beseeching Him to depart out of their coasts He embarked in a ship and crossed over and came to His own city. Then He wrought certain cures and went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues; after this most of the events of the Gospels take place, before Matthew indicates the approach of the time of passover.

⁴⁴ With the other Evangelists also, after the stay at Capernaum it is long till we come to any mention of the passover; which may confirm in their opinion those who take the view about Capernaum which was set forth above. That stay, in the neighbourhood of the passover of the Jews, is set in a brighter light by that nearness, both because it was better in itself, and still more because at the passover of the Jews there are found in the temple those who sell oxen and sheep and doves. This adds emphasis to the statement that the passover was not that of the Lord but that of the Jews; the Father's house was made, in the eyes of those who did not hallow it, a house of merchandise, and the passover of the Lord became for those who took a low and material view of it a Jewish passover. A fitter occasion than the present will occur for enquiring as to the time of the passover, which took place about the spring equinox, and for any other enquiry which may arise in connection with it. As for Heracleon, he says, "This is the great festival; for it was a type of the passion of the Saviour; not only was the lamb put to death, the eating of it afforded relaxation, the killing it pointed to what of the passion of the Saviour was in this world, and the eating it to the rest at the marriage.

⁴⁵ We have given his words, that it may be seen with what a want of caution and how loosely he proceeds, and with what an absence of constructive skill even on such a theme as this; and how little regard in consequence is to be paid to him. ⁴⁶ 15. Discrepancy of the Gospel Narratives Connected with the Cleansing of the Temple. "And Jesus went up to Jerusalem. [John 2:13-17] And He found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves and

the changers of money sitting; and He made a scourge of cords, and cast out of the temple the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the small coin of the changers, and overturned their tables, and to those who sold the doves He said, Take these things hence; make not My Father's house a house of merchandise. Then His disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of your house shall eat me up. It is to be noted that John makes this transaction of Jesus with those He found selling oxen and sheep and doves in the temple His second work; while the other Evangelists narrate a similar incident almost at the end and in connection with the story of the passion. Matthew has it thus: [Matthew 21:10-13] "At Jesus' entry into Jerusalem the whole city was stirred, saying, Who is this? And the multitudes said, This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves. And He says to them, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you make it a den of robbers. Mark has the following:

⁴⁷ "And they came to Jerusalem. And having entered into the temple He began to cast out those that sold and bought in the temple, and the tables of the money-changers He overthrew and the seats of them that sold doves. And He suffered not that any should carry a vessel through the temple; and He taught and said to them, Is it not written that My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? But you have made it a den of robbers. And Luke: [Luke 19:41-42] "And when he came near, He beheld the city and wept over it, saying that, if you had known in this day, even you, the things that belong to peace; but now they are hid from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you, when they shall surround you and shut you in on every side, and shall dash you to the ground and your children, and they shall not leave in you one stone upon another, because you knew not the time of your visitation. And He entered into the temple and began to cast out those that sold, saying to them, It is written, My house shall be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of robbers.

⁴⁸ It is further to be observed that what is recorded by the three as having taken place in connection with the Lord's going up to Jerusalem, when He did these things in the temple, is narrated in a very similar manner by John as taking place long after this, after another visit to Jerusalem different from this one. We must consider the statements, and in the first place that of Mat-

thew, where we read: [Matthew 21:1] "When He drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage over against the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway you shall find an ass tied and a colt with her; loose them and bring them to Me. And if any man say unto you, What are you doing? You shall say, The Lord has need of them, and straightway he will send them. But this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king comes, meek and seated upon an ass and upon the colt of an ass. And the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them; they brought the ass and the foal, and they placed on them their garments, and He sat thereon.

⁴⁹ And the most part of the multitude spread their garments on the road, but the multitudes that went before Him, and they that followed, cried, Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. After this comes, "And when He had entered into Jerusalem the whole city was stirred," which we cited above. Then we have Mark's account: [Mark 11:1-12] "And when they drew near unto Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, to the Mount of Olives, He sends two of His disciples and says to them, Go into the village over against you. And straightway as you enter into it you shall find a colt tied, on which no man has ever sat, loose it and bring it. And if any one say to you, Why do ye this? Say, Because the Lord has need of him, and straightway he will send him back hither. And they went and found the colt tied at the door outside on the road, and they loose him. And some of them that stood there said to them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And they said to them as Jesus told them, and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast on it their garments. But others cut down branches from the field and spread them in the way. And they that went before and they that followed cried, Hosanna, blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord;

⁵⁰ blessed be the kingdom that comes, of our father David! Hosanna in the highest! And He went into Jerusalem to the temple, and looked round about on all things, and as it was already evening, He went out to Bethany with the twelve. And on the morrow when they had come forth from Bethany He was hungry. Then, after the affair of the withered fig tree, "They came to Jerusalem. And He went into the temple and began to cast out them that sold. Luke narrates as follows: [Luke 19:29] "And it came to pass, when

He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany at the mount that is called the Mount of Olives, He sent two of his disciples, saying, Go into the village over against you, in which when you enter, you shall find a colt tied, on which no man ever has sate; loose him and bring him. And if any man asks you, Why do ye loose him? You shall say thus, The Lord has need of him. And the disciples went and found as He said to them. And when they were loosing the colt its owners said to them, Why loose ye the colt? and they said, Because the Lord has need of him. And they brought him to Jesus, and they threw their garments on the colt, and set Jesus thereon. And as He went, they strewed their garments in the way.

⁵¹ And when He was drawing near, being now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen, saying, Blessed is the King in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from the multitude said to Him, Master, rebuke Your disciples. And He answered and said, I say unto you, If these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out. And when He drew near He beheld the city and wept over it," and so on, as we cited above. John, on the contrary, after giving an account nearly identical with this, as far as, "And Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep," gives a second account of an ascent of the Lord to Jerusalem, and then goes on to tell of the supper in Bethany six days before the passover, at which Martha served and Lazarus was at table. "On the morrow, [John 12:12-15] a great multitude that had come to the feast, having heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him; and they cried, Hosanna, blessed be the King of Israel in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, having found a young ass, sat thereon, as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion;

⁵² behold your King comes, sitting on the foal of an ass. I have written out long sections from the Gospels, but I have thought it necessary to do so, in order to exhibit the discrepancy at this part of our Gospel. Three of the Gospels place these incidents, which we supposed to be the same as those narrated by John, in connection with one visit of the Lord to Jerusalem. While John, on the other hand, places them in connection with two visits which are widely separated from each other and between which were various journeys of the Lord to other places. I conceive it to be impossible for those who

admit nothing more than the history in their interpretation to show that these discrepant statements are in harmony with each other. If any one considers that we have not given a sound exposition, let him write a reasoned rejoinder to this declaration of ours.

⁵³ 16. The Story of the Purging of the Temple Spiritualized. Taken Literally, It Presents Some Very Difficult and Unlikely Features. We shall, however, expound according to the strength that is given to us the reasons which move us to recognize here a harmony; and in doing so we entreat Him who gives to every one that asks and strives acutely to enquire, and we knock that by the keys of higher knowledge the hidden things of Scripture may be opened to us. And first, let us fix our attention on the words of John, beginning, "And Jesus went up to Jerusalem. [John 2:13] Now Jerusalem, as the Lord Himself teaches in the Gospel according to Matthew, [Matthew 5:35] "is the city of the great King. It does not lie in a depression, or in a low situation, but is built on a high mountain, and there are mountains round about it, and the participation of it is to the same place, and there the tribes of the Lord went up, a testimony for Israel. But that city also is called Jerusalem, to which none of those upon the earth ascends, nor goes in; but every soul that possesses by nature some elevation and some acuteness to perceive the things of the mind is a citizen of that city.

⁵⁴ And it is possible even for a dweller in Jerusalem to be in sin (for it is possible for even the acutest minds to sin), should they not turn round quickly after their sin, when they have lost their power of mind and are on the point not only of dwelling in one of those strange cities of Judæa, but even of being inscribed as its citizens. Jesus goes up to Jerusalem, after bringing help to those in Cana of Galilee, and then going down to Capernaum, that He may do in Jerusalem the things which are written. He found in the temple, certainly, which is said to be the house of the Father of the Saviour, that is, in the church or in the preaching of the ecclesiastical and sound word, some who were making His Father's house a house of merchandise. And at all times Jesus finds some of this sort in the temple. For in that which is called the church, which is the house of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, [1 Timothy 3:15] when are there not some money-changers sitting who need the strokes of the scourge Jesus made of small cords, and dealers in small coin who require to have their money poured out and their tables overturned?

55 When are there not those who are inclined to merchandise, but need to be held to the plough and the oxen, that having put their hand to it and not turning round to the things behind them, they may be fit for the kingdom of God? When are there not those who prefer the mammon of unrighteousness to the sheep which give them the material for their true adornment? And there are always many who look down on what is sincere and pure and unmixed with any bitterness or gall, and who, for the sake of miserable gain, betray the care of those tropically called doves. When, therefore, the Saviour finds in the temple, the house of His Father, those who are selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting, He drives them out, using the scourge of small cords which He has made, along with the sheep and oxen of their trade, and pours out their stock of coin, as not deserving to be kept together, so little is it worth. He also overturns the tables in the souls of such as love money, saying even to those who sell doves, "Take these things hence," that they may no longer traffic in the house of God.

56 But I believe that in these words He indicated also a deeper truth, and that we may regard these occurrences as a symbol of the fact that the service of that temple was not any longer to be carried on by the priests in the way of material sacrifices, and that the time was coming when the law could no longer be observed, however much the Jews according to the flesh desired it. For when Jesus casts out the oxen and sheep, and orders the doves to be taken away, it was because oxen and sheep and doves were not much longer to be sacrificed there in accordance with Jewish practices. And possibly the coins which bore the stamp of material things and not of God were poured out by way of type; because the law which appears so venerable, with its letter that kills, was, now that Jesus had come and had used His scourge to the people, to be dissolved and poured out, the sacred office (episcopate) being transferred to those from the Gentiles who believed, and the kingdom of God being taken away from the Jews [Matthew 21:43] and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it. But it may also be the case that the natural temple is the soul skilled in reason, which, because of its inborn reason, is higher than the body;

57 to which Jesus ascends from Capernaum, the lower-lying place of less dignity, and in which, before Jesus' discipline is applied to it, are found tendencies which are earthly and senseless and dangerous, and things which have

the name but not the reality of beauty, and which are driven away by Jesus with His word plaited out of doctrines of demonstration and of rebuke, to the end that His Father's house may no longer be a house of merchandize but may receive, for its own salvation and that of others, that service of God which is performed in accordance with heavenly and spiritual laws. The ox is symbolic of earthly things, for he is a husbandman. The sheep, of senseless and brutal things, because it is more servile than most of the creatures without reason. Of empty and unstable thoughts, the dove. Of things that are thought good but are not, the small change. If any one objects to this interpretation of the passage and says that it is only pure animals that are mentioned in it, we must say that the passage would otherwise have an unlikely air. The occurrence is necessarily related according to the possibilities of the story. It could not have been narrated that a herd of any other animals than pure ones had found access to the temple, nor could any have been sold there but those used for sacrifice. The Evangelist makes use of the known practice of the merchants at the times of the Jewish feasts;

⁵⁸ they did bring in such animals to the outer court; this practice, with a real occurrence He knew of, were His materials. Any one, however, who cares to do so may enquire whether it is in agreement with the position held by Jesus in this world, since He was reputed to be the Son of a carpenter, to venture upon such an act as to drive out a crowd of merchants from the temple? They had come up to the feast to sell to a great number of the people, the sheep, several myriads in number, which they were to sacrifice according to their fathers' houses. To the richer Jews they had oxen to sell, and there were doves for those who had vowed such animals, and many no doubt bought these with a view to their good cheer at the festival. And did not Jesus do an unwarrantable thing when He poured out the money of the money-changers, which was their own, and overthrew their tables? And who that received a blow from the scourge of small cords at the hands of One held in but slight esteem, was driven out of the temple, would not have attacked Him and raised a cry and avenged himself with his own hand, especially when there was such a multitude present who might all feel themselves insulted by Jesus in the same way?

⁵⁹ To think, moreover, of the Son of God taking the small cords in His hands and plaiting a scourge out of them for this driving out from the temple, does it not bespeak audacity and temerity and even some measure of

lawlessness? One refuge remains for the writer who wishes to defend these things and is minded to treat the occurrence as real history, namely, to appeal to the divine nature of Jesus, who was able to quench, when He desired to do so, the rising anger of His foes, by divine grace to get the better of myriads, and to scatter the devices of tumultuous men; for "the Lord scatters the counsels of the nations and brings to naught devices of the peoples, but the counsel of the Lord abides forever. Thus the occurrence in our passage, if it really took place, was not second in point of the power it exhibits to any even of the most marvellous works Christ wrought, and claimed no less by its divine character the faith of the beholders. One may show it to be a greater work than that done at Cana of Galilee in the turning of water into wine; for in that case it was only soulless matter that was changed, but here it was the soul and will of thousands of men.

⁶⁰ It is, however, to be observed that at the marriage the mother of Jesus is said to be there, and Jesus to have been invited and His disciples, but that no one but Jesus is said to have descended to Capernaum. His disciples, however, appear afterwards as present with Him; they remembered that "the zeal of your house shall devour me. And perhaps Jesus was in each of the disciples as He ascended to Jerusalem, whence it is not said, Jesus went up to "Jerusalem and His disciples," but He went down to Capernaum, "He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples." ⁶¹17. Matthew's Story of the Entry into Jerusalem. Difficulties Involved in It for Those Who Take It Literally. We have now to take into consideration the statements of the other Gospels on the expulsion from the temple of those who made it a house of merchandise. Take in the first place what we find in Matthew. On the Lord's entering Jerusalem, he says, "All the city was stirred, saying, Who is this? But before this he has the story of the ass and the foal which were taken by command of the Lord and found by the two disciples whom he sent from Bethphage into the village over against them. These two disciples loose the ass which was tied, and they have orders, if any one says anything to them, to answer that "the Lord has need of them; and immediately he will send them. By these incidents Matthew declares that the prophecy was fulfilled which says, "Behold, the King comes, meek and sitting on an ass and a colt the foal of an ass," which we find in Zechariah. [Zechariah 9:9] When, then, the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them, they brought the ass and the

colt, and placed on them, he says, their own garments, and the Lord sat upon them, clearly on the ass and the colt.

⁶² Then "the most part of the multitude spread their garments in the way, and others cut down branches from the trees and strewed them in the way, and the multitudes that went before and that followed cried, Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Hence it was that when He entered Jerusalem, the whole city was moved, saying, Who is this? "and the multitudes said," those obviously who went before Him and who followed Him, to those who were asking who He was, "This is the prophet Jesus of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus entered into the temple and cast out all those that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves: and He says unto them, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you make it a den of robbers. Let us ask those who consider that Matthew had nothing but the history in his mind when he wrote his Gospel, what necessity there was for two of the disciples to be sent to the village over against Bethphage, to find an ass tied and its colt with it and to loose them and bring them? And how did it deserve to be recorded that He sat upon the ass and the foal and entered into the city?

⁶³ And how does Zechariah prophesy about Christ when he says, [Zechariah 9:9] "Rejoice greatly, you daughter of Zion, proclaim it, you daughter of Jerusalem. Behold your king comes unto you, just is He and bringing salvation, meek and sitting on an ass and a young foal"? If it be the case that this prophecy predicts simply the material incident described by the Evangelists, how can those who stand on the letter maintain that this is so with regard to the following part also of the prophecy, which runs: "And He shall destroy chariots from Ephraim and horse from Jerusalem, and the bow of the warrior shall be destroyed, and a multitude and peace from the Gentiles, and He shall rule over the waters as far as the sea, and the rivers to the ends of the earth," etc. It is to be noted, too, that Matthew does not give the words as they are found in the prophet, for instead of "Rejoice greatly, you daughter of Zion, proclaim it, you daughter of Jerusalem," he makes it, "Tell ye the daughter of Zion. He curtails the prophetic utterance by omitting the words, "just is He and bringing salvation," then he gives, "meek and sitting," as in the original, but instead of "on an ass and a young colt," he gives, "on an ass and a colt the foal of an ass.

⁶⁴ The Jews, examining into the application of the prophecy to what is recorded about Jesus, press us in a way we cannot overlook with the enquiry how Jesus destroyed chariots out of Ephraim and horse from Jerusalem, and how He destroyed the bow of the enemy and did the other deeds mentioned in the passage. So much with regard to the prophecy. Our literal interpreters, however, if there is nothing worthy of the appearance of the Son of God in the ass and the foal, may perhaps point to the length of the road for an explanation. But, in the first place, fifteen stades are not a great distance and afford no reasonable explanation of the matter, and, in the second place, they would have to tell us how two beasts of burden were needed for so short a journey; "He sat," it is said, "on them. And then the words: "If any man say anything unto you, say ye that the Lord has need of them, and straightway he will send them. It does not appear to me to be worthy of the greatness of the Son's divinity to say that such a nature as His confessed that it had need of an ass to be loosed from its bonds and of a foal to come with it; for everything the Son of God has need of should be great and worthy of His goodness.

⁶⁵ And then the very great multitude strewing their garments in the way, while Jesus allows them to do so and does not rebuke them, as is clear from the words used in another passage, [Luke 19:40] "If these should hold their peace, the stones will cry out. I do not know if it does not indicate a certain degree of stupidity on the part of the writer to take delight in such things, if nothing more is meant by them than what lies on the surface. And the branches being cut down from the trees and strewn on the road where the asses go by, surely they are rather a hindrance to Him who is the centre of the throng than a well-devised reception of Him. The difficulties which met us on the part of those who were cast out of the temple by Jesus meet us here in a still greater degree. In the Gospel of John He casts out those who bought, but Matthew says that He cast out those who sold and those who bought in the temple. And the buyers would naturally be more numerous than the sellers. We have to consider if the casting out of buyers and sellers in the temple was not out of keeping with the reputation of one who was thought to be the Son of a carpenter, unless, as we said before, it was by a divine power that He subjected them. The words addressed to them, too, are harsher in the other Evangelists than in John.

⁶⁶For John says that Jesus said to them, "Make not My Father's house a house of merchandise," while in the others they are rebuked for making the house of prayer a den of robbers. Now the house of His Father did not admit of being turned into a den of robbers, though by the acts of sinful men it was brought to be a house of merchandise. It was not only the house of prayer, but in fact the house of God, and by force of human neglect it harboured robbers, and was turned not only into their house but their den — a thing which no skill, either of architecture or of reason, could make it. ⁶⁷18. The Ass and the Colt are the Old and the New Testament. Spiritual Meaning of the Various Features of the Story. Differences Between John's Narrative and that of the Other Evangelists. Now to see into the real truth of these matters is the part of that true intelligence which is given to those who can say, [1 Corinthians 2:16] "But we have the mind of Christ that we may see those things which are freely given to us of God; and doubtless it is beyond our powers. For neither is the ruling principle in our soul free from agitation, nor are our eyes such as those of the fair bride of Christ should be, of which the bridegroom says, [Song of Songs 1:15] "Your eyes are doves," signifying, perhaps, in a riddle, the observant power which dwells in the spiritual, because the Holy Spirit came like a dove to our Lord and to the lord in every one. Such as we are, however, we will not delay, but will feel about the words of life which have been spoken to us and strive to lay hold of that power in them which flows to him who touches them in faith. Now Jesus is the word of God which goes into the soul that is called Jerusalem, riding on the ass freed by the disciples from its bonds. That is to say, on the simple language of the Old Testament, interpreted by the two disciples who loose it:

⁶⁸in the first place him who applies what is written to the service of the soul and shows the allegorical sense of it with reference to her, and in the second place him who brings to light by the things which lie in shadow the good and true things of the future. But He also rides on the young colt, the New Testament; for in both alike we find the word of truth which purifies us and drives away all those thoughts in us which incline to selling and buying. But He does not come alone to Jerusalem, the soul, nor only with a few companions; for many things have to enter into us before the word of God which makes us perfect, and as many things have to come after Him, all, however, hymning and glorifying Him and placing under Him their ornaments and vestures, so that the beasts He rides on may not touch the ground, when He

who descended out of heaven is seated on them. But that His bearers, the old and the new words of Scripture, may be raised yet higher above the ground, branches have to be cut down from the trees that they may tread on reasonable expositions. But the multitudes which go before and follow Him may also signify the angelic ministrations, some of which prepare the way for Him in our souls, and help in their adorning, while some come after His presence in us, of which we have often spoken, so that we need not now adduce testimonies about it.

⁶⁹ And perhaps it is not without reason that I have likened to an ass the surrounding voices which conduct the Word Himself to the soul; for it is a beast of burden, and many are the burdens, heavy the loads, which are brought into view from the text, especially of the Old Testament, as he can clearly see who observes what is done in this connection on the part of the Jews. But the foal is not a beast of burden in the same way as the ass. For though every lead of the latter be heavy to those who have not in themselves the upbearing and most lightening power of the Spirit, yet the new word is less heavy than the old. I know some who interpret the tied-up ass as being believers from the circumcision, who are freed from many bonds by those who are truly and spiritually instructed in the word; and the foal they take to be those from the Gentiles, who before they receive the word of Jesus are free from any control and subject to no yoke in their unbridled and pleasure-loving existence. The writers I am speaking of do not say who those are that go before and who those follow after; but there would be no absurdity in saying that those who went before were like Moses and the prophets, and those who followed after the holy Apostles.

⁷⁰ To what Jerusalem all these go in it is now our business to enquire, and what is the house which has many sellers and buyers to be driven out by the Son of God. And perhaps the Jerusalem above to which the Lord is to ascend driving like a charioteer those of the circumcision and the believers of the Gentiles, while prophets and Apostles go before Him and follow after Him (or is it the angels who minister to Him, for they too may be meant by those who go before and those who follow), perhaps it is that city which before He ascended to it contained the so-called [Ephesians 6:12] "spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places," or the Canaanites and Hittites and Amorites and the other enemies of the people of God, and in a word, the foreigners. For in that region, too, it was possible for the prophecy to be fulfilled which

says, [Isaiah 1:7] "Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire, your land, strangers devour it in your presence. For these are they who defile and turn into a den of robbers, that is, of themselves the heavenly house of the Father, the holy Jerusalem, the house of prayer; having spurious money, and giving pence and small change, cheap worthless coinage, to all who come to them. These are they who, contending with the souls, take from them what is most precious, robbing them of their better part to return to them what is worth nothing.

71 But the disciples go and find the ass tied and loose it, for it cannot have Jesus on account of the covering that is laid upon it by the law. [2 Corinthians 3:14] And the colt is found with it, both having been lost till Jesus came; I mean, namely, those of the circumcision and those of the Gentiles who afterwards believed. But how these are sent back again after Jesus has ascended to Jerusalem seated upon them, it is somewhat dangerous to say; for there is something mystical about it, in connection with the change of saints into angels. After that change they will be sent back, in the age succeeding this one, like the ministering spirits, [Hebrews 1:11] who are sent to do service for the sake of them who will thereby inherit salvation. But if the ass and the foal are the old and the new Scriptures, on which the Word of God rides, it is easy to see how, after the Word has appeared in them, they are sent back and do not wait after the Word has entered Jerusalem among those who have cast out all the thoughts of selling and buying. I consider, too, that it is not without significance that the place where the ass was found tied, and the foal, was a village, and a village without a name.

72 For in comparison with the great world in heaven, the whole earth is a village where the ass is found tied and the colt, and it is simply called "the village" without any other designation being added to it. From Bethphage Matthew says the disciples are sent out who are to fetch the ass and the colt; and Bethphage is a priestly place, the name of which means "House of Jaw-bones. So much we have said, as our power allowed, on the text of Matthew, reserving for a further opportunity, when we may be permitted to take up the Gospel of Matthew by itself, a more complete and accurate discussion of his statements. Mark and Luke say that the two disciples, acting on their Master's instructions, found a foal tied, on which no one had ever sat, and that they loosed it and brought it to the Lord. Mark adds that they found the foal tied at the door, outside on the road. But who is outside? Those of

the Gentiles who were strangers [Ephesians 2:12] from the covenants, and aliens to the promise of God; they are on the road, not resting under a roof or a house, bound by their own sins, and to be loosed by the twofold knowledge spoken of above, of the friends of Jesus.

73 And the bonds with which the foal was tied, and the sins committed against the wholesome law and reprov'd by it — for it is the gate of life — in respect of it, I say, they were not inside but outside the door, for perhaps inside the door there cannot be any such bond of wickedness. But there were some persons standing beside the tied-up foal, as Mark says; those, I suppose, who had tied it; as Luke records, it was the masters of the foal who said to the disciples, Why loose ye the foal? For those lords who subjected and bound the sinner are illegal masters and cannot look the true master in the face when he frees the foal from its bonds. Thus when the disciples say, "The Lord has need of him," these wicked masters have nothing to say in reply. The disciples then bring the foal to Jesus naked, and put their own dress on it, so that the Lord may sit on the disciples' garments which are on it, at His ease. What is said further will not, in the light of Matthew's statements, present any difficulty; how [Mark 11:15] "They come to Jerusalem, and entering into the temple He began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple," or how [Luke 19:41] "When He drew near and beheld the city He wept over it; and entering into the temple He began to cast out them that sold.

74 For in some of those who have the temple in themselves He casts out all that sell and buy in the temple; but in others who do not quite obey the word of God, He only makes a beginning of casting out the sellers and buyers. There is a third class also besides these, in which He began to cast out the sellers only, and not also the buyers. With John, on the contrary, they are all cast out by the scourge woven of small cords, along with the sheep and the oxen. It should be carefully considered whether it is possible that the changes of the things described and the discrepancies found in them can be satisfactorily solved by the anagogic method. Each of the Evangelists ascribes to the Word different modes of action, which produce in souls of different tempers not the same effects but yet similar ones. The discrepancy we noticed in respect of Jesus' journeys to Jerusalem, which the Gospel now in hand reports quite differently from the other three, as we have expounded their words, cannot be made good in any other way. John gives statements which are similar to those of the other three but not the same; instead of branches cut

from the trees or stubble brought from the fields and strewed on the road he says they took branches of palm trees.

⁷⁵ He says that much people had come to the feast, and that these went out to meet Him, crying, "Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord," and "Blessed is the King of Israel. He also says that it was Jesus Himself who found the young ass on which Christ sat, and the phrase, young ass, doubtless conveys some additional meaning, as the small animal afforded a benefit not of men, nor through men, but through Jesus Christ. John moreover does not, any more than the others, reproduce the prophetic words exactly; instead of them he gives us "Fear not, O daughter of Zion; behold your King comes sitting" (instead of "mounted") "on the foal of an ass" (for "on an ass and a young foal"). The words "Fear not, daughter of Zion," are not in the prophet at all. But as the prophetic utterance has been applied by all in this way, let us see if there was not a necessity that the daughter of Zion should rejoice greatly and that the greater than she, the daughter of Jerusalem, should not only rejoice greatly but should also proclaim it when her king was coming to her, just and bringing salvation, and meek, having mounted an ass and a young colt.

⁷⁶ Whoever, then, receives Him will no longer be afraid of those who are armed with the specious discourses of the heterodox, those chariots of Ephraim said to be destroyed by the Lord, [Zechariah 9:10] nor the horse, the vain thing for safety, that is the mad desire which has accustomed itself to the things of sense and which is injurious to many of those who desire to dwell in Jerusalem and to attend to the sound word. It is also fitting to rejoice at the destruction by Him who rides on the ass and the young foal of every hostile dart, since the fiery darts of the enemy are no longer to prevail over him who has received Jesus to his own temple. And there will also be a multitude from the Gentiles with peace [Zechariah 9:9-10] at the Saviour's coming to Jerusalem, when He rules over the waters that He may bruise the head of the dragon on the water, and we shall tread upon the waves of the sea and to the mouths of all the rivers on the earth. Mark, however, writing about the foal, reports the Lord to have said, "On which never man sat; and he seems to me to hint at the circumstance that those who afterwards believed had never submitted to the Word before Jesus' coming to them.

⁷⁷ For of men, perhaps, no one had ever sate on the foal, but of hearts or of powers alien to the Word some had sate on it, since in the prophet Isaiah

the wealth of opposing powers is said to be borne on asses and camels. [Isaiah 30:6] "In the distress and the affliction," he writes, "the lion and the lion's cub, whence also the offspring of flying asps, who carried their riches on asses and camels. The question occurs again, for those who have no mind but for the bare words, if according to their view the words, "on which never man sat," are not quite meaningless. For who but a man ever sits on a foal? So much of our views. ⁷⁸19. Various Views of Heracleon on Purging of the Temple. Let us see what Heracleon makes of this. He says that the ascent to Jerusalem signifies the Lord's going up from material things to the spiritual place, which is a likeness of Jerusalem. And he considers that the words are, "He found in the temple," and not "in the sanctuary," because the Lord is not to be understood as instrumental in that call only, which takes place where the spirit is not. He considers the temple to be the Holy of Holies, into which none but the High-Priest enters, and there I believe he says that the spiritual go; while the court of the temple, where the levites also enter, is a symbol of these psychical ones who are saved, but outside the Pleroma. Then those who are found in the temple selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money-changers sitting, he took to represent those who attribute nothing to grace, but regard the entrance of strangers to the temple as a matter of merchandise and gain, and who minister the sacrifices for the worship of God, with a view to their own gain and love of money. And the scourge which Jesus made of small cords and did not receive from another, he expounds in a way of his own, saying that the scourge is an image of the power and energy of the Holy Spirit, driving out by His breath those who are bad.

⁷⁹ And he declares that the scourge and the linen and the napkin and other things of such a kind are symbolic of the power and energy of the Holy Spirit. Then he assumes what is not written, as that the scourge was tied to a piece of wood, and this wood he takes to be a type of the cross; on this wood the gamblers, merchants, and all evil was nailed up and done away. In searching into the act of Jesus, and discussing the composition of the scourge out of two substances, he romances in an extraordinary way; He did not make it, he says, of dead leather. He wished to make the Church no longer a den of robbers, but the house of His Father. We must here say what is most necessary on the divinity, as referred to in Heracleon's text. If Jesus calls the temple at Jerusalem the house of His Father, and that temple was made in honour of Him who made heaven and earth, why are we not at once told

that He is the Son of no one else than the Maker of heaven and earth, that He is the Son of God? To this house of the Father of Jesus, as being the house of prayer, the Apostles of Christ also, as we find in their "Acts," are told [Acts 5:20] by the angel to go and to stand there and preach all the words of this life.

⁸⁰ But they came to the house of prayer, through the Beautiful Gate, to pray there, a thing they would not have done had they not known Him to be the same with the God worshipped by those who had dedicated that temple. Hence, too, they say, those who obeyed God rather than men, Peter and the Apostles, "The God [Acts 5:29-30] of our Fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew, hanging Him on a tree; for they know that by no other God was Jesus raised from the dead but the God of the fathers, whom Jesus also extols as the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, who are not dead but living. How, too, could the disciples, if the house was not that of the same God with the God of Christ, have remembered the saying in the sixty-ninth Psalm, "The zeal of your house shall devour Me; for thus it is found in the prophet, and not "has devoured Me. Now Christ is zealous principally for that house of God which is in each of us; He does not wish that it should be a house of merchandise, nor that the house of prayer should be a den of robbers; for He is the Son of a jealous God. We ought to give a liberal interpretation to such utterances of Scripture;

⁸¹ they speak of human things, but in the way of metaphor, to show that God desires that nothing foreign should be mixed up with His will in the soul of all men, indeed, but principally of those who are minded to accept the message of our most divine faith. But we must remember that the sixty-ninth Psalm, which contains the words, "The zeal of your house shall devour me," and a little further on, "They gave Me gall for My drink and for My thirst they gave Me vinegar," both texts being recorded in the Gospels, that that Psalm is spoken in the person of the Christ, and nowhere shows any change of person. It shows a great want of observation on Heracleon's part that he considers the words, "The zeal of your house shall devour Me," to be spoken in the person of those powers which were cast out and destroyed by the Saviour; he fails to see the connection of the prophecy in the Psalm. For if these words are understood as spoken by the expelled and destroyed powers, it follows that he must take the words, "They gave Me vinegar to drink," which are a part of the same psalm, to be also spoken by those powers. What

misled him was probably that he could not understand how the "shall devour Me" could be spoken by Christ, since He did not appreciate the way in which anthropopathic statements are applied to God and to Christ.

82 20. The Temple Which Christ Says He Will Raise Up is the Church. How the Dry Bones Will Be Made to Live Again. "The Jews then answered and said to Him, What sign showest Thou unto us, seeing that You do these things? [John 2:18-19] Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Those of the body, and those who incline to material things, seem to me to be meant by the Jews, who, after Jesus has driven out those who make God's house a house of merchandise, are angry at Him for treating these matters in such a way, and demand a sign, a sign which will show that the Word, whom they do not receive, has a right to do such things. The Saviour joins on to His statement about the temple a statement which is really one with the former, about His own body, and to the question, What sign do You do, seeing that You do such things? Answers, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. He could have exhibited a thousand other signs, but to the question, "Seeing that You do such things," He could not answer anything else; He fittingly gave the answer about the sign connected with the temple, and not about signs unconnected with the temple.

83 Now, both of these two things, the temple and the body of Jesus, appear to me, in one interpretation at least, to be types of the Church, and to signify that it is built of living stones, [1 Peter 2:5] a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, built [Ephesians 2:20] on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus being the head corner-stone; and it is, therefore, called a temple. Now, from the text, [1 Corinthians 12:27] "You are the body of Christ, and members each in his part," we see that even though the harmonious fitting of the stones of the temple appear to be dissolved and scattered, as it is written in the twenty-second Psalm that all the bones of Christ are, by the plots made against it in persecutions and afflictions, on the part of those who war against the unity of the temple in persecutions, yet the temple will be raised again, and the body will rise again on the third day after the day of evil which threatens it, and the day of consummation which follows. For the third day will rise on the new heaven and the new earth, when these bones, the whole house of Israel, [Ezekiel 37:11] will rise in the great Lord's day, death having been overcome. And thus the resurrection of the Saviour

from the passion of the cross contains the mystery of the resurrection of the whole body of Christ.

⁸⁴ But as that material body of Jesus was sacrificed for Christ, and was buried, and was afterwards raised, so the whole body of Christ's saints is crucified along with Him, and now lives no longer; for each of them, like Paul, glories [Galatians 6:14] in nothing but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which He is crucified to the world, and the world to Him. Not only, therefore, is it crucified with Christ, and crucified to the world; it is also buried with Christ, for we were buried with Christ, Paul says. [Romans 6:4] And then he says, as if enjoying some earnest of the resurrection, "We rose with Him," because He walks in a certain newness of life, though not yet risen in that blessed and perfect resurrection which is hoped for. Either, then, he is now crucified, and afterwards is buried, or he is now buried and taken down from the cross, and, being now buried, is to rise at some future time. But to most of us the mystery of the resurrection is a great one, and difficult of contemplation; it is spoken of in many other passages of Scripture, and is specially announced in the following passage of Ezekiel: "And the hand of the Lord was upon me, and He led me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me in the midst of the plain, and it was full of human bones.

⁸⁵ And He led me round about them in a circle, and behold there were very many on the face of the plain, and behold they were very dry. And He said to me, Son of man, shall these bones live? And I said, Lord, Lord, You know. And He said to me, Prophecy to these bones, and you shall say to them, Hear the word of the Lord, you dry bones; and a little further on, "And the Lord spoke to me, saying, Son of man, these bones are the house of Israel. And they say, Our bones have become dry, our hope is lost, we have breathed our last. For what bones are these which are addressed, "Hear ye the word of the Lord," as if they heard the word of the Lord? They belong to the house of Israel, or to the body of Christ, of which the Lord says, "All My bones are scattered," although the bones of His body were not scattered, and not even one of them was broken. But when the resurrection itself takes place of the true and more perfect body of Christ, then those who are now the members of Christ, for they will then be dry bones, will be brought together, bone to bone, and fitting to fitting (for none of those who are destitute of fitting (*ἀρμυνία*) will come to the perfect man), to the measure [Ephesians 4:13] of the stature of the fullness of the body of Christ.

⁸⁶ And then the many members will be the one body, all of them, though many, becoming members of one body. But it belongs to God alone to make the distinction of foot and hand and eye and hearing and smelling, which in one sense fill up the head, but in another the feet and the rest of the members, and the weaker and humbler ones, the more and the less honourable. God will temper the body together, and then, rather than now, He will give to that which lacks the more abundant honour, that there may be, by no means, any schism in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another, and, if any member be well off, all the members may share in its good things, or if any member be glorified, all the members may rejoice with it. ⁸⁷ 21. That the Son Was Raised Up by the Father. The Charge Brought Against Jesus at His Trial Was Based on the Incident Now Before Us. What I have said is not alien to the passage now engaging us, dealing as it does with the temple and those cast out from it, of which the Saviour says, "The zeal of your house shall devour Me; and with the Jews who asked that a sign should be showed them, and the Saviour's answer to them, in which He combines the discourse on the temple with that on His own body, and says, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. For from this temple, which is the body of Christ, everything that is irrational and savours of merchandise must be driven away, that it may no longer be a house of merchandise. And this temple must be destroyed by those who plot against the Word of God, and after its destruction be raised again on that third day which we discussed above; when the disciples also will remember what He, the Word, said before the temple of God was destroyed, and will believe, not only their knowledge but their faith also being then made perfect, and that by the word which Jesus spoke. And every one who is of this nature, Jesus purifying him, [John 15:3] puts away things that are irrational and things that savour of selling, to be destroyed on account of the zeal of the Logos that is in Him.

⁸⁸ But they are destroyed to be raised again by Jesus, not on the third day, if we attend to the exact words before us, but "in three days. For the rising again of the temple takes place on the first day after it has been destroyed and on the second day, and its resurrection is accomplished in all the three days. Hence a resurrection both has been and is to be, if indeed we were buried with Christ, and rose with Him. And since the word, "We rose with Him," does not cover the whole of the resurrection, "in Christ shall all be

made alive, [1 Corinthians 15:22-24] but every one in his own order, Christ the first fruits, then they that are Christ's at His coming, and then the end. It belongs to the resurrection that one should be on the first day in the paradise of God, [Luke 23:43] and it belongs to the resurrection when Jesus appears and says, "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father," [John 20:17] but the perfection of the resurrection was when He came to the Father. Now there are some who fall into confusion on this head of the Father and the Son, and we must devote a few words to them.

⁸⁹ They quote the text, [1 Corinthians 15:15] "Yea, and we are found false witnesses for God, because we testified against God that He raised up Christ, whom He raised not up," and other similar texts which show the raiser-up to be another person than He who was raised up; and the text, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up," as if it resulted from these that the Son did not differ in number from the Father, but that both were one, not only in point of substance but in point of subject, and that the Father and the Son were said to be different in some of their aspects but not in their hypostases. Against such views we must in the first place adduce the leading texts which prove the Son to be another than the Father, and that the Son must of necessity be the son of a Father, and the Father, the father of a Son. Then we may very properly refer to Christ's declaration that He cannot do anything but what He sees the Father doing and saying, [John 5:19] because whatever the Father does that the Son also does in like manner, and that He had raised the dead, i.e., the body, the Father granting Him this, who must be said to have been the principal agent in raising up Christ from the dead.

⁹⁰ But Heracleon says, "In three days," instead of "On the third day," not having examined the point (and yet having noted the words "in three"), that the resurrection is brought about in three days. But he also calls the third the spiritual day, in which they consider the resurrection of the Church to be indicated. It follows from this that the first day is to be called the "earthly" day, and the second the psychical, the resurrection of the Church not having taken place on them. Now the statements of the false witnesses, recorded in the Gospel according to Matthew and Mark towards the end of the Gospel, and the accusation they brought against our Lord Jesus Christ, appear to have reference to this utterance of His, "Destroy this temple, and I will build it up in three days. For He was speaking of the temple of His body, but they supposed His words to refer to the temple of stone, and so they said when ac-

cusing Him, "This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it up in three days," or, as Mark has it, "We heard Him say, that I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build up another temple not made with hands. Here the high-priest stood up and said to Him, "Answerest Thou nothing? What do these witness against You? But Jesus held His peace.

⁹¹ Or, as Mark says, "And the high-priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus saying, Answerest Thou nothing? What do these witness against You? But He held His peace and answered nothing. These words must, I think, necessarily have reference to the text now before us. ⁹² 22. The Temple of Solomon Did Not Take Forty-Six Years to Build. With Regard to that of Ezra We Cannot Tell How Long It Took. Significance of the Number Forty-Six. The Jews therefore said, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, [John 2:20] and will you raise it up in three days? How the Jews said that the temple had been forty-six years building, we cannot tell, if we adhere to the history. For it is written in the third Book of Kings, [1 Kings 5:18] that they prepared the stones and the wood three years, and in the fourth year, in the second month, [1 Kings 6:1] when Solomon was king over Israel, the king commanded, and they brought great precious stones for the foundation of the house, and unhewn stones. And the sons of Solomon and the sons of Hiram hewed the stones and laid them in the fourth year, and they founded the house of the Lord in the month Nisan and the second month: in the tenth year in the month Baal, which was the eighth month, the house was finished according to the whole count and the whole plan of it. Thus comparing the time of its completion with the period of building, the building of it occupies less than eleven years. How, then, do the Jews come to say that the temple was forty-six years in building?

⁹³ One might, indeed, do violence to the words and make out the period of forty-six years at all costs, by counting from the time when David, after planning about the building of the temple, said to Nathan the prophet, [2 Samuel 7:2] "Behold I dwell in a house of cedar, and the ark of God dwells in the midst of the tent," for though it is true that he was prevented, as being a man of blood, from carrying out the building, he seems to have busied himself in collecting materials for it. In the first Book of Chronicles, [1 Chronicles 29:1-5] certainly, David the king says to all the congregation, "Solomon my son, whom the Lord has chosen, is young and tender, and the work is

great, because he is not to build for man but for the Lord God. According to my whole power I have prepared for the house of my God, gold, silver, brass, and iron, wood, stones of Soom, and stones for filling up, and precious stones of many kinds, and all sorts of precious wood, and a large quantity of Parian marble. And besides this, for the pleasure I have taken in the house of my God, the gold and the silver I possess, lo, I have given it for the house of my Lord, to the full; from such supplies I prepared for the house of the saints, three thousand talents of gold from Suphir, and seven thousand talents of stamped silver.

⁹⁴ that the houses of God may be overlaid with them by the hands of artificers. For David reigned seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem; [1 Kings 2:11] so that if it could be shown that the beginning of the preparations for the temple and of David's collecting the necessary material, was in the fifth year of his reign, then, with some forcing, the statement about forty-six years might stand. But some one else will say that the temple spoken of was not that built by Solomon, for that it was destroyed at the period of the captivity, but the temple built at the time of Ezra, [Ezra 6:1] with regard to which the forty-six years can be shown to be quite accurate. But in this Maccabean period things were very unsettled with regard to the people and the temple, and I do not know if the temple was really built in that number of years. Heracleon pays no attention to the history, but says that in that he was forty-six years preparing the temple, Solomon was an image of the Saviour. The number six he connects with matter, that is, the image, and the number forty, which he says is the tetrad, not admitting of combination, he connects with the inspiration and the seed in the inspiration.

⁹⁵ Consider if the forty cannot be taken as due to the four elements of the world arranged in the building of the temple at the points at issue, and the six to the fact that man was created on the sixth day. ⁹⁶ 23. The Temple Spoken of by Christ is the Church. Application to the Church of the Statements Regarding the Building of Solomon's Temple, and the Numbers Stated in that Narrative. "But He spoke of the temple of His body. [John 2:21] When, therefore, He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. This refers to the statement that the body of the Son is His temple. It may be asked whether this is to be taken in its plain sense, or whether we

should try to connect each statement that is recorded about the temple, with the view we take about the body of Jesus, whether the body which He received from the Virgin, or that body of Christ which the Church is said to be, as we are said by the Apostle [1 Corinthians 12:27] to be all members of His body. One may, on the one hand, suppose it to be hopeless to get everything that is said about the temple properly connected with the body, in whatever sense the body be taken, and one may have recourse to a simpler explanation, and say that the body (in either of these senses) is called the temple, because as the temple had the glory of God dwelling in it, so He who was the image and glory of God, the first-born of every creature, could rightly be called, in respect of His body or the Church, the temple containing the image.

⁹⁷ We, for our part, see it to be a hard task to expound every particular of what is said about the temple in the third Book of Kings, and far beyond our powers of language, and we defer it in the meantime, as a thing beyond the scale of the present work. We also have a strong conviction that in such matters, which transcend human nature, it must be the work of divine wisdom to make plain the meaning of inspired Scripture, of that wisdom which is hidden in a mystery, which none of the rulers of this world knew. We are well aware, too, that we need the assistance of that excellent Spirit of wisdom, in order to understand such matters, as they should be understood by ministers of sacred things; and in this connection we will attempt to describe, as shortly as we may, our view of what belongs to this subject. The body is the Church, and we learn from Peter [1 Peter 2:5] that it is a house of God, built of living stones, a spiritual house for a holy priesthood. Thus the son of David, who builds this house, is a type of Christ. He builds it when his wars are at an end, [1 Kings 5:3-5] and a period of profound peace has arrived; he builds the temple for the glory of God in the Jerusalem on earth, so that worship may no longer be celebrated in a moveable erection like the tabernacle.

⁹⁸ Let us seek to find in the Church the truth of each statement made about the temple. If all Christ's enemies are made the footstool of His feet, [1 Corinthians 15:25] and Death, the last enemy, is destroyed, then there will be the most perfect peace. Christ will be Solomon, which means "Peaceful," [1 Chronicles 22:9] and the prophecy will find its fulfilment in Him, which says, "With those who hated peace I was peaceful. And then each of the living

stones will be, according to the work of his life here, a stone of that temple, one, at the foundation, an apostle or a prophet, bearing those placed upon him, and another, after those in the foundation, and supported by the Apostles, will himself, with the Apostles, help to bear those in more need. One will be a stone of the inmost parts, where the ark is, and the cherubim, and the mercy-seat; another will be on the outer wall, and another even outside the outer wall of the levites and priests, a stone of the altar of whole burnt offerings. And the management and service of these things will be entrusted to holy powers, angels of God, being, respectively, lordships, thrones, dominions, or powers;

⁹⁹ and there will be others subject to these, typified by three thousand six hundred [1 Kings 5:15-18] chief officers, who were appointed over the works of Solomon, and the seventy thousand of those who bore burdens, and the eighty thousand stone-cutters in the mountain, who wrought in the work, and prepared the stones and the wood. It is to be remarked that those reported as bearing burdens are related to the Hebdomad. The quarrymen and stone-cutters, who make the stones fitted for the temple, have some kinship to the ogdoad. And the officers, who are six hundred in number, are connected with the perfect number six multiplied into itself. The preparation of the stones, as they are taken out and fitted for the building, extends over three years; this appears to me to point solely to the time of the eternal interval which is akin to the triad. This will come to pass when peace is consummated after the number of years of the transaction of the matters connected with the exodus from Egypt, namely, three hundred and forty, and of what took place in Egypt four hundred and thirty years after the covenant made by God with Abraham. Thus, from Abraham to the beginning of the building of the temple, there are two sabbatic numbers, the 700 and the 70;

¹⁰⁰ and at that time, too, our King Christ will command the seventy thousand burden-bearers not to take any chance stones for the foundation of the temple, but great stones, precious, unhewn, that they may be hewn, not by any chance workmen, but by the sons of Solomon; for so we find it written in the third Book of Kings. Then, too, on account of the profound peace, Hiram, king of Tyre, cooperates in the building of the temple, and gives his own sons to the sons of Solomon, to hew, in company with them, the great and precious stones for the holy place, which, in the fourth year, are placed in the foundation of the house of the Lord. But in an ogdoad of years the

house is finished in the eighth month of the eighth year after its foundation.
¹⁰¹ 24. The Account of the Building of Solomon's Temple Contains Serious Difficulties and is to Be Interpreted Spiritually. For the sake of those, however, who consider that nothing further than the narrative itself is meant to be indicated in these words, it may not be unfitting to introduce at this point some considerations which they can scarcely withstand, to show that the words ought to be regarded as those of the Spirit, and that the mind of the Spirit should be sought for in them. Did the sons of the kings really spend their time in hewing the great and precious stones, and practise a craft so little in keeping with royal birth? And the number of the burden-bearers and of the stone-cutters and of the officers, the duration, too, of the period of preparing the stones and marking them, is all this recorded as it really was? The holy house, too, was got ready in peace and was to be built for God without hammer or axe or any iron tool, that there might be no disturbance in the house of God. And again I would ask those who are in bondage to the letter how it is possible that there should be eighty thousand stone-cutters and that the house of God should be built out of hard white stones without the noise of hammer or axe or any iron tool being heard in His house while the building was going on?

¹⁰² Is it not living stones that are hewn without any noise or tumult somewhere outside the temple, so that they are brought ready prepared to the place which awaits them in the building? And there is some sort of an ascent about the temple of God, not with angles, but with bends of straight lines. For it is written, [1 Kings 6:8] "And there was a winding staircase to the middle, and from the middle to the third floor; for the staircase in the house of God had to be spiral, thus imitating in its ascent the circle, which is the most perfect figure. But that this house might be secure five ties are built in it, [1 Kings 6:10] as fair as possible, a cubit high, that on looking up one might see it to be suggested how we rise from sensible things to the so-called divine perceptions, and so be brought to perceive those things which are seen only by the mind. But the place of the happier stones appears to be that called Dabir, where the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord was, and, as I may say, the handwriting of God, the tables written with His own finger. And the whole house is overlaid with gold; "the whole house," we read, [1 Kings 6:21] "he overlaid with gold until all the house was finished. But there were two cher-

ubim in Dabir, a word which the translators of the Hebrew Bible into Greek failed to render satisfactorily.

¹⁰³ Some, failing to do justice to the language, render it the temple; but it is more sacred than the temple. Now everything about the house was made golden, for a sign that the mind which is quite made perfect estimates accurately the things perceived by the intellect. But it is not given to all to approach and know them; and hence the veil of the court is erected, since to most of the priests and levites the things in the inmost part of the temple are not revealed. ¹⁰⁴ 25. Further Spiritualizing of Solomon's Temple-Building. It is worth while to enquire how, on the one hand, Solomon the king is said to have built the temple, and on the other the master-builder whom Solomon sent and fetched, [1 Kings 7:13] "Hiram of Tyre, the son of a woman who was a widow; and he was of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass, and filled with wisdom and understanding, to work all works in brass; and he was brought in to King Solomon and wrought all his works." Here I ask whether Solomon can be taken for the first-born of all creation, [Colossians 1:15] and Hiram for the man whom he assumed, from the constraint of men — for the word Tyrians means "constrainers" — the man who derived his birth from nature, and being filled with all manner of art and wisdom and understanding, was brought in to cooperate with the first-born of all creation, and to build the temple. In this temple there are also windows, [1 Kings 6:4] placed obliquely and out of sight, so that the illumination of the divine light may enter for salvation, and — why should I go into particulars? — that the body of Christ, the Church, may be found having the plan of the spiritual house and temple of God. As I said before, we require that wisdom which is hidden in a mystery, and which he alone can apprehend who is able to say, "But we have the mind of Christ," — we require that wisdom to interpret spiritually each detail of what is said in accordance with the will of Him who caused it to be written. To enter into these details is not in accordance with our present subject. What has been said may suffice to let us understand how "He spoke about the temple of His body."

¹⁰⁵ 26. The Promises Addressed to Jerusalem in the Prophets Refer to the Church, and are Still to Be Fulfilled. After all this it is proper to ask whether what is narrated as having taken place about the temple has ever taken place or ever will take place about the spiritual house. The argument may seem to pinch in whichever way we take it. If we say that it is possible that something

like what is told about the temple may take place with regard to the spiritual house, or has already taken place in it, then those who hear us will, with difficulty, be brought to admit that a change can take place in such good things as these, firstly, because they do not wish it, and secondly, because of the incongruity of thinking that such things admit of change. If, on the other hand, We seek to maintain the unchangeableness of the good things once given to the saints, then we cannot apply to them what we find in the history, and we shall seem to be doing what those of the heresies do, who fail to maintain the unity of the narrative of Scripture from beginning to end.

¹⁰⁶ If we are not to take the view proper to old wives or Jews, of the promises recorded in the prophets, and especially in Isaiah, if, that is to say, we are to look for their fulfilment in connection with the Jerusalem on earth, then, as certain remarkable things connected with the building of the temple and the restoration of the people from the captivity are spoken of as happening after the captivity and the destruction of the temple, we must say that we are now the temple and the people which was carried captive, but is to come up again to Judæa and Jerusalem, and to be built with the precious stones of Jerusalem. But I cannot tell if it be possible that, at the revolution of long periods of time, things of the same nature should take place again, but in a worse way. The prophecies of Isaiah which we mentioned are the following: [Isaiah 54:11-14] "Behold I prepare for your stone carbuncle and for your foundation sapphire; and I will make your battlements jasper, and your gates stones of crystal, and your outer wall choice stones; and all your sons shall be taught of the Lord, and in great peace shall your children be, and in righteousness shall you be built. And a little further on, to the same Jerusalem: [Isaiah 60:13-20] "And the glory of Lebanon shall come to you with cypress, and pine, and cedar, along with those who will glorify My holy place.

¹⁰⁷ And the sons of them that humbled you and insulted you shall come to you in fear; and you shall be called the city of the Lord, Sion of holy Israel, because you were desolate and hated, and there was none to help you. And I will make you an eternal delight, a joy of generations of generations. And you shall suck the milk of the Gentiles and shall eat the riches of kings, and you shall know that I am the Lord that saves you and the God of Israel that chooses you. And instead of brass I will bring you gold, and instead of iron I will bring you silver, and for wood I will bring you brass, and for stones iron. And I will establish your rulers in peace and your overseers in righteousness.

And wickedness shall no more be heard in your land, nor affliction and distress in your borders, but your walls shall be called salvation and your gates sculpture. And the sun shall no longer be to you for light by day, nor shall the rising of the moon give light to you by night, but Christ shall be to you an everlasting light and your God your glory. For your sun shall no more go down, and your moon shall not fail, for your Lord shall be to you an everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be fulfilled.

¹⁰⁸ These prophecies clearly refer to the age still to come, and they are addressed to the children of Israel in their captivity, to whom He was sent and came, who said, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [Matthew 15:24] Such things, though they are captives, they are to receive in their own land; and proselytes also are to come to them at that time through Christ, and are to fly to them, according to the saying, [Isaiah 54:15] "Behold, proselytes shall come to you through Me, and shall flee to you for refuge. And if all this is to take place with the captives, then it is plain that they must be about their temple, and that they must go up there again to be built up, having become the most precious of stones. For we find with John in his Apocalypse, [Revelation 3:12] the promise made to him that overcomes, that he will be a pillar in the temple of God, and will go no more out. All this I have said with a view to our obtaining a cursory view at least of the matters pertaining to the temple, and the house of God, and the Church and Jerusalem, which we cannot now take up systematically. Those, however, who, in their reading of the prophets, do not shrink from the labour of seeking after their spiritual meaning, must enquire into these matters with the greatest particularity, and must take account of every possibility.

¹⁰⁹ So far of "the temple of His body." ¹¹⁰ 27. Of the Belief the Disciples Afterwards Attained in the Words of Jesus. "When He was raised from the dead, [John 2:22] His disciples remembered that He spoke this, and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. This tells us that after Jesus' resurrection from the dead His disciples saw that what He had said about the temple had a higher application to His passion and His resurrection; they remembered that the words, "In three days I will raise it up," pointed to the resurrection; "And they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. We are not told that they believed the Scripture or the word which Jesus said, before. For faith in its full sense is the act of him who accepts with his whole soul what is professed at baptism. As for the higher

sense, as we have already spoken of the resurrection from the dead of the whole body of the Lord, we have now to note that the disciples were put in mind by the fulfilment of the Scripture which when they were in life they had not fully understood; its meaning was now brought under their eyes and made quite clear to them, and they knew of what heavenly things it was the pattern and shadow. Then they believed the Scripture who formerly did not believe it, and believed the word of Jesus which, as the speaker means to convey, they had not believed before the resurrection.

111 For how can any one be said in the full sense to believe the Scripture when he does not see in it the mind of the Holy Spirit, which God would have us to believe rather than the literal meaning? From this point of view we must say that none of those who walk according to the flesh believe the spiritual things of the law, of the very beginnings of which they have no conception. But, they say, those are more blessed who have not seen and yet believe, than those who have seen and have believed, and for this they quote the saying to Thomas at the end of the Gospel of John, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. But it is not said here that those who have not seen and yet have believed are more blessed than those who have seen and believed. According to their view those after the Apostles are more blessed than the Apostles; than which nothing can be more foolish. He who is to be blessed must see in his mind the things which he believes, and must be able with the Apostles to hear the words spoken to him, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear," [Matthew 13:16] and "Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see the things which you see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things which you hear, and have not heard them.

112 Yet he may be content who only receives the inferior beatitude, which says: [John 20:29] "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed. But how much more blessed are those eyes which Jesus calls blessed for the things which they have seen, than those which have not attained to such a vision; Simeon is content to take into his arms the salvation of God, and after seeing it, he says, [Luke 2:29-30] "Now, O Lord, let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation. We must strive, therefore, as Solomon says, to open our eyes that we may be satisfied with bread; "Open your eyes," he says, "and be satisfied with bread. What I have said on the text, "They believe the Scripture and the word which

Jesus had said to them," may lead us to understand, after discussing the subject of faith, that the perfection of our faith will be given us at the great resurrection from the dead of the whole body of Jesus which is His Holy Church. For what is said about knowledge, "Now I know in part," [1 Corinthians 13:12] that, I think, may be said in the same way of every other good; and one of these others is faith. "Now I believe in part," we may say, "but when that which is perfect has come, then the faith which is in part will be done away.

¹¹³ As with knowledge, so with faith, that which is through sight is far better, if I may say so, than that which is through a glass and in an enigma.

¹¹⁴ 28. The Difference Between Believing in the Name of Jesus and Believing in Jesus Himself. "Now, when He was in Jerusalem at the passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, beholding His signs which He did. But He, Jesus, did not trust Himself to them, because He knew all (men) and because He needed not that any should testify of man, for he Himself knew what was in man. One might ask how Jesus did not Himself believe in those of whom we are told that they believed. To this we must say it was not those who believed in Him that Jesus did not trust, but those who believed in His name; for believing in His name is a different thing from believing in Him. He who will not be judged because of his faith is exempted from the judgment, not for believing in His name, but for believing in Him; for the Lord says, [John 3:18] "He that believes in Me is not judged," not, "He who believes in My name is not judged; the latter believes, and hence he is not worthy to be condemned already, but he is inferior to the other who believes in Him. Hence it is that Jesus does not trust Himself to him who believes in His name. We must, therefore, cleave to Him rather than to His name, lest after we have done wonders in His name, we should hear these words addressed to us which He will speak to those who boast of His name alone.

¹¹⁵ [Matthew 7:21-23] With the Apostle Paul [Philippians 4:13] let us seek joyfully to say, "I can do all things in Christ Jesus strengthening me. We have also to notice that in a former passage [John 2:13] the Evangelist calls the passover that of the Jews, while here he does not say that Jesus was at the passover of the Jews, but at the passover at Jerusalem; and in the former case when the passover is called that of the Jews, it is not said to be a feast; but here Jesus is recorded to have been at the feast; when at Jerusalem He was at the passover during the feast, and many believed, even though only in His

name. We ought to notice certainly that "many" are said to believe, not in Him, but in His name. Now, those who believe in Him are those who walk in the straight and narrow way, [Matthew 7:14] which leads to life, and which is found by few. It may well be, however, that many of those who believe in His name will sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, the Father's house, in which are many mansions. And it is to be noted that the many who believe in His name do not believe in the same way as Andrew does, and Peter, and Nathanael, and Philip.

¹¹⁶ These believe the testimony of John when he says, "Behold the Lamb of God," or they believe in Christ as found by Andrew, or Jesus saying to Philip, "Follow Me," or Philip saying, "We have found Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus the Son of Joseph from Nazareth. Those, on the other hand, of whom we now speak, "believed in His name, beholding His signs which He did. And as they believe the signs and not in Him but in His name, Jesus "did not trust Himself to them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, because He knew what is in every man." ¹¹⁷ 29. About What Beings Jesus Needed Testimony. The words, "He needed not that any should testify of man," may fitly be used to show that the Son of God is able of Himself to see the truth about each man and is in no need of such testimony as any other could supply. The words, however, "He had no need that any should testify of man," are not equivalent to "He had no need of testimony about any being." If we take the word "man" to include every being who is according to the image of God, or every reasonable creature, then He will have no need that any should testify to Him of any reasonable being whatever, since He Himself, by the power given Him by the Father, knows them all. But if the term "man" be restricted to mortal animated reasonable beings, then it might be said, on the one hand, that He had need of testimony respecting the beings above man, and while His knowledge was adequate with regard to man it did not extend to those other beings. On the other hand, however, it might be said that He who humbled Himself had no need that any should testify to Him concerning man, but that He had such need in respect of beings higher than men.

¹¹⁸ 30. How Jesus Knew the Powers, Better or Worse, Which Reside in Man. It may also be asked what signs those many saw Him do who believed on Him, for it is not recorded that He did any signs at Jerusalem, though some may have been done which are not recorded. One may, however, con-

sider if what He did may be called signs, when He made a scourge of small cords, and cast them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables. As for those who suppose that it was only about men that He had no need of witnesses, it has to be said that the Evangelist attributes to Him two things, that He knew all beings, and that He had no need that any one should testify of man. If He knew all beings, then He knew not only men but the beings above men, all beings who are without such bodies as ours; and He knew what was in man, since He was greater than those who reprov'd and judged by prophesying, and who brought to the light the secret things of the hearts of those whom the Spirit suggested to them to be thus dealt with. The words, "He knew what was in man," could also be taken as referring to the powers, better or worse, which work in men. For if any one gives place to the devil, Satan enters into him;

¹¹⁹ thus did Judas give place, and thus did the devil put it in his heart to betray Jesus, and "after the sop," therefore, "the devil entered into him. [John 13:2-27] But if any one gives place to God, he becomes blessed; for blessed is the man whose help is from God, and the ascent is in his heart from God. You know what is in man, Thou who know all things, O Son of God. And now that our tenth book has come to be large enough we will here pause in our theme.

Commentary on Matthew

ORIGEN OF ALEXANDRIA

c. AD 185–253

Teacher and biblical scholar of Alexandria and Caesarea.

BOOK 1

Concerning the four Gospels which alone are uncontroverted in the Church of God under heaven, I have learned by tradition that the Gospel according to Matthew, who was at one time a publican and afterwards an Apostle of Jesus Christ, was written first; and that he composed it in the Hebrew tongue and published it for the converts from Judaism. The second written was that according to Mark, who wrote it according to the instruction of Peter, who, in his General Epistle, acknowledged him as a son, saying, "The church that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Mark my son." And third, was that according to Luke, the Gospel commended by Paul, which he composed for the converts from the Gentiles. Last of all, that according to John.

BOOK 2

The Unity and Harmony of Scripture

¹"Blessed are the peacemakers.... " To the man who is a peacemaker in either sense there is in the Divine oracles nothing crooked or perverse, for they are all plain to those who understand. And because to such an one there is nothing crooked or perverse, he sees therefore abundance of peace in all the Scriptures, even in those which seem to be at conflict, and in contradiction with one another. And likewise he becomes a third peacemaker as he demonstrates that that which appears to others to be a conflict in the Scriptures is no conflict, and exhibits their concord and peace, whether of the Old Scriptures with the New, or of the Law with the Prophets, or of the Gospels with the Apostolic Scriptures, or of the Apostolic Scriptures with each other. For, also, according to the Preacher, all the Scriptures are "words of the wise like

goads, and as nails firmly fixed which were given by agreement from one shepherd; " and there is nothing superfluous in them. But 1 the Word is the one Shepherd of things rational which may have an appearance of discord to those who have not ears to hear, but are truly at perfect concord.

2 For as the different chords of the psalter or the lyre, each of which gives forth a certain sound of its own which seems unlike the sound of another chord, are thought by a man who is not musical and ignorant of the principle of musical harmony, to be inharmonious, because of the dissimilarity of the sounds, so those who are not skilled in hearing the harmony of God in the sacred Scriptures think that the Old is not in harmony with the New, or the Prophets with the Law, or the Gospels with one another, or the Apostle with the Gospel, or with himself, or with the other Apostles. But he who comes instructed in the music of God, being a man wise in word and deed, and, on this account, like another David-which is, by interpretation, skilful with the hand-will bring out the sound of the music of God, having learned from this at the right time to strike the chords, now the chords of the Law, now the Gospel chords in harmony with them, and again the Prophetic chords, and, when reason demands it, the Apostolic chords which are in harmony with the Prophetic, and likewise the Apostolic with those of the Gospels.

3 For he knows that all the Scripture is the one perfect and harmonised instrument of God, which from different sounds gives forth one saving voice to those willing to learn, which stops and restrains every working of an evil spirit, just as the music of David laid to rest the evil spirit in Saul, which also was choking him. You see, then, that he is in the third place a peacemaker, who sees in accordance with the Scripture the peace of it all, and implants this peace in those who rightly seek and make nice distinctions in a genuine spirit.

BOOK 10

1. The Parable of the Tares: the House of Jesus.

1 "Then He left the multitudes and went into His house, and His disciples came unto Him saying, Declare to us the parable of the tares of the field" When Jesus then is with the multitudes, He is not in His house, for the multitudes are outside of the house, and it is an act which springs from His love of men to leave the house and to go away to those who are not able to come to Him. Now, having discoursed sufficiently to the multitudes in parables,

He sends them away and goes to His own house, where His disciples, who did not abide with those whom He had sent away, come to Him. And as many as are more genuine hearers of Jesus first follow Him, then having inquired about His abode, are permitted to see it, and, having come, see and abide with Him, all for that day, and perhaps some of them even longer. And, in my opinion, such things are indicated in the Gospel according to John in these words, "On the morrow again John was standing and two of his disciples. And in order to explain the fact that of those who were permitted to go with Jesus and see His abode, the one who was more eminent becomes also an Apostle, these words are added: "One of the two that heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

² And if then, unlike the multitudes whom He sends away, we wish to hear Jesus and go to the house and receive something better than the multitudes, let us become friends of Jesus, so that as His disciples we may come to Him when He goes into the house, and having come may inquire about the explanation of the parable, whether of the tares of the field, or of any other. And in order that it may be more accurately understood what is represented by the house of Jesus, let some one collect from the Gospels whatsoever things are spoken about the house of Jesus, and what things were spoken or done by Him in it; for all the passages collected together will convince any one who applies himself to this reading that the letters of the Gospel are not absolutely simple as some suppose, but have become simple to the simple by a divine concession; but for those who have the will and the power to hear them more acutely there are concealed things wise and worthy of the Word of God.

2. Exposition of the Parable.

³ "After these things He answered and said to them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man. Though we have already, in previous sections, according to our ability discussed these matters, none the less shall we now say what is in harmony with them, even if there is reasonable ground for another explanation. And consider now, if in addition to what we have already recounted, you can otherwise take the good seed to be the children of the kingdom, because whatsoever good things are sown in the human soul, these are the offspring of the kingdom of God and have been sown by God the Word who was in the beginning with God, so that wholesome words about anything are children of the kingdom. But while men are asleep who do not act ac-

cording to the command of Jesus, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation," the devil on the watch sows what are called tares-that is, evil opinions-over and among what are called by some natural conceptions, even the good seeds which are from the Word. And according to this the whole world might be called a field, and not the Church of God only, for in the whole world the Son of man sowed the good seed, but the wicked one tares,-that is, evil words,-which, springing from wickedness, are children of the evil one.

4 And at the end of things, which is called "the consummation of the age," there will of necessity be a harvest, in order that the angels of God who have been appointed for this work may gather up the bad opinions that have grown upon the soul, and overturning them may give them over to fire which is said to burn, that they may be consumed. And so the angels and servants of the Word will gather from all the kingdom of Christ all things that cause a stumbling-block to souls and reasonings that create iniquity, which they will scatter and cast into the burning furnace of fire. Then those who become conscious that they have received the seeds of the evil one in themselves, because of their having been asleep, shall wail and, as it were, be angry against themselves; for this is the "gnashing of teeth. Wherefore, also, in the Psalms it is said, "They gnashed upon me with their teeth. Then above all "shall the righteous shine," no longer differently as at the first, but all "as one sun in the kingdom of their Father.

5 Then, as if to indicate that there was indeed a hidden meaning, perhaps, in all that is concerned with the explanation of the parable, perhaps most of all in the saying, "Then shall the righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," the Saviour adds, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," thereby teaching those who think that in the exposition, the parable has been set forth with such perfect clearness that it can be understood by the vulgar, that even the things connected with the interpretation of the parable stand in need of explanation.

3. The Shining of the Righteous. Its Interpretation.

6 But as we said above in reference to the words, "Then shall the righteous shine as the sun," that the righteous will shine not differently as formerly, but as one sun, we will, of necessity, set forth what appears to us on the point. Daniel, knowing that the intelligent are the light of the world, and that the multitudes of the righteous differ in glory, seems to have said this, "And the

intelligent shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and from among the multitudes of the righteous as the stars for ever and ever. And in the passage, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory: so also is the resurrection of the dead," the Apostle says the same thing as Daniel, taking this thought from his prophecy. Some one may inquire how some speak about the difference of light among the righteous, while the Saviour on the contrary says, "They shall shine as one sun. I think, then, that at the beginning of the blessedness enjoyed by those who are being saved (because those who are not such are not yet purified), the difference connected with the light of the saved takes place:

7 but when, as we have indicated, he gathers from the whole kingdom of Christ all things that make men stumble, and the reasonings that work iniquity are cast into the furnace of fire, and the worse elements utterly consumed, and, when this takes place, those who received the words which are the children of the evil one come to self-consciousness, then shall the righteous having become one light of the sun shine in the kingdom of their Father. For whom will they shine? For those below them who will enjoy their light, after the analogy of the sun which now shines for those upon the earth? For, of course, they will not shine for themselves. But perhaps the saying, "Let your light shine before men," can be written "upon the table of the heart," according to what is said by Solomon, in a threefold way; so that even now the light of the disciples of Jesus shines before the rest of men, and after death before the resurrection, and after the resurrection "until all shall attain unto a full-grown man," and all become one sun. Then shall they shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

4. Concerning the Parable of the Treasure Hidden in the Field. The Parable Distinguished from the Similitude.

8 "Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid. The former parables He spoke to the multitudes; but this and the two which follow it, which are not parables but similitudes in relation to the kingdom of heaven, He seems to have spoken to the disciples when in the house. In regard to this and the next two, let him who "gives heed to reading" inquire whether they are parables at all. In the case of the latter the Scripture does not hesitate to attach in each case the name of parable; but in the present case it has not done so; and that naturally. For if

He spoke to the multitudes in parables, and "spake all these things in parables, and without a parable spake nothing to them," but on going to the house He discourses not to the multitudes but to the disciples who came to Him there, manifestly the things spoken in the house were not parables: for, to them that are without. even to those to whom "it is not given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," He speaks in parables. Some one will then say, If they are not really parables, what are they? Shall we then say in keeping with the diction of the Scripture that they are similitudes (comparisons)? Now a similitude differs from a parable;

9 for it is written in Mark, "To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or in what parable shall we set it forth?" From this it is plain that there is a difference between a similitude and a parable. The similitude seems to be generic, and the parable specific. And perhaps also as the similitude, which is the highest genus of the parable, contains the parable as one of its species, so it contains that particular form of similitude which has the same name as the genus. This is the case with other words as those skilled in the giving of many names have observed; who say that "impulse" is the highest genus of many species, as, for example, of "disinclination" and "inclination. and say that, in the case of the species which has the same name as the genus, "inclination" is taken in opposition to and in distinction from "disinclination."

5. The Field and the Treasure Interpreted.

10 And here we must inquire separately as to the field, and separately as to the treasure hidden in it, and in what way the man who has found this hidden treasure goes away with joy and sells all that he has in order to buy that field; and we must also inquire-what are the things which he sells. The field, indeed, seems to me according to these things to be the Scripture, which was planted with what is manifest in the words of the history, and the law, and the prophets, and the rest of the thoughts; for great and varied is the planting of the words in the whole Scripture; but the treasure hidden in the field is the thoughts concealed and lying under that which is manifest, "of wisdom hidden in a mystery," "even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." But another might say that the field is that which is verily full, which the Lord blessed, the Christ of God; but the treasure hidden in it is the things said to have been "hidden in Christ" by Paul, who says about Christ, "in whom are the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." The heavenly things, therefore, even the kingdom of heaven, as in a figure it

is written in the Scriptures-which are the kingdom of heaven, or Christ-Himself the king of the ages, are the kingdom of heaven which is likened to a treasure hidden in the field.

6. The Exposition Continued.

11 And at this point you will inquire, whether the kingdom of heaven is likened only to the treasure hidden in the field, so that we are to think of the field as different from the kingdom, or is likened to the whole of this treasure hidden in the field, so that the kingdom of heaven contains according to the similitude both the field and the treasure hidden in the field. Now a man who comes to the field, whether to the Scriptures or to the Christ who is constituted both from things manifest and from things hidden, finds the hidden treasure of wisdom whether in Christ or in the Scriptures. For, going round to visit the field and searching the Scriptures and seeking to understand the Christ, he finds the treasure in it; and, having found it, he hides it, thinking that it is not without danger to reveal to everybody the secret meanings of the Scriptures, or the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ. And, having hidden it, he goes away, working and devising how he shall buy the field, or the Scriptures, that he may make them his own possession, receiving from the people of God the oracles of God with which the Jews were first entrusted.

12 And when the man taught by Christ has bought the field, the kingdom of God which, according to another parable, is a vineyard, "is taken from them and is given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," -to him who in faith has bought the field, as the fruit of his having sold all that he had, and no longer keeping by him anything that was formerly his; for they were a source of evil to him. And you will give the same application, if the field containing the hidden treasure be Christ, for those who give up all things and follow Him, have, as it were in another way, sold their possessions, in order that, by having sold and surrendered them, and having received in their place from God-their helper-a noble resolution, they may purchase, at great cost worthy of the field, the field containing the treasure hidden in itself.

7. The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price. The Formation and Difference of Pearls.

13 "Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls. There are many merchants engaged in many forms of

merchandise, but not to any one of these is the kingdom of heaven like, but only to him who is seeking goodly pearls, and has found one equal in value to many, a very costly pearl which he has bought in place of many. I consider it reasonable, then, to make some inquiry into the nature of the pearl. Be careful however to note, that Christ did not say, "He sold all the pearls that he had," for he sold not only those which one seeking goodly pearls had bought, but also everything which he had, in order to buy that goodly pearl. We find then in those who write on the subject of stones, with regard to the nature of the pearl, that some pearls are found by land, and some in the sea. The land pearls are produced among the Indians only, being fitted for signet-rings and collets and necklaces; and the sea pearls, which are superior, are found among the same Indians, the best being produced in the Red Sea. The next best pearls are those taken from the sea at Britain; and those of the third quality, which are inferior not only to the first but to the second, are those found at Bosphorus off Scythia. Concerning the Indian pearl these things further are said. They are found in mussels, like in nature to very large spiral snail-shells;

¹⁴and these are described as in troops making the sea their pasture-ground, as if under the guidance of some leader, conspicuous in colour and size, and different from those under him, so that he has an analogous position to what is called the queen of the bees. And likewise, in regard to the fishing for the best-that is, those in India-the following is told. The natives surround with nets a large circle of the shore, and dive down, exerting themselves to seize that one of them all which is the leader; for they say that, when this one is captured, the catching of the troop subject to it costs no trouble, as not one of those in the troop remains stationary, but as if bound by a thong follows the leader of the troop. It is said also that the formation of the pearls in India requires periods of time, the creature undergoing many changes and alterations until it is perfected. And it is further reported that the shell-I mean, the shell of the animal which bears the pearl-opens and gapes, as it were, and being opened receives into itself the dew of heaven; when it is filled with dew pure and untroubled, it becomes illumined and brings forth a large and well-formed pearl; but if at any time it receives dew darkened, or uneven, or in winter, it conceives a pearl cloudy and disfigured with spots.

15 And this we also find that if it be intercepted by lightning when it is on the way towards the completion of the stone with which it is pregnant, it closes, and, as it were in terror, scatters and pours forth its offspring, so as to form what are called "physemata. And sometimes, as if premature, they are born small, and are somewhat cloudy though well-formed. As compared with the others the Indian pearl has these features. It is white in colour, like to silver in transparency, and shines through as with a radiance somewhat greenish yellow, and as a rule is round in form; it is also of tender skin, and more delicate than it is the nature of a stone to be; so it is delightful to behold, worthy to be celebrated among the more notable, as he who wrote on the subject of stones used to say. And this is also a mark of the best pearl, to be rounded off on the outer surface, very white in colour, very translucent, and very large in size. So much about the Indian pearl. But that found in Britain, they say, is of a golden tinge, but somewhat cloudy, and duller in sparkle. And that which is found in the strait of Bosporus is darker than that of Britain, and livid, and perfectly dim, soft and small. And that which is produced in the strait of Bosporus is not found in the "pinna" which is the pearl-bearing species of shells. but in what are called mussels;

16 and their habitat-I mean those at Bosporus-is in the marshes. There is also said to be a fourth class of pearls in Acarnania in the "pinnae" of oysters. These are not greatly sought after, but are irregular in form, and perfectly dark and foul in colour; and there are others also different from these in the same Acarnania which are cast away on every ground.

8. The Parable Interpreted is the Light of These Views.

17 Now, having collected these things out of dissertations about stones, I say that the Saviour with a knowledge of the difference of pearls, of which some are in kind goodly and others worthless, said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls;" for, if some of the pearls had not been worthless, it would not have been said, "to a man seeking goodly pearls. Now among the words of all kinds which profess to announce truth, and among those who report them, he seeks pearls. And let the prophets be, so to speak, the mussels which conceive the dew of heaven, and become pregnant with the word of truth from heaven, the goodly pearls which, according to the phrase here set forth, the merchantman seeks. And the leader of the pearls, on the finding of which the rest are found with it, is the very costly pearl, the Christ of God, the Word which is superior to the

precious letters and thoughts in the law and the prophets, on the finding of which also all the rest are easily taken. And the Saviour holds converse with all the disciples, as merchant-men who are not only seeking the goodly pearls but who have found them and possess them, when He says, "Cast not your pearls before swine.

18 Now it is manifest that these things were said to the disciples from that which is prefixed to His words, "And seeing the multitudes He went up into the mountain, and when He had sat down His disciples came unto Him; " for, in the course of those words, He said, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine. Perhaps, then, he is not a disciple of Christ, who does not possess pearls or the very costly pearl, the pearls, I mean, which are goodly; not the cloudy, nor the darkened, such as the words of the heterodox, which are brought forth not at the sunrise, but at the sunset or in the north, if it is necessary to take also into the comparison those things on account of which we found a difference in the pearls which are produced in different places. And perhaps the muddy words and the heresies which are bound up with works of the flesh, are the darkened pearls, and those which are produced in the marshes, not goodly pearls.

9. Christ the Pearl of Great Price.

19 Now you will connect with the man seeking goodly pearls the saying, "Seek and ye shall find," and this—"Every one that seeketh findeth. For what seek ye? Or what does every one that seeketh find? I venture to answer, pearls and the pearl which he possesses, who has given up all things, and counted them as loss; "for which," says Paul, "I have counted all things but loss that I may win Christ; " by "all things" meaning the goodly pearls, "that I may win Christ," the one very precious pearl. Precious, then, is a lamp to men in darkness, and there is need of a lamp until the sun rise; and precious also is the glory in the face of Moses, and of the prophets also, I think, and a beautiful sight, by which we are introduced so as to be able to see the glory of Christ, to which the Father bears witness, saying, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased. But "that which hath been made glorious hath not been made glorious in this respect by reason of the glory that surpasseth; " and there is need to us first of the glory which admits of being done away, for the sake of the glory which surpasseth; as there is need of the knowledge which is in part, which will be done away when that which is perfect comes.

²⁰ Every soul, therefore, which comes to childhood, and is on the way to full growth, until the fulness of time is at hand, needs a tutor and stewards and guardians, in order that, after all these things, he who formerly differed nothing from a bond-servant, though he is lord of all, may receive, when freed from a tutor and stewards and guardians, the patrimony corresponding to the very costly pearl, and to that which is perfect, which on its coming does away with that which is in part, when one is able to receive "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," having been previously exercised, so to speak, in those forms of knowledge which are surpassed by the knowledge of Christ. But the multitude, not perceiving the beauty of the many pearls of the law, and all the knowledge, "in part," though it be, of the prophets, suppose that they can, without a clear exposition and apprehension of these, find in whole the one precious pearl, and behold "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," in comparison with which all things that came before such and so great knowledge, although they were not refuse in their own nature, appear to be refuse. This refuse is perhaps the "dung" thrown down beside the fig tree by the keeper of the vineyard, which is the cause of its bearing fruit.

10. The Pearl of the Gospel in Relation to the Old Testament.

²¹ "To everything then is its season, and a time for everything under heaven," a time to gather the goodly pearls, and a time after their gathering to find the one precious pearl, when it is fitting for a man to go away and sell all that he has in order that he may buy that pearl. For as every man who is going to be wise in the words of truth must first be taught the rudiments, and further pass through the elementary instruction, and appreciate it highly but not abide in it, as one who, having honoured it at the beginning but passed over towards perfection, is grateful for the introduction because it was useful at the first; so the perfect apprehension of the law and the prophets is an elementary discipline for the perfect apprehension of the Gospel, and all the meaning in the words and deeds of Christ.

11. The Parable of the Drag-Net.

²² "Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea. As in the case of images and statues, the likenesses are not likenesses in every respect of those things in relation to which they are made; but, for example, the image painted with wax on the plane surface of wood has the likeness of the surface along with the colour, but does not further preserve the hollows

and prominences, but only their outward appearance; and in the moulding of statues an endeavour is made to preserve the likeness in respect of the hollows and the prominences, but not in respect of the colour; and, if the cast be formed of wax, it endeavours to preserve both, I mean both the colour and also the hollows and the prominences, but is not indeed an image of the things in the respect of depth; so conceive with me also that, in the case of the similitudes in the Gospel, when the kingdom of heaven is likened unto anything, the comparison does not extend to all the features of that to which the kingdom is compared, but only to those features which are required by the argument in hand.

23 And here, accordingly, the kingdom of heaven is "like unto a net that was cast into the sea," not (as supposed by some, who represent that by this word the different natures of those who have come into the net, to-wit, the evil and the righteous, are treated of), as if it is to be thought that, because of the phrase "which gathered of every kind," there are many different natures of the righteous and likewise also of the evil; for to such an interpretation all the Scriptures are opposed, which emphasise the freedom of the will, and censure those who sin and approve those who do right; or otherwise blame could not rightly attach to those of the kinds that were such by nature, nor praise to those of a better kind. For the reason why fishes are good or bad lies not in the souls of the fishes, but is based on that which the Word said with knowledge, "Let the waters bring forth creeping things with living souls," when, also, "God made great sea-monsters and every soul of creeping creatures which the waters brought forth according to their kinds. There, accordingly, "The waters brought forth every soul of creeping animals according to their kinds," the cause not being in it; but here we are responsible for our being good kinds and worthy of what are called "vessels," or bad and worthy of being cast outside.

24 For it is not the nature in us which is the cause of the evil, but it is the voluntary choice which worketh evil; and so our nature is not the cause of righteousness, as if it were incapable of admitting unrighteousness, but it is the principle which we have admitted that makes men righteous; for also you never see the kinds of things in the water changing from the bad kinds of fishes into the good, or from the better kind to the worse; but you can always behold the righteous or evil among men either coming from wickedness to virtue, or returning from progress towards virtue to the flood of

wickedness. Wherefore also in Ezekiel, concerning the man who turns away from unrighteousness to the keeping of the divine commandments, it is thus written: "But if the wicked man turn away from all his wickednesses which he hath done," etc., down to the words, "that he turn from his wicked way and live;" but concerning the man who returns from the advance towards virtue unto the flood of wickedness it is said, "But in the case of the righteous man turning away from his righteousness and committing iniquity," etc., down to the words, "in his sins which he hath sinned in them shall he die.

²⁵ Let those who, from the parable of the drag-net, introduce the doctrine of different natures, tell us in regard to the wicked man who afterwards turned aside from all the wickednesses which he committed and keeps all the commandments of God, and does that which is righteous and merciful, of what nature was he when he was wicked? Clearly not of a nature to be praised. If verily of a nature to be censured, of what kind of nature can he reasonably be described, when he turns away from all his sins which he did? For if he were of the bad class of natures, because of his former deeds, how did he change to that which was better? Or if because of his subsequent deeds you would say that he was of the good class, how being good by nature did he become wicked? And you will also meet with a like dilemma in regard to the righteous man turning away from his righteousness and committing unrighteousness in all manner of sins. For before he turned away from righteousness, being occupied with righteous deeds he was not of a bad nature, for a bad nature could not be in righteousness, since a bad tree-that is wickedness-cannot produce good fruits,-the fruits that spring from virtue. Again, on the other hand, if he had been of a good and unchangeable nature he would not have turned away from the good after being called righteous, so as to commit unrighteousness in all his sins which he committed.

12. The Divine Scriptures Compared to a Net.

²⁶ Now, these things being said, we must hold that "the kingdom of heaven is likened to a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind," in order to set forth the varied character of the principles of action among men, which are as different as possible from each other, so that the expression "gathered from every kind" embraces both those worthy of praise and those worthy of blame in respect of their proclivities towards the forms of virtues or of vices. And the kingdom of heaven is likened unto the variegated texture of a net, with reference to the Old and the New Scripture which is

woven of thoughts of all kinds and greatly varied. As in the case of the fishes that fall into the net, some are found in one part of the net and some in another part, and each at the part at which it was caught, so in the case of those who have come into the net of the Scriptures you would find some caught in the prophetic net; for example, of Isaiah, according to this expression, or of Jeremiah or of Daniel; and others in the net of the law, and others in the Gospel net, and some in the apostolic net; for when one is first captured by the Word or seems to be captured, he is taken from some part of the whole net.

²⁷ And it is nothing strange if some of the fishes caught are encompassed by the whole texture of the net in the Scriptures, and are pressed in on every side and caught, so that they are unable to escape but are, as it were, absolutely enslaved, and not permitted to escape from the net. And this net has been cast into the sea-the wave-tossed life of men in every part of the world, and which swims in the bitter affairs of life. And before our Saviour Jesus Christ this net was not wholly filled; for the net of the law and the prophets had to be completed by Him who says, "Think not that I came to destroy the law and the prophets, I came not to destroy but to fulfil. And the texture of the net has been completed in the Gospels, and in the words of Christ through the Apostles. On this account, therefore, "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind. And, apart from what has been said, the expression, "gathered from every kind," may show forth the calling of the Gentiles from every race.

²⁸ And those who attended to the net which was cast into the sea are Jesus Christ, the master of the net, and "the angels who came and ministered unto Him," who do not draw up the net from the sea, nor carry it to the shore beyond the sea,-namely, to things beyond this life, unless the net be filled full, that is, unless the "fulness of the Gentiles" has come into it. But when it has come, then they draw it up from things here below, and carry it to what is figuratively called the shore, where it will be the work of those who have drawn it up, both to sit by the shore, and there to settle themselves, in order that they may place each of the good in the net into its own order, according to what are here called "vessels," but cast without and away those that are of an opposite character and are called bad. By "without" is meant the furnace of fire as the Saviour interpreted, saying, "So shall it be at the consummation of the age. The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the

righteous and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. Only it must be observed, that we are already taught by the parable of the tares and the similitude set forth, that the angels are to be entrusted with the power to distinguish and separate the evil from the righteous;

²⁹ for it is said above, "The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. But here it is said, "The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the righteous and shall cast them into the furnace of fire."

13. Relation of Men to Angels.

³⁰ From this it does not follow, as some suppose, that the men who are saved in Christ are superior even to the holy angels; for how can those who are cast by the holy angels into vessels be compared with those who cast them into vessels, seeing that they have been put under the authority of the angels? While we say this, we are not ignorant that the men who will be saved in Christ surpass some angels-namely, those who have not been entrusted with this office-but not all of them. For we read, "Which things angels desire to look into," where it is not said "all" angels. And we know also this-"We shall judge angels" where it is not said "all" angels. Now since these things are written about the net and about those in the net, we say that he who desires that, before the consummation of the age, and before the coming of the angels to sever the wicked from among the righteous, there should be no evil persons "of every kind" in the net, seems not to have understood the Scripture, and to desire the impossible. Wherefore let us not be surprised if, before the severing of the wicked from among the righteous by the angels who are sent forth for this purpose, we see our gatherings also filled with wicked persons. And would that those who will be cast into the furnace of fire may not be greater in number than the righteous!

³¹ But since we said in the beginning, that the parables and similitudes are not to be accepted in respect of all the things to which they are likened or compared, but only in respect of some things, we must further establish from the things to be said, that in the case of the fishes, so far as their life is concerned, an evil thing happens to them when they are found in the net. For they are deprived of the life which is theirs by nature, and whether they are cast into vessels or cast away, they suffer nothing more than the loss of the

life as it is in fishes; but, in the case of those to whom the parable refers, the evil thing is to be in the sea and not to come into the net, in order to be cast along with the good into vessels. And in like manner the bad fishes are cast without and thrown away; but the bad in the similitude before us are cast into "the furnace of fire," that what is said in Ezekiel about the furnace of fire may also overtake them-"And the Word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man behold the house of Israel is become to me all mixed with brass and iron," etc., down to the words, "And ye shall know that I the Lord have poured My fury upon you.

14. The Disciples as Scribes.

³² "Have ye understood all these things? They say, Yea. Christ Jesus, who knows the things in the hearts of men, as John also taught concerning Him in the Gospel, puts the question not as one ignorant, but having once for all taken upon Him the nature of man, He uses also all the characteristics of a man of which "asking" is one. And there is nothing to be wondered at in the Saviour doing this, since indeed the God of the universe, bearing with the manners of men as a man beareth with the manners of his son, makes inquiry, as-"Adam, where art thou?" and, "Where is Abel thy brother?" But some one with a forced interpretation will say here that the words "have understood" are not to be taken interrogatively but affirmatively; and he will say that the disciples bearing testimony to His affirmation, say, "Yea. Only, whether he is putting a question or making an affirmation, it is necessarily said not "these things" only,-which is demonstrative,-not "all things" only, but "all these things. And here He seems to represent the disciples as having been scribes before the kingdom of heaven; but to this is opposed what is said in the Acts of the Apostles thus, "Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled, and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.

³³ Some one may inquire in regard to these things-if they were scribes, how are they spoken of in the Acts as unlearned and ignorant men? Or if they were unlearned and ignorant men, how are they very plainly called scribes by the Saviour? And it might be answered to these inquiries that, as a matter of fact, not all the disciples but only Peter and John are described in the Acts as unlearned and ignorant, but that there were more disciples in regard to whom, because they understood all things, it is said, "Every scribe,"

etc. Or it might be said that every one who has been instructed in the teaching according to the letter of the law is called a scribe, so that those who were unlearned and ignorant and led captive by the letter of the law are spoken of as scribes in a particular sense. And it is very specially the characteristic of ignorant men, who are unskilled in figurative interpretation and do not understand what is concerned with the mystical exposition of the Scriptures, but believe the bare letter, and, vindicate it, that they call themselves scribes. And so one will interpret the words, "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," as having been said to every one that knows nothing but the letter.

³⁴ Here you will inquire if the scribe of the Gospel be as the scribe of the law, and if the former deals with the Gospel, as the latter with the law, reading and hearing and telling "those things which contain an allegory," so as, while preserving the historic truth of the events, to understand the unerring principle of mystic interpretation applied to things spiritual, so that the things learned may not be "spiritual things whose characteristic is wickedness," but may be entirely opposite to such, namely, spiritual things whose characteristic is goodness. And one is a scribe "made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven" in the simpler sense, when he comes from Judaism and receives the teaching of Jesus Christ as defined by the Church; but he is a scribe in a deeper sense, when having received elementary knowledge through the letter of the Scriptures he ascends to things spiritual, which are called the kingdom of the heavens. And according as each thought is attained, and grasped abstractly and proved by example and absolute demonstration, can one understand the kingdom of heaven, so that he who abounds in knowledge free from error is in the kingdom of the multitude of what are here represented as "heavens.

³⁵ So, too, you will allegorise the word, "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand," as meaning that the scribes—that is, those who rest satisfied in the bare letter—may repent of this method of interpretation and be instructed in the spiritual teaching which is called the kingdom of the heavens through Jesus Christ the living Word. Wherefore, also, so far as Jesus Christ, "who was in the beginning with God, God the word," has not His home in a soul, the kingdom of heaven is not in it, but when any one becomes nigh to admission of the Word, to him the kingdom of heaven is nigh. But if the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are the same

thing in reality, if not in idea, manifestly to those to whom it is said, "The kingdom of God is within you," to them also it might be said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you; "and most of all because of the repentance from the letter unto the spirit; since "When one turn to the Lord, the veil over the letter is taken away. But the Lord is the Spirit. And he who is truly a householder is both free and rich;

³⁶ rich because from the office of the scribe he has been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven, in every word of the Old Testament, and in all knowledge concerning the new teaching of Christ Jesus, and has this riches laid up in his own treasure-house-in heaven, in which he stores his treasure as one who has been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven,-where neither moth doth consume, nor thieves break through. And in regard to him, who, as we have said, lays up treasure in heaven, we may truly lay down that not one moth of the passions can touch his spiritual and heavenly possessions. "A moth of the passions," I said, taking the suggestion from the "Proverbs" in which it is written, "a worm in wood, so pain woundeth the heart of man. For pain is a worm and a moth, which wounds the heart which has not its treasures in heaven and spiritual things, for if a man has his treasure in these-"for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also," -he has his heart in heaven, and on account of it he says, "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.

³⁷ And so neither can thieves in regard to whom the Saviour said, "All that came before Me are thieves and robbers," break through those things which are treasured up in heaven, and through the heart which is in heaven and therefore says, "He raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ," and, "Our citizenship is in heaven."

15. The Householder and His Treasury.

³⁸ Now since "every scribe who has been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder who bringeth forth out of his treasury things new and old," it clearly follows, by "conversion of the proposition," as it is called, that every one who does not bring forth out of his treasury things new and old, is not a scribe who has been made a disciple unto the kingdom of heaven. We must endeavour, therefore, in every way to gather in our heart, "by giving heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching," and by "meditating in the law of the Lord day and night," not only the new oracles of the Gospels and of the Apostles and their Revelation, but also the

old things in the law "which has the shadow of the good things to come," and in the prophets who prophesied in accordance with them. And these things will be gathered together, when we also read and know, and remembering them, compare at a fitting time things spiritual with spiritual, not comparing things that cannot be compared with one another, but things which admit of comparison, and which have a certain likeness of diction signifying the same thing, and of thoughts and of opinions, so that by the mouth of two or three or more witnesses from the Scripture, we may establish and confirm every word of God.

³⁹ By means of them also we must refute those who, as far as in them lies, cleave in twain the God head and cut off the New from the Old, so that they are far removed from likeness to the householder who brings forth out of his treasury things new and old. And since he who is likened to any one is different from the one to whom he is likened, the scribe "who is made a disciple unto the kingdom of heaven" will be the one who is likened, but different from him is the householder "who brings out of his treasury things new and old. But he who is likened to him, as in imitation of him, wishes to do that which is like. Perhaps, then, the man who is a householder is Jesus Himself, who brings forth out of His treasury, according to the time of the teaching, things new, things spiritual, which also are always being renewed by Him in the "inner man" of the righteous, who are themselves always being renewed day by day, and old things, things "written and engraven on stones," and in the stony hearts of the old man, so that by comparison of the letter and by exhibition of the spirit He may enrich the scribe who is made a disciple unto the kingdom of heaven, and make him like unto Himself;

⁴⁰ until the disciple shall be as the Master, imitating first the imitator of Christ, and after him Christ Himself, according to that which is said by Paul, "Be ye imitators of me even as I also of Christ. And likewise, Jesus the householder may in the simpler sense bring forth out of His treasury things new,-that is, the evangelic teaching-and things old,-that is, the comparison of the sayings which are taken from the law and the prophets, of which we may find examples in the Gospels. And with regard to these things new and old, we must attend also to the spiritual law which says in Leviticus, "And ye shall eat old things, and the old things of the old, and ye shall bring forth the old from before the new; and I will set my tabernacle among you. For we eat with blessing the old things,-the prophetic words,-and the old things of

the old things,-the words of the law; and, when the new and evangelical words came, living according to the Gospel we bring forth the old things of the letter from before the new, and He sets His tabernacle in us, fulfilling the promise which He spoke, "I will dwell among them and walk in them."

16. Parables in Relation to Similitudes, Jesus in His Own Country

⁴¹ "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence. And coming into His own country. Since we inquired above whether the things spoken to the multitude were parables, and those spoken to the disciples were similitudes, and set forth observations bearing on this in my judgment not contemptible, you must know that the sentence which is sub-joined, "And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence," will appear to be in opposition to all these arguments, as applying not only to the parables, but also to the similitudes as we have expounded. We inquire therefore whether all these things are to be rejected, or whether we must speak of two kinds of parables, those spoken to the multitudes, and those announced to the disciples; or whether we are to think of the name of parable as equi-vocal; or whether the saying, "And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these parables," is to be referred only to the parables above, which come before the similitudes. For, because of the saying, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to the rest in parables," it was not possible to say to the disciples, inasmuch as they were not of those without, that the Saviour spoke to them in parables.

⁴² And it follows from this, that the saying, "And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence," is to be referred to the parables spoken above, or that the name parable is equivocal, or that there are two kinds of parables, or that these which we have named similitudes were not parables at all. And observe that it was outside of His own country He speaks the parables "which, when He had finished, He departed thence; and coming into His own country He taught them in their synagogue. And Mark says, "And He came into His own country and His disciples follow Him. We must therefore inquire whether, by the expression, "His own country," is meant Nazareth or Bethlehem,-Nazareth, because of the saying, "He shall be called a Nazarene," or Bethlehem, since in it He was born. And further I reflect whether the Evangelists could have said, "coming to Bethlehem," or, "coming to Nazareth. They have not done so, but have named it "His country," because of something being declared in a mystic sense in the

passage about His country,-namely, the whole of Judaea,-in which He was dishonoured according to the saying, "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country.

⁴³ And if anyone thinks of Jesus Christ, "a stumbling-block to the Jews," among whom He is persecuted even until now, but proclaimed among the Gentiles and believed in,-for His word has run over the whole world,-he will see that in His own country Jesus had no honour, but that among those who were "strangers from the covenants," the Gentiles, He is held in honour. But what things He taught and spake in their synagogue the Evangelists have not recorded, but only that they were so great and of such a nature that all were astonished. And probably the things spoken were too high to be written down. Only be it noted, He taught in their synagogue, not separating from it, nor disregarding it.

17. The Brethren of Jesus.

⁴⁴ And the saying, "Whence hath this man this wisdom, " indicates clearly that there was a great and surpassing wisdom in the words of Jesus worthy of the saying, lo, a greater than Solomon is here. And He was wont to do greater miracles than those wrought through Elijah and Elisha, and at a still earlier date through Moses and Joshua the son of Nun. And they spoke, wondering, (not knowing that He was the son of a virgin, or not believing it even if it was told to them, but supposing that He was the son of Joseph the carpenter,) "is not this the carpenter's son? " And depreciating the whole of what appeared to be His nearest kindred, they said, "Is not His mother called Mary? And His brethren, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? " They thought, then, that He was the son of Joseph and Mary. But some say, basing it on a tradition in the Gospel according to Peter, as it is entitled, or "The Book of James," that the brethren of Jesus were sons of Joseph by a former wife, whom he married before Mary.

⁴⁵ Now those who say so wish to preserve the honour of Mary in virginity to the end, so that that body of hers which was appointed to minister to the Word which said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee," might not know intercourse with a man after that the Holy Ghost came into her and the power from on high overshadowed her. And I think it in harmony with reason that Jesus was the first-fruit among men of the purity which consists in chastity, and Mary among women; for it were not pious to ascribe to any other than to her the

first-fruit of virginity. And James is he whom Paul says in the Epistle to the Galatians that he saw, "But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. And to so great a reputation among the people for righteousness did this James rise, that Flavius Josephus, who wrote the "Antiquities of the Jews" in twenty books, when wishing to exhibit the cause why the people suffered so great misfortunes that even the temple was razed to the ground, said, that these things happened to them in accordance with the wrath of God in consequence of the things which they had dared to do against James the brother of Jesus who is called Christ. And the wonderful thing is, that, though he did not accept Jesus as Christ, he yet gave testimony that the righteousness of James was so great;

⁴⁶and he says that the people thought that they had suffered these things because of James. And Jude, who wrote a letter of few lines, it is true, but filled with the healthful words of heavenly grace, said in the preface, "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and the brother of James. With regard to Joseph and Simon we have nothing to tell; but the saying, "And His sisters are they not all with us. seems to me to signify something of this nature-they mind our things, not those of Jesus, and have no unusual portion of surpassing wisdom as Jesus has. And perhaps by these things is indicated a new doubt concerning Him, that Jesus was not a man but something diviner, inasmuch as He was, as they supposed, the son of Joseph and Mary, and the brother of four, and of the others-the women-as well, and yet had nothing like to any one of His kindred, and had not from education and teaching come to such a height of wisdom and power. For they also say elsewhere, "How knoweth this man letters having never learned?" which is similar to what is here said. Only, though they say these things and are so perplexed and astonished, they did not believe, but were offended in Him; as if they had been mastered in the eyes of their mind by the powers which, in the time of the passion, He was about to lead in triumph on the cross.

18. Prophets in Their Country.

⁴⁷"But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country. We must inquire whether the expression has the same force when applied universally to every prophet (as if each one of the prophets was dishonoured in his own country only, but not as if every one who was dishonoured was dishonoured in his country); or, because of the expression being singular, these things were said about one. If, then, these words are

spoken about one, these things which have been said suffice, if we refer that which is written to the Saviour. But if it is general, it is not historically true; for Elijah did not suffer dishonour in Tishbeth of Gilead, nor Elisha in Abelmeholah, nor Samuel in Ramathaim, nor Jeremiah in Anathoth. But, figuratively interpreted, it is absolutely true; for we must think of Judaea as their country, and that famous Israel as their kindred, and perhaps of the body as the house. For all suffered dishonour in Judaea from the Israel which is according to the flesh, while they were yet in the body, as it is written in the Acts of the Apostles, as having been spoken in censure to the people, "Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute, who showed before of the coming of the Righteous one? " And by Paul in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians like things are said:

⁴⁸ "For ye brethren became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judaea in Christ Jesus, for ye also suffered the same things of your own countrymen even as they did of the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drave out us, and please not God, and are contrary to all men. A prophet, then, is not without honour among the Gentiles; for either they do not know him at all, or, having learned and received him as a prophet, they honour him. And such are those who are of the Church. Prophets suffer dishonour, first, when they are persecuted, according to historical fact, by the people, and, secondly, when their prophecy is not believed by the people. For if they had believed Moses and the prophets they would have believed Christ, who showed that when men believed Moses and the prophets, belief in Christ logically followed, and that when men did not believe Christ they did not believe Moses. Moreover, as by the transgression of the law he who sins is said to dishonour God, so by not believing in that which is prophesied the prophet is dishonoured by the man who disbelieves the prophecies. And so far as the literal truth is concerned, it is useful to recount what things Jeremiah suffered among the people in relation to which he said, "And I said, I will not speak, nor will I call upon the name of the Lord. And again, elsewhere, "I was continually being mocked.

⁴⁹ And how great sufferings he endured from the then king of Israel are written in his prophecy. And it is also written that some of the people often came to stone Moses to death; for his fatherland was not the stones of any place, but the people who followed him, among whom also he was dishonoured. And Isaiah is reported to have been sawn asunder by the people; and if

any one does not accept the statement because of its being found in the Apocryphal Isaiah, let him believe what is written thus in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted;" for the expression, "They were sawn asunder," refers to Isaiah, just as the words, "They were slain with the sword," refer to Zacharias, who was slain "between the sanctuary and the altar," as the Saviour taught, bearing testimony, as I think, to a Scripture, though not extant in the common and widely circulated books, but perhaps in apocryphal books. And they, too, were dishonoured in their own country among the Jews who went about "in sheep-skins, in goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted," and so on; "For all that will to live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. And probably because Paul knew this, "That a prophet has no honour in his own country," though he preached the Word in many places he did not preach it in Tarsus.

⁵⁰ And the Apostles on this account left Israel and did that which had been enjoined on them by the Saviour, "Make disciples of all the nations," and, "Ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. For they did that which had been commanded them in Judaea and Jerusalem; but, since a prophet has no honour in his own country, when the Jews did not receive the Word, they went away to the Gentiles. Consider, too, if, because of the fact that the saying, "I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all flesh, and they shall prophesy," has been fulfilled in the churches from the Gentiles, you can say that those formerly of the world and who by believing became no longer of the world, having received the Holy Spirit in their own country—that is, the world—and prophesying, have not honour, but are dishonoured. Wherefore blessed are they who suffer the same things as the prophets, according to what was said by the Saviour, "For in the same manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

⁵¹ Now if any one who attends carefully to these things be hated and attacked, because of his living with rigorous austerity, and his reproof of sinners, as a man who is persecuted and reproached for the sake of righteousness, he will not only not be grieved, but will rejoice and be exceeding glad, being assured that, because of these things, he has great reward in heaven from Him who likened him to the prophets on the ground of his having suffered the same things. Therefore, he who zealously imitates the prophetic life, and attains to the spirit which was in them, must be dishonoured in the

world, and in the eyes of sinners, to whom the life of the righteous man is a burden.

19. Relation of Faith and Unbelief to the Supernatural Powers of Jesus.

⁵² Following this you may see, "He did not there many mighty works because of their unbelief. We are taught by these things that powers were found in those who believed, since "to every one that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance," but among unbelievers not only did the powers not work, but as Mark wrote, "They could not work. For attend to the words, "He could not there do any mighty works," for it is not said, "He would not," but "He could not; "as if there came to the power when working co-operation from the faith of him on whom the power was working, but this co-operation was hindered in its exercise by unbelief. See, then, that to those who said, "Why could we not cast it out? "He said, "Because of your little faith. And to Peter, when he began to sink, it was said, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? " But, moreover, she who had the issue of blood, who did not ask for the cure, but only reasoned that if she were to touch the hem of His garment she would be healed, was healed on the spot. And the Saviour, acknowledging the method of healing, says, "Who touched Me? For I perceived that power went forth from Me.

⁵³ And perhaps, as in the case of material things there exists in some things a natural attraction towards some other thing, as in the magnet for iron, and in what is called naphtha for fire, so there is an attraction in such faith towards the divine power, according to what is said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove. And Matthew and Mark, wishing to set forth the excellency of the divine power, that it has power even in unbelief, but not so great power as it has in the faith of those who are being benefited, seem to me to have said with accuracy, not that He did not "any" mighty works because of their unbelief, but that He did not "many" there. And Mark also does not say, that He could not do any mighty work there, and stop at that point, but added, "Save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk and healed them," the power in Him thus overcoming the unbelief. Now it seems to me that, as in the case of material things, tillage is not sufficient in itself for the gathering in of the fruits, unless the air cooperates to this end, nay, rather, He who forms the air with whatever quality He wills and makes it whatever He wills;

⁵⁴ nor the air apart from tillage, but rather He who by His providence has enacted that the things which spring up from the earth could not spring up apart from tillage; for this He has done once for all in the law, "Let the earth put forth grass sowing seed after its kind and after its likeness; " so also neither do the operations of the powers, apart from the faith of those who are being healed, exhibit the absolute work of healing, nor faith, however great it may be, apart from the divine power. And that which is written about wisdom, you may apply also to faith, and to the virtues specifically, so as to make a precept of this kind, "If any one be perfect in wisdom among the sons of men, and the power that comes from Thee be wanting, he will be reckoned as nothing; " or, "If any one be perfect in self-control, so far as is possible for the sons of men, and the control that is from Thee be wanting, he will be reckoned as nothing; " or, "If any one be perfect in righteousness, and in the rest of virtues, and the righteousness and the rest of the virtues that are from Thee be wanting to him, he will be reckoned as nothing. Wherefore, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength," for that which is fit matter for glorying is not ours, but is the gift of God;

⁵⁵ the wisdom is from Him, and the strength is from Him; and so with the rest.

20. Different Conceptions of John the Baptist.

⁵⁶ "At that season Herod the tetrarch heard the report concerning Jesus and said unto his own servants, This is John the Baptist. In Mark it is the same, and also in Luke. The Jews had different opinions, some false, such as the Sadducees held about the resurrection of the dead, that they do not rise, and in regard to angels that they do not exist, but that those things which were written about them were only to be interpreted figuratively, but had no reality in point of fact; and some true opinions, such as were taught by the Pharisees about the resurrection of the dead that they rise. We must therefore here inquire, whether the opinion regarding the soul, mistakenly held by Herod and some from among the people, was somewhat like this-that John, who a little before had been slain by him, had risen from the dead after he had been beheaded, and was the same person under a different name, and being now called Jesus was possessed of the same powers which formerly wrought in John. For what credibility is there in the idea that One, who was so widely known to the whole people, and whose name was noised abroad in

the whole of Judaea, whom they declared to be the son of the carpenter and Mary, and to have such and such for brothers and sisters, was thought to be not different from John whose father was Zacharias, and whose mother was Elisabeth, who were themselves not undistinguished among the people?

⁵⁷ But it is probable that the fact of his being the Son of Zacharias was not unknown to the people, who thought with regard to John that he was truly a prophet, and were so numerous that the Pharisees, in order to avoid the appearance of saying that which was displeasing to the people, were afraid to answer the question, "Was his baptism from heaven or from men?" And perhaps, also, to some of them had come the knowledge of the incident of the vision which was seen in the temple, when Gabriel appeared to Zacharias. What credibility, forsooth, has the erroneous opinion, whether of Herod or of some of the people, that John and Jesus were not two persons, but that it was one and the same person John who rose from the dead after that he had been beheaded and was called Jesus? some one might say, however, that Herod and some of those of the people held the false dogma of the transmigration of souls into bodies, in consequence of which they thought that the former John had appeared again by a fresh birth, and had come from the dead into life as Jesus. But the time between the birth of John and the birth of Jesus, which was not more than six months, does not permit this false opinion to be considered credible.

⁵⁸ And perhaps rather some such idea as this was in the mind of Herod, that the powers which wrought in John had passed over to Jesus, in consequence of which He was thought by the people to be John the Baptist. And one might use the following line of argument. Just as because of the spirit and the power of Elijah, and not because of his soul, it is said about John, "This is Elijah which is to come," the spirit in Elijah and the power in him having gone over to John-so Herod thought that the powers in John wrought in his case works of baptism and teaching,-for John did not one miracle, but in Jesus miraculous portents. It may be said that something of this kind was the thought of those who said that Elijah had appeared in Jesus, or that one of the old prophets had risen. But the opinion of those who said that Jesus was "a prophet even as one of the prophets," has no bearing on the question. False, then, is the saying concerning Jesus, whether that recorded to have been the view of Herod, or that spoken by others. Only, the saying, "That John went before in the spirit and power of Elijah," which corres-

ponds to the thoughts which they were now cherishing concerning John and Jesus, seems to me more credible.

⁵⁹ But since we learned, in the first place, that when the Saviour after the temptation heard that John was given up, He retreated into Galilee, and in the second place, that when John was in prison and heard the things about Jesus he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, "Art thou He that cometh, or look we for another?" and in the third place, generally that Herod said about Jesus, "It is John the Baptist, he is risen from the dead," but we have not previously learned from any quarter the manner in which the Baptist was killed, therefore Matthew has now recorded it, and Mark almost like unto him; but Luke passed over in silence the greater part of the narrative as it is found in them."

21. Herod and the Baptist.

⁶⁰ The narrative of Matthew is as follows,—"for Herod had laid hold on John and bound him in the prison. In reference to these things, it seems to me, that as the law and the prophets were until John, after whom the grace of prophecy ceased from among the Jews; so the authority of those who had rule among the people, which included the power to kill those whom they thought worthy of death, existed until John; and when the last of the prophets was unlawfully killed by Herod, the king of the Jews was deprived of the power of putting to death; for, if Herod had not been deprived of it, Pilate would not have condemned Jesus to death; but for this Herod would have sufficed along with the council of the chief priests and elders of the people, met for the purpose. And then I think was fulfilled that which was spoken as follows by Jacob to Judah: "A ruler shall not depart from Judah, nor a leader from Israel, until that come which is laid up in store, and he is the expectation of the Gentiles. And perhaps also the Jews were deprived of this power, the Providence of God arranging for the spread of the teaching of Christ among the people, so that even if this were hindered by the Jews, the opposition might not go so far as the slaying of believers, which seemed to be according to law.

⁶¹ "But Herod laid hold on John and bound him in prison and put him away," by this act signifying that, so far as it depended on his power and on the wickedness of the people, he bound and imprisoned the prophetic word, and prevented him from continuing to abide a herald the truth in freedom as formerly. But this Herod did for the sake of Herodias, the wife of his

brother Philip. For John said unto him, "It is not lawful for thee to have her. Now this Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and of Trachonitis. Some, then, suppose that, when Philip died leaving a daughter, Herodias, Herod married his brother's wife, though the law permitted marriage only when there were no children. But, as we find nowhere clear evidence that Philip was dead, we conclude that a yet greater transgression was done by Herod, namely, that he had induced his brother's wife to revolt from her husband while he was still living.

22. The Dancing of Herodias. The Keeping of Oaths.

⁶² Wherefore John, endued with prophetic boldness and not terrified at the royal dignity of Herod, nor through fear of death keeping silence in regard to so flagrant a sin, filled with a divine spirit said to Herod, "It is not lawful for thee to have her; for it is not lawful for thee to have the wife of thy brother. For Herod having laid hold on John bound him and put him in prison, not daring to slay him outright and to take away the prophetic word from the people; but the wife of the king of Trachonitis-which is a kind of evil opinion and wicked teaching-gave birth to a daughter of the same name, whose movements, seemingly harmonious, pleasing Herod, who was fond of matters connected with birthdays, came the cause of there being no longer a prophetic head among the people. And up to this point I think that the movements of the people of the Jews, which seem to be according to the law, were nothing else than the movements of the daughter of Herodias; but the dancing of Herodias was opposed to that holy dancing with which those who have not danced will be reproached when they hear the words. "We piped unto you, and ye did not dance. And on birthdays. when the lawless word reigns over them, they dance so that their movements please that word.

⁶³ Some one of those before us has observed what is written in Genesis about the birthday of Pharaoh, and has told that the worthless man who loves things connected with birth keeps birthday festivals; and we, taking this suggestion from him, find in no Scripture that a birthday was kept by a righteous man. For Herod was more unjust than that famous Pharaoh; for by the latter on his birthday feast a chief baker is killed; but by the former, John, "than whom no one greater hath risen among those born of women," in regard to whom the Saviour says, "But for what purpose did ye go out? To see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. But thanks be unto God, that, even if the grace of prophecy was taken from the people, a

grace greater than all that was poured forth among the Gentiles by our Saviour Jesus Christ, who became "free among the dead;" for "though He were crucified through weakness, yet He liveth through the power of God. Consider also the word in which pure and impure meats are inquired into; but prophecy is despised when it is brought forward in a charger instead of meat. But the Jews have not the head of prophecy, inasmuch as they disown the crown of all prophecy, Christ Jesus; and the prophet is beheaded, because of an oath in a case where the duty was rather to break the oath than to keep the oath;

⁶⁴ for the charge of rashness in taking an oath and of breaking it because of the rashness is not the same in guilt as the death of a prophet. And not on this account alone is he beheaded, but because "of those who sat at meat with him," who preferred that the prophet should be killed rather than live. And they recline at the same table and also feast along with the evil word which reigns over the Jews, who make merry over his birth. At times you may make a graceful application of the passage to those who swear rashly and wish to hold fast oaths which are taken with a view to unlawful deeds, by saying that not every keeping of oaths is seemly, just as the keeping of the oath of Herod was not. And mark, further, that not openly but secretly and in prison does Herod put John to death. For even the present word of the Jews does not openly deny the prophecies, but virtually and in secret denies them, and is convicted of disbelieving them. For as "if they believed Moses they would have believed Jesus," so if they had believed the prophets they would have received Him who had been the subject of prophecy. But disbelieving Him they also disbelieve them, and cut off and confine in prison the prophetic word, and hold it dead and divided, and in no way wholesome, since they do not understand it.

⁶⁵ But we have the whole Jesus, the prophecy concerning Him being fulfilled which said, "A bone shall not be broken."

23. The Withdrawal of Jesus.

⁶⁶ And the disciples of John having come bury his remains, and "they went and told Jesus. And He withdrew to a desert place,-that is, the Gentiles-and after the killing of the prophet multitudes followed Him from the cities everywhere; seeing which to be great He had compassion on them, and healed their sick; and afterwards with the loaves which were blessed and multiplied from a few loaves He feeds those who followed Him. "Now when

Jesus heard it He withdrew thence in a boat to a desert place apart. The letter teaches us to withdraw as far as it is in our power from those who persecute us, and from expected conspiracies through words; for this would be to act according to prudence; and, when one can keep outside of critical positions, to go to meet them is rash and headstrong. For who would still hesitate about avoiding such things, when not only did Jesus retreat in view of what happened to John, but also taught and said, "If they persecute you in this city, flee ye into the other"? When a temptation comes which is not in our power to avoid, we must endure it with exceeding nobleness and courage; but, when it is in our power to avoid it, not to do so is rash.

⁶⁷ But since after the letter we must also investigate the place according to the mystical meaning, we must say that, when prophecy was plotted against among the Jews and destroyed, because of their giving honour to matters of birthdays, and in respect of their reception of vain movements which, though conceived by the ruler of the wicked and those who feast along with him to be regular and pleasing to them, were irregular and out of tune, if truth be umpire, then Jesus withdraws from the place in which prophecy was attacked and condemned; and He withdraws to the place which had been barren of God among the Gentiles, in order that the Word of God, when the kingdom was taken from the Jews and "given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," might be among the Gentiles; and, on account of it, "the children of the desolate one," who had not been instructed either in the law or the prophets, "might be more than of her who has the husband," that is, the law. When, then, the word was of old among the Jews, it was not so among them as it is among the Gentiles; wherefore it is said that, "in a boat,"-that is, in the body-He went to the desert place apart, when He heard about the killing of the prophet. And, having come into the desert place apart, He was in it, because that the Word dwelt apart, and His teaching was contrary to the customs and usages which obtained among the Gentiles.

⁶⁸ And the crowds among the Gentiles, when they heard that Jesus had come to stay in their desert, and that He was apart, as we have already reported, followed Him from their own cities, because each had left the superstitious customs of his fathers and come to the law of Christ. And by land they followed Him, and not in a boat, inasmuch as not with the body but with the soul only, and with the resolution to which they had been persuaded by the Word, they followed the Image of God. And to them Jesus comes out, as

they were not able to go to Him, in order that, having gone to those who were without, He might lead within those who were without. And great is the crowd without to whom the Word of God goes out, and, having poured out upon it the light of His "visitation," beholds it; and, seeing that they were rather deserving of being pitied, because they were in such circumstances, as a lover of men He who was impassible suffered the emotion of pity, and not only had pity but healed their sick, who had sicknesses diverse and of every kind arising from their wickedness.

24. The Diverse Forms of Spiritual Sickness.

⁶⁹ And, if you wish to see of what nature are the sicknesses of the soul, contemplate with me the lovers of money, and the lovers of ambition, and the lovers of boys, and if any be fond of women; for these also beholding among the crowds and taking compassion upon them, He healed. For not every sin is to be considered a sickness, but that which has settled down in the whole soul. For so you may see the lovers of money wholly intent on money and upon preserving and gathering it, the lovers of ambition wholly intent on a little glory, for they gape for praise from the masses and the vulgar; and analogously you will understand in the case of the rest which we have named, and if there be any other like to them. Since, then, when expounding the words, "He healed their sick," we said that not every sin is a sickness, it is fitting to discuss from the Scripture the difference of these. The Apostle indeed says, writing to the Corinthians who had diverse sicknesses, "For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep. Hear Him in these words, knitting a band and making it plaited of different sins, according as some are weak, and others sickly more than weak, and others, in comparison with both, are asleep.

⁷⁰ For some, because of impotence of soul, having a tendency to slip into any sin whatever, although they may not be wholly in the grasp of any form of sin, as the sickly are, are only weak; but others who, instead of loving God "with all their soul and all their heart and all their mind," love money, or a little glory, or wife, or children, are suffering from something worse than weakness, and are sickly. And those who sleep are those who, when they ought to be taking heed and watching with the soul, are not doing this, but by reason of great want of attention are nodding in resolution and are drowsy in their reflections, such as "in their dreamings defile the flesh, and set at naught that which is highest in authority, and rail at dignities. And

these, because they are asleep, live in an atmosphere of vain and dream-like fancies concerning realities, not admitting the things which are actually true, but deceived by what appears in their vain imaginations, in regard to whom it is said in Isaiah, "Like as when a thirsty man dreams that he is drinking, but when he has risen up is still thirsty, and his soul has cherished a vain hope, so shall be the wealth of all the nations as many as have warred in Jerusalem.

⁷¹ If, then, we have seemed to make a digression in recounting the difference between the weak and the sickly and those that sleep, because of that which the Apostle said in the letter to the Corinthians which we have expounded, we have made the digression in our desire to represent what is meant to be understood by the saying, "And He healed their sick."

25. Healing Precedes Participation in the Loaves of Jesus.

⁷² After this the word says, "And when even was come, His disciples came to Him, saying, The place is desert and the time is already past; send, therefore, the multitudes away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food." And first observe that when about to give to the disciples the loaves of blessing, that they might set them before the multitudes, He healed the sick, in order that, having been restored to health, they might participate in the loaves of blessing; for while they are yet sickly, they are not able to receive the loaves of the blessing of Jesus. But if any one, when he ought to listen to the precept, "But let each prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread," etc., does not obey these words, but in haphazard fashion participates in the bread of the Lord and His cup, he becomes weak or sickly, or even-if I may use the expression-on account of being stupefied by the power of the bread, asleep.

BOOK 11

1. Introduction to the Feeding of the Five Thousand.

¹ "And when even was come His disciples came to Him," that is, at the consummation of the age in regard to which we may fitly say what is found in the Epistle of John, "It is the last hour. They, not yet understanding what the Word was about to do, say to Him, "The place is desert," seeing the desert condition of the masses in respect of God and the Law and the Word; but they say to Him, "The time is past," as if the fitting season of the law and prophets had passed. Perhaps they spoke this saying, in reference to the word of Jesus, that because of the beheading of John both the law and the prophets

who were until John had ceased. "The time is past," therefore they say, and no food is at hand, because the season of it is no longer present, that those who have followed Thee in the desert may serve the law and the prophets. And, further, the disciples say, "Send them away," that each one may buy food, if he cannot from the cities, at least from the villages,—places more ignoble. Such things the disciples said, because, after the letter of the law had been abrogated and prophecies had ceased, they despaired of unexpected and new food being found for the multitudes. But see what Jesus answers to the disciples though He does not cry out and plainly say it:

2 "You suppose that, if the great multitude go away from Me in need of food, they will find it in villages rather than with Me, and among bodies of men, not of citizens but of villagers, rather than by abiding with Me. But I declare unto you, that in regard to that of which you suppose they are in need they are not in need, for they have no need to go away; but in regard to that of which you think they have no need—that is, of Me—as if I could not feed them, of this contrary to your expectation they have need. Since, then, I have trained you, and made you fit to give rational food to them who are in need of it, give ye to the crowds who have followed Me to eat; for ye have the power, which ye have received from Me, of giving the multitudes to eat; and if ye had attended to this, ye would have understood that I am far more able to feed them, and ye would not have said, 'Send the multitudes away that they may go and buy food for themselves.'"

2. Exposition of the Details of the Miracle.

3 Jesus, then, because of the power which He gave to the disciples, even the power of nourishing others, said, Give ye them to eat. But (not denying that they can give loaves, but thinking that there were much too few and not sufficient to feed those who followed Jesus, and not considering that when Jesus takes each loaf—the Word—He extends it as far as He wills, and makes it suffice for all whomsoever He desires to nourish), the disciples say, We have here but five loaves and two fishes. Perhaps by the five loaves they meant to make a veiled reference to the sensible words of the Scriptures, corresponding in number on this account to the five senses, but by the two fishes either to the word expressed and the word conceived, which are a relish, so to speak, to the sensible things contained in the Scriptures; or, perhaps, to the word which had come to them about the Father and the Son. Wherefore also after His resurrection He ate of a broiled fish, having taken a part from the disciples,

and having received that theology about the Father which they were in part able to declare to Him. Such is the contribution we have been able to give to the exposition of the word about the five loaves and the two fishes; and probably those, who are better able than we to gather together the five loaves and the two fishes among themselves, would be able to give a fuller and better interpretation of their meaning.

⁴ It must be observed, however, that while in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the disciples say that they have the five loaves and the two fishes, without indicating whether they were wheaten or of barley, John alone says, that the loaves were barley loaves. Wherefore, perhaps, in the Gospel of John the disciples do not acknowledge that the loaves are with them, but say in John, "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fishes. And so long as these five loaves and two fishes were not carried by the disciples of Jesus, they did not increase or multiply, nor were they able to nourish more; but, when the Saviour took them, and in the first placed looked up to heaven, with the rays of His eyes, as it were, drawing down from it power which was to be mingled with the loaves and the fishes which were about to feed the five thousand; and after this blessed the five loaves and the two fishes, increasing and multiplying them by the word and the blessing; and in the third place dividing and breaking He gave to the disciples that they might set them before the multitudes, then the loaves and the fishes were sufficient, so that all ate and were satisfied, and some portions of the loaves which had been blessed they were unable to eat.

⁵ For so much remained over to the multitudes, which was not according to the capacity of the multitudes but of the disciples who were able to take up that which remained over of the broken pieces, and to place it in baskets filled with that which remained over, which were in number so many as the tribes of Israel. Concerning Joseph, then, it is written in the Psalms, "His hands served in the basket," but about the disciples of Jesus that they took up that which remained over of the broken pieces twelve baskets, twelve baskets, I take it, not half-full but filled. And there are, I think, up to the present time, and will be until the consummation of the age with the disciples of Jesus, who are superior to the multitudes, the twelve baskets, filled with the broken pieces of living bread which the multitudes cannot eat. Now those who ate of the five loaves which existed before the twelve baskets that remained over, were kindred in nature to the number five; for those who ate

had reached the stage of sensible things, since also they were nourished by Him who looked up to heaven and blessed and brake them, and were not boys nor women, but men. For there are, I think, even in sensible foods differences, so that some of them belong to those who "have put away childish things," and some to those who are still babes and carnal in Christ.

3. The Exposition of Details Continued. The Sitting Down on the Grass. The Division into Companies.

6 We have spoken these things because of the words, "They that did eat were five thousand men, beside children and women," which is an ambiguous expression; for either those who ate were five thousand men, and among those who ate there was no child or woman; or the men only were five thousand, the children and the women not being reckoned. Some, then, as we have said by anticipation, have so understood the passage that neither children nor women were present, when the increase and multiplication of the five loaves and the two fishes took place. But some one might say that, while many ate and according to their desert and capacity participated in the loaves of blessing, some worthy to be numbered, corresponding to the men of twenty years old who are numbered in the Book of Numbers, were Israelitish men, but others who were not worthy of such account and numbering were children and women. Moreover, interpret with me allegorically the children in accordance with the passage, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ;" and the women in accordance with the saying, "I wish to present you all as a pure virgin to Christ;" and the men according to the saying, "When I am become a man I have put away childish things.

7 Let us not pass by without exposition the words, "He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass, and He took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, He blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. And they did all eat. For what is meant by the words, "And He commanded all the multitudes to sit down on the grass?" And what are we to understand in the passage worthy of the command of Jesus? Now, I think that He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass because of what is said in Isaiah, "All flesh is grass;" that is to say, He commanded them to put the flesh under, and to keep in subjection "the mind of the flesh," that so any one might be able to partake of the loaves which Jesus blesses. Then since there are different orders of

those who need the food which Jesus supplies and all are not nourished by equal words, on this account I think that Mark has written, "And He commanded them that they should all sit down by companies upon the green grass; and they sat down in ranks by hundreds and by fifties; " but Luke, "And He said unto His disciples, Make them sit down in companies about fifty each.

⁸ For it was necessary that those who were to find rest in the food of Jesus should either be in the order of the hundred-the sacred number-which is consecrated to God, because of the unit, (in it) or in the order of the fifty-the number which embraces the remission of sins, in accordance with the mystery of the Jubilee which took place every fifty years, and of the feast at Pentecost. And I think that the twelve baskets were in the possession of the disciples to whom it was said "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And as the throne of him who judges the tribe of Reuben might be said to be a mystery, and the throne of him who judges the tribe of Simeon, and another of him who judges the tribe of Judah, and so on with the others; so there might be a basket of the food of Reuben, and another of Simeon, and another of Levi. But it is not in accordance with our present discourse now to digress so far from the subject in hand as to collect what is said about the twelve tribes, and separately what is said about each of them, and to say what each tribe of Israel may signify.

4. The Multitudes and the Disciples Contrasted.

⁹ "And straightway He constrained the disciples to enter into the boat, and to go before Him unto the other side, till He should send the multitudes away. It should be observed how often in the same passages is mentioned the word, "the multitudes," and another word, "the disciples," so that by observing and bringing together the passages about this matter it may be seen that the aim of the Evangelists was to represent by means of the Gospel history the differences of those who come to Jesus; of whom some are the multitudes and are not called disciples, and others are the disciples who are better than the multitudes. It is sufficient, however, for the present, for us to set forth a few sayings, so that any one who is moved by them may do the like with the whole of the Gospels. It is written then-as if the multitudes were below, but the disciples were able to come to Jesus when He went up into the mountain, where the multitudes were not able to be-as follows: "And seeing the multitudes He went up into the mountain, and when He had sat down

His disciples came unto Him; and He opened His mouth and taught them saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit," etc. And again in another place, as the multitudes stood in need of healing, it is said, "Many multitudes followed Him and He healed them. We do not find any healing recorded of the disciples;

¹⁰ since if any one is already a disciple of Jesus he is whole, and being well he needs Jesus not as a physician but in respect of His other powers. Again in another place, when He was speaking to the multitudes, His mother and His brethren stood without, seeking to speak to Him; this was made known to Him by some one to whom He answered, stretching forth His hand not towards the multitudes but towards the disciples, and said, "Behold My mother and My brethren. and bearing testimony to the disciples as doing the will of the Father which is in heaven, He added, "He is My brother and sister and mother. And again in another place it is written, "All the multitude stood on the beach and He spake to them many things in parables. Then after the parable of the Sowing, it was no longer the multitudes but the disciples who came and said to Him, not "Why speakest thou to us in parables," but, "Why speakest thou to them in parables. Then also He answered and said, not to the multitudes but to the disciples, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to the rest in parables. Accordingly; of those who come to the name I of Jesus some, who know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, would be called disciples; but those to whom such a privilege is not given would be called multitudes, who would be spoken of as inferior to the disciples.

¹¹ For observe carefully that He said to the disciples, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," but about the multitudes, "To them it is not given. And in another place He dismisses the multitudes indeed, and goes into the house, but He does not dismiss the disciples; and there came to Him into His house, not the multitudes but His disciples, saying, "Declare to us the parable of the tares of the field. Moreover, also, in another place when Jesus heard the things concerning John and withdrew in a boat to a desert place apart, the multitudes followed Him; when He came forth and saw a great multitude He had compassion on them and healed their sick-the sick of the multitudes, not of the disciples. "And when even was come there came to Him," not the multitudes, but the disciples, as being different from the multitudes, saying, "Send the multitudes away that they

may go into the villages and buy themselves food. And, further, when Jesus took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven He blessed and brake the loaves, He gave not to the multitudes but to the disciples, that the disciples might give to the multitudes who were not able to take from Him, but received with difficulty at the hands of the disciples the loaves of the blessing of Jesus, and did not eat even all these; for the multitudes were filled and left that which remained over in twelve baskets which were full.

5. The Disciples in Conflict. Jesus Walks Upon the Waters.

12 The reason why we have taken up this subject is the passage under discussion which tells that Jesus separated the disciples from the multitudes, and constrained them to enter into the boat and to go before Him unto the other side until He Himself should send the multitudes away; for the multitudes were not able to go away to the other side, as they were not in the mystic sense Hebrews, which are by interpretation, "dwelling on the other side. But this was the work of the disciples of Jesus-I mean to go away to the other side, and to pass beyond things seen and material, as temporal, and to go on to things unseen and eternal. To be dismissed by Jesus was a sufficient act of kindness bestowed on the multitudes by Jesus; for just because they were multitudes they were not able to go away to the other side; and this kind of dismissal no one has the power to effect save Jesus only, and it is not possible for any one to be dismissed unless he has first eaten of the loaves which Jesus blesses. Nor is it possible for any one to eat of the loaves of blessing of Jesus unless he has done as Jesus commanded and sat down upon the grass as we have told. Nor again was it possible for the multitudes to do this unless they had followed Jesus from their own cities, when He withdrew into a desert place apart.

13 And at first, when He was asked by the disciples to send away the multitudes, He did not send them away until He had fed them with the loaves of blessing; but now He sends them away, having first constrained the disciples to enter into the boat; and He sends them away, while they were somewhere below,-for the desert was below,-but He Himself went up into the mountain to pray. And you must observe this, that immediately after the five thousand had been fed, Jesus constrained the disciples to embark into the boat, and to go before Him unto the other side. Only, the disciples were not able to go before Jesus to the other side; but, when they had got as far as the middle of the sea, and the boat was distressed "because the wind was contrary to them,"

they were afraid when about the fourth watch of the night Jesus came to them. And if Jesus had not gone up into the boat neither would the wind which was contrary to the disciples who were sailing have ceased, nor would those who were sailing have gone across and come to the other side. And, perhaps, wishing to teach them by experience that it was not possible apart from Him to go to the other side He constrained them to enter into the boat and go before Him to the other side;

¹⁴ but, when they were not able to advance farther than the middle of the sea, He appeared to them, and did what is written, and showed that he who arrives at the other side reaches it because Jesus sails along with him. But what is the boat into which Jesus constrained the disciples to enter? Is it perhaps the conflict of temptations and difficulties into which any one is constrained by the Word, and goes unwillingly, as it were, when the Saviour wishes to train by exercise the disciples in this boat which is distressed by the waves and the contrary wind? But since Mark has made a slight change in the reading, and for "Straightway He constrained the disciples to enter lute the boat and to go before Him to the other side," has written, "And straightway He constrained His disciples to enter into the boat and to go before Him unto the other side unto Bethsaida," we must attend to the word, "He constrained," when first we have seen to the slight variation in Mark who indicates something more definite by the addition of the pronoun; for the same thing is not expressed by the words, straightway "He constrained the disciples. Something more than "the" disciples simply is written in Mark, namely, "His" disciples. Perhaps, therefore, to attend to the expression, the disciples who found it hard to tear themselves away from Jesus, and could not be separated from Him by any ordinary cause, wished to be present with Him;

¹⁵ but He having judged that they should make trial of the waves and of the contrary wind, which would not have been contrary if they had been with Jesus, put on them the necessity of being separated from Him and entering into the boat. The Saviour then compels the disciples to enter into the boat of temptations and to go before Him to the other side, and through victory over them to go beyond critical difficulties; but when they had come into the midst of the sea, and of the waves in the temptations, and of the contrary winds which prevented them from going away to the other side, they were not able, struggling as they were without Jesus, to overcome the

waves and the contrary wind and reach the other side. Wherefore the Word, taking compassion upon them who had done all that was in their power to reach the other side, came to them walking upon the sea, which for Him had no waves or wind that was able to oppose if He so willed; for it is not written, "He came to them walking upon the waves," but, "upon the waters;" Just as Peter, who at first when Jesus said to him, "Come," went down from the boat and walked not upon "the waves," but upon "the waters" to come to Jesus; but when he doubted he saw that the wind was strong, which was not strong to him who laid aside his little faith and his doubting.

¹⁶ But, when Jesus went up with Peter into the boat, the wind ceased, as it had no power to energeise against the boat when Jesus had gone up into it.

6. Interpretation of the Details in the Narrative. Application Thereof to All Disciples.

¹⁷ And then the disciples "having crossed over came to the land Gennesaret," of which word, if we knew the interpretation, we might gain some assistance in the exposition of the present passage. And observe, since God is faithful, and will not suffer the multitudes to be tempted above that they are able, in what way the Son of God constrained the disciples to enter into the boat, as being stronger and able to get as far as the middle of the sea, and to endure the trials by the waves, until they became worthy of divine assistance, and saw Jesus and heard Him when He had gone up, and to cross over and come to the land Gennesaret; but as for the multitudes who, because they were weaker, did not make trial of the boat and the waves and the contrary wind, them He sent away, and went up into the mountain apart to pray. To pray for whom? Was it perhaps to pray for the multitudes that, when they were dismissed after the loaves of blessing, they might do nothing opposed to their dismissal by Jesus? And for the disciples that, when they were constrained by Him to enter into the boat and to go before Him unto the other side, they might suffer nothing in the sea nor from the contrary wind? And I would say with confidence, that, because of the prayer of Jesus to the Father for the disciples, they suffered nothing when sea and wave and contrary wind were striving against them.

¹⁸ The simpler disciple, then, may be satisfied with the bare narrative; but let us remember, if ever we fall into distressful temptations, that Jesus has constrained us to enter into their boat, wishing us to go before Him unto the other side; for it is not possible for us to reach the other side, unless we have endured the temptations of waves add contrary wind. Then when we see

many difficulties besetting us, and with moderate struggle we have swum through them to some extent, let us consider that our boat is in the midst of the sea, distressed at that time by the waves which wish us to make shipwreck concerning faith or some one of the virtues; but when we see the spirit of the evil one striving against us, let us conceive that then the wind is contrary to us. ¹⁹ When then in such suffering we have spent three watches of the night—that is, of the darkness which is in the temptations—striving nobly with all our might and watching ourselves so as not to make shipwreck concerning the faith or some one of the virtues,—the first watch against the father of darkness and wickedness, the second watch against his son "who opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or thing that is worshipped," and the third watch against the spirit that is opposed to the Holy Spirit, then we believe that when the fourth watch impendeth, when "the night is far spent, and the day is at hand," the Son of God will come to us, that He may prepare the sea for us, walking upon it. And when we see the Word appearing unto us we shall indeed be troubled before we clearly understand that it is the Saviour who has come to us, supposing that we are still beholding an apparition, and for fear shall cry out; but He Himself straightway will speak to us saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And if, warmly moved by His "Be of good cheer," any Peter be found among us, who is on his way to perfection but has not yet become perfect, having gone down from the boat, as if coming out of that temptation in which he was distressed, he will indeed walk at first, wishing to come to Jesus upon the waters;

²⁰ but being as yet of little faith, and as yet doubting, will see that the wind is strong and will be afraid and begin to sink; but he will not sink because he will call upon Jesus with loud voice, and will say to Him, "Lord, save me;" then immediately while such a Peter is yet speaking and saying, "Lord save me," the Word will stretch forth His hand, holding out assistance to such an one, and will take hold of him when he is beginning to sink, and will reproach him for his little faith and doubting. Only, observe that He did not say, "O thou without faith," but, "O thou of little faith," and that it was said, "Wherefore didst thou doubt. as he had still a measure of faith, but also had a tendency towards that which was opposed to faith.

7. The Healing of the Sick on the Other Side. The Method of Healing.

²¹ But after this both Jesus and Peter will go up into the boat, and the wind will cease; and those in the boat, perceiving the great dangers from which

they have been saved, will worship Him, saying, not simply, "Thou art the Son of God," as also the two demoniacs said, but, "Of a truth, Thou art the Son of God. This the disciples in the boat say, for I do not think that others than the disciples said so. And when we have undergone all these experiences, having crossed over, we shall come to the land where Jesus commanded us to go before Him. And perhaps, also, some secret and occult mystery with reference to some who were saved by Jesus is indicated by the words, "And when the men of that place knew Him,"-plainly of the place on the other side,-"they sent into all that region round about,"-round about the other side, not on the other side itself, but round about it,-"and they brought unto Him all that were sick. And here observe that they brought unto Him not only many that were sick, but all in that region round about;

22 and the sick who were brought to Him besought Him that they might touch if it were only the border of His garment, beseeching this grace from Him, since they were not like "the woman who had an issue of blood twelve years, and who came behind Him and touched the border of His garment, saying within herself, If I do but touch His garment, I shall be made whole. For observe in what is said about the border of His garment, on account of what the flowing of her blood ceased at once. But those from the country round the land of Gennesaret, to which Jesus and His disciples crossed over and came, did not come of themselves to Jesus, but were brought by those who had sent the tidings, inasmuch as they were not able because of their extreme weakness to come of themselves. Nor did they merely touch the garment, like the woman who had an issue of blood, but they touched after that they had besought Him. Only, of these, "as many as touched were made whole. And whether there be any difference between the "They were made whole," which is said in their case, and the "being saved," -for it was said to the woman with the issue of blood, "Thy faith hath saved thee," you may yourself consider.

8. Concerning the Pharisees and Scribes Who Came and Inquired, Why Do Thy Disciples Transgress the Tradition of the Elders?

23 "Then there came to Him from Jerusalem Pharisees and scribes, saying, Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread. He who observes at what time the Pharisees and scribes came from Jerusalem to Jesus, saying, "Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders," etc., will perceive that Matthew

of necessity wrote not simply that Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem came to the Saviour to inquire of Him the matters before us, but put it thus, "Then come to Him from Jerusalem. What time, therefore, are we to understand by "then"? At the time when Jesus and His disciples crossed over and came in the boat to the land of Gennesaret, when the wind ceased from the time that Jesus entered into the boat, and when "the men of that place knowing Him sent into all that region round about, and brought unto Him all that were sick, and besought Him that they might touch if it were only the border of His garment, and as many as touched were made whole. At that time came to Him from Jerusalem Pharisees and scribes, not struck with admiration at the power which was in Jesus, which healed those who only touched even the border of His garment, but in a censorious spirit, accusing the disciples before their Teacher, not concerning the transgression of a commandment of God, but of a single tradition of the Jewish elders.

²⁴ And it is probable that this very charge of these censorious persons is a proof of the piety of the disciples of Jesus, who gave to the Pharisees and scribes no opportunity of censure with reference to the transgression of the commandments of God, as they would not have brought the charge of transgression against the disciples, as transgressing the commandment of the elders, if they had had it in their power to censure those whom they accused, and to show that they were transgressing a commandment of God. But do not suppose that these things go to establish the necessity of keeping the law of Moses according to the letter, because the disciples of Jesus up to that time kept it; for not before He suffered did He "redeem us from the curse of the law," who in suffering for men "became a curse for us. But just as fittingly Paul became a Jew to the Jews that he might gain Jews, what strange thing is it that the Apostles, whose way of life was passed among the Jews, even though they understood the spiritual things in the law, should have used a spirit of accommodation, as Paul also did when he circumcised Timothy, and offered sacrifice in accordance with a certain legal vow, as is written in the Acts of the Apostles?

²⁵ Only, again, they appear fond of bringing accusations, as they have no charge to bring against the disciples of Jesus with reference to a commandment of God, but only with reference to one tradition of the elders. And especially does this love of accusation become manifest in this, that they bring the charge in presence of those very persons who had been healed from their

sickness; in appearance against the disciples, but in reality purposing to slander their Teacher, as it was a tradition of the elders that the washing of hands was a thing essential to piety. For they thought that the hands of those who did not wash before eating bread were defiled and unclean, but that the hands of those who had washed them with water became pure and holy, not in a figurative sense, in due relation to the law of Moses according to the letter. But let us, not according to the tradition of the elders among the Jews, but according to sound reason, endeavour to purify our own actions and so to wash the hands of our souls, when we are about to eat the three loaves which we ask from Jesus, who wishes to be our friend; for with hands that are defiled and unwashed and impure, we ought not to partake of the loaves.

9. Explanation of "Corban."

²⁶ Jesus, however, does not accuse them with reference to a tradition of the Jewish elders, but with regard to two most imperative commandments of God, the one of which was the fifth in the decalogue, being as follows: "Honour thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and that thy days may be long on the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee;" and the other was written thus in Leviticus, "If a man speak evil of his father or his mother, let him die the death; he has spoken evil of his father or mother, he shall be guilty. But when we wish to examine the very letter of the words as given by Matthew, "He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death," consider whether it was taken from the place where it was written, "Whoso striketh his father or mother, let him die the death; and he that speaketh evil of father or mother let him die the death. For such are the exact words taken from the Law with regard to the two commandments; but Matthew has quoted them in part and in an abridged form, and not in the very words. But what the nature of the charge is which the Saviour brings against the Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem, when He says that they transgress the commandment of God because of their tradition we must consider.

²⁷ And God said, "Honour thy father and thy mother," teaching that the child should pay the honour which is due to his parents. Of this honour to parents one part was to share with them the necessities of life, such as food and clothing, and if there was any other thing in which it was possible for them to show favour towards their own parents. But the Pharisees and scribes promulgated in opposition to the law a tradition which is found rather ob-

scurely in the Gospel, and which we ourselves would not have thought of, unless one of the Hebrews had given to us the following facts relating to the passage. Sometimes, he says, when money-lenders fell in with stubborn debtors who were able but not willing to pay their debts, they consecrated what was due to the account of the poor, for whom money was cast into the treasury by each of those who wished to give a portion of their goods to the poor according to their ability. They, therefore, said sometimes to their debtors in their own tongue, "That which you owe to me is Corban," -that is, a gift-"for I have consecrated it to the poor, to the account of piety towards God. Then the debtor, as no longer in debt to men but to God and to piety towards God, was shut up, as it were, even though unwilling, to payment of the debt, no longer to the money-lender, but now to God for the account of the poor, in name of the money-lender.

28 What then the money-lender did to the debtor, that sometimes some sons did to their parents and said to them, "That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me, father or mother, know that you will receive this from Corban," from the account of the poor who are consecrated to God. Then the parents, hearing that that which should have been given to them was Corban,-consecrated to God,-no longer wished to take it from their sons, even though they were in extreme need of the necessities of life. The elders, then, declared to the people a tradition of this kind, "Whosoever said to his father or mother, that which should be given to any of them is Corban and a gift, that man was no longer a debtor to his father or mother in respect of giving to them the necessities of life. The Saviour censures this tradition, as not being sound but opposed to the commandment of God. For if God says, "Honour thy father and thy mother," but the tradition said, he is not bound to honour his father or mother by a gift, who has consecrated to God, as Corban, that which would have been given to his parents, manifestly the commandment of God concerning the honour due to parents was made void by the tradition of the Pharisees and scribes which said, that he was no longer bound to honour his father or mother, who had, once for all, consecrated to God that which the parents would have received.

29 And the Pharisees, as lovers of money, in order that under pretext of the poor they might receive even that which would have been given to the parents of any one, gave such teaching. And the Gospel testifies to their love of money, saying, "But the Pharisees who were lovers of money heard these

things and they scoffed at Him. If, then, any one of those who are called elders among us, or of those who are in any way rulers of the people, profess to give to the poor under the name of the commonweal, rather than to be of those who give to their kindred if they should chance to be in need of the necessities of life, and those who give cannot do both, this man might with justice be called a brother of those Pharisees who made void the word of God through their own tradition, and were accused by the Saviour as hypocrites. And as a very powerful deterrent to any one from being anxious to take from the account of the poor, and from thinking that "the piety of others is a way of gain," we have not only these things, but also that which is recorded about the traitor Judas, who in appearance championed the cause of the poor, and said with indignation, "This ointment might have been sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor," but in reality "was a thief, and having the bag took away what was put therein.

³⁰ If, then, any one in our time who has the bag of the Church speaks likes Judas on behalf of the poor, but takes away what is put therein, let there be assigned to him the portion along with Judas who did these things; on account of which things eating like a gangrene into his soul, the devil cast it into his heart to betray the Saviour; and, when he had received the "fiery dart," with reference to this end, the devil afterwards himself entered into his soul and took full possession of him. And perhaps, when the Apostle says, "The love of money is a root of all evils," he says it because of Judas' love of money, which was a root of all the evils that were committed against Jesus.

10. The Traditions of the Elders in Collision with Divine Law.

³¹ But let us return to the subject before us, in which the Saviour abridged and expounded two commandments from the law, the one from the decalogue from Exodus, and the other from Leviticus, or the other from some one of the books of the Pentateuch. Then since we have explained in what way they made void the word of God which said, "Honour thy father and thy mother," by saying, "Thou shalt not honour thy father or thy mother," whosoever shall say to his father or mother, "It is a gift that wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me," some one may inquire whether the words, "He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death," are not extraneous. For, granted that he does not honour his father and mother, who consecrates to what is called Corban that which would have been given in honour of father and mother, in what way, therefore, does the tradition

of the Pharisees make void the word which said, "He that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death.?" But, perhaps, when any one said to his father or his mother, "It is a gift, that wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me," he, as it were, casts abuse on his father or mother as if he were calling his parents sacrilegious, in taking that which was consecrated to Corban from him who had consecrated it to Corban.

³² The Jews then punish their sons according to the law, as speaking evil of father or mother, when they say to their father or mother, "It is a gift, that wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me," but you by one of your traditions make void two commandments of God. And then you are not ashamed to accuse My disciples who transgress no commandment; for they walk "in all His commandments and ordinances blamelessly," but transgress a tradition of the elders, so as not to transgress a commandment of God. And if you had held this aim before you, you would have kept the commandment about the honour due to father and mother, and that which said, "He that speaketh evil of father and mother, let him die the death;" but the tradition of the elders which is opposed to these commandments you would not have kept.

11. Exposition of the Prophecy of Isaiah Quoted by Jesus.

³³ And, after this, wishing to refute completely from the words of the prophets all these traditions of the elders among the Jews, He brought before them a saying, from Isaiah, which in the exact words is as follows: "And the Lord said, This people draws nigh to Me with their mouth," etc.; and, as we said before, Matthew has not written out the prophetic saying in the very words. And, if it be necessary because of its use in the Gospel to interpret it according to our ability, we will take in addition the preceding passage which is, in my judgment, noted with advantage by us for the exposition of that passage in the Gospel which was taken from the prophet. The passage in Isaiah from the beginning is thus. "Be ye faint, and be maddened: be ye drunken, but not with strong drink nor with wine: for the Lord hath given you to drink of the spirit of stupor, and He will close their eyes, both of their prophets, and of their rulers who see things secret. And all these sayings shall be to you as the words of the book, which has been sealed, which if they give to a man who knows letters, saying, Read this, he shall answer, I cannot read, for it is sealed. And this book will be given into the hands of a man

who does not know letters, and one will say to him, Read this, and he will say, I know not letters.

³⁴ And the Lord said, This people is nigh to Me," etc., down to the words, "Woe unto them that form counsel in secret, and their works shall be in darkness. Taking up then the passage before us in the Gospel, I have put some of the verses which come before it, and some which follow it, in order to show in what way the Word threatens to close the eyes of those of the people who are astonished and drunken, and have been made to drink of the spirit of deep sleep. And it threatens also to close the eyes of their prophets and their rulers who profess to see things secret,-which things, I think, took place after the advent of the Saviour among that people; for all the words of the whole of the Scriptures, and of Isaiah also, have become to them as the words of a sealed book. Now the expression "sealed" is used of a book closed in virtue of its obscurity and not open in virtue of its lucidity, which is equally obscure to those who are not able to read it at all because they do not know letters, and to those who profess to know letters but do not understand the meaning in the things which have been written.

³⁵ Well, then, does he add to this, that when the people, fainting because of their sins and being in a state of madness rage against Him through those sins wherewith they shall be drunken against Him with the spirit of stupor, which shall be given to them to drink by the Lord when He closes their eyes, as unworthy to see, and the eyes of their prophets and of their rulers who profess to see the hidden things of the mysteries in the Divine Scriptures; and, when their eyes are closed, then shall the prophetic words be sealed to them and hidden, as has been the case with those who do not believe in Jesus as the Christ. And when the prophetic sayings have become as the words of a sealed book, not only to those who do not know letters but to those who profess to know, then the Lord said, that the people of the Jews draw nigh to God with their mouth only, and He says that they honour Him with their lips, because their heart by reason of their unbelief in Jesus is far from the Lord. And now, especially, from the time at which they denied our Saviour, it might be said about them by God, "But in vain do they worship Me;" for they no longer teach the precepts of God but of men, and doctrines which are human and no longer of the Spirit of wisdom.

³⁶ Wherefore, when these things happen to them, God has removed the people of the Jews, and has caused to perish the wisdom of the wise men

among them; for there is no longer wisdom among them, just as there is no prophecy; but God has utterly destroyed the prudence of the prudent and concealed it, and no longer is it splendid and conspicuous. Wherefore, although they may seem to form some counsel in a deep fashion, because they do it not through the Lord they are called miserable; and even though they profess to tell some secrets of the Divine counsel they lie, since their works are not works of light, but of darkness and night. I have thought it right briefly to set forth the prophecy, and to a certain extent elucidate its meaning, seeing that Matthew made mention of it. And Mark also made mention of it, from whom we may usefully set down the following words in the place, with reference to the transgression of the elders who held that it was necessary to wash hands when the Jews ate bread, "For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders; and when they come from the market-place except they wash themselves they eat not. And there are some other things which they have received to hold, washings of cups and pots and brazen vessels and couches."

12. Things Clean and Unclean According to the Law and the Gospel.

³⁷ "And He called to Him the multitude and said unto them, Hear and understand, " etc. We are clearly taught in these words by the Saviour that, when we read in Leviticus and Deuteronomy the precepts about meat clean and unclean, for the transgression of which we are accused by the material Jews and by the Ebionites who differ little from them, we are not to think that the scope of the Scripture is found in any superficial understanding of them. For if "not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man, but that which proceedeth out of the mouth," and especially when, according to Mark, the Saviour said these things "making all meats clean," manifestly we are not defiled when we eat those things which the Jews who desire to be in bondage to the letter of the law declare to be unclean, but we are then defiled when, whereas our lips ought to be bound with perception and we ought "to make for them what we call a balance and weight," we speak offhand and discuss matters we ought not, from which there comes to us the spring of sins.

³⁸ And it is indeed becoming to the law of God to forbid those things which arise from wickedness, and to enjoin those things which tend to virtue, but as for things which are in their own nature indifferent to leave them in their own place, as they may, according to our choice and the reason

which is in us, be done ill if we sin in them, but if rightly directed by us be done well. And any one who has carefully thought on these matters will see that, even in those things which are thought to be good, it is possible for a man to sin who has taken them up in an evil way and under the impulse of passion, and that these things called impure may be considered pure, if used by us in accordance with reason. As, then, when the Jew sins his circumcision shall be reckoned for uncircumcision, but when one of the Gentiles acts uprightly his uncircumcision shall be reckoned for circumcision, so those things which are thought to be pure shall be reckoned for impure in the case of him who does not use them fittingly, nor when one ought, nor as far as he ought, nor for what reason he ought. But as for the things which are called impure, "All things become pure to the pure," for, "To them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure, since both their minds and their conscience are defiled. And when these are defiled, they make all things whatsoever they touch defiled;

³⁹ as again on the contrary the pure mind and the pure conscience make all things pure, even though they may seem to be impure; for not from intemperance, nor from love of pleasure, nor with doubting which draws a man both ways, do the righteous use meats or drinks, mindful of the precept, "Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever other thing ye do, do all to the glory of God. And if it be necessary to delineate the foods which are unclean according to the Gospel, we will say that they are such as are supplied by covetousness, and are the result of base love of gain, and are taken up from love of pleasure, and from deifying the belly which is treated with honour, when it, with its appetites, and not reason, rules our souls. But as for us who know that some things are used by demons, or if we do not know, but suspect, and are in doubt about it, if we use such things, we have used them not to the glory of God, nor in the name of Christ; for not only does the suspicion that things have been sacrificed to idols condemn him who eats, but even the doubt concerning this; for "he that doubteth," according to the Apostle, "is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

⁴⁰ He then eats in faith who believes that that which is eaten has not been sacrificed in the temples of idols, and that it is not strangled nor blood; but he eats not of faith who is in doubt about any of these things. And the man who knowing that they have been sacrificed to demons nevertheless uses

them, becomes a communicant with demons, while at the same time, his imagination is polluted with reference to demons participating in the sacrifice. And the Apostle, however, knowing that it is not the nature of meats which is the cause of injury to him who uses them or of advantage to him who refrains from their use, but opinions and the reason which is in them, said, "But meat commendeth us not to God, for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we eat not are we the worse.

⁴¹ And since he knew that those who have a loftier conception of what things are pure and what impure according to the law, turning aside from the distinction about the use of things pure and impure, and superstition, I think, in respect of things being different, become indifferent to the use of meats, and on this account are condemned by the Jews as transgressors of law, he said therefore, somewhere, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink," etc., teaching us that the things according to the letter are a shadow, but that the true thoughts of the law which are stored up in them are the good things to come, in which one may find what are the pure spiritual meats of the soul, and what are the impure foods in false and contradictory words which injure the man who is nourished in them, "For the law had a shadow of the good things to come."

13. The Offence of the Pharisees.

⁴² And as in many cases we have to consider the astonishment of the Jews at the words of the Saviour, because they were spoken with authority, so also in regard to the words in this place. Having called the multitudes therefore, He said unto them, "Hear and understand," etc. And He said this, the Pharisees being offended at this saying, as, because of their evil opinions and their worthless interpretation of the law, they were not the plant of his own Father in heaven, and on this account were being rooted up; for they were rooted up as they did not receive the true vine, which was cultivated by the Father, even Jesus Christ. For how could they be a plant of His Father who were offended at the words of Jesus, words which turn men away from the precept, "Handle not, nor taste, nor touch,-all which things were to perish in the using-after the precepts and doctrines of men," but induce the intelligent hearer of them to seek in regard to them the things which are above and not the things upon the earth as the Jews do? And since, because of their evil opinions, the Pharisees were not the plant of His Father in heaven, on this account, as about such as were incorrigible, He says to the disciple, "Let them

alone; " "Let them alone," He said for this reason, that as they were blind they ought to become conscious of their blindness and seek guides;

⁴³ but they, being unconscious of their own blindness, profess to guide the blind, not reckoning that they would fall into a pit, about which it is written in the Psalms, "He hath made a pit, and digged it, and will fall into the ditch which he hath made. Again, elsewhere it is written, "And seeing the multitudes, He went up into the mountain, and when He had sat down His disciples came unto Him; " but here He stretches forth His hand to the multitude, calling them unto Him, and turning their thoughts away from the literal interpretation of the questions in the law, when He in the first place said to them, who did not yet understand what they heard, "Hear and understand," and thereafter as in parables said to them, "Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man, but that which proceedeth out of the mouth."

14. Why the Pharisees Were Not a Plant of God. Teaching of Origen on the "Bread of the Lord."

⁴⁴ After this, it is worth while to look at the phrase which has been assailed in a sophistical way by those who say that the God of the law and the God of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not the same; for they say that the heavenly Father of Jesus Christ is not the husbandman of those who think that they worship God according to the law of Moses. Jesus Himself said that the Pharisees, who were worshipping the God who created the world and the law, were not a plant which His heavenly Father had planted, and that for this reason it was being rooted up. But you might also say this, that even if it were the Father of Jesus who "brought in and planted the people," when it came out of Egypt, "to the mountain of His own inheritance, to the place which He had prepared for Himself to dwell in," yet Jesus would have said, in regard to the Pharisees, "Every plant which My heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up. Now, to this we will say, that as many as on account of their perverse interpretation of the things in the law were not a plant of His Father in heaven, were blinded in their minds, as not believing the truth, but taking pleasure in unrighteousness, by him who is deified by the sons of this world, and on this account is called by Paul the god of this world. And do not suppose that Paul said that he was truly God;

⁴⁵ for just as the belly, though it is not the god of those who prize pleasure too highly, being lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, is said by Paul

to be their god, so the prince of this world, in regard to whom the Saviour says, "Now has the prince of this world been judged," though he is not God, is said to be the god of those who do not wish to receive the spirit of adoption, in order that they may become sons of that world, and sons of the resurrection from the dead, and who, on this account, abide in the sonship of this world. I have deemed it necessary to introduce these matters, even though they may have been spoken by way of digression, because of the saying, "They are blind guides of the blind. Who are such? The Pharisees, whose minds the god of this world hath blinded as they are unbelieving, because they have not believed in Jesus Christ; and he hath blinded them so that the "light of the Gospel of the glory of God in the face of Christ should not dawn upon them. But not only must we avoid being guided by those blind ones who are conscious that they are in need of guides, because they have not yet received the power of vision of themselves;

⁴⁶ but even in the case of all who profess to guide us in sound doctrine, we must hear with care, and apply a sound judgment to what is said, lest being guided according to the ignorance of those who are blind, and do not see the things that concern sound doctrine, we ourselves may appear to be blind because we do not see the sense of the Scriptures, so that both he who guides and he who is guided will fall into the ditch of which we have spoken before. Next to this, it is written in what way Peter answered and said to the Saviour, as if he had not understood the saying, "Not that which cometh into the mouth defileth the man, but that which goeth out of the mouth," "Declare unto us the parable. To which the Saviour says, "Are ye also, even yet, without understanding?" As if He had said, "Having been so long time with Me, do ye not yet understand the meaning of what is said, and do ye not perceive that for this reason that which goeth into his month does not defile the man, because it passeth into the belly, and going out from it is cast into the draught?" It was not in respect of the law in which they appeared to believe, that the Pharisees were not a plant of the Father of Jesus, but in respect of their perverse interpretation of the law and the things written in it.

⁴⁷ For since there are two things to be understood in regard to the law, the ministration of death which was engraven in letters and which had no kinship with the spirit, and the ministration of life which is understood in the spiritual law. those who were able with a sincere heart to say, "We know that the law is spiritual," and therefore "the law is holy, and the command-

ment holy and righteous and good," were the plant which the heavenly Father planted; but those who were not such, but guarded with care the letter which killeth only, were not a plant of God but of him who hardened their heart, and put a veil over it, which veil had power over them so long as they did not turn to the Lord; "for if any one should turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away, and the Lord is the Spirit. Now some one when dealing with the passage might say, that just as "not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man," of even though it may be thought by the Jews to be defiled, so not that which entereth into the mouth sanctifieth the man, even though what is called the bread of the Lord may be thought by the simpler disciples to sanctify. And the saying is I think, not to be despised, and on this account, demands clear exposition, which seems to me to be thus;

⁴⁸ as it is not the meat but the conscience of him who eats with doubt which defiles him that eateth, for "he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith," and as nothing is pure to him who is defiled and unbelieving, not in itself, but because of his defilement and unbelief, so that which is sanctified through the word of God and prayer does not, in its own nature, sanctify him who uses it, for, if this were so, it would sanctify even him who eats unworthily of the bread of the Lord, and no one on account of this food would become weak or sickly or asleep for something of this kind Paul represented in saying, "For this cause many among you are weak and sickly and not a few sleep. And in the case of the bread of the Lord, accordingly, there is advantage to him who uses it, when with undefiled mind and pure conscience he partakes of the bread. And so neither by not eating, I mean by the very fact that we do not eat of the bread which has been sanctified by the word of God and prayer, are we deprived of any good thing, nor by eating are we the better by any good thing; for the cause of our lacking is wickedness and sins, and the cause of our abounding is righteousness and right actions;

⁴⁹ so that such is the meaning of what is said by Paul, "For neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we eat not are we the worse. Now, if "everything that entereth into the mouth goes into the belly and is cast out into the draught," even the meat which has been sanctified through the word of God and prayer, in accordance with the fact that it is material, goes into the belly and is cast out into the draught, but in respect of the prayer which comes upon it, according to the proportion of the faith, becomes a benefit and is a

means of clear vision to the mind which looks to that which is beneficial, and it is not the material of the bread but the word which is said over it which is of advantage to him who eats it not unworthily of the Lord. And these things indeed are said of the typical and symbolical body. But many things might be said about the Word Himself who became flesh, and true meat of which he that eateth shall assuredly live for ever, no worthless person being able to eat it; for if it were possible for one who continues worthless to eat of Him who became flesh. who was the Word and the living bread, it would not have been written, that "every one who eats of this bread shall live for ever."

15. Eating with Unwashed Heart Defiles the Man.

⁵⁰Next to this let us see how the things which proceed out and defile the man do not defile the man because of their proceeding out of the mouth, but have the cause of their defilement in the heart, when there come forth out of it, before those things which proceed through the mouth, evil thoughts, of which the species are-murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness. railings. For these are the things which defile the man, when they come forth out of the heart, and going out from it proceed through the mouth; so that, if they did not come out of the heart, but were retained there somewhere about the heart, and were not allowed to be spoken through the mouth, they would very quickly disappear, and a man would be no more defiled. The spring and source, then, of every sin are evil thoughts; for, unless these gained the mastery, neither murders nor adulteries nor any other such thing would exist. Therefore, each man must keep his own heart with all watchfulness; for when the Lord comes in the day of judgment. "He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts," "all the thoughts of men meanwhile accusing or else excusing them," "when their own devices have beset them about. But of such a nature are the evil thoughts that sometimes they make worthy of censure even those things which seem good, and which, so far as the judgment of the masses is concerned, are worthy of praise.

⁵¹Accordingly, if we do alms before men, having in our thoughts the design of appearing to men philanthropic, and of being honoured because of philanthropy, we receive the reward from men; and, universally, everything that is done with the consciousness in the doer that he will be glorified by men, has no reward from Him who beholds in secret, and renders the reward

to those who are pure, in secret. So, too, therefore, is it with apparent purity if it is influenced by considerations of vain glory or love of gain; and the teaching which is thought to be the teaching of the Church, if it becomes servile through the word of flattery, either when it is made the excuse for covetousness, or when any one seeks glory from men because of his teaching, is not reckoned to be the teaching of those "who have been set by God in the Church: first, apostles; secondly, prophets; and thirdly, teachers. And you will say the like in the case of him who seeks the office of a bishop for the sake of glory with men, or of flattery from men, or for the sake of the gain received from those who, coming over to the word, give in the name of piety; for a bishop of this kind at any rate does not "desire a good work," nor can he be without reproach, nor temperate, nor sober-minded, as he is intoxicated with glory and intemperately satiated with it. And the same also you will say about the elders and deacons.

⁵² And if we seem to some to have made a digression in speaking of these things, consider if it were not necessary that they should be said, because that evil thoughts are the spring of all sins, and can pollute even those actions which, if they were done apart from evil thoughts, would have justified the man who did them. We have thus investigated according to our ability what are the things which defile; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man; but if we must say it with boldness, with unwashed heart to eat anything whatsoever which is the natural food of our reason, defileth the man.

16. Concerning the Canaanitish Woman. Meaning of the "Borders of Tyre and Sidon."

⁵³ "And Jesus went out thence and withdrew into the parts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold a Canaanitish woman. Whence the "thence"? Was it from the land of Gennesaret, concerning which it was said before, "And when they had crossed over they came into the land of Gennesaret?" But He withdrew, perhaps because the Pharisees were offended when they heard that "not that which entereth in, but that which proceedeth out, defileth the man; " and that, because of their being suspected of plotting against Him, it is said, "He withdrew," is manifest from the passage, "And when He heard that John was delivered up He withdrew into Galilee. Perhaps also on this account, when describing the things in this place, Mark says that "He rose up and went into the borders of Tyre, and having entered into the house wished no man to

know it. It is probable that He sought to avoid the Pharisees who were offended at His teaching, waiting for the time for His suffering, which was more fitting and rightly appointed. But some one might say that Tyre and Sidon are used for the Gentiles; accordingly when He withdrew from Israel He came into the parts of the Gentiles. Among the Hebrews, then, Tyre is called Sor, and it is interpreted "anguish. Sidon, which is also the Hebrew name, is rendered "hunters. And among the Gentiles likewise the hunters are the evil powers, and among them is great distress, the distress, namely, which exists in wickedness and passions.

⁵⁴ When Jesus, then, went out from Gennesaret He withdrew indeed from Israel and came, not to Tyre and Sidon, but into "the parts" of Tyre and Sidon, with the result that those of the Gentiles now believe in part; so that if He had visited the whole of Tyre and Sidon, no unbeliever would have been left in it. Now, according to Mark, "Jesus rose up and went into the borders of Tyre," -that is, the distress of the Gentiles,-in order that they also from these borders who believe can be saved, when they come out of them; for attend to this: "And behold a Canaanitish woman came out from these borders and cried saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David, my daughter is terribly vexed with a demon. And I think that if she had not come out from those borders she would not have been able to cry to Jesus with the great faith to which testimony was borne; and according to the proportion of faith one comes out from the borders among the Gentiles, which "when the Most High divided the nations He set up according to the number of the sons of Israel," and prevented their further advance. Here, then, certain borders are spoken of as the borders of Tyre and Sidon, but in Exodus the borders of Pharaoh, in which, they say, were formed the plagues against the Egyptians.

⁵⁵ And we must suppose that each of us when he sins is in the borders of Tyre or Sidon or of Pharaoh and Egypt, or some one of those which are outside the allotted inheritance of God; but when he changes from wickedness to virtue he goes out from the borders of evil, and comes to the borders of the portion of God, there being among these also a difference which will be manifest to those who are able to understand the things that concern the division and the inheritance of Israel, in harmony with the spiritual law. And all ended also to the meeting, so to speak, which took place between Jesus and the Canaanitish woman; for He comes as to the parts of Tyre and Sidon, and

she comes out of those parts, and cried, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David. Now the woman was Canaanitish, which is rendered, prepared for humiliation. The righteous, indeed, are prepared for the kingdom of heaven and for the exaltation in the kingdom of God; but sinners are prepared for the humiliation of the wickedness which is in them, and of the deeds which flow from it and prepare them for it, and of the sin which reigns in their mortal body. Only, the Canaanitish woman came out of those borders and went forth from the state of being prepared for humiliation, crying and saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David."

17. Exposition of the Details in the Narrative.

⁵⁶ Now bring together from the Gospels those who call Him Son of David, as she, and the blind men in Jericho; and who call Him Son of God, and that without the addition "truly" like the demoniacs who say, "What have we to do with Thee, Thou Son of God; " and who call Him so with the addition "truly," like those in the boat who worshipped Him saying, "Truly Thou art the Son of God. For the bringing together of these passages will, I think, be useful to you with a view to seeing the difference of those who come (to Jesus); some indeed come as to Him "who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh; " but others come to Him who "was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness; " and of these some with the "truly," and some without it. Further, observe, that the Canaanitish woman besought Him not about a son, whom she does not seem to have brought forth at all, but about a daughter who was terribly vexed with a demon; but another mother receives back alive her son who was being carried forth dead. And again the ruler of the synagogue makes supplication for a daughter twelve years old, as being dead, but the nobleman about a son as being still sick, and at the point of death. The daughter, accordingly, who was distressed by a demon, and the dead son sprang from two mothers;

⁵⁷ and the dead daughter, and the son who was sick unto death, sprang from two fathers, of whom the one was a ruler of the synagogue, and the other was a nobleman. And I am persuaded these things contain reasons concerning the verse kinds of souls which Jesus vivifies and heals. And all the cures that He works among the people, especially those recorded by the Evangelists, took place at that time, that those who would not otherwise have believed unless they saw signs and wonders might believe; for the things

aforetime were symbols of the things that are ever being accomplished by the power of Jesus; for there is no time when each of the things which are written is not done by the power of Jesus according to the desert of each. The Canaanitish woman, therefore, because of her race was not worthy even to receive an answer from Jesus, who acknowledged that He had not been sent by the Father for any other thing than to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, -a lost race of souls possessed of clear vision; but, because of her resolution and of having worshipped Jesus as Son of God, she obtains an answer, which reproaches her with baseness of birth and exhibits the measure of her worthiness, namely, that she was worthy of crumbs as the little dogs, but not of the loaves.

⁵⁸ But when she with intensified resolution, accepting the saying of Jesus, puts forth the claim to obtain crumbs even as a little dog, and acknowledges that the masters are of a nobler race, then she gets a second answer, which bears testimony to her faith as great, and a promise that it shall be done unto her as she wills. And corresponding, I think, "to the Jerusalem above, which is free, the mother" of Paul and those like to him, must we conceive of the Canaanitish woman, the mother of her who was terribly distressed with a demon, who was the symbol of the mother of such a soul. And consider whether it is not according to sound reason that there are also many fathers and many mothers corresponding to the fathers of Abraham to whom the patriarch went away, and to Jerusalem the "mother," as Paul says, concerning himself and those like to him. And it is probable that she of whom the Canaanitish woman was a symbol came out of the borders of Tyre and Sidon, of which the places on earth were types, and came to the Saviour and besought Him and even now beseeches Him saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David, my daughter is terribly vexed with a demon. Then also to those without and to the disciples when necessary He answers and says, "I was not sent;" teaching us that there are some lost souls pre-eminently intellectual and clear of vision, figuratively called sheep of the house of Israel;

⁵⁹ which things, I think, the simpler who are of opinion that they are spoken in regard to the Israel which is after the flesh will of necessity admit, namely, that our Saviour was sent by the Father to no others than to those lost Jews. But we, who can truthfully boast that "if we have once known Christ after the flesh, but now no longer do we know Him so," are assured

that it is pre-eminently the work of the Word to save the more intelligent, for these are more akin to Him than those who are duller. But since the lost sheep of the house of Israel, with the exception of "the remnant according to the election of grace," disbelieved the Word, on this account "God chose the foolish things of the world," namely, that which was not Israel, nor clear of vision, that He might put to shame the wise ones of Israel; and He called "the things which are not," handing over to them an intelligent nation who were able to admit "the foolishness of the preaching," and of His good pleasure saved those who believe in this, that He might refute "the things which are," having perfected praise for Himself, "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings," when they became hostile to truth. Now, the Canaanitish woman, having come, worshipped Jesus as God, saying, "Lord, help me," but He answered and said, "It is not possible to take the children's bread and cast it to the little dogs.

⁶⁰ But some one might inquire also into the meaning of this saying, since, inasmuch as there was a measure of loaves such that both the children and the dogs of the household could not eat loaves, unless the dogs ate other loaves than those which were well made, -it was not possible according to right reason for the well-made loaf of the children to be given as food to the little dogs. But no such thing appears in the case of the power of Jesus, for of this it was possible both for the children and those called little dogs to partake. Consider, then, whether perhaps with reference to the saying, "It is not possible to take the bread of children," we ought to say that, "He who emptied Himself and took upon Him the form of a servant," brought a measure of power such as the world was capable of receiving, of which power also He was conscious that a certain quantity went forth from Him as is plain from the words, "Some one did touch Me, for I perceived that power had gone forth from Me. From this measure of power, then, He dispensed, giving a larger portion to those who were pre-eminent and who were called sons, but a smaller portion to those who were not such, as to the little dogs.

⁶¹ But though these things were so, nevertheless where there was great faith, to her, who because of her base birth in Canaanitish land was a little dog, He gave as to a child the bread of the children. And perhaps, also, of the words of Jesus there are some loaves which it is possible to give to the more rational, as to children only; and other words, as it were, crumbs from the great house and table of the wellborn and the masters, which may be used by

some souls, like the dogs. And according to the law of Moses it is written about certain things, "Ye shall cast them to the dogs," and it was a matter of care to the Holy Spirit to give instruction about certain foods that they should be left to the dogs. Let others, then, who are strangers to the doctrine of the Church, assume that souls pass from the bodies of men into the bodies of dogs, according to their varying degree of wickedness; but we, who do not find this at all in the divine Scripture, say that the more rational condition changes into one more irrational, undergoing this affection in consequence of great slothfulness and negligence. But, also, in the same way, a will which was more irrational, because of its neglect of reason, sometimes turns and becomes rational, so that that which at one time was a dog, loving to eat of the crumbs that fell from the table of its masters, comes into the condition of a son.

⁶² For virtue contributes greatly to the making of one a son of God, but wickedness, and mad fury in wanton discourses and shamelessness, contribute to the giving of a man the name of dog according to the word of the Scripture. And the like you will also understand in the case of the other names which are applied to animals without reason. Only, he who is reproached as a dog and yet is not indignant at being called unworthy of the bread of children and with all forbearance repeats the saying of that Canaanitish woman, "Yea, Lord, for even the little dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table," will obtain the very gentle answer of Jesus saying to him, "Great is thy faith," -when he has received so great faith- and saying, "Be it done unto thee even as thou wilt," so that he himself may be healed, and if he has produced any fruit which stands in need of healing, that this, too, may be cured.

18. Concerning the Multitudes Who Were Healed. Comparison of the Mountain Where Jesus Sat to the Church.

⁶³ "And Jesus departed thence, "-manifestly, from what has been said before, from the parts of Tyre and Sidon,-"and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee. which is commonly called the Lake of Gennesaret, and again went up into the mountain where He went up and sat. We may say, then, that into this mountain where Jesus sits, not only the sound in health go up, but along with the sound, those also who were suffering from various disorders. And, perhaps, this mountain to which Jesus went up and sat is that which is more commonly called the Church, which has been set up through the word of

God over the rest of the world and the men upon it; whither go not the disciples only, leaving the multitudes as in the case of the beatitudes, but great multitudes who were not accused themselves of being deaf or suffering from any affection, but who had such along with themselves. For you may see, along with the multitudes who come to this mountain where the Son of God sits, some who have become deaf to the things promised, and others blind in soul and not looking at the true light, and others who are lame and not able to walk according to reason, and others who are maimed and not able to work according to reason.

⁶⁴ Those, accordingly, who are suffering in soul from such things, though they go up along with the multitudes into the mountain where Jesus was, so long as they are outside of the feet of Jesus, are not healed by Him; but when, as men suffering from such disorders, they are cast by the multitude at His feet, and at the extremities of the body of Christ, not being worthy to obtain such things so far as they themselves are concerned, they are then healed by Him. And when you see in the congregation of what is more commonly called the church the catechumens cast behind those who are at the extreme end of it, and as it were at the feet of the body of Jesus-the church-coming to it with their own deafness and blindness and lameness and crookedness, and in time cured according to the Word, you would not err in saying that such having gone up with the multitudes of the church to the mountain where Jesus was, are cast at His feet and are healed;

⁶⁵ so that the multitude of the church is astonished at beholding transformations which have taken place from so great evils to that which is better, so that it might say, those who were formerly dumb afterwards speak the word of God, and the lame walk, the prophecy of Isaiah being fulfilled, not only in things bodily but in things spiritual, which said, "Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of him that hath an impediment in his speech be plain. And there, unless the expression, "the lame man shall leap as an hart," is to be taken as accidental, we will say that those formerly lame, and who now through the power of Jesus leap as an hart are not without design compared to a hart, which is a clean animal, and hostile to serpents and cannot at all be injured by their poison. But also, in respect of the fact that the dumb are seen speaking is the prophecy fulfilled which said, "And the tongue of him that hath an impediment shall be plain," or rather that which said, "Hear ye deaf; "but the blind see according to the prophecy

following, "Hear ye deaf, and ye blind look up that ye may see. Now the blind see, when they see the world and from the exceeding great beauty of the things created they contemplate the Creator corresponding in greatness and beauty to them;

⁶⁶and when they see clearly "the invisible things of God Himself from the creation of the world, which are perceived through the things that are made; " that is, they see and understand with care and clearness. Now the multitudes seeing these things, glorified the God of Israel, and glorify Him in the persuasion that it is the same God, who is the Father of Him who healed those previously mentioned, and the God of Israel. For He is not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. Let us then cause to go up along with ourselves to the mountain where Jesus sits-His church-those who wish to go up to it along with us, the deaf, the blind, the lame, the maimed and many others, and let us cast them at the feet of Jesus that He may heal them, so that the multitudes are astonished at their healing; for it is not the disciples who are described as wondering at such things, although at that time they were present with Jesus, as is manifest from the words, "And Jesus called unto Him His disciples and said, I have compassion on the multitudes," etc.; and perhaps if you attend carefully to the words, "There came unto Him great multitudes," you would find that the disciples at that time did not come to Him, but had begun long ago to follow Him and followed Him into the mountain.

⁶⁷But there came unto Him those who were inferior to the disciples, and were then for the first time approaching Him, who had not the same experience as those who had gone up with them. Observe, moreover, in the Gospel who are described as having followed Jesus, and who as having come to Him, and who as having been brought to Him, and the division between those who go before and of those who follow; and of those who came, who came to Him in the house, and who when He was elsewhere. For by observation, and by comparing things spiritual with spiritual, you would find many things worthy of the accurate wisdom in the Gospels.

19. Concerning the Seven Loaves. The Narrative of the Feeding of the Four Thousand Compared with that of the Five Thousand.

⁶⁸"And Jesus called unto Him His disciples and said. Above in the similar history to this about the loaves, before the loaves are spoken of, "Jesus came forth and saw a great multitude and had compassion upon them and healed

their sick. And when even was come the disciples came to Him saying, The place is desert and the time is already past, send them away," etc. But now after the healing of the deaf and the rest, He takes compassion on the multitude which had continued with Him now three days and had nothing to eat. And there the disciples make request concerning the five thousand; but here He speaks of His own accord about the four thousand. Those, too, are fed when it was evening after they had spent a day with Him; but these, who are testified to have continued with Him three days, partake of the loaves lest they might faint by the way. And there the disciples say to Him when He was not inquiring, that they had only five loaves and two fishes; but here to Him making inquiry, they give answer about the seven loaves and the few small fishes. And there He commands the multitudes to sit down or lie upon the grass; for Luke also wrote, "Make them sit down," and Mark says, "He commanded them all to sit down;" but here He does not command but proclaims to the multitude to sit down.

⁶⁹ Again, there, the three Evangelists say in the very same words that "He took the five loaves and the two fishes and looking up to heaven He blessed;" but here, as Matthew and Mark have written, "Jesus gave thanks and brake;" there, they recline upon the grass, but here they sit down upon the ground. You will moreover investigate in the accounts in the different places the variation found in John, who wrote in regard to that transaction that Jesus said, "Make the men sit down," and that, having given thanks, He gave of the loaves to them that were set down, but he did not mention this miracle at all. Attending, then, to the difference of those things which are written in the various places in regard to the loaves, I think that these belong to a different order from those; wherefore these are fed in a mountain, and those in a desert place; and these after they had continued three days with Jesus, but those one day, on the evening of which they were fed. And further, unless it be the same thing for Jesus to do a thing of Himself and to act after having heard from the disciples, consider if those to whom Jesus shows kindness are not superior when He fed them on the spot with a view to showing them kindness.

⁷⁰ And, if according to John, they were barley loaves of which the twelve baskets remained over, but nothing of this kind is said about these, how are not these superior to the former? And the sick of those He healed, but here He heals these, along with the multitudes, who were not sick but blind, and

lame, and deaf, and maimed; wherefore also in regard to these the four thousand marvel, but in regard to the sick no such thing is said. And these I think who ate of the seven loaves for which thanks were given, are superior to those who ate of the five which were blessed; and these who ate the few little fishes to those who ate of the two, and perhaps also these who sat down upon the ground to those who sat down on the grass. And those from fewer loaves leave twelve baskets, but these from a greater number leave seven baskets, inasmuch, as they were able to receive more. And perhaps these tread upon all earthly things and sit down upon them, but those upon the grass-upon their flesh only-for "all flesh is grass. Consider also after this, that Jesus does not wish to send them away fasting lest they faint on the way, as being without the loaves of Jesus, and while they were still on the way-the way to their own concerns-might suffer injury.

⁷¹ Take note also of the cases where Jesus is recorded to have sent any one away, that you may see the difference of those who were sent away by Him after being fed, and those who had been sent away otherwise; and, as a pattern of one who was sent away otherwise, take "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. But further the disciples who are always with Jesus are not sent away by Him; but the multitudes after they have eaten are sent away. Likewise, again, the disciples who conceive nothing great about the Canaanitish woman say, "Send her away, for she crieth after us; " but the Saviour does not at all appear to send her away; for saying unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith, be it done to thee even as thou wilt," He healed her daughter from that hour: it is not however written that He sent her away. So far at the present time have we been able to investigate and see into the passage before us.

BOOK 12

1. Concerning Those Who Asked Him to Show Them a Sign from Heaven.

¹ "And the Sadducees and Pharisees came, and tempting Him kept asking Him to shew them a sign from heaven. The Sadducees and Pharisees who disagreed with each other in regard to the most essential truths,-for the Pharisees champion the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, hoping that there will be a world to come, while the Sadducees know nothing after this life in store for a man whether he has been advancing towards virtue, or has made no effort at all to come out from the mountains of wickedness,-these, I say, agree that they may tempt Jesus. Now, a similar thing, as Luke has nar-

rated, happened in the case of Herod and Pilate, who became friends with one another that they might kill Jesus; for, perhaps, their hostility with one another would have prevented Herod from asking that He should be put to death, in order to please the people, who said, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him," and would have influenced Pilate, who was somewhat inclined against His condemnation, his hostility with Herod giving fresh impulse to the inclination which he previously cherished to release Jesus. But their apparent friendship made Herod stronger in his demand against Jesus with Pilate, who wished, perhaps, also because of the newly-formed friendship to do something to gratify Herod and all the nation of the Jews.

² And often even now you may see in daily life those who hold the most divergent opinions, whether in the philosophy of the Greeks or in other systems of thought, appearing to be of one mind that they may scoff at and attack Jesus Christ in the person of His disciples. And from these things I think you may go on by rational argument to consider, whether when forces join in opposition which are in disagreement with one another, as of Pharaoh with Nebuchadnezzar, and of Tirhakah, king of the Ethiopians, with Sennacherib, a combination then takes place against Jesus and His people. So perhaps, also, "The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers were gathered together," though not at all before at harmony with one another, that having taken counsel against the Lord and His Christ. they might slay the Lord of glory.

2. Why the Pharisees Asked a Sign from Heaven.

³ Now, to this point we have come in our discourse, because of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming together unto Jesus, who disagreed in matters relating to the resurrection, but came, as it were, to an agreement for the sake of tempting our Saviour, and asking Him to show them a sign from heaven. For, not satisfied with the wonderful signs shown among the people in the healing of all forms of disease and sickness, and with the rest of the miracles which our Saviour had done in the knowledge of many, they wished Him to show to them also a sign from heaven. And I conjecture that they suspected that the signs upon earth might possibly not be of God; for they did not hesitate indeed to say, "Jesus casts out demons by Beelzebub the prince of the demons;" and it seemed to them that a sign from heaven could not spring from Beelzebub or any other wicked power. But they erred in regard to both, in regard to signs upon earth as well as to signs from heaven, not being "ap-

proved money-changers," nor knowing how to distinguish between the spirits that are working, which kind are from God, and which have revolted from Him. And they ought to have known that even many of the portents wrought against Egypt in the time of Moses, though they were not from heaven, were clearly from God, and that the fire which fell from heaven upon the sheep of Job was not from God;

⁴for that fire belonged to the same one as he to whom belonged those who carried off, and made three bands of horsemen against, the cattle of Job. I think, moreover, that in Isaiah-as if signs could be shown both from the earth and from heaven, the true being from God, but "with all power and signs and lying wonders" those from the evil one-it was said to Ahaz, "Ask for thyself a sign from the Lord thy God in the depth or in the height. For, unless there had been some signs in the depth or in the height which were not from the Lord God, this would not have been said, "Ask for thyself a sign from the Lord thy God in the depth or in the height. But I know well that such an interpretation of the passage, "Ask for thyself a sign from the Lord thy God," will seem to some one rather forced; but give heed to that which is said by the Apostle about the man of sin, the son of perdition, that, "with all power and signs and lying wonders and with all deceit of unrighteousness," he shall be manifested to them that are perishing, imitating all kinds of wonders, to-wit, those of truth. And as the enchanters and magicians of the Egyptians, as being inferior to the man of sin and the son of perdition, imitated certain powers, both the signs and wonders of truth, doing lying wonders so that the true might not be believed;

⁵so I think the man of sin will imitate signs and powers. And perhaps, also, the Pharisees suspected these things because of the prophecies concerning Him; but I inquire whether also the Sadducees tempting Him asked Jesus to show them a sign from heaven. For unless we say that they suspected this, how shall we describe their relation to the portents which Jesus wrought, who continued hard-hearted and were not put to shame by the miraculous things that were done? But if any one supposes that we have given an occasion of defence to the Pharisees and Sadducees, both when they say that the demons were cast out by Jesus through Beelzebub, and when tempting Him, they ask Jesus about a heavenly sign, let him know that we plausibly say that they were drawn away to the end that they might not believe in the miracles of Jesus; but not as to deserve forgiveness; for they did not look to the words

of the prophets which were being fulfilled in the acts of Jesus, which an evil power was not at all capable of imitating. But to bring back a soul which had gone out, so that it came out of the grave when already stinking and passing the fourth day, was the work of no other than Him who heard the word of the Father, "Let us make man after our image and likeness.

⁶ But also to command the winds and to make the violence of the sea cease at a word, was the work of no other than Him through whom all things, both the sea itself and the winds, have come into being. Moreover also as to the teaching which stimulates men to the love of the Creator, in harmony with the law and the prophets, and which checks passions and moulds morals according to piety, what else did it indicate to such as were able to see. than that He was truly the Son of God who wrought works so mighty? In respect of which things He said also to the disciples of John, "Go your way and tell John what great things ye see and hear; the blind receive their sight," etc.

3. The Answer of Jesus to Their Request.

⁷ Next let us remark in what way, when asked in regard to one sign, that He might show it from heaven, to the Pharisees and Sadducees who put the question, He answers and says, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall be no sign given to it, but the sign of Jonah the prophet, " when also, "He left them and departed. But the sign of Jonah, in truth, according to their question, was not merely a sign but also a sign from heaven; so that even to those who tempted Him and sought a sign from heaven He, nevertheless, out of His own great goodness gave the sign. For if, as Jonah passed three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so the Son of man did in the heart of the earth, and after this rose up from it, -whence but from heaven shall we say that the sign of the resurrection of Christ came? And especially when, at the time of the passion, He became a sign to the robber who obtained favour from Him to enter into the paradise of God; after this, I think, descending into Hades to the dead, "as free among the dead. And the Saviour seems to me to conjoin the sign which was to come from Himself with the reason of the sign in regard to Jonah when He says, not merely that a sign like to that is granted by Him but that very sign;

⁸ for attend to the words, "And there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet. Accordingly that sign was this sign, because that became indicative of this, so that the elucidation of that sign, which was ob-

scure on the face of it, might be found in the fact that the Saviour suffered, and passed three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. At the same time also we learn the general principle that, if the sign signifies something, each of the signs which are recorded, whether as in actual history, or by way of precept, is indicative of something afterwards fulfilled; as for example, the sign of Jonah going out after three days from the whale's belly was indicative of the resurrection of our Saviour, rising after three days and three nights from the dead; and that which is called circumcision is the sign of that which is indicated by Paul in the words: "We are the circumcision. Seek you also every sign in the Old Scriptures as indicative of some passage in the New Scripture, and that which is named a sign in the New Covenant as indicative of something either in the age about to be, or even in the subsequent generations after that the sign has taken place.

4. Why Jesus Called Them an Adulterous Generation, the Law as Husband.

9 And He called them, indeed, "an evil generation," because of the quality arising from evil which had been produced in them, for wickedness is voluntary evil-doing, but "adulterous" because that when the Pharisees and Sadducees left that which is figuratively called man, the word of truth or the law, they were debauched by falsehood and the law of sin. For if there are two laws, the law in our members warring against the law of the mind, and the law of the mind, we must say that the law of the mind-that is, the spiritual-is man, to whom the soul was given by God as wife, that is, to the man who is law, according to what is written, "A wife is married to a man by God;" but the other is a paramour of the soul which is subject to it, which also on account of it is called an adulteress. Now that the law is husband of the soul Paul clearly exhibits in the Epistle to the Romans, saying, "The law hath dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth; for the woman that hath a husband is bound to the husband while he liveth, to the husband who is law," etc. For consider in these things that the law hath dominion over the man so long time as the law liveth,-as a husband over a wife.

10 "For the woman that hath a husband," that is, the soul under the law, "is bound to the husband while he liveth," to the husband who is the law; but if the husband-that is, the law die-she is discharged from the law, which is her husband. Now the law dies to him who has gone up to the condition of blessedness, and no longer lives under the law, but acts like to Christ, who, though He became under law for the sake of those under law, that He might

gain those under law, did not continue under law, nor did He leave subject to law those who had been freed by Him; for He led them up along with Himself to the divine citizenship which is above the law, which contains, as for the imperfect and such as are still sinners, sacrifices for the remission of sins. He then who is without sin, and stands no longer in need of legal sacrifices, perhaps when he has become perfect has passed beyond even the spiritual law, and comes to the Word beyond it, who became flesh to those who live in the flesh, but to those who no longer at all war after the flesh, He is perceived as being the Word, as He was God in the beginning with God, and reveals the Father. Three things therefore are to be thought of in connection with this place-the woman that hath a husband, who is under a husband-the law;

¹¹ and the woman who is an adulteress, to-wit, the soul, which, while her husband, the law, liveth, has become joined to another husband, namely, the law of the flesh; and the woman who is married to the brother of the dead husband, to the Word who is alive and dies not, who "being raised from the dead dieth no more, for death hath no more dominion over Him. So far then because of the saying, "But if the husband die she is discharged from the law, the husband," and because of this, "so then, while her husband liveth, she shall be called an adulteress, if she be joined to another man," and because of this, "but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress though she be joined to another man. But this very saying, "So then while her husband liveth, she shall be called an adulteress," we have brought forward, wishing clearly to show why in answer to the Pharisees and Sadducees who were tempting Him and asking Him to show them a sign from heaven, He said not only "a wicked generation," but an "adulterous" generation. In a general way, then, the law in the members which wars against the law of the mind, as a man who is an adulterer, is an adulterer of the soul.

¹² But now also every power that is hostile, which gains the mastery over the human soul, and has intercourse with it, commits adultery with her who had a bridegroom given to her by God, namely, the Word. After these things it is written that "He left them and departed. For how was the bridegroom-the Word-not going to leave the adulterous generation and depart from it? But you might say that the Word of God, leaving the synagogue of the Jews as adulterous, departed from it, and took a wife of fornication, namely, those from the Gentiles; since those who were "Sion, a faithful city,"

have become harlots; but these have become like the harlot Rahab, who received the spies of Joshua, and was saved with all her house; after this no longer playing the harlot, but coming to the feet of Jesus, and wetting them with the tears of repentance, and anointing them with the fragrance of the ointment of holy conversation, on account of whom, reproaching Simon the leper,-the former people,-He spoke those things which are written.

5. Concerning the Leaven of the Pharisees.

13 "And His disciples came to the other side and forgot to take loaves. Since the loaves which they had before they came to the other side were no longer useful to the disciples when they came to the other side, for they needed one kind of loaves before they crossed and a different kind when they crossed,-on this account, being careless of taking loaves when going to the other side, they forgot to take loaves with them. To the other side then came the disciples of Jesus who had passed over from things material to things spiritual, and from things sensible to those which are intellectual. And perhaps that He might turn back those who, by crossing to the other side, "had begun in spirit," from running back to carnal things, Jesus said to them when on the other side, "Take heed and beware. For there was a certain lump of teaching and of truly ancient leaven,-that according to the bare letter, and on this account not freed from those things which arise from wickedness,-which the Pharisees and Sadducees offered, of which Jesus does not wish His own disciples any longer to eat, having made for them a new and spiritual lump, offering Himself to those who gave up the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees and had come to Him-"the living bread which came down from heaven and gives life to the world.

14 But since, to him who is no longer going to use the leaven and the lump and the teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the first thing is to "see" and then to "beware," so that no one, by reason of not seeing and from want of taking heed, may ever partake of their forbidden leaven,-on this account He says to the disciples, first, "see," and then, "beware. It is the mark of the clear-sighted and careful to separate the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees and every food that is not of "the unleavened-bread of sincerity and truth" from the living bread, even that which came down from heaven, so that no one who eats may adopt the things of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but by eating the living and true bread may strengthen his soul. And we might seasonably apply the saying to those who, along with the

Christian way of life, prefer to live as the Jews, materially, for these do not see nor beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, but, contrary to the will of Jesus who forbade it, eat the bread of the Pharisees. Yea and also all, who do not wish to understand that the law is spiritual, and has a shadow of the good things to come, and is a shadow of the things to come, neither inquire of what good thing about to be each of the laws is a shadow, nor do they see nor beware of the leaven of the Pharisees;

¹⁵ and they also who reject the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead are not on their guard against the leaven of the Sadducees. And there are many among the heterodox who, because of their unbelief in regard to the resurrection of the dead, are imbued with the leaven of the Sadducees. Now, while Jesus said these things, the disciples reasoned, saying not aloud, but in their own hearts, "We took no loaves. And something like this was what they said, "If we had loaves we would not have had to take of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees; but since, from want of loaves, we run the risk of taking from their leaven, while the Saviour does not wish us to run back to their teaching, therefore He said to us, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And these things then they reasoned; Jesus, while looking to that which was in their hearts, and hearing the reasons in them, as the true overseer of hearts, reproves them because they did not see nor remember the loaves which they received from Him; on account of which, even when they appeared to be in want of loaves, they did not need the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

6. The Meaning of Leaven. Jesus' Knowledge of the Heart.

¹⁶ Then expounding clearly and representing to them, who were being distracted because of the equivocal meaning of loaf and leaven, in an undisguised fashion, that He was not speaking to them about sensible bread but about the leaven in the teaching, He subjoins, "How is it that ye do not perceive that I spake not you concerning bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And though He had not laid bare the interpretation, but still continued to use metaphorical language, the disciples would have understood that the discourse of the Saviour was about the teaching, figuratively called leaven, which the Pharisees and Sadducees were teaching. So long, then, as we have Jesus with us fulfilling the promise which runs, "Lo, I am with you always unto the consummation of the age," we cannot fast nor be in want of food, so that, because of want of it we should desire to take and

eat the forbidden leaven, even from the Pharisees and Sadducees. Now there may sometimes be a time, when He is with us, that we are without food, as is spoken of in the passage above, "They continue with me now three days and have nothing to eat; " but, even though this should happen, being unwilling to send us away fasting lest we faint on the way, He gives thanks over the loaves which were with the disciples, and causes us to have the seven baskets over from the seven loaves, as we have recorded.

¹⁷ And moreover this also is to be observed, in view of those who think that the divinity of the Saviour is not at all demonstrable from the Gospel of Matthew, that the fact that, when the disciples were reasoning among themselves and saying, "We have no loaves," Jesus knew their reasonings and said, "Why reason ye among yourselves, O ye of little faith, because ye took no loaves," was beyond the power of man; for the Lord alone, as Solomon says in the third Book of Kings, knows the hearts of men. But since the disciples understood, when Jesus said, "Beware of the leaven," that He did not tell them to beware of the loaves but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees, you will understand that whenever leaven is named it is put figuratively for teaching, whether in the law, or in the Scriptures which come after the law; and so perhaps leaven is not offered upon the altar; for it is not right that prayers should take the form of teaching, but should only be supplications of good things from God. But one might inquire, on account of what has been said about disciples who came to the other side, if any one who has reached the other side can be reproached as one of little faith, and as not yet understanding nor remembering what was done by Jesus.

¹⁸ But it is not difficult, I think, to say to this, that in relation to that which is perfect, on the coming of which "that which is in part shall be done away," all our faith here is little faith, and in regard to that, we who know in part do not yet know nor remember; for we are not able to obtain a memory which is sufficient and able to attain to the magnitude of the nature of the speculations.

7. Relative Magnitude of Sins of the Heart and Actual Sins.

¹⁹ But we may also learn from this, that in respect of the reasonings only which we reason within ourselves, we are sometimes convicted and reproached as being of little faith. And I think that just as a man commits adultery in his heart only, though not proceeding altogether to the overt act, so he commits in his heart the rest of the things which are forbidden. As

then he who has committed adultery in his heart will be punished proportionately to adultery of this kind, so also he who has done in his heart any one of the things forbidden, for example, who has stolen in his heart only, or borne false witness in his heart only, will not be punished as he who has stolen in fact, or who has completed the very act of false testimony, but only as he who has done such things in his heart. There is also the case of the man who while he did not arrive at the evil action, came short of it in spite of his own will. For if, in addition to willing it, he has attempted it, but not carried it out, he will be punished not as one who has sinned in his heart alone but in deed. To questions of this sort one might ask, whether any one commits adultery in his heart, even if he does not do the deed of adultery, but lacks self-control in heart only. And the like also you will say concerning the rest of things which are deserving of praise.

20 But the passage possibly contains a plausible fallacy which must be cleared away, I think, in this manner: adultery which takes place in the heart is a less sin, than if one were also to add to it the act. But it is impossible that there can be chastity in the heart, hindering the chaste action—unless indeed one brings forward for an illustration of this the case of the virgin who according to the law was violated in solitude; for it may be granted that the heart of any one may be most pure, but that force in a matter of licentiousness has caused the corruption of the body of her who was chaste. In truth she seems to me to be altogether chaste in secret heart, but no longer to be pure in body such as she was before the act of violence; but though she is not pure outwardly, is she therefore now also unchaste? I have said these things because of the words, "They reasoned among themselves saying, We took no loaves," to which is added, "And Jesus perceiving it, said, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves," etc.; for it was necessary that investigation should be made in regard to the censure of things in secret and correlatively to the praise of things in secret.

8. The Leaven Figurative Like the Water Spoken of by Jesus to the Woman of Samaria.

21 But I wonder if the disciples thought, before the saying was explained to them by Jesus, that their Teacher and Lord was forbidding them to beware of the sensible leaven of the Pharisees or the Sadducees as impure, and on this account forbidden, lest they might use that leaven because they had not taken loaves. And we might make a like inquiry in regard to other things;

but by-way of illustration the narrative about the woman of Samaria sufficeth, "Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." For there, also, so far as the mere form of expression is concerned, the Samaritan woman would seem to have thought that the Saviour was giving a promise about sensible water, when He said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." And those things then must be figuratively interpreted, and we must examine and compare the water of the spring of Jacob from which the woman of Samaria drew water with the water of Jesus; and here the like must be done; for perhaps the loaves were not baked, but a kind of raw leaven solely, the teaching, namely, of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

*9. Concerning the Question of Jesus in Caesarea, Who Do Men Say that I Am?
Different Conceptions of Jesus.*

²² "Now when Jesus came into the parts of Coesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples. Jesus inquires of the disciples, "Who do men say that I am," that we may learn from the answer of the Apostles the different conceptions then held among the Jews in regard to our Saviour; and perhaps also that the disciples of Jesus might learn to be interested in knowing what is said by men about them; because that will be an advantage to them who do it, by cutting off in every way occasions of evil if anything evil is spoken of, and by increasing the incitements to good, if anything good is spoken of. Only, observe how, on account of the different movements of opinion among the Jews about Jesus, some, under the influence of unsound theories, said that He was John the Baptist. like Herod the tetrarch who said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist, he is risen from the dead, and therefore do the powers work in him;" but others that He who was now called Jesus was Elijah, either having been born a second time, or living from that time in the flesh, and appearing at the present time.

²³ But those who said that Jesus was Jeremiah, and not that Jeremiah was a type of the Christ, were perhaps influenced by what is said in the beginning of Jeremiah about Christ, which was not fulfilled in the prophet at that time, but was beginning to be fulfilled in Jesus, whom "God set up over nations and kingdoms to root up, and to break down, and to destroy, and to build up, and to transplant," having made Him to be a prophet to the Gentiles to whom He proclaimed the word. Moreover also those who said, "that

he was a certain one of the prophets," conceived this opinion concerning Him because of those things which had been said in the prophets as unto them, but which had not been fulfilled in their case. But also the Jews, as worthy of the veil which was upon their heart, held false opinions concerning Jesus; while Peter as not a disciple "of flesh and blood," but as one fit to receive the revelation of the Father in heaven, confessed that He was the Christ. The saying of Peter to the Saviour, "Thou art the Christ," when the Jews did not know that He was Christ, was indeed a great thing, but greater that he knew Him not only to be Christ, but also "the Son of the living God," who had also said through the prophets, "I live," and "They have forsaken Me the spring of living water;

24 " -and He is life also, as from the Father the spring of life, who said, "I am the Life;" And consider carefully, whether, as the spring of the river is not the same thing as the river, the spring of life is not the same as life. And these things we have added because to the saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God," was subjoined the word "living;" for it was necessary to set forth something noteworthy in regard to that which is said about God and the Father of all things as living, both in relation to His absolute life, and in relation to those things which participate in it. But since we said that they were under the influence of unsound opinions who declared that Jesus was John the Baptist, or any one of those named, in saying this let us prove that if they had fallen in with Jesus as He was going away to John for baptism, or with John when he was baptizing Jesus, or if they had heard it from any one, they would not have said that Jesus was John. But also if they had understood the opinions under the influence of which Jesus said, "If ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah which is to come. and had heard what was said, as men having ears, some would not have said that He was Elijah.

25 And if those who said that He was Jeremiah had perceived that the most of the prophets took upon themselves certain features that were symbolical of Him, they would not have said that He was Jeremiah; and in like manner the others would not have said that He was one of the prophets.

10. The Answer of Peter.

26 And perhaps that which Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," if we say it as Peter, not by flesh and blood revealing it unto us, but by the light from the Father in heaven shining in our heart, we too become as Peter, being pronounced blessed as he

was, because that the grounds on which he was pronounced blessed apply also to us, by reason of the fact that flesh and blood have not revealed to us with regard to Jesus that He is Christ, the Son of the living God, but the Father in heaven, from the very heavens, that our citizenship may be in heaven, revealing to us the revelation which carries up to heaven those who take away every veil from the heart, and receive "the spirit of the wisdom and revelation" of God. And if we too have said like Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," not as if flesh and blood had revealed it unto us, but by light from the Father in heaven having shone in our heart, we become a Peter, and to us there might be said by the Word, "Thou art Peter," etc. For a rock is every disciple of Christ of whom those drank who drank of the spiritual rock which followed them, and upon every such rock is built every word of the church, add the polity in accordance with it; for in each of the perfect, who have the combination of words and deeds and thoughts which fill up the blessedness, is the church built by God.

11. The Promise Given to Peter Not Restricted to Him, But Applicable to All Disciples Like Him.

²⁷ But if you suppose that upon that one Peter only the whole church is built by God, what would you say about John the son of thunder or each one of the Apostles? Shall we otherwise dare to say, that against Peter in particular the gates of Hades shall not prevail, but that they shall prevail against the other Apostles and the perfect? Does not the saying previously made, "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it," hold in regard to all and in the case of each of them? And also the saying, "Upon this rock I will build My church"? Are the keys of the kingdom of heaven given by the Lord to Peter only, and will no other of the blessed receive them? But if this promise, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," be common to the others, how shall not all the things previously spoken of, and the things which are subjoined as having been addressed to Peter, be common to them? For in this place these words seem to be addressed as to Peter only, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," etc; but in the Gospel of John the Saviour having given the Holy Spirit unto the disciples by breathing upon them said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," etc. Many then will say to the Saviour, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;

²⁸ "but not all who say this will say it to Him, as not at all having learned it by the revelation of flesh and blood but by the Father in heaven Himself

taking away the veil that lay upon their heart, in order that after this "with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord" they may speak through the Spirit of God saying concerning Him, "Lord Jesus," and to Him, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And if any one says this to Him, not by flesh and blood revealing it unto Him but through the Father in heaven, he will obtain the things that were spoken according to the letter of the Gospel to that Peter, but, as the spirit of the Gospel teaches, to every one who becomes such as that Peter was. For all bear the surname of "rock" who are the imitators of Christ, that is, of the spiritual rock which followed those who are being saved, that they may drink from it the spiritual draught. But these bear the surname of the rock just as Christ does. But also as members of Christ deriving their surname from Him they are called Christians, and from the rock, Peters. And taking occasion from these things you will say that the righteous bear the surname of Christ who is Righteousness, and the wise of Christ who is Wisdom. And so in regard to all His other names, you will apply them by way of surname to the saints;

²⁹and to all such the saying of the Saviour might be spoken, "Thou art Peter," etc., down to the words, "prevail against it. But what is the "it"? Is it the rock upon which Christ builds the church, or is it the church? For the phrase is ambiguous. Or is it as if the rock and the church were one and the same? This I think to be true; for neither against the rock on which Christ builds the church, nor against the church will the gates of Hades prevail; just as the way of a serpent upon a rock, according to what is written in the Proverbs, cannot be found. Now, if the gates of Hades prevail against any one, such an one cannot be a rock upon which Christ builds the church, nor the church built by Jesus upon the rock; for the rock is inaccessible to the serpent, and it is stronger than the gates of Hades which are opposing it, so that because of its strength the gates of Hades do not prevail against it; but the church, as a building of Christ who built His own house wisely upon the rock, is incapable of admitting the gates of Hades which prevail against every man who is outside the rock and the church, but have no power against it.

12. Every Sin-Every False Doctrine is a "Gate of Hades."

³⁰But when we have understood how each of the sins through which there is a way to Hades is a gate of Hades, we shall apprehend that the soul, which has "spot or wrinkle or any such thing," and because of wickedness is neither holy nor blameless, is neither a rock upon which Christ builds, nor a church,

nor part of a church which Christ builds upon the rock. But if any one wishes to put us to shame in regard to these things because of the great majority of those of the church who are thought to believe, it must be said to him not only "Many are called, but few chosen; " but also that which was said by the Saviour to those who come to Him, as it is recorded in Luke in these words, "Strive to enter in by the narrow door, for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in through the narrow door and shall not be able; " and also that which is written in the Gospel of Matthew thus, "For narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it. Now, if you attend to the saying, "Many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in and shall not be able," you will understand that this refers to those who boast that they are of the church, but live weakly and contrary to the word.

³¹ Of those, then, who seek to enter in, those who are not able to enter will not be able to do so, because the gates of Hades prevail against them; but in the case of those against whom the gates of Hades will not prevail, those seeking to enter in will be strong, being able to do all things, in Christ Jesus, who strengtheneth them. And in like manner each one of those who are the authors of any evil opinion has become the architect of a certain gate of Hades; but those who co-operate with the teaching of the architect of such things are servants and stewards, who are the bond-servants of the evil doctrine which goes to build up impiety. And though the gates of Hades are many and almost innumerable, no gate of Hades will prevail against the rock or against the church which Christ builds upon it. Notwithstanding, these gates have a certain power by which they gain the mastery over some who do not resist and strive against them; but they are overcome by others who, because they do not turn aside from Him who said, "I am the door," have rased from their soul all the gates of Hades. And this also we must know that as the gates of cities have each their own names, in the same way the gates of Hades might be named after the species of sins;

³² so that one gate of Hades is called "fornication," through which fornicators go, and another "denial," through which the deniers of God go down into Hades. And likewise already each of the heterodox and of those who have begotten any "knowledge which is falsely so called," has built a gate of Hades—Marcion one gate, and Basilides another, and Valentinus another.

13. The "Gates of Hades" And the "Gates of Zion" Contrasted.

³³ In this place, then, the gates of Hades are spoken of; but in the Psalms the prophet gives thanks saying, "He who lifteth me up from the gates of death that I may declare all thy praises in the gates of the daughter of Zion. And from this we learn that it is never possible for any one to be fit to declare the praises of God, unless he has been lifted up from the gates of death, and has come to the gates of Zion. Now the gates of Zion may be conceived as opposed to the gates of death, so that there is one gate of death, dissoluteness, but a gate of Zion, self-control; and so a gate of death, unrighteousness, but a gate of Zion, righteousness, which the prophet shows forth saying, "This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter into it. And again there is cowardice, a gate of death, but manly courage, a gate of Zion; and want of prudence, a gate of death, but its opposite, prudence, a gate of Zion. But to all the gates of the "knowledge which is falsely so called" one gate is opposed, the gate of knowledge which is free from falsehood. But consider if, because of the saying, "our wrestling is not against flesh and blood," etc., you can say that each power and world-ruler of this darkness, and each one of the "spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" is a gate of Hades and a gate of death.

³⁴ Let, then, the principalities and powers with which our wrestling is, be called gates of Hades, but the "ministering spirits" gates of righteousness. But as in the case of the better things many gates are first spoken of, and after the gates, one, in the passage, "Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will enter into them, and will make full confession to the Lord," and "this is the gate of the Lord, by it the righteous shall enter;" so also in the case of those gates which are opposed, many are the gates of Hades and death, each a power; but over all these the wicked one himself. And let us take heed in regard to each sin, as if we were descending into some gate of death if we sin; but when we are lifted up from the gates of death let us declare all the praises of the Lord in the gates of the daughter of Zion; as, for example, in one gate of the daughter of Zion-that which is called self-control-we will declare by our self-control the praises of God; and in another which is called righteousness, by righteousness we will declare the praises of God; and, generally, in all things whatsoever of a praiseworthy character with which we are; occupied, in these we are at some gate of the daughter of Zion, declaring at each gate some praise of God.

³⁵ But we must make inquiry whether in one of the Twelve it is said, "They hated him that reproveth in the gates, and they loathed the holy word. Perhaps, then, he who reproves in the gates is of the gates of the daughter of Zion, reproving those who are in sins which are opposed to this gate, even of the gates of Hades or death. But if ye do not so understand the words, "They hated him that reproveth in the gates," either the expression "in the gates" will be held to be superfluous, or investigate how that which is said can be worthy of the prophetic spirit.

14. In What Sense the "Keys" Are Given to Peter, and Every Peter. Limitations of This Power.

³⁶ And after this let us see in what sense it is said to Peter, and to every Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And, in the first place, I think that the saying, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," is spoken in consistency with the words, "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. For he is worthy to receive from the same Word the keys of the kingdom of heaven, who is fortified against the gates of Hades so that they do not prevail against him, receiving, as it were, for a prize, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, because the gates of Hades had no power against him, that he might open for himself the gates that were closed to those who had been conquered by the gates of Hades. And he enters in, as a temperate man, through an opened gate-the gate of temperance-by the key which opens temperance; and, as a righteous man, by another gate-the gate of righteousness-which is opened by the key of righteousness; and so with the rest of the virtues. For I think that for every virtue of knowledge certain mysteries of wisdom corresponding to the species of the virtue are opened up to him who has lived according to virtue;

³⁷ the Saviour giving to those who are not mastered by the gates of Hades as many keys as there are virtues, which open gates equal in number, which correspond to each virtue according to the revelation of the mysteries. And perhaps, also, each virtue is a kingdom of heaven, and all together are a kingdom of the heavens; so that according to this he is already in the kingdom of the heavens who lives according to the virtues, so that according to this the saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," is to be referred, not to the time, but to deeds and dispositions; for Christ, who is all virtue, has come, and speaks, and on account of this the kingdom of God is within His disciples, and not here or there. But consider how great power the

rock has upon which the church is built by Christ, and how great power every one has who says, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," so that the judgments of this man abide sure, as if God were judging in him, that in the very act of judging the gates of Hades shall not prevail against him. But when one judges unrighteously, and does not bind upon earth according to the Word of God, nor loose upon earth according to His will, the gates of Hades prevail against him; but, in the case of any one against whom the gates of Hades do not prevail, this man judges righteously.

³⁸ Wherefore he has the keys of the kingdom of heaven, opening to those who have been loosed on earth that they may be also loosed in heaven, and free; and shutting to those who by his just judgment have been bound on earth that they also may be bound in heaven, and condemned. But when those who maintain the function of the episcopate make use of this word as Peter, and, having received the keys of the kingdom of heaven from the Saviour, teach that things bound by them, that is to say, condemned, are also bound in heaven, and that those which have obtained remission by them are also loosed in heaven, we must say that they speak wholesomely if they have the way of life on account of which it was said to that Peter, "Thou art Peter;" and if they are such that upon them the church is built by Christ, and to them with good reason this could be referred; and the gates of Hades ought not to prevail against him when he wishes to bind and loose. But if he is tightly bound with the cords of his sins, to no purpose does he bind and loose. And perhaps you can say that in the heavens which are in the wise man-that, is the virtues,-the bad man is bound; and again in these the virtuous man is loosed, and has received an indemnity for the sins which he committed before his virtue.

³⁹ But, as the man, who has not the cords of sins nor iniquities compared to a "long rope or to the strap of the yoke of a heifer," not even God could bind, in like manner, no Peter, whoever he may be; and if any one who is not a Peter, and does not possess the things here spoken of, imagines as a Peter that he will so bind on earth that the things bound are bound in heaven, and will so loose on earth that the things loosed are loosed in heaven, he is puffed up, not understanding the meaning of the Scriptures, and, being puffed up, has fallen into the ruin of the devil.

15. Relation of the Former Commission Given by Jesus to the Disciples, to His Present Injunction of Silence. Belief and Knowledge Contrasted.

⁴⁰ "Then enjoined He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was the Christ. It is written above that Jesus sent forth these twelve saying unto them, "Go not into any way of the Gentiles," and the other words which are recorded to have been said to them when He sent them to the apostleship. Did He then wish them when they were already discharging the function of Apostles to proclaim that He was the Christ? For, if He wished it, it is fitting to inquire why He now at all commands the disciples that they should not say that He was the Christ? Or if He did not wish it, how can the things concerning the apostleship be safely maintained? And these things also one may inquire at this place,--whether, when He sent away the Twelve, He did not send them away with the understanding that He was the Christ? But if the Twelve had such understanding, manifestly Peter had it also; how, then, is he now pronounced blessed? For the expression here plainly indicates that now for the first time Peter confessed that Christ was the Son of the living God, Matthew then, according to some of the manuscripts, has written, "Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no man that He was the Christ," but Mark says, "He charged them that they should tell no man of Him;" and Luke, "He charged them and commanded them to tell this to no man. But what is the "this"?"

⁴¹ Was it that also according to him, Peter answered and said to the question, "Who say ye that I am."-"The Christ, the Son of the living God?" You must know, however, that some manuscripts of the Gospel according to Matthew have, "He charged. The difficulty thus started seems to me a very real difficulty; but let a solution which cannot be impugned be sought out, and let the finder of it bring it forward before all, if it be more credible than that which shall be advanced by us as a fairly temperate view. Consider, then, if you can say, that the belief that Jesus is the Christ is inferior to the knowledge of that which is believed. And perhaps also there is a difference in the knowledge of Jesus as the Christ, as every one who knows does not know Him alike. From the words in John, "If ye abide in My word, ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," it is plain that belief without knowledge is inferior to knowing; but that there is a difference in the knowledge of Jesus as the Christ, as all who know Him do not know Him equally, is a fact self-evident to any one who gives even a very little consideration to

the matter. For who would not acknowledge, for example, that Timothy, though he knew that Jesus was the Christ, had not been enlightened to such an extent in the knowledge of Him as the Apostle had been enlightened?

⁴² And who would not also admit this—that though many, speaking the truth, say about God, "He has given to me a true knowledge of things that are," yet they will not say this with equal insight and apprehension of the things known, nor as knowing the same number of things? But it is not only in respect of the difference of knowing that those who know do not know alike, but also according to that which is the source of the knowledge; so that according to this he who knows the Son by the revelation of the Father, as Peter is testified to have known, has the highest beatitude. Now, if these views of ours are sound, you will consider whether the Twelve formerly believed but did not know; but, after believing, they gained also the rudiments of knowledge and knew a few things about Him; and afterwards they continued to advance in knowledge so that they were able to receive the knowledge from the Father who reveals the Son; in which position Peter was, when he was pronounced blessed; for also he is pronounced blessed not merely because he said, "Thou art the Christ," but with the addition, "the Son of the living God. Accordingly Mark and Luke who have recorded that Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ," but have not given the addition found in Matthew, have not recorded that he was declared blessed for what had been said, nor the blessing which followed the declaration of blessedness, "Thou art Peter," etc.

16. Gradual Growth in Knowledge of the Disciples.

⁴³ But now we must first investigate the fact that they were declaring other things about Him as being great and wonderful, but did not yet proclaim that He was the Christ, lest the Saviour may not appear to take away from them the authority to announce that He was the Christ, which He had formerly bestowed upon them. And perhaps some one will support an argument of this kind, saying that on their introduction into the school of Christ the Jews were taught by the disciples glorious things about Jesus, so that in due season there might be built upon these as a foundation the things about Jesus being the Christ; and perhaps many of the things which were said to them were said to all who virtually believed; for not to the Apostles alone did the saying apply, "Before governors and kings also shall ye be brought for My sake for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles;" and per-

haps also not to the Apostles absolutely, but to all who were about to believe the word, "And brother shall deliver up brother to death," etc.; but, "Whosoever shall confess Me," etc., is said not specially to the Apostles, but also to all believers. According to this, then, through that which was said to the Apostles an outline was given beforehand of the teaching which would afterwards come to be of service both to them and to every teacher.

17. Reasons for that Gradual Knowledge.

⁴⁴ And likewise he who holds that the fact that He was Christ had been formerly proclaimed by the Apostles when they heard the saying, "What I tell you in the darkness, speak ye in the light, and what ye hear in the ear proclaim on the housetops," will say, that He wished first to give catechetical instruction as it were to those of the Apostles who were to hear the name of Christ, then to permit this, so to speak, to be digested in the minds of the hearers, that, after there had been a period of silence in the proclamation of something of this kind about Him, at a more seasonable time there might be built up upon the former rudiments "Christ Jesus crucified and raised from the dead," which at the beginning not even the Apostles knew; for it is written in the passage now under consideration, "From that time began Jesus to show unto His disciples that He must go unto Jerusalem" and suffer this and that.

⁴⁵ But if now, for the first time, the Apostles learn from Jesus the things that were about to happen unto Him, namely, that the elders will plot against Him, and that He will be killed, and that after these things, on the third day, He will rise from the dead,-what necessity is there for supposing that those who had been taught by the Apostles concerning Jesus knew them before, or that although Christ was announced to them He was announced to them by way of an introduction which did not clearly elucidate the things concerning Him? For our Saviour wished, when He enjoined the disciples to tell no man that He was the Christ, to reserve the more perfect teaching about Him to a more fitting time, when to those who had seen Him crucified, the disciples who had seen Him crucified and risen could testify the things relating to His resurrection. For it the Apostles, who were always with Him and had seen all the wonderful things which He did, and who bore testimony to His words that they were words of eternal life, were offended on the night on which He was betrayed,-what do you suppose would have been

the feelings of those who had formerly learned that He was the Christ? To spare them, I think, He gave this command.

18. Jesus Was at First Proclaimed by the Twelve as a Worker and a Teacher Only.

⁴⁶ But he who holds that the things spoken to the Twelve refer to the times subsequent to this, and that the Apostles had not as yet announced to their hearers that He was the Christ, will say that He wished the conception of the Christ which was involved in the name of Jesus to be reserved for that preaching which was more perfect, and which brought salvation, such as Paul knew of when he said to the Corinthians, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Wherefore, formerly they proclaimed Jesus as the doer of certain things, and the teacher of certain things; but now when Peter confesses that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, as He did not wish it to be proclaimed already that He was the Christ, in order that He might be proclaimed at a more suitable time, and that as crucified, He commands His disciples that they should tell no man that He was the Christ. And that this was His meaning, when He forbade proclamation to be made that He was the Christ, is in a measure established by the words, "From that time began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders," and what is annexed;

⁴⁷ for then, at the fitting time, He proclaims, so to speak, to the disciples who knew that Jesus was Christ, the Son of the living God, the Father having revealed it to them, that instead of believing in Jesus Christ who had been crucified, they were to believe in Jesus Christ who was about to be crucified. But also, instead of believing in Christ Jesus and Him risen from the dead, He teaches them to believe in Christ Jesus and Him about to be risen from the dead. But since "having put off from Himself the principalities and the powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over in the cross," if any one is ashamed of the cross of Christ, he is ashamed of the dispensation on account of which these powers were triumphed over; and it is fitting that he, who both believes and knows these things, should glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which, when Christ was crucified, the principalities-among which, I think, was also the prince of this world-were made a show of and triumphed over before the believing world. Wherefore, when His suffering was at hand he said, "Now the prince of this world has been judged," and, "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out," and, "I, if

I be lifted from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself; " as he no longer had sufficient power to prevent those going to Jesus who were being drawn by Him.

19. Importance of the Proclamation of Jesus as the Crucified.

⁴⁸ It is necessary, therefore, to the proclamation of Jesus as Christ, that He should be proclaimed as crucified; and the proclamation that Jesus was the Christ does not seem to me so defective when any of His other miracles is passed over in silence, as when the fact of His crucifixion is passed over. Wherefore, reserving the more perfect proclamation of the things concerning Him by the Apostles, He commanded His disciples that they should tell no man that He was the Christ; and He prepared them to say that He was the Christ crucified and risen from the dead, "when He began "not only to say, nor even to advance to the point of teaching merely, but "to show" to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, etc.; for attend to the expression "show"; because just as sensible things are said to be shown so the things spoken by Him to His disciples are said to be shown by Jesus. And i do not think that each of the things seen was shown to those who saw Him suffering many things in body from the elders of the people, with such clearness as was the rational demonstration about Him to the disciples.

20. Why Jesus Had to Go to Jerusalem.

⁴⁹ "Then began He to show; " and probably afterwards when they were able to receive it He shewed more clearly, no longer beginning to show as to those who were learning the introduction, but already also advancing in the showing; and if it is reasonable to conceive that Jesus altogether completed what He began, then, some time, He altogether completed that which He began to show to His disciples about the necessity of His suffering the things which are written. For, when any one apprehends from the Word the perfect knowledge of these things, then it must be said that, from a rational exhibition (the mind seeing the things which are shown,) the exhibition becomes complete for him who has the will and the power to contemplate these things, and does contemplate them. But since "it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem," -a perishing which corresponds to the words, "He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." -on this account it was necessary for Him to go to Jerusalem, that having suffered many things in that Jerusalem, He might make "the first-fruits" of the resurrection from the dead in

the Jerusalem above, doing away with and breaking up the city upon the earth with all the worship which was maintained in it. For so long as Christ "had not been raised from the dead.

⁵⁰ the first-fruits of them that are asleep," and those who become conformed to His death and resurrection had not yet been raised along with Him, the city of God was sought for below, and the temple, and the purifications, and the rest; but when this took place, no longer were the things below sought for, but the things above; and, in order that these might be set up, it was necessary that He should go unto the Jerusalem below, and there suffer many things from the elders in it, and the chief priests and scribes of the people, in order that He might be glorified by the heavenly elders who could receive his bounties, and by diviner high-priests who are ordained under the one High-Priest, and that He might be glorified by the scribes of the people who are occupied with letters "not written with ink" but made clear by the Spirit of the living God, and might be killed in the Jerusalem below, and having risen from the dead might reign in Mount Zion, and the city of the living God-the heavenly Jerusalem. But on the third day He rose from the dead.

⁵¹ in order that having delivered them from the wicked one, and his son, in whom was falsehood and unrighteousness and war and everything opposed to that which Christ is, and also from the profane spirit who transforms himself into the Holy Spirit, He might gain for those who had been delivered the right to be baptized in spirit and soul and body, into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, which represent the three days eternally present at the same time to those who by means of them are sons of light.

21. The Rebuke of Peter and the Answer of Jesus.

⁵² "And Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, God be propitious to Thee. Lord, this shall never be unto thee. To whom He said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou art a stumbling-block unto Me; for thou mindest not the things of God but the things of men. Since Jesus had begun to show unto His disciples that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things, Peter up to this point learned the beginnings of those things which were shown. But since he thought that the sufferings were unworthy of Christ the Son of the living God, and below the dignity of the Father who had revealed to him so great things about Christ,-for the things that con-

cerned His coming suffering had not been revealed to him,-on this account he took Him, and as one forgetful of the honour due to the Christ, and that the Son of the living God neither does nor says anything worthy of rebuke, he began to rebuke Him; and as to one who needed propitiation,-for he did not yet know that "God had set Him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood," he said, "God be propitious to thee, O Lord. Approving his purpose, indeed, but rebuking his ignorance, because of the purpose being right. He says to him, "Get thee behind Me," as to one who, by reason of the things of which he was ignorant and spake not rightly, had abandoned the following of Jesus;

⁵³ but because of his ignorance, as to one who had something antagonistic to the things of God, He said, "Satan," which in the Hebrew means "adversary. But, if Peter had not spoken from ignorance, nor rebuked the Son of the living God, saying unto Him, "God be propitious to thee, Lord, this shall never be unto Thee," Christ would not have said to him, "Get thee behind Me," as to one who had given up being behind Him and following Him; nor would He have said as to one who had spoken things adverse to what He had said, "Satan. But now Satan prevailed over him who had followed Jesus and was going behind Him, to turn aside from following Him and from being behind the Son of God, and to make him, by reason of the words which he spoke in ignorance, worthy of being called "Satan" and a stumbling-block to the Son of God, and "as not minding the things of God but the things of men. But that Peter was formerly behind the Son of God, before he committed this sin, is manifest from the words, "Come ye behind Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

22. Importance of the Expressions "Behind" And "Turned."

⁵⁴ But you will compare together His saying to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan," with that said to the devil (who said to Him, "All these things will I give Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me"), "get thee hence," without the addition, "behind Me; "for to be behind Jesus is a good tiling. Wherefore it was said, "Come ye behind Me and I will make you fishers of men." And to the same effect is the saying, "He that doth not take his cross and follow behind Me is not worthy of Me." And as a general principle observe the expression "behind"; because it is a good thing when any one goes behind the Lord God and is behind the Christ; but it is the opposite when any one casts the words of God behind him, or when he transgresses the commandment

which says, "Do not walk behind thy lusts." And Elijah also, in the third Book of Kings, says to the people, "How long halt ye on both your knees? If God is the Lord, go behind Him, but if Baal is the Lord, go behind him." And Jesus says this to Peter when He "turned," and He does so by way of conferring a favour. And if therefore you will collect more illustrations of the "having turned," and especially those which are ascribed to Jesus, and compare them with one another, you would find that the expression is not superfluous. But it is sufficient at present to bring forward this from the Gospel according to John, "Jesus turned and beheld them-" clearly, Peter and Andrew-"following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? " For observe that, when He "turned," it is for the advantage of those to whom He turned.

23. Peter as a Stumbling-Block to Jesus.

⁵⁵ Next we must inquire how He said to Peter, "Thou art a stumbling-block unto Me," especially when David says, "Great peace have they that love Thy law, and there is no stumbling-block to them. For some one will say, if this is said in the prophet, because of the steadfastness of those who have love, and are incapable of being offended, for "love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, love never faileth," how did the Lord Himself, "who upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all that be bowed down," say to Peter, "Thou art a stumbling-block unto Me"? But it must be said that not only the Saviour, but also he who is perfected in love, cannot be offended. But, so far as it depends on himself, he who says or does such things is a stumbling-block even to him who will not be offended; unless perhaps Jesus calls the disciple who sinned a stumbling-block even to Himself, as much more than Paul He would have said from love, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I burn not?" In harmony with which we may put, "Who is made to stumble, and I am not made to stumble?" But if Peter, at that time because of the saying.

⁵⁶ "God be propitious to Thee, Lord, this shall not be unto Thee," was called a stumbling-block by Jesus, as not minding the things of God in what he said but the things of men, what is to be said about all those who profess to be made disciples of Jesus, but do not mind the things of God, and do not look to things unseen and eternal, but mind the things of man, and look to things seen and temporal, but that such still more would be stigmatized by Jesus as a stumbling-block to Him, and because stumbling-blocks to Him, as stumbling-blocks to His brethren also? As in regard to them He says, "I was

thirsty and ye gave Me no drink," etc., so also He might say, "When I was running ye caused Me to stumble. Let us not therefore suppose that it is a trivial sin to mind the things of men, since we ought in everything to mind the things of God. And it will be appropriate also to say this to every one that has fallen away from the doctrines of God and the words of the church and a true mind; as, for example, to him who minds as true the teaching of Basilides, or Valentinus, or Marcion, or any one of those who teach the things of men as the things of God.

24. Self-Denial and Cross-Bearing.

⁵⁷ "Then Jesus said to His disciples, If any man wills to follow after Me, " etc. He shows by these words that, to will to come after Jesus and to follow Him, springs from no ordinary manly courage, and that no one who has not denied himself can come after Jesus. And the man denies himself who wipes out by a striking revolution his own former life which had been spent in wickedness; as by way of illustration he who was once licentious denies his licentious self, having become self-controlled even abidingly. But it is probable that some one may put the objection, whether as he denied himself i so he also confesses himself, when he denied himself, the unjust, and confesses himself, the righteous one. But, if Christ i is righteousness, he who has received righteousness confesses not himself but Christ; so also he who has found wisdom, by the very possession of wisdom, confesses Christ. And such a one indeed as, "with the heart believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth maketh confession unto salvation," arid bears testimony to the works of Christ, as making confession by all these things of Christ before men, will be confessed by Him before His Father in heaven. So also he who has not denied himself but denied the Christ will experience the saying, "I also will deny him. On this account let every thought and every purpose and every word and every action become a denial of ourselves, but a testimony about Christ and in Christ;

⁵⁸ for I am persuaded that every action of the perfect man is a testimony to Christ Jesus, and that abstinence from every sin is a denial of self, leading him after Christ. And such an one is crucified with Christ, and taking up his own cross follows Him who for our sakes bears His own cross, according to that which is said in John: "They took Jesus therefore and put it on Him," etc., down to the words, "Where they crucified Him. But the Jesus according to John, so to speak, bears the cross for Himself, and bearing it went out; but

the Jesus according to Matthew and Mark and Luke, does not bear it for Himself, for Simon of Cyrene bears it. And perhaps this man refers to us, who because of Jesus take up the cross of Jesus, but Jesus Himself takes it upon Himself; for there are, as it were, two conceptions of the cross, the one which Simon of Cyrene bears, and the other which Jesus Himself bears for Himself.

25. Reference to the Saying of Paul About Crucifixion with Christ.

⁵⁹ Moreover in regard to the saying, "Let him deny himself," the following saying of Paul who denied himself seems appropriate, "Yet I live, and yet no longer I but Christ liveth in me; " for the expression, "I live, yet no longer I," was the voice of one denying himself, as of one who had laid aside his own life and taken on himself the Christ, in order that He might live in him as Righteousness, and as Wisdom, and as Sanctification, and as our Peace, and as the Power of God, who worketh all things in him. But further also, attend to this, that while there are many forms of dying, the Son of God was crucified, being hanged on a tree, in order that all who die unto sin may die to it, in no other way than by the way of the cross. Wherefore they will say, "I have been crucified with Christ," and, "Far be it from me to glory save hi the cross of the Lord, through which the world has been crucified unto me and I unto the world." For perhaps also each of those who have been crucified with Christ puts off from himself the principalities and the powers, and makes a show of them and triumphs over them in the cross; or rather, Christ does these things in them.

26. The Less of Life; And the Saving of It.

⁶⁰ "For whosoever would save his own life shall lose it." The first expression is ambiguous; for it may be understood. in one way thus. If any one as being a lover of life, and thinking that the present life is good, tends carefully his own life with a view to living in the flesh, being afraid to die, as through death going to lose it, this man, by the very willing to save in this way his own life will lose it, placing it outside of the borders of blessedness. But if any one despising the present life because of my word, which has persuaded him to strive in regard to eternal life even unto death for truth, loses his own life, surrendering it for the sake of piety to that which is commonly called death, this man, as for my sake he has lost his life, will save it rather, and keep it in possession. And according to a second way we might interpret the saying as follows. If any one, who has grasped what salvation really is, wishes to pro-

cure the salvation of his own life, let this man having taken farewell of this life, and denied himself and taken up his own cross, and following me, lose his own life to the world; for having lost it for my sake and for the sake of all my teaching, he will gain the end of loss of this kind-salvation.

27. Life Lost to the World is Saved.

⁶¹ But at the same time also observe that at the beginning it is said, "Whosoever wills," but afterwards, "Whoso shall lose." If we then wish it to be saved let us lose it to the world, as those who have been crucified with Christ and have for our glorying that which is in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world is to be crucified unto us and we unto the world, that we may gain our end, even the salvation of our lives, which begins from the time when we lose it for the sake of the word. But if we think that the salvation of our life is a blessed thing, with reference to the salvation which is in God and the blessednesses with Him, then any loss of life ought to be a good thing, and, for the sake of Christ must prove to be the prelude to the blessed salvation. It seems to me, therefore, following the analogy of self-denial, according to what has been said, that each ought to lose his own life. Let each one therefore lose his own sinning life, that having lost that which is sinful, he may receive that which is saved by right actions; but a man will in no way be profited if he shall gain the whole world. Now he gains the world, I think, to whom the world is not crucified; and to whom the world is not crucified, to that man shall be the loss of his own life. But when two things are put before us, either by gaining one's life to forfeit the world, or by gaining the world to forfeit one's life, much more desirable is the choice, that we should forfeit the world and gain our life by losing it on account of Christ.

28. The Exchange for One's Life.

⁶² But the saying, "What shall a man give in exchange for his own life, " if spoken by way of interrogation, will seem to be able to indicate that an exchange for his own life is given by the man who after his sins has given up his whole substance, that his property may feed the poor, as if he were going by that to obtain salvation; but, if spoken affirmatively, I think, to indicate that there is not anything in man by the giving of which in exchange for his own life which has been overcome by death. he will ransom it out of its hand. A man, therefore, could not give anything as an exchange for his own

life, but God gave an exchange for the life of us all, "the precious blood of Christ Jesus," according as "we were bought with a price," "having been redeemed, not with corruptible things as silver or gold, but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," even of Christ. And in Isaiah it is said to Israel. "I gave Ethiopia in exchange for thee, and Egypt and Syene for thee; from what time thou hast become honourable before Me thou wast glorified." For the exchange, for example, of the first-born of Israel was the first-born of the Egyptians, and the exchange for Israel was the Egyptians who died in the last plagues that came upon Egypt, and in the drowning which took place after the plagues. But, from these things, let him who is able inquire whether the exchange of the true Israel given by God, "who redeems Israel from all his transgressions," is the true Ethiopia, and, so to speak, spiritual Egypt. and Syene of Egypt; and to inquire with more boldness, perhaps Syene is the exchange for Jerusalem, and Egypt for Judaea, and Ethiopia for those who fear, who are different from Israel, and the house of Levi, and the house of Aaron.

29. The Coming of the Son of Man in Glory.

⁶³ "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His own Father with His angels." Now, indeed, the Son of man has not come in His glory; "for we saw Him, and He had no form nor beauty; but His form was dishonoured and defective compared with the sons of men; He was a man in affliction and toil, and acquainted with the enduring of sickness, because His face was turned away, He was dishonoured and not esteemed." And it was necessary that He should come in such form that He might bear our sins and suffer pain for us; for it did not become Him in glory to bear our sins and suffer pain for us. But He also comes in glory, having prepared the disciples through that epiphany of His which has no form nor beauty; and, having become as they that they might become as He, "conformed to the image of His glory," since He formerly became conformed to "the body of our humiliation," when He "emptied Himself and took upon Him the form of a servant," He is restored to the image of God and also makes them conformed unto it.

30. The Word Appears in Different Forms; The Time of His Coming in Glory.

⁶⁴ But if you will understand the differences of the Word which by "the foolishness of preaching" is proclaimed to those who believe, and spoken in wisdom to them that are perfect, you will see in what way the Word has the

form of a slave to those who are learning the rudiments, so that they say, "We saw Him and He had no form or beauty. But to the perfect He comes "in the glory of His own Father," who might say, "and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. For indeed to the perfect appears the glory of the Word, and the only-begotten of God His Father, add the fulness of grace and likewise of truth, which that man cannot perceive who requires the "foolishness of the preaching," in order to believe. But "the Son of man shall come in the glory of His own Father" not alone, but "with His own angels. And if you can conceive of all those who are fellow-helpers in the glory of the Word, and in the revelation of the Wisdom which is Christ, coming along with Him, you will see in what way the Son of man comes in the glory of His own Father with His own angels. And consider whether you can in this connection say that the prophets who formerly suffered in virtue of their word having "no form or beauty" had an analogous position to the Word who had "no form or beauty.

⁶⁵ And, as the Son of man comes in the glory of His own Father, so the angels, who are the words in the prophets, are present with Him preserving the measure of their own glory. But when the Word comes in such form with His own angels, He will give to each a part of His own glory and of the brightness of His own angels, according to the action of each. But we say these things not rejecting even the second coming of the Son of God understood in its simpler form. But when shall these things happen? Shall it be when that apostolic oracle is fulfilled which says, "For we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good or bad?" But if He will render to each according to his deed, not the good deed only, nor the evil apart from the good, it is manifest that He will render to each according to every evil, and according to every good, deed.

⁶⁶ But I suppose-in this also following the Apostle, but comparing also the sayings of Ezekiel, in which the sins of him who is a perfect convert are wiped out, and the former uprightness of him who has utterly fallen away is not held of account-that in the case of him who is perfected, and has altogether laid aside wickedness, the sins are wiped out, but that, in the case of him who has altogether revolted from piety, if anything good was formerly done by him, it is not taken into account. But to us, who occupy a middle position between the perfect man and the apostate, when we stand before the

judgment-seat of Christ, there is rendered what we have done, whether good or bad; for we have not been so pure that our evil deeds are not at all imputed unto us, nor have we fallen away to such an extent that our better actions are forgotten.

31. The Simpler Interpretation of the Promise About Not Tasting of Death.

⁶⁷ "Verily I say unto you there be some of them that stand here that shall not taste of death. Some refer these things to the going up-six days after, or, as Luke says, eight days-of the three disciples into the high mountain with Jesus apart; and those who adopt this interpretation say that Peter and the remaining two did not taste of death before they saw the Son of man coining in His own kingdom and in His own glory. For when they saw Jesus transfigured before them so that "His face shone," etc., "they saw the kingdom of God coming with power. For even as some spear-bearers stand around a king, so Moses and Elijah appeared to those who had gone up into the mountains, talking with Jesus. But it is worth while considering whether the sitting on the right hand and on the left band of the Saviour in His kingdom refers to them, so that the words, "But for whom it is prepared," were spoken because of them. Now this interpretation about the three Apostles not tasting of death until they have seen Jesus transfigured, is adapted to those who are designated by Peter as "new-born babes longing for the reasonable milk which is without guile," to whom Paul says, "I have fed you with milk, not with meat," etc.

⁶⁸ Now, too, every interpretation of a text which is able to build up those who cannot receive greater truths might reasonably be called milk, flowing from the holy ground of the Scriptures, which flows with milk and honey. But he who has been weaned, like Isaac, worthy of the good cheer and reception which Abraham gave at the weaning of his son, would seek here and in every Scripture food which is different, I think, from that which is meat, indeed, but is not solid food, and from what are figuratively called herbs, which are food to one who has been weaned and is not yet strong but weak, according to the saying, "He that is weak eateth herbs. In like manner also he who has been weaned, like Samuel, and dedicated by his mother to God, - she was Hannah, which is, by interpretation, grace, -would be also a son of grace, seeking, like one nurtured in the temple, flesh of God, the holy food of those who are at once perfect and priests.

32. Standing by the Saviour.

⁶⁹ The reflections in regard to the passage before us that occur to us at the present time are these: Some were standing where Jesus was, having the foot-steps of the soul firmly planted with Jesus, and the standing of their feet was akin to the standing of which Moses said in the passage, "And I stood on the mountain forty days and forty nights," who was deemed worthy to have it said to him by God who asked him to stand by Him, "But stand thou here with Me. Those who really stand by Jesus—that is, by the Word of God—do not all stand equally; for among those who stand by Jesus are differences from each other. Wherefore, not all who stand by the Saviour, but some of them as standing better, do not taste of death until they shall have seen the Word who dwelt with men, and on that account called Son of man, coming in His own kingdom; for Jesus does not always come in His own kingdom when He comes, since to the newly initiated He is such that they might say, beholding the Word Himself not glorious nor great, but inferior to many among them, "We saw Him, and He had no form or beauty, but His form was dishonoured, defective compared with all the sons of men. And these things will be said by those who beheld His glory in connection with their own former times, when at first the Word as understood in the synagogue had no form nor beauty to them.

⁷⁰ To the Word, therefore, who has assumed most manifestly the power above all words. there belongs a royal dignity which is visible to some of those who stand by Jesus, when they have been able to follow Him as He goes before them and ascends to the lofty mountain of His own manifestation. And of this honour some of those who stand by Jesus are deemed worthy if they be either a Peter against whom the gates of Hades do not prevail, or the sons of thunder, and are begotten of the mighty voice of God who thunders and cries aloud from heaven great things to those who have ears and are wise. Such at least do not taste death.

33. Interpretation of "Tasting of Death."

⁷¹ But we must seek to understand what is meant by "tasting of death. And He is life who says, "I am the life," and this life assuredly has been hidden with Christ in God; and. "when Christ our life shall be manifested, then along with Him" shall be manifested those who are worthy of being manifested with Him in glory. But the enemy of this life, who is also the last en-

emy of all His enemies that shall be destroyed, is death, of which the soul that sinneth dies, having the opposite disposition to that which takes place in the soul that lives uprightly, and in consequence of living uprightly lives. And when it is said in the law, "I have placed life before thy face," the Scripture says this about Him who said, "I am the Life," and about His enemy, death; the one or other of which each of us by his deeds is always choosing. And when we sin with life before our face, the curse is fulfilled against us which says, "And thy life shall be hanging up before thee," etc., down to the words, "and for the sights of thine eyes which thou shall see. As, therefore, the Life is also the living bread which came down from heaven and gave life to the world, so His enemy death is dead bread. Now every rational soul is fed either on living bread or dead bread, by the opinions good or bad which it receives.

72 As then in the case of more common foods it is the practice at one time only to taste them, and at another to eat of them more largely; so also, in the case of these loaves, one eats insufficiently only tasting them, but another is satiated,-he that is good or is on the way to being good with the living bread which came down from heaven, but he that is wicked with the dead bread, which is death; and some perhaps sparingly, and sinning a little, only taste of death; but those who have attained to virtue do not even taste of it, but are always fed on the living bread. It naturally followed then in the case of Peter, against whom the gates of Hades will not prevail, that he did not taste of death, since any one tastes of death and eats death at the time when the gates of Hades prevail against him; and one eats or tastes of death in proportion as the gates of Hades to a greater or less extent, more or fewer in number, prevail against him. But also for the sons of thunder who were begotten of thunder, which is a heavenly thing, it was impossible to taste of death, which is extremely far removed from thunder, their mother.

73 But these things the Word prophesies to those who shall be perfected, and who by standing with the Word advanced so far that they did not taste of death, until they saw the manifestation and the glory and the kingdom and the excellency of the Word of God in virtue of which He excels every word, which by an appearance of truth draws away and drags about those who are not able to break through the bonds of distraction, and go up to the height of the excellency of the Word of truth.

34. Meaning of "Until." No Limitation of Promise.

⁷⁴ But since some one may think that the promise of the Saviour prescribes a limit of time to their not tasting of death, namely, that they will not taste of death "until" they see the Son of man coming in His own kingdom. but after this will taste of it, let us show that according to the scriptural usage the word "until" signifies that the time concerning the thing signified is pressing, but is not so defined that after the "until," that which is contrary to the thing signified should at all take place. Now, the Saviour says to the eleven disciples when He rose from the dead, this among other things, "Lo, I am with you all the days, even until the consummation of the age. When He said this, did He promise that He was going to be with them until the consummation of the age, but that after the consummation of the age, when another age was at hand, which is "called the age to come," He would be no longer with them?-so that according to this, the condition of the disciples would be better before the consummation of the age than after the consummation of the age? But I do not think that any one will dare to say, that after the consummation of the age the Son of God will be no longer with the disciples, because the expression declares that He will be with them for so long, until the consummation of the age is at hand;

⁷⁵ for it is clear that the matter under inquiry was, whether the Son of God was forthwith going to be with His disciples before the age to come and the hoped for promises of God which were given as a recompense. But there might have been a question-it being granted that He would be with them-whether sometimes He was present with them, and sometimes not present. Wherefore setting us free from the suspicion that might have arisen from doubt, He declared that now and even all the days He would be with the disciples, and that He would not leave those who had become His disciples until the consummation of the age; (because He said "all the days" He did not deny that by night, when the sun set, He would be present with them. But if such is the force of the words, "until the consummation of the age," plainly we shall not be compelled to admit that those who see the Son of man coming in His own kingdom shall taste of death, after being deemed worthy of beholding Him in such guise. But as in the case of the passage we brought forward, the urgent necessity was to teach us that "until the consummation of the age" He would not leave us but be with us all the days;

76 so also in this case I think that it is clear to those who know how to look at the logical coherence of things that He who has seen once for all "the Son of man coming in His own kingdom," and seen Him "in His own glory," and seen "the kingdom of God come with power," could not possibly taste of death after the contemplation of things so good and great. But apart from the word of the promise of Jesus, we have conjectured not without reason that we would taste of death, so long as we were not yet held worthy to see "the kingdom of God come with power," and "the Son of man coming in His own glory and in His own kingdom."

35. Scriptural References to Death.

77 But since here it is written in the three Evangelists, "They shall not taste of death," but in other writers different things are written concerning death, it may not be out of place to bring forward and examine these passages along with the "taste. In the Psalms, then, it is said, "What man is he that shall live and not see death? " And again, in another place, "Let death come upon them and let them go down into Hades alive; " but in one of the prophets, "Death becoming mighty has swallowed them up; " and in the Apocalypse, "Death and Hades follow some. Now in these passages it appears to me that it is one thing to taste of death, but another thing to see death, and another thing for it to come upon some, and that a fourth thing, different from the aforesaid, is signified by the words, "Death becoming mighty has swallowed them up," and a fifth thing, different from these, by the words, Death and Hades follow them. And if you were to collect them, you would perhaps find also other differences than those which we have mentioned, by a comparison of which with one another and right investigation, you would find the things signified in each place.

78 But here I inquire whether it is a less evil to see death, but a greater evil than seeing to taste of it, but still worse than this that death should follow any one, and not only follow him, but also now come upon him and seize him whom it formerly followed; but to be swallowed up seems to be more grievous than all the things spoken of. But giving heed to what is said, and to the differences of sins committed, you will not I think, be slow to admit that things of this kind were intended by the Spirit who caused these things to be written in the oracles of God. But, if it be necessary to give an exposition clearer than what has been said of what is signified by seeing the Son of man coming in His own kingdom, or in His own glory, and what is signified by

seeing the kingdom of God come with power, these things-whether those that are made to shine in our hearts, or that are found by those who seek, or that enter gradually into our thoughts.-let each one judge as he wills-we will set forth. He who beholds and apprehends the excellency of the Word, as it breaks down and refutes all the plausible forms of things which are truly lies but profess to be truths, sees the Son of man, (according to the word of John, "the Word of God,") coming in His own kingdom;

⁷⁹ but if such an one were to behold the Word, not only breaking down plausible oppositions, but also representing His own truths with perfect clearness, he would behold His glory in addition to His kingdom. And such an one indeed would see in Him the kingdom of God come with power; and he would see this, as one who is no longer now under the reign of "sin which reigns in the mortal body of those who sin," but is ever under the orders of the king, who is God of all, whose kingdom is indeed potentially "within us," but actually, and, as Mark has called it, "with power," and not at all in weakness within the perfect alone. These things, then, Jesus promised to the disciples who were standing, prophesying not about all of them, but about some.

36. Concerning the Transfiguration of the Saviour.

⁸⁰ "Now after six days, " according to Matthew and Mark, "He taketh with him Peter and James and John his brother, and leads them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them. Now, also, let it be granted, before the exposition that occurs to us in relation to these things, that this took place long ago, and according to the letter. But it seems to me, that those who are led up by Jesus into the high mountain, and are deemed worthy of beholding His transfiguration apart, are not without purpose led up six days after the discourses previously spoken. For since in six days-the perfect number-the whole world,-this perfect work of art,-was made, on this account I think that he who transcends all the things of the world by beholding no longer the things which are seen, for they are temporal, but already the things which not seen, and only the things which are not seen, because that they are eternal, is represented in the words, "After six days days Jesus took up with Him" certain persons.

⁸¹ If therefore any one of us wishes to be taken by Jesus, and led up by Him into the high mountain, and be deemed worthy of beholding His transfiguration apart, let him pass beyond the six days, because he no longer

beholds the things which are seen, nor longer loves the world, nor the things in the world, nor lusts after any worldly lust, which is the lust of bodies, and of the riches of the body, and of the glory which is after the flesh, and whatever things whose nature it is to distract and drag away the soul from the things which are better and diviner, and bring it down and fix it fast to the deceit of this age, in wealth and glory, and the rest of the lusts which are the foes of truth. For when he has passed through the six days, as we have said, he will keep a new Sabbath, rejoicing in the lofty mountain, because he sees Jesus transfigured before him; for the Word has different forms, as He appears to each as is expedient for the beholder, and is manifested to no one beyond the capacity of the beholder.

37. Force of the Words "Before Them."

⁸² But you will ask if, when He was trans-figured before those who were led up by Him into the lofty mountain, He appeared to them in the form of God, in which He formerly was, so that He had to those below the form of a servant, but to those who had followed Him after the six days to the lofty mountain, He had not that form, but the form of God. But hear these things, if you can, at the same time giving heed spiritually, that it is not said simply, "He was trans-figured," but with a certain necessary addition, which Matthew and Mark have recorded; for, according to both, "He was trans-figured before them. And according to this, indeed, you will say that it is possible for Jesus to be transfigured before some with this transfiguration, but before others at the same time not to be transfigured. But if you wish to see the transfiguration of Jesus before those who went up into the lofty mountain apart long with Him, behold with me the Jesus in the Gospels, as more simply apprehended, and as one might say, known "according to the flesh," by those who do not go up, through works and words which are uplifting, to the lofty mountain of wisdom, but known no longer after the flesh, but known in His divinity by menus of all the Gospels, and beholden in the form of God according to their knowledge; for before them is Jesus transfigured, and not to any one of those below.

⁸³ But when He is transfigured, His face also shines as the sun, that He may be manifested to the children of light, who have put off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, and are no longer the children of darkness or night, but have become the sons of day, and walk honestly as in

the day; and being manifested, He will shine unto them not simply as the sun, but as demonstrated to be the sun of righteousness.

38. The Garments White as the Light.

84 And not only is He transfigured before such disciples, nor does He only add to the transfiguration the shining of His face as the sun; but further also to those who were led up by Him into the high mountain apart, His garments appear white as the light. But the garments of Jesus are the expressions and letters of the Gospels with which He invested Himself. But I think that even the words in the Apostles which indicate the truths concerning Him are garments of Jesus, which become white to those who go up into the high mountain along with Jesus. But since there are differences also of things white, His garments become white as the brightest and purest of all white things; and that is light. When therefore you see any one not only with a thorough understanding of the theology concerning Jesus, but also making clear every expression of the Gospels, do not hesitate to say that to Him the garments of Jesus have become white as the light. But when the Son of God in His transfiguration is so understood and beheld, that His face is a sun, and His garments white as the light, straightway there will appear to him who beholds Jesus in such form Moses,-the law-and Elijah,-in the way of synecdoche, not one prophet only, but all the prophets-holding converse with Jesus; for such is the force of the words "talking with Him; " but, according to Luke, "Moses and Elijah appeared in glory," down to the words, "in Jerusalem." But if any one sees the glory of Moses, having understood the spiritual law as a discourse in harmony with Jesus, and the wisdom in the prophets which is hidden in a mystery, he sees Moses and Elijah in glory when he sees them with Jesus.

39. Jesus Was Transfigured-"As He Was Praying."

85 Then, since it will be necessary to expound the passage as given in Mark, "And as He was praying He was transfigured before them, " we must say that perhaps it is possible especially to see the Word transfigured before us if we have done the things aforesaid, and gone up into the mountain, and seen the absolute Word holding converse with the Father, and praying to Him for such things as the true High-Priest might pray for to the only true God. But in order that He may thus hold fellowship with God and pray to the Father, He goes up into the mountain; and then, according to Mark, "His garments

become white and glistening as the light, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them." And perhaps the fullers upon the earth are the wise men of this world who are careful about the diction which they consider to be bright and pure, so that even their base thoughts and false dogmas seem to be beautified by their fulling, so to speak; but He who shows His own garments glistening to those who have ascended and brighter than their fulling can make them, is the Word, who exhibits in the expressions of the Scriptures which are despised by many the glistening of the thoughts, when the raiment of Jesus, according to Luke, becomes white and dazzling.

40. Discussion of the Saying of Peter.

⁸⁶ But let us next see what was the thought of Peter when he answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles, " etc. And on this account these words call for very special examination, because Mark, in his own person, has added, "For he wist not what to answer," but Luke, "not knowing," he says, "what he spake. You will consider, therefore, if he spake these things as in a trance, being filled with the spirit which moved him to say these things, which could not be a Holy Spirit; for John taught in the Gospel that, before the resurrection of the Saviour, no one had the Holy Spirit, saying, "For the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified. But if the Spirit was not yet, and he, not knowing what he said, spoke under the influence of some spirit, the spirit which caused these things to be said was some one of the spirits which had not yet been triumphed over in the cross, nor made a show of along with them, about whom it is written, "Having put off from Himself the principalities and the powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in the cross." But this spirit was perhaps that which is called a stumbling-block by Jesus, and which is spoken of as Satan in the passage, "Get thee behind Me, Satan;

⁸⁷ thou art a stumbling-block unto me.' But I know well that such things will offend many who meet with them, because they think that it is opposed to sound reason that he should be spoken ill of who a little before had been pronounced blessed by Jesus, on the ground that the Father in heaven had revealed to him the things concerning the Saviour, to-wit, that He was verily Jesus, and the Christ, and the Son of the living God. But let such an one attend more exactly to the statements about Peter and the rest of the Apostles, how even they made requests as if they were yet alien from Him who was to redeem them from the enemy and purchase them with His own precious

blood; or let them also, who will have it that even before the passion of Jesus the Apostles were perfect, tell us whence it came about that "Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep. But to anticipate something else of what follows and apply it to the subject in hand, I would raise in turn these questions, -whether it is possible for any one to find occasion of stumbling in Jesus apart from the working of the devil who caused him to stumble;

⁸⁸ and whether it is possible for any one to deny Jesus, and that in presence of a little maid and a doorkeeper and men most worthless, unless a spirit had been with him in his denial hostile to the Spirit which is given and the wisdom, (which is given) to those who are assisted by God to make confession, according to a certain desert of theirs. But he who has learned to refer the roots of sin to the father of sin, the devil, will not say that apart from him either the Apostles were caused to stumble, or that Peter denied Christ thrice before that well-known cock-crowing. But if this be so, consider whether perhaps with a view to make Jesus stumble, so far as was in his power, and to turn Him aside from the dispensation whose characteristic was suffering that brought salvation to men, which He undertook with great willingness, seeking to effect these things which seemed to contribute to this end, he himself also here wishes as it were, by deceit, to draw away Jesus, as if calling upon Him no longer to condescend to men, and come to them, and undergo death for them, but to abide on the high mountain with Moses and Elijah. But he promised also to build three tabernacles, one apart for Jesus, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah, as if one tabernacle would not have sufficed for the three, if it had been necessary for them to be in tabernacles and in the high mountain.

⁸⁹ And perhaps also in this he acted with evil intent, when he incited him "who did not know what he said," not desiring that Jesus and Moses and Elijah should be together, but desiring to separate them from one another, under pretext of the three tabernacles. And likewise it was a lie, "It is good for us to be here;" for if it had been a good thing they would also have remained there. But if it were a lie, you will seek to know who caused the lie to be spoken; and especially since according to John, "When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father thereof;" and as there is no truth apart from the working of Him who says, "I am the Truth," so there is no lie apart from him who is the enemy of truth. These contrary qualities, accordingly, were still in Peter truth and falsehood; and from truth he said,

"Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God," but from falsehood he said, "May God be propitious to Thee, Lord, this shall not be unto Thee," and also, "It is good for us to be here.

⁹⁰ But if any one will not admit that Peter spoke these things from any evil inspiration, but that his words were of his own mere choice, and it is demanded of him how he will interpret, "not knowing what he said," and, "for he did not know what to answer," he will say, that in the former case Peter held it to be a shameful thing and unworthy of Jesus to admit that the Son of the living God, the Christ, whom already the Father had revealed to him, should be killed; and in the present case that, as having seen the two forms of Jesus and the one at the transfiguration which was much more excellent, being well pleased with that, he said that it was good to make their sojourning in that mountain, in order that he himself and those with him might rejoice as they beheld the transfiguration of Jesus and His face shining as the sun. and His garments white as the light, and, in addition to these things, might always behold in glory those whom they had once seen in glory, Moses and Elijah; and that they might rejoice at the things which they might hear, as they talked and held intercourse with each other, Moses and Elijah with Jesus, and Jesus with them.

41. Figurative Interpretation of the Same.

⁹¹ But since we have not yet spent our energy in interpreting the things in the place figuratively, but have said these things by way of searching into the mere letter, let us in conformity with these things, consider whether the aforesaid Peter and the sons of thunder who were taken up into the mountain of the dogmas of the truth, and who saw the transfiguration of Jesus and of Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory with Him. might wish to make tabernacles in themselves for the Word of God who was going to dwell in them, and for His law which had been beholden in glory, and for the prophecy which spake of the decease of Jesus, which He was about to accomplish; and Peter, as one loving the contemplative life, and having preferred that which was delightful in it to the life among the crowd with its turmoil, said, with the design of benefiting those who desired it, "It is good for us to be here. But since "love seeketh not its own," Jesus did not do that which Peter thought good; wherefore He descended from the mountain to those who were not able to ascend to it and behold His transfiguration, that they might behold Him in such form as they were able to see Him. It is, there-

fore, the part of a righteous man who possesses "the love which seeketh not its own" to be free from all, but to bring himself under bondage to all those below that He might gain the more of them.

⁹² But some one, with reference to what we have alleged about the trance and the working of an evil spirit in Peter, concerning the words, "not knowing what he said," not accepting that interpretation of ours, may say that there were certain mentioned by Paul "desiring to be teachers of the law," who do not know about what they speak, but who, though they do not clearly expound the nature of what is said, nor understand their meaning, make confident affirmations of things which they do not know. Of such a nature was the affection of Peter also, for not apprehending what was good with reference to the dispensation of Jesus and of those who appeared in the mountain, -Moses and Elijah, -he says, "It is good for us to be here," etc., "not knowing what he said," "for he wist not what to say," for if "a wise man will understand the things from his own mouth, and carries prudence in his lips," he who is not so does not understand the things from his own mouth, nor comprehend the nature of the things spoken by him.

42. The Meaning of the "Bright Cloud."

⁹³ Next to these come the words, "While He was yet speaking, behold, also, a bright cloud overshadowed them, " etc. Now, I think that God, wishing to dissuade Peter from making three tabernacles, under which so far as it depended on his choice he was going to dwell, shows a tabernacle better, so to speak, and much more excellent, the cloud. For since it is the function of a tabernacle to overshadow him who is in it, and to shelter him, and the bright cloud overshadowed them, God made, as it were, a diviner tabernacle, inasmuch as it was bright, that it might be to them a pattern of the resurrection to come; for a bright cloud overshadows the just, who are at once protected and illuminated and shone Upon by it. But what might the bright cloud, which overshadows the just, be? Is it, perhaps, the fatherly power, from which comes the voice of the Father bearing testimony to the Son as beloved and well-pleasing, and exhorting those who were under its shadow to hear Him and no other one? But as He speaks of old, so also always does He speak through what He wills. And perhaps, too, the Holy Spirit is the bright cloud which overshadows the just, and prophesies of the things of God, who works in it, and says, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased;

"but I would venture also to say that our Saviour is a bright cloud. When, therefore, Peter said, "Let us make here three tabernacles," ...

⁹⁴ one from the Father Himself, and from the Son, and one from the Holy Spirit. For a bright cloud of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit overshadows the genuine disciples of Jesus; or a cloud overshadows the Gospel and the law and the prophets, which is bright to him who is able to see the light of it in the Gospel, and the law, and the prophets. But perhaps the voice from the cloud says to Moses and Elijah, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased, hear Him," as they were desirous to see the Son of man, and to hear Him, and to behold Him as He was in glory. And perhaps it teaches the disciples that He who was, in a literal sense, the Son of God, and His beloved in whom He was well-pleased, whom it behoved them especially to hear, was He who was then beheld, and transfigured, and whose face shone as the sun, and who was clothed with garments white as the light.

43. Relation of Moses and Elijah to Jesus. The Injunction of Silence.

⁹⁵ But after these things it is written that, when they heard the voice from the cloud bearing testimony to the Son, the three Apostles, not being able to bear the glory of the voice and power resting upon it, "fell on their face," and besought God; for they were sore afraid at the supernatural sight, and the things which were spoken from the sight. But consider if you can also say this with reference to the details in the passage, that the disciples, having understood that the Son of God had been holding conference with Moses, and that it was He who said, "A man shall not see My face and live," and taking further the testimony of God about Him, as not being able to endure the radiance of the Word, humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God; but, after the touch of the Word, lifting up their eyes they saw Jesus only and no other. Moses, the law, and Elijah, the prophet, became one only with the Gospel of Jesus; and not, as they were formerly three, did they so abide, but the three became one, But consider these things with me in relation to mystical matters;

⁹⁶ for in regard to the bare meaning of the letter, Moses and Elijah, having appeared in glory and talked with Jesus, went away to the place from which they had come, perhaps to communicate the words which Jesus spake with them, to those who were to be benefited by Him, almost immediately, namely, at the time of the passion, when many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep, their tombs being opened, were to go to the city which is truly

holy-not the Jerusalem which Jesus wept over-and there appear unto many. But after the dispensation in the mountain, when the disciples were coming down from the mountain in order that, when they had come to the multitude, they might serve the Son of God concerning the salvation of the people, Jesus commanded the disciples saying, "Tell the vision to no man until the Son of man rise from the dead. But that saying, "Tell the vision to no man," is like that which was investigated in the passage above, when "He enjoined the disciples to tell no man that He was the Christ. Wherefore the things that were said at that passage may be useful to us also for the passage before us; since Jesus wishes also, in accordance with these, that the things of His glory should not be spoken of, before His glory after the passion; for those who heard, and in particular the multitudes, would have been injured when they saw Him crucified, who had been so glorified.

⁹⁷ Wherefore since His being glorified in the resurrection was akin to His transfiguration, and to the vision of His face as the sun, on this account He wishes that these things should then be spoken of by the Apostles, when He rose from the dead.

BOOK 13

1. Relation of the Baptist to Elijah. The Theory of Transmigration Considered.

¹ "The disciples asked Him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come? " The disciples indeed who went up with Jesus remembered the traditions of the scribes concerning Elijah, that before the advent of Christ, Elijah would come and prepare for Him the souls of those who were going to receive Him. But the vision in the mountain, at which Elijah appeared, did not seem to be in harmony with the things which were said, since to them it seemed that Elijah had not come before Jesus but after Him; wherefore, they say these things, thinking that the scribes lied. But to this the Saviour answers, not setting aside the traditions concerning Elijah, but saying that there was another advent of Elijah before that of Christ of which the scribes were ignorant; and, in regard to this, being ignorant of him, they "had done unto him whatsoever they listed," as if they had been accomplices in his having been cast into prison by Herod and slain by him; then He says that according as they had done towards Elijah so would He suffer at their hands. And these things indeed as about Elijah the disciples asked and the Saviour answered, but when they heard they understood that the words, "Elijah has already come," and that following which was spoken by the Saviour, had ref-

erence to John the Baptist. And let these things be said by way of illustration of the passage before us.

² But now according to our ability let us make investigation also into the things that are stored up in it. In this place it does not appear to me that by Elijah the soul is spoken of, lest I should fall into the dogma of transmigration, which is foreign to the church of God, and not handed down by the Apostles, nor anywhere set forth in the Scriptures; for it is also in opposition to the saying that "things seed are temporal," and that "this age shall have a consummation," and also to the fulfilment of the saying, "Heaven and earth shall pass away," and "the fashion of this world passeth away," and "the heavens shall perish," and what follows. For if, by hypothesis, in the constitution of things which has existed from the beginning unto the end of the world, the same soul can be twice hithe body, for what cause should it be in it? For if because of sin it should be twice in the body, why should it not be thrice, and repeatedly in it, since punishments, in respect of this life, and of the sins committed in it, shall be rendered to it only by the method of transmigration? But if this be granted as a consequence, perhaps there will never be a time when a soul shall not undergo transmigration: for always because of its former sins will it dwell in the body;

³ and so there will be no place for the corruption of the world, at which "the heaven and the earth shall pass away. And if it be granted, on this hypothesis, that one who is absolutely sinless shall not come into the body by birth, after what length of time do you suppose that a soul shall be found absolutely pure and needing no transmigration? But nevertheless, also, if any one soul is always thus being removed from the definite number of souls and returns no longer to the body, sometime after infinite ages, as it were, birth shall cease; the world being reduced to some one or two or a few more, after the perfecting of whom the world shall perish, the supply of souls coming into the body having failed. But this is not agreeable to the Scripture; for it knows of a multitude of sinners at the time of the destruction of the world. This is manifest from consideration of the saying, "How-beit when the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?" So we find it thus said in Matthew, "As were the days of Noah so shall also be the coming of the Son of man; for as they were in the days of the flood," etc. But to those who are then in existence there shall be the exaction of a penalty for their sins, but not by way of transmigration;

⁴for, if they are caught while still sinning, either they will be punished after this by a different form of punishment,-and according to this either there will be two general forms of punishment, the one by way of transmigration, and the other outside of a body of this kind, and let them declare the causes and differences of these,-or they will not be punished, as if those who were left at the consummation of things had forthwith cast away their sins; or, which is better, there is one form of punishment for those who have sinned in the body, namely, that they should suffer, outside of it, that is, outside the constitution of this life, what is according to the desert of their sins. But to one who has insight into the nature of things it is clear that each of these things is fitted to overturn the doctrine of transmigration. But if, of necessity, the Greeks who introduce the doctrine of transmigration, laying down things in harmony with it, do not acknowledge that the world is coming to corruption, it is fitting that when they have looked the Scriptures straight in the face which plainly declare that the world will perish, they should either disbelieve them, or invent a series of arguments in regard to the interpretation of the things concerning the consummation; which even if they wish they will not be able to do.

⁵And this besides we will say to those who may have had the hardihood to aver that the world will not perish, that, if the world does not perish but is to exist for infinite periods of time, there will be no God knowing all things before they come into being. But if, perhaps, He knows in part, either He will know each thing before it comes into being, or certain things, and after these again other things; for things infinite in nature cannot possibly be grasped by that knowledge whose nature it is to limit things known. From this it follows that there cannot be prophecies about all things whatsoever, since all things are infinite.

2. "The Spirit and Power of Elijah"-Not the Soul-Were in the Baptist.

⁶I have thought it necessary to dwell some time on the examination of the doctrine of transmigration, because of the suspicion of some who suppose that the soul under consideration was the same in Elijah and in John, being called in the former case Elijah, and in the second case John; and that, not apart from God, had he been called John, as is plain from the saying of the angel who appeared to Zacharias, "Fear not, Zacharias, for thy supplication is heard, and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John;" and from the fact that Zacharias regained his speech after he

had written in the tablet, that he who had been born should be called John. But if it were the soul of Elijah, then, when he was begotten a second time, he should have been called Elijah; or for the change of name some reason should have been assigned, as in the case of Abram and Abraham, Sarah and Sarrah, Jacob and Israel, Simon and Peter. And yet not even thus would their argument in the case be tenable; for, in the case of the aforesaid, the changes of name took place in one and the same life. But some one might ask, if the soul of Elijah was not first in the Tishbite and secondly in John, what might that be in both which the Saviour called Elijah?

7 And I say that Gabriel in his words to Zacharias suggested what the substance was in Elijah and John that was the same; for he says, "Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God; and he shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah. For, observe, he did not say in the "soul" of Elijah, in which case the doctrine of transmigration might have some ground, but "in the spirit and power of Elijah. For the Scripture well knows the distinction between spirit and soul, as, "May God sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; " anti the passage, "Bless the Lord, ye spirits and souls of the righteous" as it stands in the book of Daniel, according to the Septuagint, represents the difference between spirit and soul. Elijah, therefore, was not called John because of the soul, but because of the spirit and the power, which in no way conflicts with the teaching of the church, though they were formerly in Elijah, and afterwards in John; and "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," but the souls of the prophets are not subject to the prophets, and "the spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha.

8 But we ought to inquire whether the spirit of Elijah is the same as the spirit of God in Elijah, or whether they are different from each other, and whether the spirit of Elijah which was in him was something supernatural, different from the spirit of each man which is in him; for the Apostle clearly indicates that the Spirit of God, though it be in us, is different from the spirit of each man which is in Him, when he says somewhere, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; " and elsewhere, "No one of men knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of the man which is in him; even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God. But do not marvel in regard to what is said about Elijah, if, just as

something strange happened to him different from all the saints who are recorded, in respect of his having been caught up by a whirlwind into heaven, so his spirit had something of choice excellence, so that not only did it rest on Elisha, but also descended along with John at his birth; and that John, separately, "was filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb," and separately, "came before Christ in the spirit and power of Elijah. For it is possible for several spirits not only worse, but also better, to be in the same man.

9 David accordingly asks to be established by a free spirit, and that a right spirit be renewed in his inward parts. But if, in order that the Saviour may impart to us of "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and reverence," he was filled also with the spirit of the fear of the Lord; it is possible also that these several good spirits may be conceived as being in the same person. And this also we have brought forward, because of John having come before Christ "in the spirit and power of Elijah," in order that the saying, "Elijah has already come," may be referred to the spirit of Elijah that was in John; as also the three disciples who had gone up with Him understood that He spake to them about John the Baptist. Upon Elisha, then, only the spirit of Elijah rested, but John came before, not only in the spirit, but also in the power of Elijah. Wherefore, also, Elisha could not have been called Elijah, but John was Elijah himself. But if it be necessary to adduce the Scripture from which the scribes said that Elijah must first come, listen to Malachi who says, "And behold I will send to you Elijah the Tishbite," etc., down to the words, "Lest I come and smite the earth utterly.

10 And it seems to be indicated by these words, that Elijah was to prepare for the glorious coming of Christ by certain holy words and dispositions in their souls, those who had been made fittest for this, which those upon earth could not have endured, because of the excellency of the glory, unless they had been prepared before hand by Elijah. And likewise, by Elijah, in this place, I do not understand the soul of that prophet but his spirit and his power; for these it is by which all things shall be restored, so that when they have been restored, and, as a result of that restoration, become capable of receiving the glory of Christ, the Son of God who shall appear in glory may sojourn with them. But if also Elijah be in some sort a word inferior to "the Word who was in the beginning with God, God the Word," this word also

might come as a preparatory discipline to the people prepared by it, that they might be trained to the reception of the perfect Word. But some one may raise the question whether the spirit and power of Elijah, suffered what was suffered in John, according to the words, "They did in him whatsoever they listed. And to this it will be said on the one hand, in simpler fashion that there is nothing strange in the thought, that the things which assist do, because of love, suffer along with those that are assisted; and Jesus indeed says.

11 "Because of the weak I was weak, and I hungered because of the hungry, and I thirsted because of the thirsty," and, on the other hand, in a deeper sense that the words are not, "But they did unto him whatsoever they listed in him," for the things which suffered leaned upon the spirit and the power of Elijah, the soul of John being in no wise Elijah; and probably also the body (leaned upon them). For in one fashion is the soul in the body, and the spirit, and the power; and in another fashion is the body of the righteous man in these better parts, as leaning upon them, and clinging to them; but "they who are in the flesh cannot please God; but ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if the Spirit of God dwell in you;" for the soul of the sinner is in the flesh, but of the righteous man in spirit. And likewise, further, this might be inquired into, to whom refer the words, "But they did in him whatsoever they listed. Was it to the scribes in regard to whom the disciples inquired and said, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must first come?" But it is not at all evident that John suffered anything at the hands of the scribes, except, indeed, that they did not believe him; or, as we said also before, that they were accomplices in the wrongs which Herod dared to inflict on him.

12 But another might say that the words, "But they did in him whatsoever they listed," refer not to the scribes but to Herodias and her daughter, and Herod, who did in him whatsoever they listed. And that which follows, "So shall the Son of man suffer from them," might be referred to the scribes, if the former were referred to them; but, if the former refers to Herod and Herodias and her daughter, the second passage will also refer to them; for Herod also seems to have joined in the vote that Jesus should die, perhaps his wife also taking part with him in the plot against Him.

3. Concerning the Epileptic.

13 "And when they were come to the multitude, there came to Him a man kneeling to Him and saying, Lord, have mercy upon my son." Those who are

suffering, or the kinsfolk of the sufferers, are along with the multitudes; wherefore, when He has dispensed the things that were beyond the multitudes, He descends to them, so that those, who were not able to ascend because of the sicknesses that repressed their soul, might be benefited when the Word descended to them from the loftier regions. But we ought to make inquiry, in respect of what diseases the sufferers believe and pray for their own healing, and in respect of what diseases others do this for them, as, for example, the centurion for his servant, and the nobleman for his son, and the ruler of the synagogue for a daughter, and the Canaanitish woman for her female child who was vexed with a demon, and now the man who kneels to Him on behalf of his epileptic son. And along with these you will investigate when the Saviour heals of Himself and unasked by any one, as for example, the paralytic; for these cures, when compared with one another for this very purpose, and examined together, will exhibit to him who is able to hear "the wisdom of God hidden in a mystery," many dogmas concerning the different diseases of souls, as well as the method of their healing.

4. Spiritual Epileptics.

¹⁴ But since our present object is not to make inquiry about every case, but about the passage before us, let us, adopting a figurative interpretation, consider who we may say the lunatic was, and who was his father who prayed for him, and what is meant by the sufferer falling not constantly but oft-times, sometimes into the fire, and sometimes into the water, and what is meant by the fact that he could not be healed by the disciples but by Jesus Himself. For if every sickness and every infirmity, which our Saviour then healed among the people, refers to different disorders in souls, it is also in accordance with reason that by the paralytics are symbolised the palsied in soul, who keep it lying paralysed in the body; but by those who are blind are symbolised those who are blind in respect of things seen by the soul alone, and these are really blind; and by the deaf are symbolised those who are deaf in regard to the reception of the word of salvation. On the same principle it will be necessary that the matters regarding the epileptic should be investigated. Now this affection attacks the sufferers at considerable intervals, during which he who suffers from it seems in no way to differ from the man in good health, at the season when the epilepsy is not working on him. Similar disorders you may find in certain souls, which are often supposed to be healthy in point of temperance and the other virtues;

¹⁵ then, sometimes, as if they were seized with a kind of epilepsy arising from their passions, they fall down from the position in which they seemed to stand, and are drawn away by the deceit of this world and other lusts. Perhaps, therefore, you would not err if you said, that such persons, so to speak, are epileptic spiritually, having been cast down by "the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places," and are often ill, at the time when the passions attack their soul; at one time falling into the fire of burnings, when, according to what is said in Hosea, they become adulterers, like a pan heated for the cooking from the burning flame; and, at another time, into the water, when the king of all the dragons in the waters casts them down from the sphere where they appeared to breath freely, so that they come into the depths of the waves of the sea of human life. This interpretation of ours in regard to the lunatic will be supported by him who says in the Book of Wisdom with reference to the even temperament of the just man, "The discourse of a pious man is always wisdom," but, in regard to what we have said, "The fool changes as the moon.

¹⁶ And sometimes even in the case of such you may see impulses which might carry away in praise of them those who do not attend to their want of ballast, so that they would say that it was as full moon in their case, or almost full moon. And you might see again the light that seemed to be in them diminishing, -as it was not the light of day but the light of night,-fading to so great an extent, that the light which appeared to be seen in them no longer existed. But whether or not those who first gave their names to things, on account of this gave the name of lunacy to the disease epilepsy, you will judge for yourself.

5. The Deaf and Dumb Spirit.

¹⁷ Now the father of the epileptic-perhaps the angel to whom he had been allotted, if we are to say that every human soul is put in subjection to some angel-prays the Physician of souls for his son that He may heal him who could not be healed from his disorder by the inferior word which was in the disciples. But the dumb and deaf spirit, who was cast out by the Word, must be figuratively understood as the irrational impulses, even towards that which seems to be good, so that, what things any man once did by irrational impulse which seemed to onlookers to be good, he may do no longer irrationally but according to the reason of the teaching of Jesus. Under the inspiration of this Paul also said, "If I have all faith so as to remove mountains;

" for he, who has all faith, which is as a grain of mustard seed, removes not one mountain only, but also several analogous to it; for although faith is despised by men and appears to be something very little and contemptible; yet when it meets with good ground, that is the soul, which is able fittingly to receive such seed, it becomes a great tree, so that no one of those things which have no wings, but the birds of heaven which are winged spiritually, are able to lodge in the branches of faith so great.

6. Influence of the Moon and Stars on Men.

¹⁸ Let us now, then, give heed to the very letter of the passage, and first let us inquire, how he who has been cast into darkness and repressed by an impure and deaf and dumb spirit is said to be a "lunatic," and for what reason the expression to be a "lunatic" derives its name from the great light in heaven which is next to the sun, which God appointed "to rule over the night. Let physicians then, discuss the physiology of the matter, inasmuch as they think that there is no impure spirit in the case, but a bodily disorder, and inquiring into the nature of things let them say, that the moist humours which are in the head are moved by a certain sympathy which they have with the light of the moon, which has a moist nature; ¹⁹ but as for us, who also believe the Gospel that this sickness is viewed as having been effected by an impure dumb and deaf spirit in those who suffer from it, and who see that those, who are accustomed like the magicians of the Egyptians to promise a cure in regard to such, seem sometimes to be successful in their case, we will say that, perhaps, with the view of slandering the creation of God, in order that "unrighteousness may be spoken loftily, and that they may set their mouth against the heaven," this impure spirit watches certain configurations of the moon, and so makes it appear from observation of men suffering at such and such a phase of the moon, that the cause of so great an evil is not the dumb and deaf demon, but the great light in heaven which was appointed "to rule by night. and which has no power to originate such a disorder among men. But they all "speak unrighteousness loftily," as many as say, that the cause of all the disorders which exist on the earth, whether of such generally or of each in detail, arises from the disposition of the stars; and such have truly "set their mouth against the heaven," when they say that some of the stars have a malevolent, and others a benevolent influence;

²⁰ since no star was formed by the God of the universe to work evil, according to Jeremiah as it is written in the Lamentations, "Out of the mouth

of the Lord shall come things noble and that which is good. And it is probable that as this impure spirit, producing what is called lunacy, observes the phases of the moon, that it may work on him who for certain causes has been committed to it, and who has not made himself worthy of the guardianship of angels, so also there are other spirits and demons who work at certain phases of the rest of the stars; so that not the moon only, but the rest of the stars also may be calumniated by those "who speak unrighteousness loftily. It is worth while, then, to listen to the casters of nativities, who refer the origin of every form of madness and every demoniacal possession to the phases of the moon. That those, then, who suffer from what is called lunacy sometimes fall into the water is evident, and that they also fall into the fire, less frequently indeed, yet it does happen; and it is evident that this disorder is very difficult to cure, so that those who have the power to cure demoniacs sometimes fall in respect of this, and sometimes with fastings and supplications and more toils, succeed. But you will inquire whether there are such disorders in spirits as well as in men;

²¹ so that some of them speak, but some of them are speechless, and some of them hear, but some are deaf; for as in them will be found the cause of their being impure, so also, because of their freedom of will, are they condemned to be speechless and deaf; for some men will suffer such condemnation if the prayer of the prophet, as spoken by the Holy Spirit, shall be given heed to, in which it is said of certain sinners, "Let the lying lips be put to silence. And so, perhaps, those who make a bad use of their hearing, and admit the hearing of vanities, will be rendered deaf by Him who said, "Who hath made the stone-deaf and the deaf," so that they may no longer lend an ear to vain things.

7. The Power of Faith.

²² But when the Saviour said, "O faithfulness and perverse generation, " He signifies that wickedness, which is contrary to nature, stealthily enters in from perversity, and makes us perverted. But of the whole race of men on earth, I think, being oppressed by reason of their wickedness and His tarrying with them, the Saviour said, "How long shall I be with you? "We have already, then, spoken in part of the words, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain," etc.; but nevertheless also we shall speak in this place the things that appear to us fitted to increase perspicuity. The mountains here spoken of, in my opinion, are the hostile powers that

have their being in a flood of great wickedness, such as are settled down, so to speak, in some souls of men. Whenever, then, any one has all faith so that he no longer disbelieves in any things which are contained in the Holy Scriptures, and has faith such as was that of Abraham, who believed in God to such a degree that his faith was counted for righteousness. he has all faith as a grain of mustard seed; then will such an one say to this mountain-I mean, the dumb and deaf spirit in him who is called lunatic,-"Remove hence," clearly, from the man who is suffer-lug, perhaps to the abyss, and it shall remove. And the Apostle, taking, I think.

²³ his starting-point from this place, says with apostolical authority, "If I have all faith so as to remove mountains," for not one mountain merely, but also several analogous to it, he removes who has all faith which is as a grain of mustard-seed; and nothing shall be impossible to him who has so great faith. But let us also attend to this, "This kind goeth not out save by prayer and fasting," in order that if at any time it is necessary that we should be engaged in the healing of one suffering from such a disorder, we may not adjure, nor put questions, nor speak to the impure spirit as if it heard, but devoting ourselves to prayer and fasting, may be successful as we pray for the sufferer, and by our own fasting may thrust out the unclean spirit from him.

8. Jesus' Prediction of His "Delivery" Into the Hands of Men.

²⁴ "And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men. And these things will appear to be of the same effect as those, "that Jesus began to show unto His disciples that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes. But it is not so; for it is not the same thing "to show unto the disciples that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes," and, after suffering, "be killed," and, after being killed, "be raised up on the third day," as that which was said to them, when they were in Galilee,-which we did not learn before, -that the Son of man "would be delivered up; "for the being delivered up was not mentioned above, but now also it is said that "He is to be delivered up into the hands of men. As for these matters let us inquire by what person or persons He will be delivered up into the hands of men; for there we are taught of whom He will suffer, and in what place He will suffer; but here, in addition, we learn that while His suffering many things takes place at the hands of the

aforesaid, they are not the prime causes of His suffering many things, but the one or ones who delivered Him up into the hands of men.

²⁵ For some one will say that the Apostle, interpreting this, says with reference to God, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all;" but the Son also gave Himself to death for us, so that He was delivered up, not only by the Father but also by Himself. But another will say not merely that, but also collecting the passages together, will say that the Son is first delivered up by God, -then about to be tempted, then to be in conflict, then to suffer for men, or even for the whole world that He might take away its sin, -to the prince of this age, and to the rest of its princes, and then by them delivered into the hands of men who would slay Him. The case of Job will be taken as an illustration. "Lo, all that is his I give into thy hands, but do not touch him;

²⁶ " thereafter, he was, as it were, delivered up by the devil to his princes, namely, to those who took prisoners of war, to the horsemen, to the fire that came down from heaven, to the great wind that came from the desert and broke up his house, But you will consider if, as he delivered up the property of Job to those who took them captive, and to the horsemen, so also he delivered them up to a certain power, subordinate to "the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience," in order that the fire which descended thence on the sheep of Job might seem to fall from heaven, to the man who announced to Job that "fire fell from heaven, and burned up his sheep, and consumed the shepherds likewise. And in the same way you will inquire whether also the sudden mighty wind, that came down from the desert and assailed the four corners of the dwelling, was one of those which are under the devils to whom the devil delivered up the banquet of the sons and daughters of Job, that the house might fall on the children of the just man, and they might die.

²⁷ Let it be granted, then, that, as in the case of Job, the Father first delivered up the Son to the opposing powers, and that then they delivered Him up into the hands of men, among which men Judas also was, into whom after the sop Satan entered, who delivered Him up in a more authoritative manner than Judas. But take care lest on comparing together the delivering up of the Son by the Father to the opposing powers, with the delivering up of the Saviour by them into the hands of men, you should think that what is called the delivering up is the same in the case of both. For understand that

the Father in His love of men delivered Him up for us all; but the opposing powers, when they delivered up the Saviour into the hands of men, did not intend to deliver Him up for the salvation of some, but, as far as in them lay, since none of them knew "the wisdom of God which was hidden in a mystery," they gave Him up to be put to death, that His enemy death might receive Him under its subjection, like those who die in Adam; and also the men who slew Him did so, as they were moulded after the will of those who wished indeed that Jesus should become subject to death.

²⁸I have deemed it necessary also to examine into these things, because that when Jesus was delivered up into the hands of men, He was not delivered up by men into the hands of men, but by powers to whom the Father delivered up His Son for us all, and in the very act of His being delivered up, and coming under the power of those to whom He was delivered up, destroying him that has the power of death; for "through death He brought to nought him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

9. Satan and the "Delivery" Of Jesus.

²⁹Now we must think that the devil has the power of death,-not of that which is common and indifferent, in accordance with which those who are compacted of soul and body die, when their soul is separated from the body,-but of that death which is contrary to and the enemy of Him who said, "I am the Life," in accordance with which "the soul that sinneth, it shall die. But that it was not God who gave Him up into the hands of men, the Saviour manifestly declares when He says, "If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews. For, when He was delivered up to the Jews. He was delivered into the hands of men, not by His own servants, but by the prince of this age who says, concerning the powers which are in the sphere of the invisible, the kingdoms which are set up against men." All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship Me. Wherefore also we should think that in regard to them it was said, "The kings of the earth stood side by side, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ. And those kings, indeed, and those rulers stood side by side and were gathered against the Lord and against His Christ;

³⁰but we, because we have been benefited by His being delivered by them into the hands of men and slain, say, "Let us break their bonds asunder and

cast away their yoke from us. For, when we become conformed to the death of Christ, we are no longer under the bonds of the kings of the earth, as we have said, nor under the yoke of the princes of this age, who were gathered together against the Lord. And, on this account, "the Father spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all," that those, who took Him and delivered Him up into the hands of men, might be laughed at by Him who dwells in the heavens, and might be derided by the Lord, inasmuch as, contrary to their expectation, it was to the destruction of their own kingdom and power, that they received from the Father the Son, who was raised on the third day, by having abolished His enemy death, and made us conformed, not only to the image of His death but also of His resurrection; through whom we walk in newness of life, no longer sitting "in the region and shadow of death," through the light of God which has sprung up upon us.

³¹ But when the Saviour said, "The Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall rise again," they were "exceeding sorry," giving heed to the fact that He was about to be delivered up into the hands of men, and that He would be killed, as matters gloomy and calling for sorrow, but not attending to the fact that He would rise on the third day, as He needed no longer time "to bring to nought through death him that had the power of death."

10. Concerning Those Who Demanded the Half-Shekel.

³² "And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received the half-shekel came to Peter. There are certain kings of the earth, and the sons of these do not pay toll or tribute; and there are others, different from their sons, who are strangers to the kings of the earth, from whom the kings of the earth receive toll or tribute. And among the kings of the earth, their sons are free as among fathers; but those who are strangers to them, while they are free in relation to things beyond the earth, are as slaves in respect of those who lord it over them and keep them in bondage; as the Egyptians lorded it over the children of Israel, and greatly afflicted their life and violently held them in bondage. It was for the sake of those who were in a bondage, corresponding to the bondage of the Hebrews, that the Son of God took upon Him only the form of a slave, doing no work that was foul or servile. As then, having the form of that slave, He pays toll and tribute not different

from that which was paid by His disciple; for the same stater sufficed, even the one coin which was paid for Jesus and His disciple.

³³ But this coin was not in the house of Jesus, but it was in the sea, and in the mouth of a fish of the sea which, in my judgment, was benefited when it came up and was caught in the net of Peter, who became a fisher of men, in which net was that which is figuratively called a fish, in order also that the coin with the image of Caesar might be taken from it, and that it might take its place among those which were caught by them who have learned to become fishers of men. Let him, then, who has the things of Caesar render them to Caesar, that afterwards he may be able to render to God the things of God. But since Jesus, who was "the image of the invisible God," had not the image of Caesar, for "the prince of this age had nothing in Him," on this account He takes from its own place, the sea, the image of Caesar, that He may give it to the kings of the earth for Himself and His disciple, so that those who receive the half-shekel might not imagine that Jesus was the debtor of them and of the kings of the earth; for He paid the debt, not having taken it up, nor having possessed it, nor having acquired it, nor at any time having made it His own possession, so that the image of Caesar might never be along with the image of the invisible God.

11. The Freedom of Sons.

³⁴ And this may be put in another way. There are some who are kings' sons on the earth, and yet they are not sons of those kings, but sons, and sons absolutely; but others, because of their being strangers to the sons of the kings of the earth, and sons of no one of those upon the earth, but on this very account are sons, whether of God or of His Son, or of some one of those who are God's. If, then, the Saviour inquires of Peter, saying, "The kings of the earth from whom do they receive toll or tribute—from their own sons or from strangers?" and Peter replies not from their own sons, but "from strangers," then Jesus says about such as are strangers to the kings of the earth, and on account of being free are sons, "Therefore the sons are free;" for the sons of the kings of the earth are not free, since "every one that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin," but they are free who abide in the truth of the word of God, and on this account, know the truth, that they also may become free from sin. If, any one then, is a son simply, and not in this matter wholly a son of the kings of the earth, he is free. And neverthe-

less, though he is free, he takes care not to offend even the kings of the earth, and their sons, and those who receive the half-shekel;

³⁵ wherefore He says, "Let us not cause them to stumble, but go thou and cast thy net, and take up the fish that first cometh up," etc. But I would inquire of those who are pleased to make myths about different natures, of what sort of nature they were, whether the kings of the earth, or their sons, or those who receive the half-shekel, whom the Saviour does not wish to offend; it appears of a verity, ex hypothesi, that they are not of a nature worthy of praise, and yet He took heed not to cause them to stumble, and He prevents any stumbling-block being put in their way, that they may not sin more grievously, and that with a view to their being saved-if they will-even by receiving Him who has spared them from being caused to stumble. And as in a place verily of consolation,-for such is, by interpretation, Capernaum,-comforting the disciple as being both free and a son, He gives to him the power of catching the fish first, that when it came up Peter might be comforted by its coming up and being caught, and by the staler being taken from its mouth, in order to be paid to those whose the staler was, add who demanded as their own such a piece of money.

12. The Stater Allegorized.

³⁶ But you might sometimes gracefully apply the passage to the lover of money, who has nothing in his mouth but things about silver, when you behold him healed by some Peter, who takes the stater, which is the symbol of all his avarice, not only from his mouth and words, but from his whole character. For you will say that such an ode was in the sea, and in the bitter affairs of life, and in the waves of the cares and anxieties of avarice, having the staler in his mouth when he was un believing and avaricious, but that he came up from the sea and was caught in the rational net, and being benefited by some Peter who has taught him the truth, no longer has the stater in his mouth, but in place of it those things which contain His image, the oracles of God.

13. The Sacred Half-Shekel.

³⁷ Moreover to the saying, "They that received the half-shekel came to Peter," you will adduce from Numbers that, for the saints according to the law of God, is paid not a half-shekel simply, but a sacred half-shekel. For it is written, "And thou shalt take five shekels per head, according to the sacred

half-shekel." But also on behalf of all the sons of Israel is given a sacred half-shekel per head. Since then it was not possible for the saint of God to possess along with the sacred half-shekels the profane shekels, so to speak, on this account, to them who do not receive the sacred half-shekels, and who asked Peter and said, "Doth not your master pay the half-shekel?" the Saviour commands the stater to be paid, in which was the half-shekel which was found in the mouth of the first fish that came up, in order that it might be given for the Teacher and the disciple.

14. Concerning Those Who Said, Who is the Greatest? and Concerning the Child that Was Called by Jesus.

³⁸ "In that day came the disciples unto Jesus saying, Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" In order that we might be taught what it was that the disciples came to Jesus and asked to learn of Him, and how He answered to their inquiry, Matthew, though he might have given an account of this very thing only, has added, according to some manuscripts, "In that hour the disciples came unto Jesus," but, according to others, "In that day;" and it is necessary that we should not leave the meaning of the evangelist without examination. Wherefore giving attention to the words preceding "in that day," or "hour," let us see if it is possible from them to find a way to understand, as being necessary, the addition, "in that day," or "hour. Jesus then had come to Capernaum along with His disciples, where "they that received the half-shekel came to Peter," and asked and said, "Doth not your Master pay the half-shekel?" Then, when Peter answered and said to them, Yea, Jesus giving further a defence with reference to the giving of the half-shekel, sends Peter to drag up the fish into the net, in the mouth of which He said that a stater would be found which was to be given for Himself and Peter.

³⁹ It seems to me, then, that thinking that this was a very great honour which had been bestowed on Peter by Jesus, who judged that he was greater than the rest of His friends, they wished to learn accurately the truth of their suspicion, by making inquiry of Jesus and hearing from Him, whether, as they supposed, He had judged that Peter was greater than they; and at the same time also they hoped to learn the ground on which Peter had been preferred to the rest of the disciples. Matthew then, I think, wishing to make this plain, has subjoined to the words "that take"-the stater, to-wit-"and give unto them for thee and me," the words, "In that day came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And, per-

haps, they were also in doubt because of the preference which had been given to the three at the transfiguration, and they were in doubt about this-which of the three was judged by the Lord to be greatest. For John reclined on His breast through love, and we may conclude that before the Supper they had seen many tokens of special honour given by Jesus to John; but Peter on his confession was called blessed in their hearing, because of his saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God; " but again because of the saying, "Get thee behind Me, Satan;

40 thou art a stumbling-block unto Me, for thou mindest not the things of God hut the things of men," they were distracted in mind as to whether it was not he but one of the sons of Zebedee, that was the greatest. So much for the words "in that day" or "hour," on which took place the matters relating to the stater.

15. Greatness Varies in Degree.

41 But next we must seek to understand this: the disciples came to Him, as disciples to a teacher proposing difficult questions, and making inquiry, Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And, in this respect, we must imitate the disciples of Jesus; for if, at any time, any subject of investigation among us should not be found out let us go with all unanimity in regard to the question in dispute to Jesus, who is present where two or three are gathered together in His name, and is ready by His presence with power to illumine the hearts of those who truly desire to become His disciples, with a view to their apprehension of the matters under inquiry. And likewise it would be nothing strange for us to go to any of those who have been appointed by God as teachers in the church, and propose any question of a like order to this, "Who, then, is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? "What, then, was already known to the disciples of the matters relating to this question? And what was the point under inquiry? That there is not equality in regard to those who are deemed worthy of the kingdom of heaven they had apprehended, and that, as there was not equality, some one was greatest, and so in succession down to the least: but of what nature was the greatest, and what was the way of life of him who was the least, and who occupied the middle position, they further desired to know;

42 unless, indeed, it is more accurate to say that they knew who was least from the words, "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; "but

who was the greatest of all they did not know, even if they had grasped the meaning of the words, "Whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven;" for as there were many great, it was not clear to them who was the greatest of the great, to use a human standard. And that many are great, but the great not equally great, will be manifest from the ascription of the epithet "great" to Isaac, "who waxed great, and became exceedingly great," and from what is said in the case of Moses, and John the Baptist, and the Saviour. And every one will acknowledge that even though all these were great according to the Scripture, yet the Saviour was greater than they. But whether John also (than whom there was no greater among those born of women), was greater than Isaac and Moses, or whether he was not greater, but equal to both, or to one of them, it would be hazardous to declare.

⁴³ And from the saying, "But Isaac, waxing great, became greater," until he became not simply great, but with the twice repeated addition, "exceedingly," we may learn that there is a difference among the great, as one is great, and another exceedingly great, and another exceedingly exceedingly great. The disciples, therefore, came to Jesus and sought to learn, who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and perhaps they wished to learn, hearing from Him sometimes like this, "A certain one is greatest in the kingdom of heaven;" but He gives a universal turn to the discourse, showing what was the quality of him who was greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Let us seek to understand, from what is written, to the best of our ability, who this is. "For Jesus called a little child," etc.

16. Why the Great are Compared to Little Children.

⁴⁴ But first we may expound it in simple fashion. One, expounding the word of the Saviour here after the simple method, might say that, if any one who is a man mortifies the lusts of manhood, putting to death by the spirit the deeds of the body, and" always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus," to such a degree that he has the condition of the little child who has not tasted sensual pleasures, and has had no conception of the impulses of manhood, then such an one is converted, and has become as the little children. And the greater the advance he has made towards the condition of the little children in regard to such emotions, by so much the more as compared with those who are in training and have not advanced to so great a height of self-control, is he the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

But that which has been said about little children in respect of lustful pleasures, the same might also be said in regard to the rest of the affections and infirmities and sicknesses of the soul, into which it is not the nature of little children to fall, who have not yet fully attained to the possession of reason; as, for example, that, if any one be converted, and, though a man, such an one becomes as a child in respect of anger;

⁴⁵ and, as is the child in relation to grief, so that sometimes he laughs and plays at the very time that his father or mother or brother is dead, he who is converted would become such an one as little children; and, having received from the Word a disposition incapable of grief, so that he becomes like the little child in regard to grief. And the like you will say about what is called pleasure, in regard to which the wicked are irrationally lifted up, from which little children do not suffer, nor such as have been converted and become as little children. As, then, it has been accurately demonstrated also by others, that no passion is incident to the little children who have not yet attained to full possession of reason; and if no passion, clearly fear also; but, if there be anything corresponding to the passions, these are faint, and very quickly suppressed, and healed in the case of little children, so that he is worthy of love, who, being converted as the little children, has reached such a point as to have, as it were, his passions in subjection like the little children. And with regard to fear, therefore, similar things to those spoken might be conceived, that the little children do not experience the fear of the wicked, but a different thing, to which those who have an accurate knowledge of questions in regard to the passions and their names give the name of fear;

⁴⁶ as, for example, in the case of children there is a forgetfulness of their evils at the very time of their tears, for they change in a moment, and laugh and play along with those who were thought to grieve and terrify them, but in truth had wrought in them no such emotion. So too, moreover, one will humble himself like the little child which Jesus called; for neither haughtiness, nor conceit in respect of noble birth, or wealth, or any of those things which are thought to be good, but are not, comes to a little child. Wherefore you may see those who are not altogether infants, up to three or four years of age, like to those who are of mean birth, though they may seem to be of noble birth, and not appearing at all to love rich children rather than the poor. If, therefore, in the same way as according to their age children are affected towards those passions which exalt the senseless, the disciple of Jesus

under the influence of reason has humbled himself like the little child which Jesus showed, not being exalted because of vainglory, nor puffed up on the ground of wealth, or raiment, nor elated because of noble birth, in particular are they to be received and imitated in the name of Jesus, who have been converted as the Word showed, like the little child which Jesus took to Him;

⁴⁷ since especially in such the Christ is, and therefore He says, "Whosoever shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me. "

17. The Little Ones and Their Stumbling-Blocks.

⁴⁸ But it is a hard task to expound what follows in logical harmony with what has already been said; for one might say, how is it that he who is converted and has become as the little children, is a little one among such as believe in Jesus, and is capable of being caused to stumble? And likewise let us attempt to explain this coherently. Every one that gives his adherence to Jesus as the Son of God according to the true history concerning Him, and by deeds done according to the Gospel, is on the way to living the life which is according to virtue, is converted and is on the way towards becoming as the little children; and it is impossible for him not to enter into the kingdom of heaven. There are, indeed, many such; but not all, who are converted with a view to becoming like the little children, have reached the point of being made like unto little children; but each wants so much of the likeness to the little children, as he falls short of the disposition of little children towards the passions, of which we have spoken. In the whole multitude, then, of believers, are also those who, having been, as it were, just converted in regard to their becoming as the little children, at the very point of their conversion that they may become as the little children, are called little;

⁴⁹ and those of them, who are converted that they may become as the little children, but fall far short of having truly become as the little children, are capable of being caused to stumble; each of whom falls so far short of the likeness to them, as he falls short of the disposition of children towards the passions, of which we have spoken, to whom we ought not to give occasions of stumbling-block; but, if it be otherwise, he who has caused him to stumble will require, as contributing towards his cure, to have "an ass's mill-stone hanged about his neck, and be sunk into the depths of the sea. For, in this way, when he has paid the due penalty in the sea, where is "the dragon which God formed to play in it," and, so far as is expedient for the end in view, has been punished and undergone suffering, he shall then have his part

in those troubles which belong to the depths of the sea, which he endured when he was dragged down by the ass's millstone. For there are also differences of millstones, so that one of them may be, so to call it, the millstone of a man, and another that of an ass; and that is human, about which it is written, "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; one is taken and one is left;" but the millstone of the ass is that which shall be put round him who has given occasion of stumbling-block.

⁵⁰ But some one might say-I know not whether he would speak soundly or erroneously-that the ass's millstone is the heavy body of the wicked man, which is sunken downwards, and which he will receive at the resurrection that he may be sunk in the abyss which is called the depth of the sea, where "is the dragon which God formed to play therein. But another will refer the creating of a stumbling-block to one of the little ones to the powers that are unseen by men; for from these arise many stumbling-blocks to the little ones pointed out by Jesus. But when they cause to stumble one of the little ones pointed out by Jesus, who are believers in Him, he shall assume an ass's millstone, the corruptible body which presses heavily on the soul, which is itself hung from the neck, which is dragged down to the affairs in this life, that by means of these their conceit may be taken away, and having paid the penalty, they shall come, through means of the ass's millstone, to the condition expedient for them.

18. Who Was the Little Child Called by Jesus.

⁵¹ Now another interpretation different from what is called the simpler may be uttered; whether as dogma, or for the sake of exercise, so to speak, let us also inquire what was the little child who was called by Jesus and set in the midst of the disciples. Now consider if you can say that the little child, whom Jesus called, was the Holy Spirit who humbled Himself, when He was called by the Saviour, and set in the midst of the reason of the disciples of Jesus; if, indeed, He wishes us, being turned away from everything else, to be turned towards the examples suggested by the Holy Spirit, so that we may so become as the little children, who are themselves also turned and likened to the Holy Spirit; which little children God gave to the Saviour, according to what is said in Isaiah, "Behold, I and the little children which God has given to me. And it is not possible for any one to enter into the kingdom of heaven, who has not been turned away from the affairs of this world, and made like unto the little children who possess the Holy Spirit; which Holy Spirit was called

by Jesus, and, descending from His own perfection to men as a little child, was set by Jesus in the midst of the disciples. It is necessary, then, for him who has turned away from the desires of this world to humble himself not simply as the little child, but, according to what is written, "as this little child.

⁵² But to humble oneself as that little child is to imitate the Holy Spirit, who humbled Himself for the salvation of men. Now, that the Saviour and the Holy Spirit were sent by the Father for the salvation of men has been declared in Isaiah, in the person of the Saviour, saying, "And now the Lord hath sent me and His Spirit. You must know, however, that this expression is ambiguous; for either God sent, but also the Holy Spirit sent, the Saviour; or, as we have taken it, the Father sent both-the Saviour and the Holy Spirit. He, therefore, who has humbled himself more than all those who have humbled themselves in imitation of that little child, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. For there are many who are willing to humble themselves as that little child; but the man, who in every respect has become like to the little child who humbled himself, in the name of Jesus-especially in Jesus Himself,-in reality, would be found to be he who is named greater than all in the kingdom of heaven. But as he receives Jesus, whosoever receives one such of the little children in His name, so he rejects Jesus and casts Him out, who does not wish to receive one such little child in the name of Jesus.

⁵³ But if, also, there is a difference in those who are deemed worthy of the Holy Spirit, as believers receive more or less of the Holy Spirit, there would be some little ones among those who believe in God who can be made to stumble: to avenge whose being made to stumble the Word says, with reference to those who had caused them to stumble, "It is profitable for him that an ass's millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea. Let these things be said in regard to the passage of Matthew before us.

19. The Parallel Passages in Mark and Luke.

⁵⁴ But let us consider also the like account in the other Evangelists. Mark, then, says, that the Twelve reasoned in the way as to which of them was the greatest. Wherefore He sat down, and called them, and teaches who is the greatest, saying, that he who became last of all by means of his moderation and gentleness, would as the greatest obtain the first place, so that he did not receive the place of one who was being ministered unto, but the place of one

who ministered, and that not to some but not to others, but to all absolutely; for attend to the words, "If any man would be first he shall be last of all, and minister of all. And next to that He says, that "He,"-Jesus to-wit-"took a little child, and set him in the midst of His own disciples, and taking him in His arms, He said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of the little children in My name receiveth Me. But what was the little child which Jesus took and placed in His arms, according to the deeper meaning in the passage? Was it the Holy Spirit? And to this little child, indeed, some were likened, of whom He said, "Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in My name receiveth Me. According to Luke, however, the reasoning did not arise spontaneously in the disciples, but was suggested to them by the question, "which of them should be greatest.

⁵⁵ And Jesus, seeing the reasoning of their heart, as He had eyes that see the reasonings of hearts,-seeing the reasoning of their heart,-without being questioned, according to Luke, "took the little child and set him," not in the midst alone, as Matthew and Mark have said, but now, also, "by His side," and said to the disciples, not only, "Whosoever shall receive one such little child," or, "Whosoever shall receive one of such little ones in My name receiveth Me," but, now going even a step higher, "Whosoever shall receive this little child in My name receiveth Me. It is necessary, therefore, according to Luke, to receive in the name of Jesus that very little child which Jesus took and placed by His side. And I know not if there be any one who can interpret figuratively the word, "Whosoever shall receive this little child in My name. For it is necessary that each of us should receive in the name of Jesus that little child which Jesus then took and set by His side; for he lives as immortal, and we must receive him from Jesus Himself in the name of Jesus; and without being separated from him, Jesus is with him who receives the little child, so that according to this it is said, "Whosoever shall receive this little child in My name receiveth Me. Then, since the Father is inseparable from the Son, He is with him who receives the Son. Wherefore it is said, "And whosoever shall receive Me receives Him that sent Me.

⁵⁶ But he who has received the little child, and the Saviour, and Him that sent Him, is least of all the disciples of Jesus, making himself little. But, so far as he belittles himself, to that extent does he become great; as that very thing, which caused him the more to make himself little, contributes to his advance in greatness; for attend to what is said, "He that is least among you

all the same is great; "but in other manuscripts we read, "The same shall be great. Now, according to Luke, "If any one shall not receive the kingdom of God as the little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And this expression is ambiguous; for either it means that he who receives the kingdom of God may become as a little child, or, that he may receive the kingdom of God, which has become to him as a little child. And perhaps here those who receive the kingdom of God receive it, when it is as a little child, but in the world to come no longer as a little child; and they receive the greatness of the perfection in the spiritual manhood, so to speak, which perfection is manifested to all who in the present time receive it, when it is here as a little child.

20. The World and Offences. Various Meanings of World.

⁵⁷ "Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling. The expression "cosmos," is used in itself and absolutely in the passage, "He was in the cosmos and the cosmos knew Him not," but it is used relatively and in respect of its connection with that of which it is the cosmos, in the words, "Lest you look up to the heaven, and seeing the sun, and the moon, and all the cosmos of the heavens, you should stray and bow down to them and worship them. And the like you will find in the Book of Esther, spoken about her, when it is written, stripping off all her "cosmos. For the word "cosmos," simply, is not the same as the "cosmos" of heaven, or the "cosmos" of Esther; and this which we are now investigating is another. I think, then, that the world is not this compacted whole of heaven and earth according to the Divine Scriptures, but only the place which is round about the earth, and this is not to be conceived in respect of the whole earth, but only in respect of ours which is inhabited; for the true light "was in the world," that is, in the place which is around, conceived in relation to our part of the earth; "and the world knew Him not," that is, the men in the region round about, and perhaps also the powers that have an affinity to this place.

⁵⁸ For it is monstrous to understand by the world here the compacted whole formed of heaven and earth, and those in it; so that it could be said, that the sun and moon and the choir of the stars and the angels in all this world, did not know the true light, and, though ignorant of it, preserved the order which God had appointed for them. But when it is said by the Saviour in the prayer to the Father, "And, now, glorify me, O Father, with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was," you

must understand by the "world," that which is inhabited by us on the earth; for it was from this world that the Father gave men to the Son, in regard to whom alone the Saviour beseeches His Father, and not for the whole world of men. Moreover, also, when the Saviour says, "And I come to thee and am no longer in the world," He speaks of the terrestrial world; for it is not to be supposed that He spoke things contradictory when He said, "And I come to thee, and I am no longer in the world," and "I am in the world. But also in this, "And these things I speak in the world," we must think of the place round about the earth. And this is clearly indicated also by the words, "And the world hated them, because they are not of the world.

⁵⁹ For it hated us from the time when we no longer "look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen," because of the teaching of Jesus; not the world of heaven and earth and them that are therein, all compacted together but the men on the earth along with us. And the saying, "They are not of the world," is equivalent to, They are not of the place round about the earth. And so also the disciples of Jesus are not of this world, as He was not of the world. And further also the saying, "That the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me," twice spoken in the Gospel according to John, does not refer to the things that are superior to men, but to men who need to believe that the Father sent the Son into the world here. Yea, and also in the Apostle, "Your faith is proclaimed in the whole world."

21. The "Woe" Does Not Apply to the Disciples of Jesus.

⁶⁰ But if there is woe unto men everywhere on the earth, because of occasions of stumbling to those who are laid hold of by them; but the disciples are not of the world, as they do not look at things seen, like as the Master is not of this world; to no one of the disciples of Jesus does the "woe because of occasions of stumbling" apply, since "great peace have they who love the law of God, and there is to them no occasion of stumbling. But if any one seems to be called a disciple, but yet is of the world, because of his loving the world, and the things therein,-I mean, the life in the place round about the earth, and the property in it, or the possessions, or any form of wealth whatsoever,-so that the saying, "they are not of the world," does not fit him; to him, as being really of the world, shall come that which happens to the world, the "woe, because of occasions of stumbling. But let him who wishes to avoid this woe not be a lover of life, but let him say with Paul," "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

⁶¹ For the saints while "in the tabernacle, do groan being burdened" with "the body of humiliation," and do all things that they may become worthy to be found in the mystery of the resurrection, when God shall fashion anew the body of humiliation not of all, but of those who have been truly made disciples to Christ, so that it may be conformed to the body of the glory of Christ. For as none of the "woes" happen to any of the disciples of Christ, so does not this "woe, because of occasions of stumbling; "for, supposing that thousands of occasions should arise, they shall not touch those who are no longer of the world. But if any one, because of his faith wanting ballast, and the instability of his submission in regard to the Word of God, is capable of being caused to stumble, let him know that he is not called by Jesus His disciple. Now we must suppose that so many stumbling-blocks come, that, as a result, the woes extend not to some parts of the earth, but to the whole "world" which is in it.

22. What the "Occasions of Stumbling" Are.

⁶² "And it must needs be that occasions of stumbling come," which I take to be different from the men by whom they come. The occasions then which come are an army of the devil, his angels, and a wicked band of impure spirits, which, seeking out instruments through whom they will work, often find men altogether strangers to piety, and sometimes even some of those who are thought to believe the Word of God, for whom exists a worse woe than that which comes to him who is caused to stumble, just as also it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for the places where Jesus did signs and wonders, and yet was not believed. But as one might undertake to make a collection from the Scriptures of those who are pronounced blessed, and of the things in respect of which they are so called, so also he might undertake to do with the woes which are written, and those in whose case the woes are spoken. But that the woe is worse in the case of him who causes to stumble, than in him who is made to stumble, you may prove by the passage, "Whoso shall cause to stumble one of these little ones which believe in Me, it is profitable for him," etc.;

⁶³ for, while the little one who is made to stumble receives retribution from him who caused him to stumble, it is expedient that the severe and intolerable punishment which is written should befall the man who has caused the stumbling. But if we were to give more careful consideration to these things, we should be on our guard against sinning against the brethren, and

wounding their conscience when it is weak, lest we sin against Christ; as often our brethren about us, "for whom Christ died," perish, not only through our knowledge, but also through some other causes connected with us; in the case of whom, we, sinning against Christ, shall pay the penalty, the soul of them who perish through us being required of us.

23. In What Sense "Necessary."

⁶⁴Next we must test accurately the meaning of the word "necessity" in the passage, "For there is a necessity that the occasions come," and to the like effect in Luke, "It is 'inadmissible' but that occasions of stumbling should come," instead of "impossible." And as it is necessary that that which is mortal should die, and it is impossible but that it should die, and as it must needs be that he who is in the body should be fed, for it is impossible for one who is not fed to live, so it is necessary and impossible but that occasions of stumbling should arise, since there is a necessity also that wickedness should exist before virtue in men, from which wickedness stumbling-blocks arise; for it is impossible that a man should be found altogether sinless, and who, without sin, has attained to virtue. For the wickedness in the evil powers, which is the primal source of the wickedness among men, is altogether eager to work through certain instruments against the men in the world. And perhaps also the wicked powers are more exasperated when they are cast out by the word of Jesus, and their worship is lessened, their customary sacrifices not being offered unto them; and there is a necessity that these offences come; but there is no necessity that they should come through any particular one; wherefore the "woe" falls on the man through whom the stumbling-block comes, as he has given a place to the wicked power whose purpose it is to create a stumbling-block. But do not suppose that by nature, and from constitution, there are certain stumbling-blocks which seek out men through whom they come; for as God did not make death, so neither did He create stumbling-blocks; but free-will begot the stumbling-blocks in some who did not wish to endure toils for virtue.

24. The Offending Hand, or Foot, or Eye.

⁶⁵And it is well, then, if the eye and the hand are deserving of praise, that the eye cannot with reason say to the hand, "I have no need of thee. But if any one in the whole body of the congregations of the church, who because of his practical girls has the name of hand, should change and become a

hand causing to stumble, let the eye say to such a hand, "I have no need of thee," and, saying it, let him cut it off and cast it from him. And so it is well, if any head be blessed, and the feet worthy of the blessed head, so that the head observing the things which are becoming to itself, may not be able to say to the feet, "I have no need of you. If, however, any foot be found to become a stumbling-block to the whole body, let the head say to such a foot, "I have no need of thee," and having cut it off, let him cast it from himself; for even it is much better that the rest of the body should enter into life, wanting the foot or the hand which caused the stumbling-block, rather than, when the stumbling-block has spread over the whole body, it should be cast into the hell of fire with the two feet or the two hands. And so it is well, that he who can become the eye of the whole body should be worthy of Christ and of the whole body;

⁶⁶ but if such an eye should ever change, and become a stumbling-block to the whole body, it is well to take it out and cast it outside the whole body, and that the rest of the body without that eye should be saved, rather than that along with it, when the whole body has been corrupted, the whole body should be cast into the hell of fire. For the practical faculty of the soul, if prone to sin, and the walking faculty of the soul, so to speak, if prone to sin, and the faculty of clear vision, if prone to sin, may be the hand that causes to stumble, and the foot that causes to stumble, and the eye that causes to stumble, which things it is better to cast away, and having put them aside to enter into life without them, like as one halt, or maimed, or one-eyed, rather than along with them to lose the whole soul. And likewise in the case of the soul it is a good and blessed thing to use its power for the noblest ends; but if we are going to lose one for any cause, it is better to lose the use of it, that along with the other powers we may be saved.

25. The Eye or Hand Allegorized.

⁶⁷ And it is possible to apply these words also to our nearest kinsfolk, who are our members, as it were; being considered to be our members, because of the close relationship; whether by birth, or from any habitual friendship, so to speak; whom we must not spare if they are injuring our soul. For let us cut off from ourselves as a hand or a foot or an eye, a father or mother who wishes us to do that which is contrary to piety, and a son or daughter who, as far as in them lies, would have us revolt from the church of Christ and the love of Him. But even if the wife of our bosom, or a friend who is kindred in soul,

become stumbling-blocks to us, let us not spare them, but let us cut them out from ourselves, and cast them outside of our soul, as not being truly our kindred but enemies of our salvation; for "whosoever hates not his father, and mother," and the others subjoined, when it is the fitting season to hate them as enemies and assailants, that he may be able to win Christ, this man is not worthy of the Son of God. And in respect of these we may say, that from a critical position any lame one, so to speak, is saved, when he has lost a foot-say a brother-and alone obtains the inheritance of the kingdom of God; and a maimed one is saved, when his father is not saved, but they perish, while he is separated from them, that he alone may obtain the benedictions. And so also any one is saved with one eye, who has cut out the eye of his own house, his wife, if she commit fornication, lest having two eyes he may go away into the hell of fire.

26. The Little Ones and Their Angels.

⁶⁸"See that ye despise not one of these little ones. It seems to me that as among the bodies of men there are differences in point of size,-so that some are little, and others great, and others of middle height, and, again, there are differences among the little, as they are more or less little, and the same holds of the great, and of those of middle height,-so also among the souls of men, there are some things which give them the stamp of littleness, and other things the stamp of greatness, so to speak, and generally, after the analogy of things bodily, other things the stamp of mediocrity. But in the case of bodies, it is not due to the action of men but to the spermatic principles, that one is short and little, another great, and another of middle height; but in the case of souls, it is our free-will, and actions of such a kind, and habits of such a kind, that furnish the reason why one is great, or little, or of middle height; and it is of our free-will either by advancing in stature to increase our size, or not advancing to be short. And so indeed I understand the words about Jesus having assumed a human soul, "Jesus advanced;" for as from the free-will there was an advance of His soul in wisdom and grace, so also in stature. And the Apostle says, "Until we all attain unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;

⁶⁹"for we must think that he attains unto a man, and that full-grown, according to the inner man, who has gone through the things of the child, and has reached the stage of the man, and has put away the things of the child, and generally, has perfected the things of the man. And so we must

suppose that there is a certain measure of spiritual stature unto which the most perfect soul can attain by magnifying the Lord, and become great. Thus, then, these became great, of whom this is written, Isaac, and Moses, and John, and the Saviour Himself above all; for also about Him Gabriel said, "He shall be great; " but the little ones are "the newborn babes which long for the reasonable milk which is without guile," such as stand in need of nursing-fathers and nursing-mothers, spoken of in Isaiah when he says, about the calling from the Gentiles, "And they shall bring the sons in the bosom, and take their daughters on the shoulders, and kings shall be thy nursing-fathers and their princesses thy nursing-mothers. For these reasons you will, then, attend to the word, "Do not despise one of these little ones," and consider whether it is their angels who bring them in their bosom, since they have become sons, and also take on their shoulders what are called daughters, and whether from them are the nursing-fathers who are called kings, and the nursing-mothers who are called princesses.

⁷⁰ And since the little ones, pointed out by our Saviour, are under the stewardship as of nursing-fathers and nursing-mothers, on this account I think that Moses, who believed that he had been already assigned a place among the ranks of the great, said, with regard to the promise, "My angel shall go before you," "If thou thyself do not go along with me, carry me not up hence. For though the little one even be an heir, yet as being a child he differs nothing from a servant when he is a child, and to the extent to which he is little "has the spirit of bondage to fear; " but he who is not at all any longer such has no longer the spirit of bondage, but already the spirit of adoption, when "perfect love casteth out fear; " it will be plain to thee, how that according to these things "the angel of the Lord" is said "to encamp round about them that fear Him, and to save them. But you will consider, according to these things also, whether these are indeed angels of the little ones "who are led by the spirit of bondage to fear," "when the angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear Him and delivereth them; "but of the great, whether it is the Lord who is greater than the angels, who might say about each of them, "I am with him in affliction;

⁷¹ " and, so long as we are imperfect, and need one to assist us that we may be delivered from evils, we stand in need of an angel of whom Jacob said, "The angel who delivered me from all the evils; " but, when we have become perfected, and have passed through the stage of being subject to nursing-

fathers and nursing-mothers and guardians and stewards, we are meet to be governed by the Lord Himself.

27. When the Little Ones are Assigned to Angels.

⁷² Then again one might inquire at what time those who are called their angels assume guardianship of the little ones pointed out by Christ; whether they received this commission to discharge concerning them, from what time "by the laver of regeneration," through which they were born "as new-born babes, they long for the reasonable milk which is without guile," and no longer are in subjection to any wicked power; or, whether from birth they had been appointed, according to the foreknowledge and predestination of God, over those whom God also foreknew, and foreordained to be conformed to the glory of the Christ. And with reference to the view that they have angels from birth, one might quote, "He who separated me from my mother's womb," and, "From the womb of my mother thou hast been my protector," and, "He has assisted me from my mother's womb," and, "Upon thee I was cast from my mother," and in the Epistle of Jude, "To them that are beloved in God the Father and are kept for Jesus Christ, being called," -kept completely by the angels who keep them.

28. Close Relationship of Angels to Their "Little Ones."

⁷³ With reference to the words, "When through the layer I became a child in Christ," it may be said, that there is no holy angel present with those who are still in wickedness, but that during the period of unbelief they are under the angels of Satan; but, after the regeneration, He who has redeemed us with His own blood consigns us to a holy angel, who also, because of his purity, beholds the face of God. And a third exposition of this passage might be something like the following, which would say, that as it is possible for a man to change from unbelief to faith, and from intemperance to temperance, and generally from wickedness to virtue, so also it is possible that the angel, to whom any soul has been entrusted at birth, may be wicked at the first, but afterwards may at some time believe in proportion as the man believes, and may make such advance that he may become one of the angels who always behold the face of the Father in heaven, beginning from the time that he is yoked along with the man who was foreknown and foreordained to believe at that time, the judgments of God, which are unspeakable

and unsearchable and like to the depths, fitly bringing together all this harmonious relationship-angels with men.

74 And it may be that as when a man and his wife are both unbelievers, sometimes it is the man who first believes and in time saves his wife, and sometimes the wife who begins and afterwards in time persuades her husband, so it happens with angels and with men. If, however, anything of this kind takes place in the case of other angels or not, you may seek out for yourself. But consider whether it may not be appropriate to say something of this kind in regard to each angel who is so honoured according to the word of the Saviour, that he is said to behold always the face of the Father who is in heaven. But since in what we said above, that the little ones have angels, but that the great have passed beyond such a position, some one will quote in opposition to US from the Acts of the Apostles, where it is written, that a certain maid Rhoda, when Peter knocked at the door, came to answer, and recognizing the voice of Peter, ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate; but when they who were gathered together in the house wondered, and thought that it was quite impossible that Peter verily stood before the gate, they said, It is his angel. For the objector will say that, as they had learned once for all that each of the believers had some definite angel, they knew that Peter also had one.

75 But he, who adheres to what we have previously said, will say that the word of Rhoda was not necessarily a dogma, and perhaps also the word of those who did not accurately know, when one as being little and God-fearing is governed by angels, and when now by the Lord Himself. After this, in order to establish our conception of the little one which we have brought forward, it will be said that we need no command about "not despising" in the case of the great, but we do need it in the case of the little; wherefore it is not merely said, "Do not despise one of these," pointing to all the disciples, but "one of these little ones," pointed out by Him, who sees the littleness and the greatness of the soul.

29. The Little Ones and the Perfect.

76 But another might say that the perfect man is here called little, applying the word, "For he that is least among you all, the same is great," and will affirm that he who humbles himself and becomes a child in the midst of all that believe, though he be an apostle or a bishop, and becomes such "as when a nurse cherisheth her own children," is the little one pointed out by Jesus,

and that the angel of such an one is worthy to behold the face of God. For to say that the little are here called perfect, according to the passage, "He that is least among you all, the same is great." and as Paul said, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints was this grace given," will seem to be in harmony with the saying, "Whoso shall cause one of these little ones to stumble," and "So it is not the will of My Father in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." For he, as has been stated, who is now little, could not be made to stumble nor perish, for "great peace have they who love the law of God, and there is no stumbling-block to them; " and he could not perish, who is least of all among all the disciples of Christ, and on this account becomes great; and, since he could not perish, he could say, "Who shall separate us from the love," etc. But he who wishes to maintain this last exposition will say that the soul even of the just man is changeable, as Ezekiel also testifies, saying, that the righteous man may abandon the commandments of God, so that his former righteousness is not reckoned unto him; wherefore it is said, "Whoso shall cause to stumble one of these little ones, and, "It is not the will of My Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

77 [As for the exposition of the matters relating to "the hundred sheep," you may consult the homilies on Luke.]

30. *The Sinning Brother.*

78 "If thy brother sin against thee, go, shew him his fault between thee and him alone. " He, then, who attends closely to the expression, in proof of the surpassing philanthropy of Jesus, will say, that as the words do not suggest a difference of they will act in a singular manner and contrary to the goodness of Jesus, who supply the thought, that these words are to be understood as being limited in their application to lesser sins. But another, also attending closely to the expression, and not wishing to introduce these extraneous thoughts, nor admitting that it is spoken about every sin, will say, that he who commits those great sins is not a brother, even if he be called a brother, as the Apostle says, "If any one that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, etc., with such an one not to eat; " for no one who is all idolater, or a fornicator, or covetous, is a brother; for if he, who seems to bear the name of Christ, though he is named a brother, has something of the features of these, he would not rightly be called a brother.

79 As then he, who says that such words are spoken about every sin, whether the sin be murder, or poisoning, or paederasty, or anything of that sort, would give occasion of injury to the exceeding goodness of Christ, so, on the contrary, he who distinguishes between the brother and him who is called the brother, might teach that, in the case of the least of the sins of men, he who has not repented after the telling of the fault is to be reckoned as a Gentile and a publican, for sins which are "not unto death," or, as the law has described them in the Book of Numbers, not "death-bringing. This would seem to be very harsh; for I do not think that any one will readily be found who has not been censured thrice for the same form of sin, say, reviling, with which revilers abuse their neighbours, or those who are carried away by passion, or for over-drinking, or lying and idle words, or any of those things which exist in the masses. You will inquire, therefore, whether any observation of the passage has escaped the notice of those, who are influenced by their conception of the goodness of the Word, and grant pardon to those who have committed the greatest sins, as well as of those who teach that, in the case of the very least sins, he is to be reckoned as a Gentile and a publican, making him a stranger to the church, after he has committed three very trivial transgressions.

80 But the following seems to me to have been overlooked by both of them, namely, the words, "Thou hast gained thy brother. It is assigned by the Word to him only who heard, and He no longer applies it in the case of him who has stumbled twice or thrice and been censured; but that which was to be said about him who was censured twice or thrice, corresponding to the saying, "Thou hast gained thy brother," He has left in the air, so to speak. He is not, therefore, altogether gained, nor will he altogether perish, or he will receive stripes. And attend carefully to the first passage, "If he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother," and to the second passage, which is literally, "If he hear thee not, take with thyself one or two more, that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. What, then, will happen to him who has been censured for the second time, after every word has been established by two or three witnesses, He has left us to conceive. And, again, "If he refuse to hear them"-manifestly, the witnesses who have been taken-"tell it," he says, "to the church;" and He does not say what he will suffer if he does not hear the church, but He taught that if he refused to hear

the church, then he who had thrice admonished, and had not been heard, was to regard him for the future as the Gentile and the publican.

⁸¹ Therefore he is not altogether gained, nor will he altogether perish. But what at all he will suffer, who at first did not hear, but required witnesses, or even refused to hear these, but was brought to the church, God knows; for we do not declare it, according to the precept, "Judge not that ye be not judged," "until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the hearts. But, with reference to the seeming harshness in the case of those who have committed less sins, one might say that it is not possible for him who has not heard twice in succession to hear the third time, so as, on this account, no longer to be as a Gentile or a publican, or no longer to stand in need of the censure in presence of all the church. For we must bear in mind this, "So it is not the will of My Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. For if "we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad," let each one with all his power do what he can so that he may not receive punishment for more evil things done in the body, even if he is going to receive back for all the wrongs which he has done;

⁸² but it should be our ambition to procure the reward for a greater number of good deeds, since "with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us," and, "according to the works of our own hands shall it happen unto us," and not in infinite wise, but either double or sevenfold shall sinners receive for their sins from the hand of the Lord; since He does not render unto any one according to the works of his hands, but more than that which he has done, for "Jerusalem," as Isaiah taught, "received from the hand of the Lord double for her sins;" but the neighbours of Israel, whoever they may be, will receive sevenfold, according to the following expression in the Psalms, "Render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom the reproach with which they have reproached Thee, O Lord. And other forms of payment in return could be found, which, if we apprehend, we shall know that to repent after any sin, whatever its greatness, is advantageous, in order that, in addition to our not being punished for more offences, there may be some hope left to us concerning good deeds done afterwards at some time, even though, before them, thousands of errors have been committed by anyone of us. For

it would be strange that evil deeds should be reckoned to any one, but the better which are done after the bad should profit nothing; which may also be learned from Ezekiel, by those who pay careful consideration to the things said about such cases.

31. The Power to Bind on Earth and in Heaven.

⁸³ But to me it seems that, to the case of him who after being thrice admonished was adjudged to be as the Gentile and the publican, it is fitly subjoined, "Verily, I say unto you, "-namely, to those who have judged any one to be as the Gentile and the publican,—"and what things soever ye shall bind on the earth, " etc.; for with justice has he, who has thrice admonished and not been heard, bound him who is judged to be as a Gentile and a publican; wherefore, when such an one is bound and condemned by one of this character, he remains bound, as no one of those in heaven overturns the judgment of the man who bound him. And, in like manner, he who was admonished once for all, and did things worthy of being gained, having been set free by the admonition of the man who gained him, and no longer bound by the cords of his own sins, for which he was admonished, shall be adjudged to have been set free by those in heaven. Only, it seems to be indicated that the things, which above were granted to Peter alone, are here given to all who give the three admonitions to all that have sinned; so that, if they be not heard, they will bind on earth him who is judged to be as a Gentile and a publican, as such an one has been bound in heaven.

⁸⁴ But since it was necessary, even if something in common had been said in the case of Peter and those who had thrice admonished the brethren, that Peter should have some element superior to those who thrice admonished, in the case of Peter, this saying "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of the heavens," has been specially set before the words, "And what things soever ye shall bind on earth," etc. And, indeed, if we were to attend carefully to the evangelical writings, we would also find here, and in relation to those things which seem to be common to Peter and those who have thrice admonished the brethren, a great difference and a pre-eminence in the things said to Peter, compared with the second class. For it is no small difference that Peter received the keys not of one heaven but of more, and in order that whatsoever things he binds on the earth may be bound not in one heaven but in them all, as compared with the many who bind on earth and loose on earth, so that these things are bound and loosed not in the heavens, as in the

case of Peter, but in one only; for they do not reach so high a stage, with power as Peter to bind and loose in all the heavens. The better, therefore, is the binder, so much more blessed is he who has been loosed, so that in every part of the heavens his loosing has been accomplished.

BOOK 14

1. The Power of Harmony in Relation to Prayer.

¹ "Again I say unto you that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them. The word symphony is strictly applied to the harmonies of sounds in music. And there are indeed among musical sounds some accordant and others discordant. But the Evangelic Scripture is familiar with the name as applied to musical matters in the passage, "He heard a symphony and dancing. For it was fitting that when the son who had been lost and found came by penitence into concord with his father a symphony should be heard on the occasion of the joyous mirth of the house. But the wicked Laban was not acquainted with the word symphony in his saying to Jacob, "And if thou hadst told me I would have sent thee away with mirth and with music and with drums and a harp. But akin to the symphony of this nature is that which is written in the second Book of Kings when "the brethren of Aminadab went before the ark, and David and his son played before the Lord on instruments artistically fitted with might and with songs;

² " for the instruments thus fitted with might and with songs, had in themselves the musical symphony which is so powerful that when two only, bring along with the symphony which has relation to the music that is divine and spiritual, a request to the Father in heaven about anything whatsoever, the Father grants the request to those who ask along with the symphony on earth,-which is most miraculous,-those things which those who have made the symphony spoken of may have asked. So also I understand the apostolic saying "Defraud ye not one the other except it be by agreement for a season that ye may give yourselves unto prayer. For since the word harmony is applied to those who marry according to God in the passage from Proverbs which is as follows: "Fathers will divide their house and substance to their sons, but from God the woman is married to the man," it is a logical consequence of the harmony being from God, that the name and the deed should enjoy the agreement with a view to prayer, as is indicated in the word, "unless it be by agreement. Then the Word repeating that the agreeing of

two on the earth is the same thing as the agreeing with Christ, adds, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name. Therefore the two or three who are gathered together in the name of Christ are those who are in agreement on earth, not two only but sometimes also three.

³ But he who has the power will consider whether this agreement and a congregation of this sort in the midst of which Christ is, can be found in more, since "narrow and straightened is the way that leadeth unto life, and few be they that find it. But perhaps also not even few but two or three make a symphony as Peter and James and John, to whom as making a symphony the Word of God showed His own glory. But two made a symphony, Paul and Sosthenes, when writing the first Epistle to the Corinthians; and after this Paul and Timothy when sending the second Epistle to the same. And even three made a symphony when Paul and Silvanus and Timothy gave instruction by letter to the Thessalonians. But if it be necessary also from the ancient Scriptures to bring forward the three who made a symphony on earth, so that the Word was in the midst of them making them one, attend to the superscription of the Psalms, as for example to that of the forty-first, which is as follows: "Unto the end, unto understanding, for the sons of Korah.

⁴ For though there were three sons of Korah whose names we find in the Book of Exodus, Aser, which is, by interpretation, "instruction," and the second Elkana, which is translated, "possession of God," and the third Abiasaph, which in the Greek tongue might be rendered, "congregation of the father," yet the prophecies were not divided but were both spoken and written by one spirit, and one voice, and one soul, which wrought with true harmony, and the three speak as one, "As the heart panteth after the springs of the water, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. But also they say in the plural in the forty-fourth Psalm, "O God, we have heard with our ears. But if you wish still further to see those who are making symphony on earth look to those who heard the exhortation, "that ye may be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment. and who strove after the goal, "the soul and the heart of all the believers were one. who have become such, if it be possible for such a condition to be found in more than two or three, that there is no discord between them, just as there is no discord between the strings of the ten-stringed psalter with each other.

5 But they were not in symphony in earth who said, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ," but there were schisms among them, upon the dissolution of which they were gathered together in company with the spirit in Paul, with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, that they might no longer "bite and devour one another so that they were consumed by one another;" for discord consumes, as concord brings together, and admits the Son of God who comes in the midst of those who have become at concord. And strictly, indeed, concord takes place in two things generic, through the perfecting together, as the Apostle has called it, of the same mind by an intellectual grasp of the same opinions, and through the perfecting together of the same judgment, by a like way of living. But if whenever two of us agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of the Father of Jesus who is in heaven, plainly when this is not done for them of the Father in heaven as touching anything that they shall ask, there the two have not been in agreement on earth; and this is the cause why we are not heard when we pray, that we do not agree with one another on earth, neither in opinions nor in life.

6 But further also if we are the body of Christ and God hath set the members each one of them in the body that the members may have the same care one for another, and may agree with one another, and when one member suffers, all the members suffer with it, and if one be glorified, they rejoice with it, we ought to practise the symphony which springs from the divine music, that when we are gathered together in the name of Christ, He may be in the midst of us, the Word of God, and the Wisdom of God, and His Power.

2. The Harmony of Husband and Wife.

7 So much then for the more common understanding of the two or three whom the Word exhorts to be in agreement. But now let us also touch upon another interpretation which was uttered by some one of our predecessors, exhorting those who were married to sanctity and purity; for by the two, he says, whom the Word desires to agree on earth, we must understand the husband and wife, who by agreement defraud each other of bodily intercourse that they may give themselves unto prayer; when if they pray for anything whatever that they shall ask, they shall receive it, the request being granted to them by the Father in heaven of Jesus Christ on the ground of such agreement. And this interpretation does not appear to me to cause dissolution of

marriage, but to be an incitement to agreement, so that if the one wished to be pure, but the other did not desire it, and on this account he who willed and was able to fulfil the better part, condescended to the one who had not the power or the will, they would not both have the accomplishment from the Father in heaven of Jesus Christ, of anything whatever that they might ask.

3. The Harmony of Body, Soul, and Spirit.

8 And next to this about the married, I am familiar also with another interpretation of the agreement between the two which is as follows. In the wicked, sin reigns over the soul, being settled as on its own throne in this mortal body, so that the soul obeys the lusts thereof; but in the case of those, who have stirred up the sin which formerly reigned over the body as from a throne and who are in conflict with it, "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh;" but in the case of those who have now become perfected, the spirit has gained the mastery and put to death the deeds of the body, and imparts to the body of its own life, so that already this is fulfilled, "He shall quicken also your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you;" and there arises a concord of the two, body and spirit, on the earth, on the successful accomplishment of which there is sent up a harmonious prayer also of him who "with the heart believes unto righteousness, but with the mouth maketh confession unto salvation. so that the heart is no longer far from God, and along with this the righteous man draws nigh to God with his own lips and mouth.

9 But still more blessed is it if the three be gathered together in the name of Jesus that this may be fulfilled, "May God sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But some one may inquire with regard to the concord of spirit and body spoken of, if it is possible for these to be at concord without the third being so,-I mean the soul-and whether it does not follow from the concord of these on the earth after the two have been gathered together in the name of Christ, that the three also are already gathered together in His name, in the midst of whom comes the Son of God as all are dedicated to Him,-I mean the three,-and no one is opposed to Him, there being no antagonism not only on the part of the spirit, but not even of the soul, nor further of the body.

4. Harmony of the Old and New Covenants.

¹⁰ And likewise it is a pleasant thing to endeavour to understand and exhibit the fact of the concord of the two covenants,—of the one before the bodily advent of the Saviour and of the new covenant; for among those things in which the two covenants are at concord so that there is no discord between them would be found prayers, to the effect that about anything whatever they shall ask it shall be done to them from the Father in heaven. And if also you desire the third that unites the two, do not hesitate to say that it is the Holy Spirit, since "the words of the wise," whether they be of those before the advent, or at the time of the advent, or after it, "are as goads, and as nails firmly fixed, which were given by agreement from one shepherd." And do not let this also pass unobserved, that He did not say, where two or three are gathered together in My name, there "shall I be" in the midst of them, but "there am I," not going to be, not delaying, but at the very moment of the concord being Himself found, and being in the midst of them.

5. The Limit of Forgiveness.

¹¹ "Then came Peter and said unto Him, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?" The conception that these things were said in a simple sense by Peter, as if he were inquiring whether he was to forgive his brother when he sinned against him seven times, but no longer if he sinned an eighth time, and by the Saviour, as if He thought that one should sit still and reckon up the sins of his neighbours against him in order that he might forgive seventy times and seven, but that from the seventy-eighth he should not forgive the man who wronged him, seems to me altogether silly and unworthy alike of the progress which Peter had made in the company of Jesus and of the divine magnanimity of Jesus. Perhaps, then, these things also border on an obscurity akin to the words, "Hear My voice, ye wives of Lamech," etc. If any one has already become a friend of Jesus so as to be taught by His spirit which illumines the reason of him who has advanced so far according to his desert, he might know the true meaning, therefore, in regard to these things, and such as Jesus Himself would have clearly expounded it; but we who fall short of the greatness of the friendship of Jesus must be content if we can babble a little about the passage. The number six, then, appears to be working and toilsome, but the number seven to contain the idea of repose.

¹² And consider if you can say that he, who loves the world and works the things of the world, and does those things which are material, sins six times, and that the number seven is the end of sin in his case, so that Peter with some such thought in his mind wished to pardon seven sins of those which his brother had committed against him. But since as units the tens and the hundreds have a certain common measure of proportion to the number which is in units, and Jesus knew that the number might be exceeded, on this account, I think, that He added to the number seven also the seventy, and said that there ought to be forgiveness to brethren here, and to them who have sinned in respect to things here. But if any one going beyond the things about the world and this age were to commit sin, even if it were trifling, he could not longer reasonably have forgiveness of sins; for forgiveness extends to the things here, and in relation to the sins committed here, whether the forgiveness comes late or soon; but there is no forgiveness, not even to a brother, who has sinned beyond the seven and seventy times.

¹³ But you might say that he who has sinned in such wise, whether as against Peter his brother, or as against Peter, against whom the gates of Hades do not prevail, is by sins of this kind in the smaller number of the sin, but according to sins still worse is in the number which has no forgiveness of sins.

6. Concerning the King Who Made a Reckoning with His Own Servants, to Whom Was Brought a Man Who Owed Ten Thousand Talents.

¹⁴ "Therefore I say unto you the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, who wished to make a reckoning with his own servants. The general conception of the parable is to teach us that we should be inclined to forgive the sins committed against us by those who have wronged us, and especially if after the wrongdoing he who has done it supplicates him who has been wronged, asking forgiveness for the sins which he has committed against him. And this the parable wishes to teach us by representing that even when forgiveness has been granted by God to us of the sins in respect of which we have received remission, exaction will be demanded even after the remission, unless we forgive the sins of those who have wronged us, so that there is no longer left in us the least remembrance of the wrong that was done. but the whole heart, assisted by the spirit of forgetfulness of wrongs, which is no common virtue, forgives him who has wronged us those things which have been wickedly done against any of us by him, even treacherously. But next to

the general conception of the parable, it is right to examine the whole of it more simply according to the letter, so that he who advances with care to the right investigation of each detail of the things previously written may derive profit from the examination of what is said.

¹⁵ Now there is, as is probable, an interpretation, transcendental and hard to trace, as it is somewhat mystical, according to which, after the analogy of the parables which are interpreted by the Evangelists, one would investigate each of the details in this; as, for example, who the king was, and who the servants were, and what was the beginning of his making a reckoning, and who was the one debtor who owed many talents, and who was his wife and who his children, and what were the "all things" spoken of besides those which the king ordered to be sold in order that the debt might be paid out of his belongings, and what was meant by the going out of the man who had been forgiven the many talents, and who was the one of the servants who was found and was a debtor not to the householder, but to the man who had been forgiven, and what is meant by the number of the hundred pence, and what by the word, "He took him by the throat saying, Pay what thou owest," and what is the prison into which he who had been forgiven all the talents went out and cast his fellow-servant, and who were the fellow-servants who were grieved and told the lord all that had been done, and who were the tormentors to whom he who had cast his fellow-servant into prison was delivered, and how he who was delivered to the tormentors paid all that was due, so that he no longer owed anything.

¹⁶ But it is probable also that some other things could be added to the number by a more competent investigator, the exposition and interpretation of which I think to be beyond the power of man, and requiring the Spirit of Christ who spoke them in order that Christ may be understood as He spoke; for as "no one among men knows the things of the man, save the spirit which is in him," and "no one knows the things of God, save the Spirit of God," so no one knows after God the things spoken by Christ in proverbs and parables save the Spirit of Christ, in which he who participates in Christ not only so far as He is Spirit, but in Christ as He is Wisdom, as He is Word, would behold the things which were revealed to him in this passage. But with regard to the interpretation of the loftiest type, we make no profession; nor on the other hand with the assistance of Christ who is the Wisdom of God do we despair of apprehending the things signified in the parable; but

whether it shall be the case that such things shall be dictated to us in connection with this Scripture or not, may God in Christ suggest the doing of that which is pleasing to Him, if only there be granted to us also concerning these things, the word of wisdom which is given from God through the Spirit, and the word of knowledge which is supplied according to the Spirit.

7. Exposition Continued: the King and the Servants.

¹⁷ "The kingdom of heaven," He says, "is likened," etc. But if it be likened to such a king, and one who has done such things, who must we say that it is but the Son of God? For He is the King of the heavens, and as He is absolute Wisdom and absolute Righteousness and absolute Truth, is He not so also absolute Kingdom? But it is not a kingdom of any of those below, nor of a part of those above, but of all the things above, which were called heavens. But if you enquire into the meaning of the words, "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven," you may say that Christ is theirs in so far as He is absolute Kingdom, reigning in every thought of the man who is no longer under the reign of sin which reigns in the mortal body of those who have subjected themselves to it. And if I say, reigning in every thought, I mean something like this, reigning as Righteousness and Wisdom and Truth and the rest of the virtues in him who has become a heaven, because of bearing the image of the heavenly, and in every power, whether angelic, or the rest that are named saints, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come, and who are worthy of a kingdom of such a kind.

¹⁸ Accordingly this kingdom of heaven (when it was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh," that for sin it might condemn sin, when God made "Him who knew no sin to be sin on behalf of us," who bear the body of our sin), is likened to a certain king who is understood in relation to Jesus being united to Him, if we may dare so to speak, having more capacity towards being united and becoming entirely one with the "First-born of all creation," than he, who, being joined to the Lord, becomes one spirit with Him. Now of this kingdom of the heavens which is likened unto a certain king, according to the conception of Jesus, and is united to Him, it is said by anticipation that he wished to make a reckoning with his servants. But he is about to make a reckoning with them in order that it may be manifested how each has employed the tried money of the householder and his rational coins. And the image in the parables was indeed taken from masters who made a reckoning with their own servants; but we shall understand more accurately

what is signified by this part of the parable, if we fix our thought on the things done by the slaves who had administered their master's goods, and who were asked to give a reckoning concerning them. For each of them, receiving in different measure from his master's goods, has used them either for that which was right so as to increase the goods of his master.

¹⁹ or consumed it riotously on things which he ought not, and spent profusely without judgment and without discretion that which had been put into his hands. But there are those who have wisely administered these goods and goods so great, but have lost others, and whenever they give the reckoning when the master makes a reckoning with them, there is gathered together how much loss each has incurred, and there is reckoned up how much gain each has brought, and according to the worthiness of the way in which he has administered it, he is either honoured or punished, or in some cases the debt is forgiven, but in others the talents are taken away. Well, then, from what has been said, let us first look at the rational coins and the tried money of the householder, of which one receives more and another less, for according to the ability of each, to one are given five talents as he has the ability to administer so many, but to another two as not being able to receive the amount of the man before him, and to another one as being also inferior to the second. Are these, then, the only differences, or are we to recognize these differences in the case of certain persons of whom the Gospel goes on to speak while there are also others besides these: In other parables also are found certain persons, as the two debtors, the one who owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty;

²⁰ but whether these had been entrusted with them and had administered them badly as being inferior in ability to him who had been entrusted with a talent, or had received them, we have not learned; but that they owed so much, we seem to be taught from the parable. And there are found other ten servants who were each entrusted with a pound separately. And if any one understood the varied character of the human soul and the wide differences from each other in respect of natural aptitude, or want of aptitude for more or fewer of the virtues, and for these virtues or for those, perhaps he would comprehend how each soul has come with certain coins of the householder which come to light with the full attainment of reason, and with the attention which follows the full attainment of reason, and with exercise in things that are right, or with diligence and exercise in other things, whether they

be useful as pursuits, or in part useful and in part not useful, such as the opinions which are not wholly true nor wholly false.

8. The Principle of the Reckoning.

²¹ But you will here inquire whether all men can be called servants of the king, or some are servants whom he foreknew and fore-ordained, while there are others who transact business with the servants, and are called bankers. And in like manner you will inquire if there are those outside the number of the slaves from whom the householder declares that he will exact his own with usury, not only men alien from piety, but also some of the believers. Now the servants alone are the stewards of the Word, but the king, making a reckoning with the servants, demands from those who have borrowed from the servants, whether a hundred measures of wheat or a hundred measures of oil, or whatever in point of fact those who are outside of the household of the king have received; for he who owed the hundred measures of wheat or the hundred measures of oil is not found to be, according to the parable, a fellow-servant of the unjust steward, as is evident from the question-how much owest thou to my lord? But mark with me that each deed which is good or seemly is like a gain and an increment, but a wicked deed is like a loss; and as there is a certain gain when the money is greater and another when it is less, and as there are differences of more or less, so according to the good deeds, there is as it were a valuing of gains more or less.

²² To reckon what work is a great gain, and what a less gain, and what a least, is the prerogative of him who alone knows to investigate such things, looking at them in the light of the disposition, and the word, and the deed, and from consideration of the things which are not in our power cooperating with those that are; and so also in the case of things opposite, it is his to say what sin, when a reckoning is made with the servants, is found to be a great loss, and what is less, and what, if we may so call it, is the loss of the very last mite, or the last farthing. The account, therefore, of the entire and whole life is exacted by that which is called the kingdom of heaven which is likened to a king, when "we must all stand before the judgment-sent of Christ that each one may receive the things done in the body according to what he hath done, whether good or bad;" and then when the reckoning is being made, shall there be brought into the reckoning that is made also every idle word that men shall speak, and Guy cup of cold water only which one has given to drink in the name of a disciple.

9. The Time Occupied by the Reckoning.

²³ And these things will take place whenever that happens which is written in Daniel, "The books were opened and the judgment was set;" for a record, as it were, is made of all things that have been spoken and done and thought, and by divine power every hidden thing of ours shall be manifested, and everything that is covered shall be revealed, in order that when any one is found who has not "given diligence to be freed from the adversary," he may go in succession through the hands of the magistrate, and the judge, and the attendant into the prison, until he pays the very last mite; but when one has given diligence to be freed from him and owes nothing to any one, and already has made the pound ten pounds or five pounds, or doubled the five talents, or made the two four, he may obtain the due recompense, entering into the joy of his Lord, either being set over all His possessions, or hearing the word, "Have thou authority over ten cities," or "Have thou authority over five cities.

²⁴ But we think that these things are spoken of as if they required a long period of time, in order that an account may be made by us of the whole times of the earthly life, so that we might suppose that when the king makes a reckoning with each one of his many servants the matter would require so vast a period of time, until these things come to an end which have existed from the beginning of the world down to the consummation of the age, not of one age, but of many ages. But the truth is not so; for when God wished all at once to rekindle in the memories of all everything that had been done by each one throughout the whole time, in order that each might become conscious of his own doings whether good or bad, He would do it by His ineffable power. For it is not with God as with us; for if we wish to call some things to remembrance, we require sufficient time for the detailed account of what has been said by us, and to bring to our remembrance the things which we wish to remember; but if He wished to call to our memory the things which have been done in this life, in order that becoming conscious of what we have done we may apprehend for what we are punished or honoured, He could do so.

²⁵ But if any one disbelieves the swiftness of the power of God in regard to these matters, he has not yet had a true conception of the God who made the universe, who did not require times to make the vast creation of heaven and earth and the things in them; for, though He may seem to have made these

things in six days, there is need of understanding to comprehend in what sense the words "in six days" are said, on account of this, "This is the book of the generation of heaven and earth," etc. Therefore it may be boldly affirmed that the season of the expected judgment does not require times, but as the resurrection is said to take place "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," so I think will the judgment also be.

10. The Man Who Owed Many Talents.

²⁶Next we must speak in regard to this, "And when he had begun to reckon, there was brought unto him one which owed many talents. " The sense of this appears to me to be as follows: The season of beginning the judgment is with the house of God, who says, as also it is written in Ezekiel, to those who are appointed to attend to punishments, "Begin ye with My saints;" and it is like "the twinkling of an eye;" but, the time of making a reckoning includes the same "twinkling," ideally apprehended, for we are not forgetful of what has been previously said of those who owe more. Wherefore it is not written, when he was making reckoning, but it is said, "When he began to reckon," there was brought, at the beginning of his making a reckoning, one who owed many talents; he had lost tens of thousands of talents, having been entrusted with great things, and having had many things committed to his care, but he had brought no gain to his master, but had lost tens of thousands so that he owed many talents; and, perhaps on this account, he owed many talents, seeing that he followed often the woman, who was sitting upon the talent of lead, whose name is wickedness. But observe here that every great sin is a loss of the talents of the master of the house, and such sins are committed by fornicators, adulterers, abusers of themselves with men, effeminate, idolaters, murderers.

²⁷Perhaps then the one who is brought to the king owing many talents has committed no small sin but all that are great and heinous; and if you were to seek for him among men, perhaps you would find him to be "the man of sin, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against every God or object of worship;" but if you seek him outside the number of men, who can this be but the devil who has ruined so many who received him, who wrought sin in them. For "man is a great thing, and a pitiful man is precious," precious so as to be worthy of a talent, whether of gold like as the lamp which was equal to a talent of gold, or of silver or of any kind of material whatsoever understood intellectually, the symbols of which

are recorded in the Words of the Days, when David became enriched with many talents of which the number is mentioned, so many talents of gold, and so many of silver, and of the rest of the material there named, from which the temple of God was built.

11. The Servant Who Owed a Hundred Pence.

²⁸ Only, though he cannot pay the talents, for he has lost them, he has a wife and children and other things, of which it is written, "All that he has. And it was possible that when he had been sold along with his own, he would have prospered if some one had bought him, and, by his worth and the things that were his, have paid the whole debt in full; and it was possible that he might no longer be the servant of the king, but become that of his purchaser. And he makes a request that he be not sold along with his own, but may continue to abide in the house of the king; wherefore he fell down and worshipped him, knowing that the king was God, and said, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all; " for he was, as is probable, an active man, who knew that he could by a second course of action fill up the whole deficiency of the former loss of many talents. And this truly good king was moved with compassion for the man who owed him many talents and then released him, having bestowed upon him a favour greater than the request which had been made;

²⁹ for the debtor promised to the long-suffering master to pay all his debts, but the Lord moved with compassion for him did not merely forgive him with the idea of receiving his own back as a result of his patience, but even entirely released him and forgave him the whole debt. But this wicked servant, who had besought his master to have patience for his many talents, acted without mercy, for, having found one of his fellow-servants which owed him a hundred pence, he laid hold on him and took him by the throat, saying, "Pay if thou owest. And did he not exhibit the very excess of wickedness who laid hold of his fellow-servant for a hundred pence, and took him by the throat and deprived him of freedom to breathe, when he himself, for the many talents, had neither been laid hold of, nor seized by the throat, but at first was ordered to be sold along with his wife and children and all that was his own; but afterwards, when he had worshipped him, the master was moved with compassion for him, and he was released and forgiven in regard to the whole of the debt.

³⁰ But it were indeed a hard task to tell according to the conception of Jesus who is the one fellow-servant who was found to be owing a hundred pence, not to his own lord, but to him who owed many talents, and who are the fellow-servants who saw the one taking by the throat, and the other taken, and were exceedingly sorry, and represented clearly unto their own lord all that had been done. But what the truth in these matters is, I declare that no one can interpret unless Jesus, who explained all things to His own disciples privately, takes up His abode in his reason, and opens up all the treasures in the parable which are dark, hidden, unseen, and confirms by clear demonstrations the man whom He desires to illumine with the light of the knowledge of the things that are in this parable, that he may at once represent who is brought to the king as the debtor of many talents, and who is the other one who owes to him a hundred pence, etc.; whether he can be the man of sin previously mentioned, or the devil, or neither of these, but some other, whether a man, or some one of these under the sway of the devil;

³¹ for it is a work of the wisdom of God to exhibit the things have have been prophesied concerning those who are in themselves of a certain nature, or have been made according to such and such qualities, whether among visible powers or also among some men, in whatever way they may have been written by the Holy Spirit. But as we have not yet received the competent mind which is able to be blended with the mind of Christ, and which is capable of attaining to things so great, and which is able with the Spirit to "search all things, even the deep things of God," we, forming an impression still indefinitely with regard to the matters in this passage, are of opinion that the wicked servant indicated by the parable who is here represented in regard to the debt of many talents, refers to some definite one.

12. The Time of the Reckoning.

³² But it is fitting to examine at what time the man-the king-in the parable wished to make a reckoning with his own servants, and to what period we ought to refer the things that are said. For if it be after the consummation, or at it at the time of the expected judgment, how are we to maintain the things about him who owed a hundred pence, and was taken by the throat by the man who had been forgiven the many talents? But if, before the judgment, how can we explain the reckoning that was made before this by the king, with his own servants? But we ought to think in a general way about

every parable, the interpretation of which has not been recorded by the evangelists, even though Jesus explained all things to His own disciples privately; and for this reason the writers of the Gospels have concealed the clear exposition of the parables, because the things signified by them were beyond the power of the nature of words to express, and every solution and exposition of such parables was of such a kind that not even the whole world itself could contain the books that should be written in relation to such parables. But it may happen that a fitting heart be found, and, because of its purity, able to receive the letters of the exposition of the parable, so that they could be written in it by the Spirit of the living God.

³³ But some one will say that, perhaps, we act with impiety, who, because of the secret and mystical import of some of the Scriptures which are of heavenly origin, wish them to be symbolic, and endeavour to expound them, even though it might seem *ex hypothesi* that we had an accurate knowledge of their meaning. But to this we must say that, if there be those who have obtained the gift of accurate apprehension of these things, they know what they ought to do; but as for us, who acknowledge that we fall short of the ability to see into the depth of the things here signified, even though we obtain a somewhat crass perception of the things in the passage, we will say, that some of the things which we seem to find after much examination and inquiry, whether by the grace of God, or by the power of our own mind, we do not venture to commit to writing; but some things, for the sake of our own intellectual discipline, and that of those who may chance to read them, we will to some extent set forth. But let these things, then, be said by way of apology, because of the depth of the parable; but, with regard to the question at what time the man-the king-in the parable wished to make a reckoning with his own servants, we will say that it seems that this takes place about the time of the judgment which had been proclaimed.

³⁴ And this is confirmed by two parables, one at the close of the Gospel before us, and one from the Gospel according to Luke. And not to prolong the discussion by quoting the very letter, as any one who wishes can take it from the Scripture himself, we will say that the parable according to Matthew declares, "For it is as when a man going into another country called his own servants, and delivered unto them his own goods, and to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one talent;" then they took action with regard to that which had been entrusted to them, and, after a

long time, the lord of those servants cometh, and it is written in the very words, that he also makes a reckoning with them. And compare the words, "And when he began to make a reckoning," and consider that he called the going of the householder into another country the time at which "we are at home in the body but absent from the Lord;" but his advent, when, "after a long time the lord of those servants cometh," the time at the consummation in the judgment; for after a long time the lord of those servants cometh and makes a reckoning with them, and those things which follow take place.

³⁵ But the parable in Luke represents with more clearness, that "a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return," and when going, "he called ten servants, and gave to them ten pounds, and said unto them, Trade ye till I come. But the nobleman, being hated by his own citizens, who sent an ambassage after him, as they did not wish him to reign over them, came back again, having received the kingdom, and told the servants to whom he had given the money to be called to himself that he might know what they had gained by trading. And, seeing what they had done, to him who had made the one pound ten pounds, rendering praise in the words, "Well done, thou good servant, because thou wast found faithful in a very little," he gives to him authority over ten cities, to-wit, those which were under his kingdom. And to another, who had multiplied the pound fivefold, he did not render the praise which he assigned to the first, nor did he specify the word "authority," as in the case of the first, but said to him, "Be thou also over five cities. But to him who had tied up the pound in a napkin, he said, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant;" and he said to them that stood by.

³⁶ Take from him the pound, and give it unto him that hath the ten pounds Who, then, in regard to this parable, will not say that the nobleman, who goes into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return, is Christ, going, as it were, into another country to receive the kingdoms of this world, and the things in it? And those who have received the ten talents are those who have been entrusted with the dispensation of the Word which has been committed unto them. And His citizens who did not wish Him to reign over them when He was a citizen in the world in respect of His incarnation, are perhaps Israel who disbelieved Him, and perhaps also the Gentiles who disbelieved Him.

13. No Forgiveness to the Unforgiving.

³⁷ Only, I have said these things with the view of referring his return when he comes with his kingdom to the consummation, when he commanded the servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him that he might know what they had gained by trading, and from a desire to demonstrate from this, and from the parable of the Talents, that the passage "he who wished to make a reckoning with his own servants" is to be referred to the consummation when now he is king, receiving the kingdom, on account of which, according to another parable, he went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. Therefore, when he returned after receiving the kingdom, he wished to make a reckoning with his own servants. And "when he had begun to reckon, there was brought unto him one who owed many talents," and he was brought as to a king by those who had been appointed his ministers—I think, the angels, And perhaps he was one of those under the kingdom who had been entrusted with a great administration and had not dispensed it well, but had wasted what had been entrusted to him, so that he came to owe the many talents which he had lost. This very man, perhaps not having the means to pay, is ordered by the king to be sold along with his wife, by intercourse with whom he became the father of certain children.

³⁸ But it is no easy task to see what is intellectually meant by father and mother and children. What this means in point of truth God may know, and whether He Himself has given insight to us or not, he who can may judge. Only this is our conception of the passage; that, as "the Jerusalem which is above" is "the mother" of Paul and of those like unto him, so there may be a mother of others after the analogy of Jerusalem, the mother, for example, of Syene in Egypt, or Sidon, or as many cities as are named in the Scriptures. Then, as Jerusalem is "a bride adorned for her husband," Christ, so there may be those mothers of certain powers who have been allotted to them as wives or brides. And as there are certain children of Jerusalem, as mother, and of Christ, as father, so there would be certain children of Syene, or Memphis, or Tyre, or Sidon, and the rulers set over them. Perhaps then, too, this one, the debtor of many talents who was brought to the king, has, as we have said, a wife and children, whom at first the king ordered to be sold, and also all that he had to be sold; but afterwards, being moved with compassion, he released him and forgave him all the debt; not, as if he were

ignorant of the future, but, in order that we might understand what happened, it was written that he did so.

³⁹ Each one then of those who have, as we have said, a wife and children will render an account whenever the king comes to make a reckoning, having received the kingdom and having returned; and each of them as a ruler of any Syene or Memphis, or Tyre or Sidon, or any like unto them, has also debtors. This one, then, having been released, and having been forgiven all the debt, "went out from the king and found one of his fellow-servants," etc.; and, on this account, I suppose that he took him by the throat, when he had gone out from the king, for unless he had gone out he would not have taken his own fellow-servant by the throat. Then observe the accuracy of the Scripture, how that the one fell down and "worshipped," but the other fell down and did not worship but "besought;" and the king being moved with compassion released him and forgave him all the debt, but the servant did not wish even to pity his own fellow-servant; and the king before his release ordered him to be sold and what was his, while he who had been forgiven cast him into prison. And observe that his fellow-servants did not bring any accusation or "said," but "told," and that he did not use the epithet "wicked" at the beginning in regard to the money lost, but reserved it afterwards for his action towards the fellow-servant. But mark also the moderation of the king;

⁴⁰ he does not say, You worshipped me, but You besought me; and no longer did he order him and his to be sold, but, what was worse, he delivered him to the tormentors, because of his wickedness. But who may these be but those who have been appointed in the matter of punishments? But at the same time observe, because of the use made of this parable by adherents of heresies, that if they accuse the Creator of being passionate, because of words that declare the wrath of God, they ought also to accuse this king, because that "being wroth," he delivered the debtor to the tormentors. But it must further be said to those whose view it is that no one is delivered by Jesus to the tormentors,—pray, explain to us, good sirs, who is the king who delivered the wicked servant to the tormentors? And let them also attend to this, "So therefore also shall My heavenly Father do unto you;" and to the same persons also might rather be said the things in the parable of the Ten Pounds that the Son of the good God said, "Howbeit these mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them," etc. The conclusion of the parable,

however, is adapted also to the simpler; for all of us who have obtained the forgiveness of our own sins, and have not forgiven our brethren, are taught at once that we shall suffer the lot of him who was forgiven but did not forgive his fellow-servant.

14. How Jesus Finished His Words.

⁴¹ "And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these words." He who gives a detailed and complete account of each of the questions before him so that nothing is left out, finishes his own words. But he will give a declaration on this point with more confidence who devotes himself with great diligence to the entire reading of the Old and New Testament; for if the expression, "he finished these words," may be applied to no other, neither to Moses, nor to any of the prophets, but only to Jesus, then one would dare to say that Jesus alone finished His words, He who came to put an end to things, and to fulfil what was defective in the law, by saying, "It was said to them of old time," etc., and, again, "That the things spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled. But if it is written somewhere also in them, then you may compare and contrast the discourses finished by them with those finished by the Saviour, that you may find the difference between them. And yet at this point, also, investigation might be made whether in the case of the things spoken by way of oracle the expression, "he finished," is applied either to the things spoken by Moses, or any of the prophets, or of both together; for careful observation would suggest very weighty thoughts to those who know how "to compare spiritual things with spiritual," and on this account "speak not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth.

⁴² But perhaps some other one, attending with over-curious spirit to the word "finished," which is assigned to things of a more mystical order, just as we say that some one delivered to those who were under his control mysteries and rites of "perfecting" not in a praiseworthy fashion, and another delivered the mysteries of God to those who are worthy, and rites of "perfecting" proportionate to such mysteries, might say that having initiated them, he made a rite of "perfecting," by which "perfecting" the words were shown to be powerful, so that the gospel of Jesus was preached in the whole world, and by virtue of the divine "perfecting" gained the mastery of every soul which the Father draws to the Son, according to what is said by the Saviour, "No one comes to Me except the Father which has sent Me draw him. Wherefore also "the word" of those who by the grace of God are ambassadors of the gospel,

"and their preaching, is not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit of power," to those for whom the words of the doctrine of Jesus were finished. You will therefore observe how often it is said, "He finished. and of what things it is said, and you will take as an illustration that which is said in regard to the beatitudes, and the whole of the discourse to which is subjoined, "And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these words, all the multitudes were astonished at His teaching.

⁴³ But now the saying, "Jesus finished these words," is referred also immediately to the very mystical parable according to which the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a king, but also beyond this parable to the sections which were written before it.

15. How Men Followed Jesus.

⁴⁴ Only, when Jesus had finished these words, having spoken them in Galilee about Capernaum, then "He departed thence, and came into the borders of Judaea," which were different from Galilee. But He came to the borders of Judaea, and not to the middle of it, but, as it were, to the outermost parts, where great multitudes followed Him, whom He healed at "the borders of Judaea beyond Jordan,"-where baptism had been given. But you will observe the difference between the crowds who simply followed, and Peter and the others who gave up everything and followed, and Matthew, who arose and followed him; he did not simply follow, but "having arisen;" for "having arisen" is an important addition. There are always those, then, who follow like the great multitudes, who have no arisen that they may follow, nor have given up all that was theirs formerly, but few are they who have arisen and followed, who also, in the regeneration, shall sit on twelve thrones. Only, if one wishes to be healed, let him follow Jesus.

16. Concerning the Pharisees and Scribes Tempting Jesus (by Asking) Whether Was Lawful for a Man to Put Away His Wife for Every Cause.

⁴⁵ After this it is written that "there came unto Him the Pharisees tempting Him and saying, Is it lawful for a man to wife for every cause?" Mark, also, has written to the like effect. Accordingly, of those who came to Jesus and inquired of Him, there were some who put questions to tempt Him; and if our Saviour so transcendent was tempted, which of His disciples who is ordained to teach need be vexed, when he is tempted by some who inquire, not from the love of learning, but from the wish to tempt? And you might find many passages, if you brought them together, in which the Pharisees temp-

ted our Jesus, and others, different from them, as a certain lawyer, and perhaps also a scribe, that by bringing together what is said about those who tempted Him, you might find by investigation what is useful for this kind of inquiries. Only, the Saviour, in response to those who tempted Him, laid down dogmas; for they said, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his own wife for every cause?" and He answered and said, "Have ye not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female?" etc. And I think that the Pharisees put forward this word for this reason, that they might attack Him whatever He might say; as, for example, if He had said, "It is lawful," they would have accused Him of dissolving marriages for trifles;

⁴⁶ but, if He had said, "It is not lawful," they would have accused Him of permitting a man to dwell with a woman, even with sins; so, likewise, in the case of the tribute-money, if He had told them to give, they would have accused Him of making the people subject to the Romans, and not to the law of God, but if He had told them not to give, they would have accused Him of creating war and sedition, and of stirring up those who were not able to stand against so powerful an army. But they did not perceive in what way He answered blamelessly and wisely, in the first place, rejecting the opinion that a wife was to be put away for every cause, and, in the second place, giving answer to the question about the bill of divorcement; for He saw that not every cause is a reasonable ground for the dissolution of marriage, and that the husband must dwell with the wife as the weaker vessel, giving honour, and bearing her burdens in sills; and by what is written in Genesis, He puts to shame the Pharisees who boasted in the Scriptures of Moses, by saying, "Have ye not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female," etc., and, subjoining to these words, because of the saying, "And the twain shall become one flesh," teaching in harmony with one flesh, namely, "So that they are no more twain, but one flesh."

⁴⁷ And, as tending to convince them that they should not put away their wife for every cause, is it said, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. It is to be observed, however, in the exposition of the words quoted from Genesis in the Gospel, that they were not spoken consecutively as they are written in the Gospel; and I think that it is not even said about the same persons, namely, of those who were formed after the image of God, and of those who were formed from the dust of the ground and from one of the ribs of Adam. For where it is said, "Male and female made He them," the

reference is to those formed "after the image," but where He also said, "For this cause shall a man leave his own father and mother," etc., the reference is not to those formed after the image; for some time after the Lord God formed the man, taking dust from the ground, and from his side the help-mate. And mark, at the same time, that in the case of those who are formed "after the image," the words were not "husband and wife" but "male and female. But we have also observed this in the Hebrew, for man is indicated by the word "is," but male by the word "zachar," and again woman by the word "essa," but female by the word "agkeba.

48 For at no time is it "woman" or "man" "after the image," but the superior class, the male, and the second, the female. But also if a man leave his mother and his father, he cleaves not to the female, but to his own wife, and "they become," since man and woman are one in flesh, "one flesh. Then, describing what ought to be in the case of those who are joined together by God, so that they may be joined together in a manner worthy of God, the Saviour adds, "So that they are no more twain;" and, wherever there is indeed concord, and unison, and harmony, between husband and wife, when he is as ruler and she is obedient to the word, "He shall rule over thee," then of such persons we may truly say, "They are no more twain. Then since it was necessary that for "him who was joined to the Lord," it should be reserved "that he should become one spirit with Him," in the case of those who are joined together by God, after the words, "So that they are no more twain," it is said, "but one flesh. And it is God who has joined together the two in one so that they are no more twain, from the time that the woman is married to the man. And, since God has joined them together, on this account in the case of those who are joined together by God, there is a "gift";

49 and Paul knowing this, that marriage according to the Word of God was a "gift," like as holy celibacy was a gift, says, "But I would that all men were like myself; howbeit, each man hath his own gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that. And those who are joined together by God both mind and keep the precept, "Husbands love your wives, as Christ also the church. The Saviour then commanded, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," but man wishes to put asunder what God hath joined together, when, "falling away from the sound faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron, forbid-

ding," not only to commit fornication, but "to marry," he dissolves even those who had been before joined together by the providence of God. Let these things then be said, keeping in view what is expressly said concerning the male and the female, and the man and the woman, as the Saviour taught in the answer to the Pharisees.

17. Union of Christ and the Church.

⁵⁰ But since the Apostle understands the words, "And they twain shall be one flesh," of Christ and the church, we must say that Christ keeping the saying, "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder," did not put away His former wife, so to speak—that is, the former synagogue—for any other cause than that that wife committed fornication, being made an adulteress by the evil one, and along with him plotted against her husband and slew Him, saying, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, crucify Him, crucify Him. It was she therefore who herself revolted, rather than her husband who put her away and dismissed her; wherefore, reproaching her for falling away from him, it says in Isaiah, "Of what kind is the bill of your mother's divorcement, with which I sent her away?" And He who at the beginning created Him "who is in the form of God" after the image, made Him male, and the church female, granting to both oneness after the image. And, for the sake of the church, the Lord—the husband—left the Father whom He saw when He was" in the form of God," left also His mother, as He was the very son of the Jerusalem which is above, and was joined to His wife who had fallen down here, and these two here became one flesh.

⁵¹ For because of her, He Himself also became flesh, when "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," and they are no more two, but now they are one flesh, since it is said to the wife, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members each in his part;" for the body of Christ is not something apart different from the church, which is His body, and from the members each in his part. And God has joined together these who are not two, but have become one flesh, commanding that men should not separate the church from the Lord. And he who takes heed for himself so as not to be separated, is confident as one who will not possibly be separated and says, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Here, therefore, the saying, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," was written with relation to the Pharisees, but to those who are superior to the Pharisees, it could be said, "What then God hath joined together, let nothing put asunder," neither

principality nor power; for God, who has joined together is stronger than all those which any one could conceive and name.

18. The Bill of Divorcement.

⁵² After this we will discuss the saying of the Pharisees which they said to Jesus, "Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement and put her away?" And with good reason we will bring forward for this purpose the passage from Deuteronomy concerning the bill of divorcement, which is as follows: "But if a man taketh a wife and cohabit with her, and it shall be, if she do not find favour in his sight because he hath found in her a thing unseemly," etc., down to the words, "and ye shall not pollute the land which the Lord your God giveth you for an inheritance. Now I inquire whether in these things according to this law, we are to seek nothing in it beyond the letter seeing that God has not given it, or whether to the Pharisees who quoted the saying, "Moses commanded to give a bill of divorcement and put her away," it was of necessity said, "Moses, for your hardness of heart, suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it hath not been so. But if any one ascends to the Gospel of Christ Jesus which teaches that the law is spiritual, he will seek also the spiritual understanding of this law.

⁵³ And he who wishes to interpret these things figuratively will say that, just as it was said by Paul confident in the grace which he had, "A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth, but if the husband be dead she is free to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord; but she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgment, and I think that I also have the Spirit of God" (for here to the words, "after my judgment," lest it should be despised as being without the Spirit of God, he well added, "and I think that I also have the Spirit of God)," so also it would be possible for Moses, by reason of the power given to him to make laws, to the effect that he suffered for the hardness of heart of the people certain things, among which was the putting away of wives, to be persuaded in regard to the laws which he promulgated according to his own judgment, that in these also the legislation took place with the Spirit of God. And he will say that, unless one law is spiritual and another is not such, this is a law, and this is spiritual, and its spiritual significance ought to be investigated.

19. The Divorce of Israel.

⁵⁴ Now, keeping in mind what we said above in regard to the passage from Isaiah about the bill of divorcement, we will say that the mother of the people separated herself from Christ, her husband, without having received the bill of divorcement, but afterwards when there was found in her an unseemly thing, and she did not find favour in his sight, the bill of divorcement was written out for her; for when the new covenant called those of the Gentiles to the house of Him who had cast away his former wife, it virtually gave the bill of divorcement to her who formerly separated from her husband-the law, and the Word. Therefore he, also, having separated from her, married, so to speak, another, having given into the hands of the former the bill of divorcement; wherefore they can no longer do the things enjoined on them by the law, because of the bill of divorcement. And a sign that she has received the bill of divorcement is this, that Jerusalem was destroyed along with what they called the sanctuary of the things in it which were believed to be holy, and with the altar of burnt offerings, and all the worship associated with it. And a further sign of the bill of divorcement is this, that they cannot keep their feasts, even though according to the letter of the law designedly commanded them, in the place which the Lord God appointed to them for keeping feasts;

⁵⁵ but there is this also, that the whole synagogue has become unable to stone those who have committed this or that sin; and thousands of things commanded are a sign of the bill of divorcement; and the fact that "there is no more a prophet," and that they say, "We no longer see signs; " " for the Lord says, "He hath taken away from Judaea and from Jerusalem," according to the word of Isaiah, "Him that is mighty, and her that is mighty, a powerful giant," etc., down to the words, "a prudent hearer. Now, He who is the Christ may have taken the synagogue to wife and cohabited with her, but it may be that afterwards she found not favour in His sight; and the reason of her not having found favour in His sight was, that there was found in her an unseemly thing; for what was more unseemly than the Circumstance that, when it was proposed to them to release one at the feast, they asked for the release of Barabbas the robber, and the condemnation of Jesus? And what was more unseemly than the fact, that they all said in His case, "Crucify Him, crucify Him," and "Away with such a fellow from the earth"? And can

this be freed from the charge of unseemliness, "His blood be upon us, and upon our children"?

⁵⁶ Wherefore, when He was avenged, Jerusalem was compassed with armies, and its desolation was near, and their house was taken away from it, and "the daughter of Zion was left as a booth in a vineyard, and as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, and as a besieged city. And, about the same time, I think, the husband wrote out a bill of divorcement to his former wife, and gave it into her hands, and sent her away from his own house, and the bond of her who came from the Gentiles has been cancelled about which the Apostle Says, "Having blotted out the bond written in ordinances, which was contrary to us, and He hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; " for Paul also and others became proselytes of Israel for her who came from the Gentiles. The first wife, accordingly, not having found favour before her husband, because in her had been found an unseemly thing, went out from the dwelling of her husband, and, going away, has become joined to another man, to whom she has subjected herself, whether we should call the husband Barabbas the robber, who is figuratively the devil, or some evil power. And in the case of some of that synagogue there has happened the former thing which was written in the law, but in the case of others, that which was second.

⁵⁷ For the last husband hated his wife and will write out for her some day at the consummation of things a bill of divorcement, when God so orders it, and will give it into her hands and will send her away from his dwelling; for as the good God will put enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between his seed and her seed, so will He order it that the last husband shall hate her.

20. Christ and the Gentiles.

⁵⁸ Now there are those in whose case it has happened that the man dwells with them without having hated them, because they abide in the house of the last husband, who took to himself their synagogue as wife. But also in their case the latter husband dies, perhaps whenever the last enemy of Christ, death, is destroyed. But whichever of these things may happen, whether the former or the latter to the wife, the former husband, it says, who sent her away, will not be able to turn back and take her to be a wife to himself after she has been defiled, since "it is abomination," it says, "before the Lord thy God. But these things will not seem to be consistent with this, "If the fulness

of the Gentiles be come in, all Israel shall be saved. But consider if it can be said to this, that, if she shall be saved by her former husband returning and taking her to himself as wife, she will in any case be saved after she has been polluted. A priest, then, will not take to himself as a wife one who has been a harlot and an outcast, but no other, as being inferior to the priest, is hindered from doing so. But if you seek for the harlot in regard to the calling of the Gentiles, you may use the passage, "Take to yourself a wife of fornication, and children of fornication," etc.;

⁵⁹ for, as "the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless," so he who, casting oat his former wife, takes in due season "a wife of fornication," having done it according to the command of Him who says, when it is necessary, and so long as it was necessary, "He shall not take a harlot to wife," and, when it was reasonable, He says, "Take to yourself a wife of fornication. For as the Son of man is Lord of the sabbath, and not the slave of the sabbath as the people are, so He who gives the law has power to give it "until a time of reformation," and to change the law, and, when the time of the reformation is at hand, also to give after the former way and after the former heart another way and another heart, "in an acceptable time, and in a day of salvation. And let these things be said according to our interpretation of the law in regard to the bill of divorcement.

21. Union of Angels and the Souls of Men.

⁶⁰ But some one may inquire whether the human soul can be figuratively called a wife, and the angel who is set over her and is her ruler, with whom as her sovereign she holds conversation, can be called her husband; so that according to this each lawfully dwells along with the soul which is worthy of the guardianship of a divine angel; but sometimes after long sojourning and intercourse a cause may arise in the soul why she does not find favour in the eyes of the angel who is her lord and ruler, because that in it there is found an unseemly thing; and bonds may be written out, as such are written, and a bill of divorcement be written and put into the hands of her who is cast out, so that she may no longer be familiar with her former guardian, when she is cast out from his dwelling. And even she who has gone away from her former dwelling may be joined to another husband, and be unfortunate with him, not only, as in the case of the former, not finding favour in his sight because an unseemly thing was found in her, but even being hated by him. Yea, and even there might be written out from the second husband a bill of

divorcement and it might be put into her hands from the last husband who sends her away from his dwelling.

⁶¹ But whether there can be such a change of the life of angels with men, as to amount, so far as concerns their relation to us, to their death, one may put the question rash though it be; but be that as it may, she also who has once fallen away from the former husband will not return again to him, for the former husband who sent her away will not be able to turn back and take her as wife to himself, after she was defiled. And if one should dare, using a Scripture which is in circulation in the church, but not acknowledged by all to be divine, to soften down a precept of this kind, the passage might be taken from The Shepherd, concerning some who as soon as they believe are put in subjection to Michael, but falling away from him from love of pleasure, are put in subjection to the angel of luxury, then to the angel of punishment, and after this to the angel of repentance; for you observe that the wife or soul who has once been given to luxury no longer returns to the first ruler, but also besides suffering punishment, is put in subjection to one inferior to Michael; for the angel of penitence is inferior to him. We must therefore take heed lest there be found in us any unseemly thing, and we should not find favour in the eyes of our husband Christ, or of the angel who has been set over us.

⁶² For if we do not take heed, perhaps we also shall receive the bill of divorcement, and either be bereft of our guardian, or go to another man. But I consider that it is not of good omen to receive, as it were, the marriage of an angel with our own soul.

22. The Marriage of Church Dignitaries.

⁶³ But, while dealing with the passage, I would say that we will be able perhaps now to understand and clearly set forth a question which is hard to grasp and see into, with regard to the legislation of the Apostle concerning ecclesiastical matters; for Paul wishes no one of those of the church, who has attained to any eminence beyond the many, as is attained in the administration of the sacraments, to make trial of a second marriage. For laying down the law in regard to bishops in the first Epistle to Timothy, he says, "If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. The bishop, therefore, must be without reproach, the husbands of one wife, temperate, sober-minded," etc.; and, in regard to deacons, "Let the deacons," he says, "be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well," etc.

Yea, and also when appointing widows, he says, "Let there be no one as a widow under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man;" and after this he says the things superadded, as being second or third in importance to this. And, in the Epistle to Titus, "For this cause," he says, "I left thee in Crete that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city as I gave thee charge. If any one is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children, that believe" -of course-and so on.

⁶⁴ Now, when we saw that some who have been married twice may be much better than those who have been married once, we were perplexed why Paul does not at all permit those who have been twice married to be appointed to ecclesiastical dignities; for also it seemed to me that such a thing was worthy of examination, as it was possible that a man, who had been unfortunate in two marriages, and had lost his second wife while he was yet young, might have lived for the rest of his years up to old age in the greatest self-control and chastity. Who, then, would not naturally be perplexed why at all, when a ruler of the church is being sought for, we do not appoint such a man, though he has been twice married, because of the expressions about marriage, but lay hold of the man who has been once married as our ruler, even if he chance to have lived to old age with his wife, and sometimes may not have been disciplined in chastity and temperance?

⁶⁵ But, from what is said in the law about the bill of divorcement, I reflect whether, seeing that the bishop and the presbyter and the deacon are a symbol of things that truly exist in accordance with these names, he wished to appoint those who were figuratively once married, in order that he who is able to give attention to the matter, may find out from the spiritual law the one who was unworthy of ecclesiastical rule, whose soul did not find favour in the eyes of her husband because there had been found in her an unseemly thing, and she had become worthy of the bill of divorcement; for such a soul, having dwelt along with a second husband, and having been hated by such an one, can no longer, after the second bill of divorcement, return to her former husband. It is likely, therefore, also, that other arguments will be found by those who are wiser than we, and have more ability to see into such things, whether in the law about the bill of divorcement, or in the apostolic writings which prohibit those who have been twice married from ruling over the church or being preferred to preside over it. But, until something shall be found that is better and able by the excessive brilliancy of the light

of knowledge to cast into the shade what we have uttered, we have said the things which have occurred to us in regard to the passages.

23. Some Laws Given by Concession to Human Weakness.

⁶⁶ But, even if we have seemed to touch on things too deep for our capacity in the passages, nevertheless, because of the literal expression these things must further be said, that some of the laws were written not as excellent, but as by way of accommodation to the weakness of those to whom the law was given; for something of this kind is indicated in the words, "Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives; " but that which is pre-eminent and superior to the law, which was written for their hardness of heart, is indicated in this, "But from the beginning it hath not been so. But in the new covenant also there are some legal injunctions of the same order as, "Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives; "for example, because of our hardness of heart, it has been written on account of our weakness, "But because of fornications, let each man have his own wife and let each woman have her own husband; " and this, "Let the husband render unto the wife her due, and likewise also the wife unto the husband. To these sayings it is accordingly subjoined, "But this I say by way of permission, not of commandment.

⁶⁷ But this also, "A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth, but if her husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord," was said by Paul in view of our hardness of heart and weakness, to those who do not wish to desire earnestly the greater gifts and become more blessed. But now contrary to what was written, some even of the rulers of the church have permitted a woman to marry, even when her husband was living, doing contrary to what was written, where it is said, "A wife is bound for so long time as her husband liveth," and "So then if while her husband liveth, she shall be joined to another man she shall be called an adulteress," not indeed altogether without reason, for it is probable this concession was permitted in comparison with worse things, contrary to what was from the beginning ordained by law, and written.

24. Jewish Criticism of the Law of Christ.

⁶⁸ But perhaps some Jewish man of those who dare to oppose the teaching of our Saviour will say, that when Jesus said, "Whosoever shall put away his own wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress," He also

gave permission to put away a wife like as well as Moses did, who was said by Him to have given laws for the hardness of heart of the people, and will hold that the saying, "Because he found in her an unseemly thing," is to be reckoned as the same as fornication on account of which with good cause a wife could be cast away from her husband. But to him it must be said that, if she who committed adultery was according to the law to be stoned, clearly it is not in this sense that the unseemly thing is to be understood. For it is not necessary for adultery or any such great indecency to write a bill of divorcement and give it into the hands of the wife; but indeed perhaps Moses called every sin an unseemly thing, on the discovery of which by the husband in the wife, as not finding favour in the eyes of her husband, the bill of divorcement is written, and the wife is sent away from the house of her husband; "but from the beginning it hath not been so.

⁶⁹ After this our Saviour says, not at all permitting the dissolution of marriages for any other sin than fornication alone, when detected in the wife, "Whosoever shall but away his own wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress. But it might be a subject for inquiry if on this account He hinders any one putting away a wife, unless she be caught in fornication, for any other reason, as for example for poisoning, or for the destruction during the absence of her husband from home of an infant born to them, or for any form of murder whatsoever. And further, if she were found despoiling and pillaging the house of her husband, though she was not guilty of fornication, one might ask if he would with reason cast away such an one, seeing that the Saviour forbids any one to put away his own wife saving for the cause of fornication. In either case there appears to be something monstrous, whether it be really monstrous, I do not know; for to endure sins of such heinousness which seem to be worse than adultery or fornication, will appear to be irrational; but again on the other hand to act contrary to the design of the teaching of the Saviour, every one would acknowledge to be impious. I wonder therefore why He did not say, Let no one put away his own wife saving for the cause of fornication, but says, "Whosoever shall put away his own wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress.

⁷⁰ For confessedly he who puts away his wife when she is not a fornicator, makes her an adulteress, so far as it lies with him, for if, "when the husband is living she shall be called an adulteress if she be joined to another man; "

and when by putting her away, he gives to her the excuse of a second marriage, very plainly in this way he makes her an adulteress. But as to whether her being caught in the act of poisoning or committing murder, furnishes any defence of his dismissal of her, you can inquire yourselves; for the husband can also in other ways than by putting her away cause his own wife to commit adultery; as, for example, allowing her to do what she wishes beyond what is fitting, and stooping to friendship with what men she wishes, for often from the simplicity of husbands such false steps happen to wives; but whether there is a ground of defence or not for such husbands in the case of such false steps, you will inquire carefully, and deliver your opinion also in regard to the difficult questions raised by us on the passage. And even he who withholds himself from his wife makes her oftentimes to be an adulteress when he does not satisfy her desires, even though he does so under the appearance of greater gravity and self-control.

⁷¹ And perhaps this man is more culpable who, so far as it rests with him, makes her an adulteress when he does not satisfy her desires than he who, for other reason than fornication, has sent her away,—for poisoning or murder or any of the most grievous sins. But as a woman is an adulteress, even though she seem to be married to a man, while the former husband is still living, so also the man who seems to marry her who has been put away, does not so much marry her as commit adultery with her according to the declaration of our Saviour.

25. Chastity and Prayer.

⁷² Now after these things, having considered how many possible accidents may arise in marriages, which it was necessary for the man to endure and in this way suffer very great hardships, or if he did not endure, to transgress the word of Christ, the disciples say to him, taking refuge in celibacy as easier, and more expedient than marriage, though the latter appears to be expedient, "If the case of life man is so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry. And to this the Saviour said, teaching us that absolute chastity is a gift given by God, and not merely the fruit of training, but given by God with prayer, "All men cannot receive the saying, but they to whom it is given. Then seeing that some make a sophistical attack on the saying. "To whom it is given," as if those who wished to remain pure in celibacy, but were mastered by their desires, had an excuse, we must say that, if we believe the Scriptures, why at all do we lay hold of the saying, "But they to whom it is given," but no longer

attend to this, "Ask and it shall be given you," and to that which is added to it, "For every one that asketh receiveth"? For if they "to whom it is given" can receive this saying about absolute purity, let him who wills ask, obeying and believing Him who said, "Ask and it shall be given you," and not doubting about the saying, "Every one that asketh receiveth."

⁷³ But when there you will inquire who it is that asketh, for no one of those who do not receive has asked, even though he seems to have done so, since it is not lawful to say that the saying, "Every one that asketh receiveth," is a lie. Who then is he that asketh, but he who has obeyed Jesus when He says, "If ye stand praying, believe that ye receive, and ye shall receive"? But he that asketh must do everything in his power that he may pray "with the spirit" and pray also "with the understanding," and pray "without ceasing," keeping in mind also the saying, "And He spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint, saying, There was in a city a judge," etc. And it is useful to know what it is to ask, and what it is to receive, and what is meant by "Every one that asketh, receiveth," and by "I say unto you though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity, he will arise and give him as many as he needeth. It is therefore added, "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you," and so on. Further, let the saying, "All men cannot receive the saying but they to whom it is given," be a stimulus to us to ask worthily of receiving;

⁷⁴ and this, "What son is there of you who shall ask his father for a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent," etc. God therefore will give the good gift, perfect purity in celibacy and chastity, to those who ask Him with the whole soul, and with faith, and in prayers without ceasing. parparpar

INTRODUCTION

¹ According to Eusebius (H. E. vi. 36) the Commentaries on the Gospel of Matthew were written about the same time as the *Contra Celsum*, when Origen was over sixty years of age, and may therefore be probably assigned to the period 246-248. This statement is confirmed by internal evidence. In the portion here translated, books x.-xiv., he passes by the verses Matt. xviii. 12, 13, and refers for the exposition of them to his *Homilies on Luke* (book xiii. 29). Elsewhere, he refers his readers for a fuller discussion on certain points to his *Commentaries on John* (book xvi. 20), and on *Romans* (book xvii. 32). Of the twenty-five books into which the work was divided, the first nine, with the exception of two fragments, are lost; books x.-xvii., covering

the portion from Matt. xiii. 36 to xxii. 33, are extant in the Greek, and the greater part of the remaining books survives in a Latin version, which is co-extensive with the Greek from book xii. 9 to book xvii. 36, and contains further the exposition from Matt. xxii. 34 to xxvii. 66. The passages in Cramer's Catena do not seem to be taken from the Commentaries. Of the numerous quotations from Matthew only one (Matt. xxi. 35) can be definitely traced to this section of the writings of Origen; and as this differs greatly from our present text, and is moreover purely narrative, it is probably taken like the others either from the Scholia (*commaticum interpretationis genus*), or from the Homilies to which reference is made by Jerome (Prol.

2 in Matt. I. iv). The majority of them may be ascribed to the Scholia. In addition to the mss. already referred to (p. 294) the old Latin version is often useful for determining the text, though it contains some interpolations and has many omissions. The omissions (cf. book xiii. 28, book xiv. x, 3, book xiv. 19-22) are not due to any dogmatic bias, but have been made by the translator or some subsequent transcriber on the ground that the passages were uninteresting or unimportant. The version is otherwise for the most part literal, and has in some cases preserved the correct reading, though it often fails just when it would have been of most service. For an estimate of the work and method of Origen as an exegete, see pp. 291-294; and for a fuller statement on some of the points here touched upon, see Westcott's article on Origen in Smith's Dictionary of Christian Biography (vol. iv.).

P A R T T W O

The Song of Songs

*Origen's commentary and two homilies on the Song of Songs,
which he read as a song of Christ and the soul.*

Commentary on the Song of Songs

ORIGEN OF ALEXANDRIA

c. AD 185–253

Teacher and biblical scholar of Alexandria and Caesarea.

COMMENTARY ON THE SONG OF SONGS — BOOK ONE

¹ English translation of Origen of Alexandria's *Commentary on the Song of Songs* (*Commentarium in Canticum Canticorum*), in the Latin translation of Rufinus of Aquileia (c. 410). Translated from the OCR-corrected Migne *Patrologia Graeca* 13 (Delarue) base text. Rufinus's translation is intrinsically incomplete, running only as far as Song of Songs 2:15. This English translation is in the public domain.

BOOK ONE

² » Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth. « ³ We must recall what we noted beforehand in the preface, namely that this little book, having the appearance of a wedding-song, is written in the manner of a drama. And we said that a drama is where fixed characters are introduced who speak, while others sometimes come on the scene, and others withdraw, or draw near, and thus the whole is carried forward through the changes of the characters. This, then, will be the character of the whole book, and according to it, so far as we are able, a historical exposition will be fitted by us. But the spiritual understanding is directed, no less according to what we indicated in the preface, either to the Church in relation to Christ under the title of bride or bridegroom, or to the union of the soul with the Word of God. Now, then, there is introduced under the form of the narrative a certain bride who has received, under the title of a betrothal and dowry, most worthy gifts from a most noble bridegroom; but since the bridegroom delays for a very long time, she is stirred by the longing of her love for him, and lies pining in her house, doing everything so that she may at some time see her bridegroom and enjoy his kisses. And since she sees that her love can neither be put off,

nor that she is able to obtain what she desires, she turns herself to prayer and makes supplication to God, knowing that he is the Father of her bridegroom.

4 Let us consider her, then, lifting up holy hands without anger and dispute, in modest attire with reverence and sobriety, adorned with the most worthy ornaments with which it is fitting for a noble bride to be adorned, but burning with desire for the bridegroom, and agitated by the inner wound of love, pouring out, as we said, her prayer to God, and saying concerning her bridegroom: Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth. These are the things that the historical explanation, composed in the manner of a drama, contains. But let us see whether the inner meaning can be fittingly adapted in this way. Let the Church be the one desiring to be united to Christ. And understand the Church as the assembly of all the saints. Let this Church, then, be as it were the single person of all, who speaks and says: I have all things, I am filled with the gifts which I received before the nuptials under the title of betrothal or dowry. For long ago, when I was being prepared for marriage to the son of the King, the firstborn of all creation, his holy angels obeyed and ministered to me, bringing to me the law in place of a betrothal gift. For the law is said to have been ordained through angels in the hand of a mediator. The prophets also ministered to me.

5 For they too spoke all those things by which they might not only show and point out to me concerning the Son of God — to whom they desired to betroth me by these things which are called pledges and dowry-gifts — but also, that they might kindle me into love and desire of him, they announced to me with prophetic voices concerning his coming, and, filled with the Holy Spirit, they preached to me of his innumerable powers and his immense works. His beauty too, and his fairness, and his gentleness they described, so that by all these things I was inflamed beyond endurance to love of him. But since the age is now nearly at its end, and yet his own presence is not granted to me, but I see only his ministers ascending and descending to me, for this reason I pour out my prayer to you, the Father of my bridegroom, and I beseech you that at last, taking pity on our love, you would send him; that he may now speak to me no longer through his ministers alone, the angels and the prophets, but that he himself may come in his own person, and kiss me with the kiss of his mouth — that is, may pour the words of his own mouth

into my mouth, that I may hear him himself speaking, that I may see him himself teaching.

6 For these are the kisses of Christ which he extended to the Church, when in his coming Christ himself, set in the flesh, proclaimed to her the words of faith and charity and peace, according to what Isaiah had promised, and being sent ahead to the bride had said: "Not a legate, nor an angel, but the Lord himself will save us." 7 But in the third place of exposition let us introduce the soul, whose whole zeal is to be joined and united to the Word of God, and to enter within the mysteries of his wisdom and knowledge as into the bridal chambers of the heavenly bridegroom; and to this soul too there have been given, as gifts, the very presence of the bridegroom — under the name, that is, of a dowry. For just as the dowry of the Church was the volumes of the law and the prophets, so to this soul let there be reckoned as dowry-gifts the law of nature, and rational sense, and the freedom of the will. And having these gifts of her dowry, let there be for her the teaching of a first instruction, coming down from admonishers and teachers. But since in these things there is not for her the full and perfect fulfillment of her desire and of her love, let her pray that her mind, pure and virginal, may be illumined by the very illuminations and visitations of the Word of God. For when the mind is filled with divine perceptions and understandings through the ministry of no man or angel, then let it believe that it is receiving the very kisses of the Word of God. For the sake, therefore, of these and suchlike kisses let the soul, praying to God, say: Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth.

8 For while she was incapable of grasping the pure and solid teaching of the Word of God himself, she received the necessary kisses, that is, perceptions, from the mouth of teachers; but when of her own accord she has now begun to discern obscure things, to unravel what is perplexed, to loose what is entangled, and to explain parables and riddles and the sayings of the wise along the fitting lines of understanding, then let her believe that she has now received the kisses of her bridegroom himself, that is, of the Word of God. And he set "kisses" in the plural, that we may understand that the illumination of each obscure meaning is a kiss of the Word of God conveyed to the perfect soul. And according to this, perhaps, the prophetic and perfect mind was saying: I opened my mouth and drew in the spirit. But by the mouth of the bridegroom we understand the power of God, by which he il-

lumines the mind, and, as if by a certain discourse of love addressed to it — if indeed it is worthy to receive the presence of so great a power — he makes manifest whatever things are unknown and obscure to it; and this is the truer and nearer and holier kiss, which is said to be offered by the bridegroom, the Word of God, to the bride, that is, to the pure and perfect soul.

9 The image of this thing is that kiss which in the Church, at the time of the mysteries, we give to one another. As often, therefore, as we find in our heart, without admonishers, something that is sought concerning the divine doctrines and meanings, so often let us believe that kisses have been given to us by the bridegroom, the Word of God. But when, seeking something concerning the divine meanings, we are unable to find it, then, taking up the affection of this prayer, let us ask of God the visitation of his Word, and let us say: Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth. For the Father knows the capacity of each soul, and knows at what time, to which soul, he ought to offer the kisses of his Word — in understandings, that is, and perceptions. 10 » For your breasts are better than wine, and the fragrance of your ointments is above all spices. «

11 Understand first, as though in the drama of the narrative, that the bride with hands lifted up to God has poured out a prayer to the Father, and has prayed that the bridegroom might now come to her, and that he himself might pour upon her the kiss of his own mouth. And while she prays these things to the Father, in the very prayer in which she said, "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth," she prepares also to add other words of prayer, and to say that in this very beginning of her speech the bridegroom was present, and stood beside her as she prayed and revealed his own words, and that this same bridegroom stood anointed with wondrous ointments, and with such as it befitted a bridegroom to be fragrant with. But the bride, when she saw present the one for whom she was praying that he might be present, and that while she was still speaking there was granted to her what she was praying for, and that there were given to her by him the kisses she had begged for, being made glad on this account, and moved by the beauty of his breasts and by the odor of his fragrance, turns the discourse of the prayer she had set out upon toward the presence of the bridegroom who was there; and when she had said, "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth," she adds after these words, addressing the bridegroom now present, saying: "Your breasts are better than wine, and the fragrance of your ointments is

above all spices." These things for the present according to the historical understanding, which we have said is woven in the manner of a drama. But now let us inquire what the inner meaning holds.

¹² We find that the ruling faculty of the heart is called by diverse names in the divine Scriptures, which names are wont to be fitted according to the causes and matters that are being treated. For sometimes it is called the heart, as: "Blessed are the pure in heart"; "With the heart it is believed unto righteousness. But if it be the time of a banquet, according to the manner and arrangement of those reclining, it is called either the bosom or the breast: just as John in the Gospel relates concerning a certain disciple whom Jesus loved, that he reclined in his bosom or upon his breast; he, assuredly, to whom Simon Peter, beckoning, said: "Ask, who is this of whom he speaks. And then, reclining upon the breast of Jesus, he says to him: "Lord, who is it? For in these things it is certain that John is said to have rested in the ruling faculty of the heart of Jesus and in the inner senses of his teaching, there seeking and searching out the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which were hidden in Christ Jesus. But also that the bosom of Christ should be taken in the place of holy doctrines, I think does not seem unfitting. In diverse ways, therefore, as we had begun to say, the ruling faculty of the heart is designated in the holy Scriptures, as also nonetheless in Leviticus, where, concerning the sacrifices, the little breast of separation and the arm are set apart for the priests;

¹³ and in this little breast and arm set apart and separated, surpassing other men, he wills there to be in the priests the ruling faculty of the heart and the beauty of works. Concerning which we have expounded more fully in the book of Leviticus, as the Lord deigned to grant. According to these things, therefore, also in the present passage, since the drama that is enacted appears to be one of love, let us understand in the breasts the ruling faculty of the heart, so that what is said may seem to be of this sort: "Your heart, O my bridegroom" — that is, the teachings which are within you, or the grace of doctrine — "surpasses all wine," which is wont to gladden the heart of man. For just as in those things of which it says, "For they shall see God," the heart seems fittingly to have been named, while among those reclining the bosom and the breast are set down, on account, without doubt, of the posture of those reclining and the form of the banquet; and again, as among the priests the little breast and the arm are designated by mystical utterances, so also I

think in the present passage, where the posture and the conversations of lovers are described, this same ruling faculty of the heart is most agreeably called by the name of breasts. Good, therefore, are the breasts of the bridegroom, since in them are hidden the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

¹⁴ And these breasts the bride compares to wine, but she so compares them that she prefers them. And by wine are to be understood those teachings and doctrines which, through the law and the prophets, the bride had been accustomed to receive before the coming of the bridegroom. ¹⁵ But now, considering this teaching which flows from the breasts of the Bridegroom, she marvels and is astonished, seeing it far more excellent than that with which she had been gladdened before the coming of the Bridegroom—as though from the spiritual wine that the holy fathers and prophets ministered, they who also planted vineyards of this kind, as Noah first, and Isaiah "on a horn, in a fruitful place," and cultivated them. Seeing, then, that there now dwells in the Bridegroom a great eminence of doctrines and of knowledge, and that a teaching far more perfect than there was among the ancients flows forth from him, she says: "Your breasts are better than wine"—better, that is, than that teaching with which I was gladdened by the ancients. For it is of this wine of the ancients that Ecclesiastes must be understood to speak, where he says: "I said in my heart: Come, and I will test you with gladness, and I will see in good. And again, speaking of the same vineyards, the same Ecclesiastes says: "I magnified my work, I built houses for myself, I planted vineyards for myself, I made for myself gardens and paradises," and the rest. But there are also of this vineyard certain mystical ministers, who are called pourers of wine. For so the same one says: "And I made for myself male singers and female singers, and in the gladness of the sons of men, pourers of wine and pouresses of wine.

¹⁶ See, therefore, whether we can, both in other passages and also in this, understand the Savior mingling the new streams of his breasts with the old wine, when Mary and Joseph, seeking him, "found him in the temple sitting in the midst of the teachers, and hearing and questioning them," when also "all were marveling at his answers. But perhaps too the likeness of this figure is fulfilled there, where, going up onto the mountain, he taught the crowds, and said: "It was said to the ancients: You shall not kill; but I say to you: Everyone who is angry with his brother without cause shall be liable"; and: "It was said to the ancients: You shall not commit adultery; but I say to you:

Everyone who looks at a woman to desire her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Insofar, then, as this teaching of his surpasses that ancient one, in that same measure the Bride understands and declares that his breasts are better than wine.

17 But the fact that the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-drinker," this too has a bearing on the matter. Such, I think, was that wine also in Cana of Galilee which was being drunk at the wedding feast; and when it ran short, He made yet another wine, to which the steward of the feast bore witness that it was exceedingly good and far more excellent than the wine that had already been served, when he said: "Every man sets out the good wine first, and when they have become drunk, then that which is worse; but you have kept the good wine until now. And Solomon too, who because of the wisdom he had received from God was an object of admiration to the queen of Sheba, who had come to test him with questions in which that same queen might examine him and marvel at him — hear the Scripture recounting it: "And the queen of Sheba," it says, "saw all the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built, the provision of his banquet, and the seating of his servants and the order of his ministers, and his garments, and his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings which he offered in the house of God, and she was astonished," and so on.

18 In these things, then, note how she who came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon marvels, among the rest, also at the food of his banquet, or at his cupbearers, and is said to have been amazed at these things. Now I do not know whether we should suppose the queen to have been so foolish that, having come for this reason from the ends of the earth — that she might hear the wisdom of Solomon — she should marvel at bodily foods, and at that common wine, and at the pourers of wine in the king's service. For what in these things would seem worthy of a queen's admiration, seeing they are common to almost all men? But it seems to me that she marveled at the foods of his teaching and the wine of the doctrines which were being proclaimed by him through divine wisdom. This was that wine also which is reported through Jeremiah concerning the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab, who at that time when the sins of the people had grown strong, and captivity was threatening on account of the iniquities of the populace, were called together to drink wine, and they said that their

father Jonadab had commanded them that neither they nor their sons should drink wine forever, nor build houses, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyards, but should dwell in tents all the days of their life.

19 And God embraces them because they had kept their father's precept and had refused to drink wine. For then, on account of the sins of the people and their iniquities, their vine was of the vine of Sodom, and their branches of Gomorrah, their grape a grape of gall, and a cluster of bitterness; the venom of asps and the fury of dragons was their wine. For this reason, therefore, the sons of Jonadab are held praiseworthy, who refused to drink and to receive such wine — that is, poisoned doctrines and doctrines foreign to the faith of God. For this reason, perhaps, God smote the vines of the Egyptians, as is written in the psalm, lest they should make such wine. Therefore, if we have understood the differences of wine, and have perceived that they consist in the diversity of doctrines, then when the bride here says, "For your breasts are good above wine," by "wine" let us of course understand good wine, not bad. For the bridegroom's doctrines are preferred as compared with good doctrines, not bad. For she had first tasted good wine in the law and the prophets; and having, as it were, been prepared beforehand by it to receive gladness of heart, and to make herself ready so that she might be able also to take in that gladness which was to come through the breasts of the bridegroom himself — the teaching more excellent and more eminent than all — she says: "Your breasts are good above wine."

20 And see whether we can still fit to this figure that parable of the Gospel which says: "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which when a man has found, he hides it, and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field. This treasure, then, is hidden not in some desert place, nor in the woods, but in a field. And it is surely possible that that field has vineyards too, which yield wine, and has also the treasure for the sake of which, when he had sold everything, the man who had found the treasure there bought that field. He, then, who bought the field can say that the treasure which is in the field is good, more than the wine that is in it. So, then, the bridegroom too and the breasts of the bridegroom, which like a treasure lie hidden in the law and the prophets, are good, more than the wine that is in them — that is, more than that teaching which is open and gladdens the hearers. Good, therefore, are the breasts of the bridegroom. For the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in him; and when these

have been opened and revealed to the eyes of the bride, they will seem to her far more excellent than was before that wine of the law and of the prophetic teaching.

²¹ But if we ought also to understand a third exposition, concerning the perfect soul and the Word of God, we can say that anyone, so long as he is little and has not yet offered himself wholly to God, drinks the wine which that field yields — the field which has within itself also the hidden treasure — and drinking, he is gladdened by the wine. But when he has offered and devoted himself to God, and has become a Nazirite, and has found the hidden treasure, and has come to the very breasts and fountains of the Word of God, he will no longer drink wine and strong drink, saying to the Word of God itself concerning those treasures which are stored up in him of knowledge and wisdom: "For your breasts are good above wine." ²² Now there are certain ointments of the Bridegroom, in whose fragrance the Bride has taken delight, and she says: "The scent of your ointments is above all aromatic spices. Aromatic spices are kinds of perfumed substances. But the Bride had a certain acquaintance with, and knowledge of, aromatic spices — that is, of the words of the Law and the prophets — by which, before the coming of the Bridegroom, she seemed to be instructed, though only in a moderate way, and trained for the worship of God, being as yet a little girl, and living under guardians and stewards and tutors; for "the Law was our tutor unto Christ. Now all these had been aromatic spices, in which she was seen to be nourished and prepared for her Bridegroom. But when the fullness of times came, and she had grown up, and the Father sent His Only-begotten, anointed with the Holy Spirit, into this world, the Bride, having smelled the fragrance of the divine ointment, and perceiving that all those aromatic spices which she had earlier seemed to use are far inferior in comparison with the sweetness of this new and heavenly ointment, says: "The scent of your ointments is above all aromatic spices. Since the same Christ is called both Bridegroom and high priest — high priest indeed according to this, that He is the mediator of God and men and of every creature, for which He also became a propitiation, offering Himself a victim for the sin of the world;

²³ but Bridegroom according to this, that He is joined to the Church, which has no spot or wrinkle or any such thing — consider whether perhaps that priestly ointment which in Exodus is commanded to be compounded by the art of the perfumer holds the meaning of this ointment which the Bride

now, having smelled it, admires; and you will see that those aromatic spices of which the ointment seemed to be compounded, with which Aaron was anointed, since they were earthly and of bodily matter, but this ointment, with which she now saw the Bridegroom anointed, is spiritual and heavenly — therefore she says: "Because the scent of your ointments is above all aromatic spices. Let us then see how that ointment was compounded: "And the Lord spoke," it says, "to Moses, saying: Take for yourself the flower of choice myrrh, five hundred shekels, and sweet cinnamon, two hundred and fifty shekels, and sweet cane, two hundred and fifty shekels, and of cassia five hundred shekels according to the holy shekel, and oil from olives, a hin, and you shall make of it the oil of holy anointing, an ointment by the art of the perfumer. Now these things the Bride had heard reported in the Law, but she now discerns their meaning and truth.

²⁴ See then that these four kinds of that ointment held the pattern of the incarnation of the Word of God, which took a body compacted of four elements — in which body the myrrh preserves the tokens of His death, which He undertook either as high priest for the people or as Bridegroom for the Bride. But that it is written not simply "myrrh," but "the flower of myrrh," and "of choice myrrh," indicated not only His death, but also that He would be the firstborn from the dead, and that those who had been planted together in the likeness of His death would be not only called, but chosen. But the cinnamon is called immaculate, doubtless on account of the Church, which, purified by the washing of water, He made immaculate, having no spot or wrinkle or anything of this kind. But the cane too is taken up, because "His tongue is the pen of a scribe writing swiftly," designating by the perfumes of sweetness the grace of doctrine. Cassia also is employed, a kind said to be most hot and most burning: in which is shown either the fervor of the Holy Spirit, or the pattern of the coming judgment by fire. And the number of five hundred, or of two hundred and fifty shekels, either holds the mystery of the five senses in Him made perfect a hundredfold, or the number of fifty, being the number of pardon, set down fivefold, signifies the remission of sins given through Him.

²⁵ But all these are gathered together with pure oil, through which is shown either that it was for the sake of mercy alone that He who was in the form of God took the form of a servant, or that those things which had been assumed from material substance in Christ were, through the Holy Spirit,

reduced into one, and made into one form, which is the person of the mediator. That material oil, then, could in no way be called the oil of gladness. But this oil — that is, the ointment of the Holy Spirit, with which Christ was anointed, and of which the Bride, now perceiving its scent, has marveled — is rightly called the oil of gladness, because "the fruit of the Spirit is joy": with which God anointed Him who "loved justice and hated iniquity. For therefore it is said: "The Lord your God anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows. And therefore the scent of His ointments is above all aromatic spices. But we use a similar exposition even if this discourse is transferred to each individual soul set in the love and desire of the Word of God, one who has run through all the branches of teaching in order, in which, before the knowledge of the Word of God, she is seen to have been exercised and educated, whether descending from the moral schools or from the natural.

²⁶ For all those were to her certain aromatic spices, inasmuch as in these a commendable instruction and a correction of morals is acquired, in these the vanity of the world is detected, and the false wonders of perishable things are rejected. All these, then, were to her as aromatic spices and certain fragrant perfumes of the soul. But when it came to the knowledge of the mysteries and the science of the divine doctrines, when access was gained to the very gates of wisdom — and wisdom not of this world, nor of the princes of this world who are brought to nothing, but to that very wisdom of God which is discoursed among the perfect, and when the mystery which was not known to former generations was revealed to the sons of men — when, I say, the soul has ascended to the knowledge of so great a secret, she rightly says: "The scent of your ointments" — namely the spiritual and mystical understanding — "is above all aromatic spices" of moral and natural philosophy. But let it not escape us that in certain copies, in place of what we read, "Because your breasts are good above wine," we find written, "Because your utterances are good above wine";

²⁷ which, although they may seem to have signified more evidently those very things which we have discoursed by spiritual interpretation, nevertheless we in all things keep to the writings of the Seventy Translators, being certain that the Holy Spirit willed that the forms of the mysteries lie hidden within the divine Scriptures, and not be held openly and in plain view. ²⁸ » Your name is an ointment poured out. Therefore the maidens have loved you and

have drawn you after them. In the fragrance of your ointments we will run.
« 29 The historical exposition here is indeed the same as in the preceding passages, and it runs on through the present place too until some change of persons occurs, since this is what is demanded by the order of the drama that we have adopted in this exposition. Yet there may well be seen in these words a certain prophecy uttered from the person of the bride concerning Christ — that at the coming of our Lord and Savior it would come to pass that his name should be so diffused throughout the whole earth and through the entire world that it would become a fragrance of sweetness in every place, just as the Apostle too said: "For we are the good fragrance of Christ in every place; to some indeed a fragrance from death unto death, but to others a fragrance from life unto life. For if to all he had been a fragrance from life unto life, she would surely have said here too: "All have loved you and drawn you. But she says that now, when your name has become an ointment poured out, they have loved you — not those aged souls, souls clothed with the old man, having wrinkles and spots, but the maidens, that is, souls set in the growth of youth and beauty, souls that are ever being made new and are renewed from day to day, putting on the new man who has been created according to God.

30 Therefore for the sake of these maidens, souls set amid advances and increases of life, he who was in the form of God emptied himself, that his name might become an ointment poured out; that he might no longer dwell only in the unapproachable light and remain in the form of God, but that the Word might be made flesh, whereby these maidens, these souls set amid advances of progress, might not only love him but also draw him to themselves. For each soul draws and takes to itself the Word of God according to the measure of its capacity and its faith. And when the souls have drawn the Word of God to themselves and have grafted him into their senses and understandings, and have felt his sweetness and the pleasantness of his fragrance, when they have taken in the perfume of his ointments — that is, when they have come to know the reasons for his coming, the causes of his redemption and his passion, and the love wherewith for the salvation of all he, the immortal one, went even to the death of the cross — then the maidens, invited by all these as by the fragrances of a certain divine and unspeakable ointment, that is, souls made full of vigor and eagerness, run after him, and hasten to the fragrance of his sweetness not with a slow step nor with

tardy paces, but with rapid course and all speed, even as did he who said: "So I run that I may lay hold."

³¹ But as to what she says: "Your name is an ointment poured out, therefore the maidens have loved you, and have drawn you after them; in the fragrance of your ointments we will run" — the maidens draw Christ to themselves, if indeed it be understood of the Churches, which is one when it is perfect. But the maidens are many, while they are still being instructed and are making progress. These, then, draw Christ to themselves through faith, because Christ, when he shall have seen two or three gathered together in the faith of his name, goes thither, and is in the midst of them, drawn by their faith and summoned by their unanimity. But if, by the third exposition, these things ought to be understood of the soul that follows the Word of God, then whatever soul has first been schooled in moral matters and secondly has also been exercised in natural matters, through all those things which we have shown above to be taught in these disciplines, that very correction of morals, and the erudition in things, and the uprightness of learning draws the Word of God to itself, and he is willingly drawn; for he comes most gladly to erudite souls, and indulgently allows himself to be drawn by them, and graciously grants it. But I truly ask:

³² if his name alone, because it has become an ointment poured out, has wrought so great a work, and has so roused up the maidens that first they drew him to themselves, and, having him with them, took in the fragrance of his ointments, and straightway ran after him — if all these things, I say, have been effected by his name alone, what do you suppose his very substance will do? What of virtue, what of vigor will these maidens receive from it, if in some way they should ever be able to attain to that very incomprehensible and unspeakable substance of his? For my part I think that, if they should ever attain to this, they will no longer walk nor run, but, bound by certain bonds of his love, will cleave to him, so that no place for any further movement may remain in them any more, but they may be with him one spirit, and there may be fulfilled in them that which is written: "As you, Father, in me, and I in you are one, so may these also be one in us."

³³ But now, for the moment, as it seems, the bride, having joined to herself many maidens — of whom it is said in what follows that there is no number — being seized by one sense alone, that is, by smell only, records that she runs into the fragrance of the ointments of the bridegroom; wheth-

er because she herself still has need of running and of progress, or because she indeed is perfect, but on behalf of these maidens who still have need of running and of progress she too confesses that she runs; just as that man also, when he himself was not under the law, nevertheless became under the law, that he might gain those who are under the law; and again, though he is under the law of Christ, yet to those who are without law he too became without law, that he might save those who are without law. And this comes to pass, as we have said, while as yet only her sense of smell has received him. What do you suppose they will do when the Word of God has occupied their hearing also, and their sight and touch and taste, and has furnished to each several sense the powers proper to it, according to their nature and capacity? — so that the eye, if it has been able to see his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, may no longer wish to see anything beyond, nor the hearing to hear anything other than the Word of life and salvation.

³⁴ But also the one whose hand has handled of the Word of life will handle nothing further that is material, nothing fragile and perishable; nor, when the taste has tasted the good Word of God, and his flesh, and the bread which came down from heaven, will it endure to taste anything else after these. For in comparison with his sweetness and pleasantness every remaining savor will seem to it rough and bitter, and therefore it will feed on this alone. For whatever sweetness it may desire, it will find in this; for he renders himself apt and suited to all things. In short, to those who are regenerated from incorruptible seed he becomes rational and guileless milk; but to those who are weak in anything he offers himself as vegetables, for the friendship and grace of hospitality. But to those who, according to their capacity of receiving, have senses exercised to the discernment of good and evil, he offers himself as solid food. But if there are any who have gone out of Egypt, and, having followed the pillar of fire and cloud, have come into the wilderness, he descends to them from heaven, furnishing them a minute and subtle food, like to that of the angels, so that man eats the bread of angels. He has also in himself many other and innumerable differences of foods, which meanwhile one clothed with skin, with flesh and bones and sinews, cannot receive.

³⁵ But whoever has been worthy to return and to be with Christ, and whoever, being found faithful in a little, shall be set over many things, he will taste and receive the delight of the Lord, being brought to a certain

place which, on account of this abundance and variety of foods, is named the place of delights. For which reason it is also said to be situated in Eden, which signifies delights. For there it will be said to him: "Delight yourself in the Lord. And he will delight not in the one sense of eating and tasting only, but he will also delight in hearing and in sight and in touch and in smell. For he will run into the fragrance of his ointment. And thus he who has come to the summit of perfection and of blessedness will delight with all his senses in the Word of God. Wherefore we too, being set in these passages, entreat the hearers of these things that they mortify their carnal senses, lest they take up anything of what is said according to the motions of the body, but that they present those more divine senses of the inner man for the receiving of these things; even as Solomon also teaches us, saying: "But you shall find the divine sense. And as Paul too writes to the Hebrews concerning the perfect, as we mentioned above, that they have senses exercised to the discernment of good or evil;

³⁶ showing that there are in man, besides these bodily senses, five others no less, which are sought by exercise, and are called exercised, namely when they examine the understanding of things with a keener sharpness. For not perfunctorily and carelessly is that to be heard which the Apostle says concerning the perfect, that they have senses exercised to the discernment of good or evil. ³⁷ That this may shine forth more clearly, let us take, if it seems good, an example from these bodily senses, and so at last we shall presently come to those divine senses of the inner man which Scripture names. For if the bodily eye have the exercise of sight, with no obstacle hindering it, it will apprehend either the colors of bodies, or their magnitudes and qualities, wholly and without any falsity. But if the sight be hindered either by a mist, or by some other weakness, and it think the red to be white, and the green to be black, or that something is straight when it is crooked and twisted, without doubt the judgment of the mind will be thrown into confusion, and one thing will be taken for another. So, then, the inner sight also, unless it be trained by instruction and diligence, whereby through much experience it may have discernment of good and evil, but ignorance and inexperience fall upon its eyes like a mist, or even the languor of some malice come upon it as upon bleary eyes, can in no way behold the distinction of good or evil: and thence it comes to pass that it does evil things as though they were good, and spurns good things as though they were evil.

38 And according to this pattern which we have treated concerning the sight of the body and of the soul, consequently also concerning hearing, and taste, and smell, and touch, by referring the several powers of each kind of the bodily senses to the senses of the soul, you will clearly recognize what exercises ought to be applied in each, and what amendment ought to be prepared. But we have pursued these things with a somewhat broad digression, wishing to show that the smelling of the bride and of the maidens, whereby they smelled the odor of the bridegroom's ointments, is spoken not of the sense of the body, but of that divine and inner odor of him who is called the inner man. This sense of smelling, therefore, insofar as it is sound and whole, having received the odor of Christ, leads from life unto life. But if it be not sound, having received this odor, it casts down from death into death, according to him who said: "For we are the good odor of Christ, to some indeed of life unto life, but to others an odor of death unto death. Finally, those too who have understanding of herbs and skill in spices report that there are certain spices, of which, if certain animals catch the odor, they straightway perish; but others are refreshed by the same odor, and receive life.

39 And now, therefore, in these very expositions and discourses which we have in hand, there seems to be for some life out of life, but for others death out of death. For if the man who is called animal, who cannot perceive and understand the things that are of the Spirit of God, hear these things expounded in this way, without doubt he will mock, and will pronounce these things to be foolish and empty, saying that dreams are being treated rather than the causes of things and divine doctrines. For these men, therefore, this odor of the Song of Songs becomes death unto death, that is, from the death of unbelief unto the death of judgment and condemnation. But to those who follow the spiritual and subtle sense, and who understand that there is greater truth in the things that are not seen than in the things that are seen, and that the invisible and spiritual things are held to be truer with God than the visible and bodily ones, this kind of understanding will without doubt seem worthy to be embraced and followed. For they recognize that such is the path of the truth to be understood by which one comes to God. But if he who judges these things foolish and to be mocked be a stranger to the faith, it is no wonder.

⁴⁰ But if there be any one of those who seem to believe, and to receive the authority of the Scriptures, and yet does not receive this form of spiritual exposition, but mocks and disparages it, let us try from other places of the Scriptures to instruct and persuade him. And if perhaps he can thus come to his senses, let us say some such things as these to him: it is written, "The commandment of the Lord is bright, enlightening the eyes. Let him tell us, then, what are the eyes that are enlightened by the light of the commandment. And again: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. What are these ears, which he who has them, he alone is said to hear the words of Christ? And again: "For we are the good odor of Christ unto God"; and in another place: "Taste and see that the Lord is sweet. And what does another say: "Our hands have handled of the word of life. Do you think that in all these things he will not be moved to observe that all these things are spoken not of the bodily senses, but of those which we have taught to be present in each one according to the inner man? — unless he who is of this sort be driven by the vice of contentiousness and boasting.

⁴¹ Since by these vices both that inner sight is blinded, and the sense of smell is stopped up, and the hearing is hardened, deservedly he can neither see the things that are spiritual, nor hear, but neither can he catch that odor of Christ, whereby, now that it has been received, the maidens themselves, in whom this sense was well sound and vigorous, run after him into the odor of his ointments, and running they do not fail, nor grow weary, because, refreshed by the sweetness of that odor which is from life unto life, they continually grow strong. ⁴² What he says can also still be understood in this way: "Your name is ointment poured out. Therefore the maidens have loved you." The only-begotten Son of God, though he was in the form of God, emptied himself and took the form of a servant. But he emptied himself, without doubt, of the fullness in which he was. Those, therefore, who say that "of his fullness we have all received," they themselves are the maidens who, receiving of that fullness out of which he emptied himself — and his name became an ointment poured out — say, "After you we will run in the odor of your ointments." For unless he had poured out the ointment, that is, the fullness of the divine Spirit, and humbled himself even to the form of a servant, no one could have grasped him in that fullness of divinity — except perhaps the bride alone, inasmuch as she seems to indicate that this ointment was poured out and gave the cause of love not to herself, but to the maidens. For thus she

says: "Your name is ointment poured out; therefore the maidens have loved you." As if she were to say: The maidens indeed have loved you for this reason, because you emptied yourself of the form of God, and your name became an ointment poured out. But I have loved you not for the ointment poured out, but for the very fullness of the ointments. For this is what she indicates in that place where she says, "The odor of your ointments is above all spices." But as to the fact that she too says that, together with the maidens, she will run after him, I say this is the reason: that all who are perfect become all things to all, that they may gain all, as we have already explained above.

43 » The king has brought me into his chamber. Let us exult and rejoice in you. « 44 When the bride had made known to her bridegroom that the young maidens, captivated by his fragrance, were running after him, and that she too would run with them so as to offer them a pattern in all things, now, as though having already won the prize of her labor because she outran those who were running, she says that she has been brought in by the bridegroom king into his chamber, that there she might behold all the royal riches. In this, assuredly, she rightly rejoices and exults, inasmuch as she has now looked upon the secret and hidden things of the king. This is, according to the sequence of the drama proposed, as it were the historical sense. But since she whose case is here treated is the Church coming to Christ, or the soul cleaving to the Word of God, what other chamber of Christ and storehouse of God are we to believe there to be, into which he brings either the Church or the soul that cleaves to him, save that very hidden and recondite meaning of his, of which Paul too was speaking: "But we have the mind of Christ, that we may know the things that are given to us by God. These are those things "which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have they entered into the heart of man, which God has prepared for those who love him.

45 When therefore Christ leads the soul into the understanding of his own meaning, she is said to be brought into the chamber of the king, in which are "the treasures of his wisdom and knowledge hidden. Now it seems not without significance that, whereas she could have said, "My bridegroom has brought me in," or "my brother," or something of this kind, as is her custom, now, because she was about to speak of a chamber, she has said the chamber of the king, and has set down no other name, in which perhaps someone even middling might be understood. But I think that in these words the king is named for this reason: that through this name the cham-

ber might be shown to be exceedingly rich, being royal indeed and filled with many and immense riches. Wholly near to this man there seems to me to have been also that one who said that he had been caught up to the third heaven, and from there into paradise, and had heard "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter. For what do you think those words were which he heard? Did he not hear them from the king? And did he not hear them being set in the chamber, and near the chamber? And those words were, I believe, some such as these:

⁴⁶ that they exhorted him to greater progress, and promised him that if he should persevere unto the end, he too might be able to enter the chamber, according to that which is also promised through the prophet: "I will give you dark treasures, hidden, invisible. I will open to you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God who have called your name Israel. The young maidens therefore run after him, and into his fragrance, yet each according to her strength — one indeed more swiftly, another a little more slowly, another even lower than the rest and in the last place, another in the first place. Nevertheless all of them run, but one is perfect, who runs in such a way as to arrive and alone receive the prize. For she alone it is who says: "The king has brought me into his chamber," whereas before she had said, not of herself alone, but of many: "After you, into the fragrance of your ointments, we will run. She is therefore brought into the chamber of the king, and is made a queen, and it is she of whom it is said: "The queen stood at your right hand in a gilded garment, girded about with variety. But concerning those young maidens who had been running after her, and had remained far behind her in the very courses of their running, it is said: "Virgins shall be brought to the king after her, her companions shall be brought to you:

⁴⁷ they shall be brought in gladness and exultation, they shall be led into the temple of the king. But this too we ought to note in this passage, that just as the king has a certain chamber into which he brings his queen or his bride, so also the bride has her own chamber, into which she is admonished by the Word of God, when she has entered, to close the door, and so, with all those riches of hers shut up within that chamber, to pray to him who sees in secret, and looks upon how great the wealth — that is, the virtues of the soul — which the bride has stored within her chamber, so that, seeing her riches, he may grant her petitions. For "to everyone who has it shall be given." ⁴⁸ But as for what she says, "Let us exult and rejoice in you," this seems to be spoken

in the person of the young maidens, who desire and beg of the bridegroom that, just as the bride has attained what is perfect and exults, so they too may now deserve to complete their course and to arrive at the king's chamber, so that, having beheld and gazed upon all those things of which she boasts, they too may exult as she does, and rejoice in him. Or else it may be seen to be said to the bride by the young maidens who congratulate her and make promises and petitions, that they may become sharers in her exultation and gladness. » We will love your breasts above wine. «

⁴⁹ The bride indeed, after she had earned kisses from the very mouth of the bridegroom, and to receive and enjoy his breasts, says to him: "Good are your breasts above wine. But the maidens, who had not yet come to that degree of blessedness, nor received the summit of perfection, nor by practice and works fulfilled the fruit of perfect charity, so that they might, as it were from experience, declare of his breasts that they are good — yet seeing the bride delighted and refreshed by the breasts of the bridegroom, namely from the fountains of wisdom and knowledge that flow from his breasts, and taking up cups of heavenly doctrine as imitators of his perfection and desiring to walk in the same footsteps — they promise, and say: "We will love your breasts above wine," that is: We indeed have not yet ascended to that perfection, that we should now love your breasts more than wine, or at least your breasts which are above wine (for the sense will appear to stand in either way); yet we hold hope, being maidens, of advancing to that age wherein we may be able not only to be fed and nourished from the breasts of the Word of God, but also to love the one who nourishes.

⁵⁰ Now these maidens are, as we have often already said, the souls who seem to have been imbued with the first and initial instructions that are strong at the beginning, and gladdened as it were by a certain wine, only by the training of tutors and guardians and the pedagogue, being as it were little ones, who would indeed have it in their powers to love wine, but would not yet have it in their age, that they could be moved or stirred by the love of the bridegroom's breasts. But when the fullness of times comes, and Christ has advanced in them in age and wisdom, and they have now begun to perceive what the breasts of the bridegroom are, and what perfection of the Word of God is designated in them, and what fullness of spiritual doctrine, then they also promise that more than the wine which they now drink as little ones, they will love the breasts of the bridegroom; that is, they will be

more inclined toward the perfect and, in all fullness, the established teachings of Christ than they were before seen to be, whether in common studies, or in the instructions of the Law and the prophets.

51 » Equity has loved you. « 52 This also the maidens seem to me to declare, as if making satisfaction for the fact that they had promised they would love the breasts of the bridegroom above wine, and do not yet love them in the present, nor show the entire force of charity. This voice, then, is as of those accusing themselves: as those who have not yet, having cast off all iniquity, arrived at equity, so that they might now be able to love above wine the breasts of the bridegroom, knowing it to be unfitting that anything of iniquity should still remain in one who has arrived at the perfection of spiritual or mystical doctrine. Since, therefore, the summit of perfection consists in charity, and charity admits nothing of iniquity, and where there is nothing of iniquity, there without doubt is equity, rightly then is she said to be equity who loves the bridegroom. And see whether it is not on this account that that saying too seems to have been spoken by the Savior in the Gospel: "If you love me, keep my commandments. If, therefore, he who loves Christ keeps his commandments, there is no iniquity in him, but equity remains in him; it is equity, therefore, which keeps his commandments and loves Christ. And again: If he who keeps the commandments himself loves Christ, and the commandments are kept in equity, then it is equity which loves Christ; he who does anything iniquitous neither keeps the commandments nor loves Christ.

53 It will therefore be that, as much iniquity as is in us, so far are we from the love of Christ, and so much transgression of his commandments is held to be in us. And therefore let us set down equity to be a certain straight rule, so that if there is anything of iniquity in us, applying and drawing over it this straightedge of the commandments of God, whatever in us is crooked, whatever is twisted, may be cut off from the line of this rule, so that it may be said also of us: "Equity has loved you. But we can also take it in this way, so that what she said, "Equity has loved you," may seem to be similar as if she had said: Justice has loved you, and truth, and wisdom, and chastity, and each single virtue. Nor be surprised indeed if we say that it is the virtues which love Christ, since in other places we are accustomed to take Christ to be the very substance of the virtues themselves. And this too you will frequently find applied in the divine Scriptures according to places and occa-

sions. For we find that he himself is called both justice, and peace, and truth. And again it is written in the Psalms: "Justice and peace have kissed"; and: "Truth has arisen from the earth, and justice has looked down from heaven. All of which, indeed, he himself is said to be, and again are said to embrace him.

⁵⁴ But he is likewise called the bridegroom, and the same is also named the bride, as it is written in the prophecy: "As on a bridegroom he has placed a mitre on me, and as a bride he has adorned me with an ornament."

COMMENTARY ON THE SONG OF SONGS — BOOK TWO

¹ English translation of Origen of Alexandria's *Commentary on the Song of Songs* (*Commentarium in Canticum Canticorum*), in the Latin translation of Rufinus of Aquileia (c. 410). Translated from the OCR-corrected Migne *Patrologia Graeca* 13 (Delarue) base text. Rufinus's translation is intrinsically incomplete, running only as far as Song of Songs 2:15. This English translation is in the public domain.

BOOK TWO

2 » I am dark and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar, like the skins of Solomon. « ³ In other copies we read: "I am black and beautiful. Here again the person of the bride is introduced as speaking; but she speaks not to those young maidens who are accustomed to run with her, but to the daughters of Jerusalem, to whom she seems to make reply as to those who have disparaged her unsightliness, and to say: I am indeed dark, or black, so far as concerns color, O daughters of Jerusalem; but I am beautiful, if one looks upon the inner lineaments of my members. For the tents of Kedar too, she says — Kedar being a great nation — are black, and the very nation of Kedar is interpreted as blackness or darkness. But the skins of Solomon also are black, and yet on that account the blackness of the skins did not appear unseemly to so great a king in all his glory. Do not therefore, O daughters of Jerusalem, reproach me with the fault of my color, since there is no lack of beauty in my body, whether natural or acquired by exercise. This is what the historical drama contains, and the outward form of the tale set before us. But let us return to the mystical order. This bride who speaks holds the person of the Church gathered out of the nations. But the daughters of Jerusalem, to whom her discourse is addressed, are those souls who, on ac-

count of the election of the fathers, are indeed called most beloved, but enemies on account of the Gospel.

⁴ These are the daughters of the earthly city Jerusalem, who, seeing the Church out of the nations — ignoble, as they suppose, in that she cannot ascribe to herself the nobility of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, yet forgetting her own people and her father's house, coming even to Christ — despise her and cast a shadow upon her for the ignobility of her race. And the bride, perceiving that the daughters of the former people impute this to her, and that on this account she is even called black, as one who has not the brightness of her fathers' learning, replies to these things and says: I am indeed black, O daughters of Jerusalem, in that I do not descend from the stock of illustrious men, nor have I received the illumination of the law of Moses; yet I have my own beauty with me. For there is in me first that which was made in me according to the image of God; and now, coming to the Word of God, I have received back my own comeliness. For although, on account of the darkness of my color, you compare me to the tents of Kedar and to the skins of Solomon, yet Kedar too descends from Ishmael. For in the second place there was born of Ishmael this Kedar; and Ishmael was not without a share in the divine blessing. But you also compare me to the skins of Solomon, which are none other than the skins of the tabernacle of God;

⁵ and yet I marvel at you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that you would reproach me with the blackness of my color. How do you not remember what is written in the law — what Miriam suffered, who disparaged Moses because he had taken to wife a black Ethiopian woman? How are you ignorant that the shadow of that image is now being fulfilled in me in truth? I am that Ethiopian woman; I am black indeed for the ignobility of my race, but beautiful because of repentance and faith. For I have received into myself the Son of God, I have received the Word made flesh. I have come to him who is the image of God, the firstborn of all creation, and who is the brightness of glory and the radiance of his substance, and I have become beautiful. Why then do you reproach one who is being converted from sin — a thing which the law forbids to be done? And how do you glory in the law, while you transgress the law? But since we are at those places where the Church that comes from the nations says that she is black and beautiful, although it may seem long and laborious to gather from the divine Scriptures in what places, or in what manner, the form of this mystery went before, nevertheless it

does not seem to me a thing to be altogether omitted, but rather to be recalled as briefly as may be.

6 First, then, in the book of Numbers it is thus written concerning the Ethiopian woman: "And Miriam spoke to Aaron, and they disparaged Moses on account of the Ethiopian woman whom he had taken to wife, and they said: Has the Lord spoken to Moses alone? Has he not spoken also to us? And again in the third book of Kings it is written concerning the queen of Sheba, that she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, in this manner: "The queen of Sheba heard the name of Solomon, and the name of the Lord, and she came to test him with riddles; and she came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue: and camels bearing spices, and much gold, and precious stone; and she came in to Solomon, and spoke to him all the words that were in her heart, and Solomon declared to her all her words, and there was no word which the king omitted, and which the king did not declare to her. And the queen of Sheba saw all the prudence of Solomon, and the house which he had built, and the food of Solomon, and the seat of his servants, and the order of his ministers, and his garments, and his cup-bearers, and his burnt offerings which he offered in the house of the Lord, and she was astounded, and said to king Solomon:

7 The word is true which I heard in my land concerning your word and your prudence, and I did not believe those who spoke to me until I came, and my eyes saw, and behold, not even the half is of what was told me. For you have added good things beyond all the report which I heard in my land. Blessed are your women, blessed are these your servants who stand in your presence always, and hear all your prudence. Let the Lord your God be blessed, who has given you the throne of Israel. Because the Lord loved Israel, and willed him to abide forever, he set you as king over them, that you might do judgment with justice, and judge them. And she gave to Solomon a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and very many spices, and precious stone. Never had such spices come, nor in such abundance, as the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. Now this history we have wished to repeat somewhat more at length, and to insert into this our exposition, knowing that these things so greatly befit the person of the Church which comes from the nations to Christ, that the Lord himself in the Gospels made mention of this queen, saying that she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

8 And he calls her the queen of the South, in that Ethiopia lies in the parts of the South, and is set as it were at the utmost, at the ends of the earth. We find, moreover, that Josephus too makes mention of this same queen in his history, adding this also, that after she had returned, he says, from Solomon, king Cambyses, marveling at her wisdom — which without doubt she had received from the wisdom of Solomon — named her, he says, by the name Meroë. And he relates that she held the kingdom not only of Ethiopia, but also of Egypt. We shall add still further those things which in the sixty-seventh psalm are contained concerning this same form. It says there, then: "Scatter the nations that desire wars, and let ambassadors come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall stretch out her hand to God before the rest. Kingdoms of the earth, sing to God, sing psalms to the Lord. There is yet, in the fourth place, in Zephaniah the prophet, written concerning this same figure in this manner: "Therefore wait for me, says the Lord, in the day of my resurrection, in my testimony," that is, in my witness, "because my judgment is unto the gathering of the nations, that I may receive kings, and pour out upon them the wrath of my indignation. In the fire of my zeal shall all the earth be consumed.

9 For then will I turn among the peoples a tongue into its generation, that all may call upon the name of the Lord, and serve him under one yoke. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia I will receive those who are scattered, and they shall bring sacrifice to me. In that day you shall not be confounded, O Sheba, for all your devices in which you have acted impiously against me. But in Jeremiah also it is written, that certain princes of the people of Israel cast Jeremiah into the pit of Melchiah the king's son, which was in the house of the prison, and they let him down with ropes, and in the pit there was no water, but mire, and he was in the mire. But Abdemelech, an Ethiopian man, a eunuch, who was in the king's house, hearing that they had cast Jeremiah into the pit, spoke to the king, and said: My lord king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, in that they have cast him into the pit, and he will die there from the face of famine, since there are now no more loaves in the city. And the king commanded this Abdemelech the Ethiopian, saying: Take from here thirty men, and lead him up out of the pit, that he die not there. And what more? It was Abdemelech the Ethiopian who led Jeremiah up out of the pit. And a little after: The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying:

10 Go, and say to Abdemelech the Ethiopian, saying: Thus says the Lord God of Israel: Behold, I am bringing my words upon this city for evil, and not for good, and I will save you in that day, and I will not give you into the hands of the men whom you fear. Saving I will save you from before their face, and by the sword you shall not fall, but your soul shall be for salvation, because you have trusted in me, says the Lord. These things, for the present, could occur to us from the holy Scriptures, by which it seems to me that the mystery of the little verse set before us from the Song of Songs is confirmed, in which she says: "I am dark (or black) and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem, like the tent of Kedar, and like the skins of Solomon. Moses, then, is found in Numbers to take a dark, or black, Ethiopian woman to wife, on whose account Miriam and Aaron disparage him, and, indignant, say: "Has the Lord spoken to Moses alone? Has he not spoken also to us? In which, if you consider it carefully, the historical narrative is not even found to have coherence. For what will seem to fit the matter, that, being indignant on account of the Ethiopian woman, they should say: "Has the Lord spoken to Moses alone? Has he not spoken also to us? For it were fitting, if this were the cause, that they should say:

11 You ought not, O Moses, to have taken an Ethiopian woman to wife, and of the seed of Ham, but one of your own race, and of the house of Levi. None of these things do they say, but they declare: "Has God spoken to Moses alone? Has he not spoken also to us? In which it seems to me too that, according to the mystery, they understood rather what was being done, and saw that Moses — that is, the spiritual law — was now passing over into the nuptials and wedlock of the Church gathered from the nations; and that Miriam, who held the form of the forsaken Synagogue, and Aaron, who held the image of the carnal priesthood, seeing that the kingdom was taken away from themselves, and given to a nation bringing forth its fruits, said: "Has God spoken to Moses alone? Has he not spoken also to us? Finally, though such and so magnificent works of faith and patience of Moses are related, never was he exalted by God with such praises as now, when he took the Ethiopian woman to wife. Now it is said of him, that "Moses was a man exceedingly meek above all men who are upon the earth. Now the Lord also says of him this: "If there be a prophet among you, I will speak to him in visions, or in dreams, not so with my servant Moses, who is faithful in all my house.

¹² Mouth to mouth will I speak to him, in his own form, and not in a riddle, and he saw the glory of the Lord. And why were you not afraid to detract from my servant Moses? All these things, on account of his marriage with the Ethiopian woman, did Moses deserve to hear from the Lord. But of these things we have treated more fully in the book of Numbers; and if anyone judges it worthy to know them, let him seek them out there. But now let it suffice to prove from these things that she herself is the black one, and beautiful, and the Ethiopian woman, whom Moses — that is, the spiritual law, which without doubt is the Word of God and Christ — takes into his own wedlock, though the daughters of Jerusalem, namely this common people with their priests, detract and disparage. But let us also look at those things which we brought forward from the third book of Kings concerning the queen of Sheba — she likewise being no less an Ethiopian woman, to whom the Lord bears witness in the Gospels, that in the day of judgment she comes with the men of the unbelieving generation, and condemns them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and he adds, that "a greater than Solomon is here," teaching by this that the truth is greater than the figures of the truth.

¹³ She came then, this queen — nay rather, according to her figure, the Church came from the nations to hear the wisdom of the true Solomon and the true peaceable one, our Lord Jesus Christ. And she came, first indeed testing him by riddles and questions, which before seemed to her insoluble, and by him she is set free concerning the knowledge of the true God and concerning the creatures of the world, or concerning the immortality of the soul and the judgment to come — which with her and with her teachers, the gentile philosophers at least, always remained uncertain and doubtful. She came, then, into Jerusalem — that is, into the vision of peace — with a multitude and much power; for she came not with one nation only, as the Synagogue before had the Hebrews alone, but with the nations of the whole world; bringing also gifts worthy of Christ: the sweetnesses of spices, that is, good works, which ascend to God through the odor of sweetness. But she came also filled with gold — that is, without doubt, with meanings and rational teachings, which before faith she had already gathered from this common and scholarly learning. She brought also precious stone, by which we may understand the ornaments of morals. With this equipment, then, she enters in to the peaceable king Christ, and opens to him her heart —

that is, in the confession and repentance of her preceding faults — and she spoke to him all that was in her heart;

¹⁴ wherefore Christ also, who is our peace, declared to her all her words, and there is no word which the king omitted and did not declare to her. Finally, when now the time of his passion drew near, thus he speaks to her — that is, to his chosen disciples: "Now I will not call you servants, but friends, because the servant knows not what his master does. But I have made known to you all things whatsoever I have heard from my Father. Thus, then, is fulfilled what he said, that there was no word which the peaceable Lord did not declare to the queen of Sheba — that is, to the Church gathered from the nations. But if you look upon the state of the Church and consider her dispensations and orderings, then you will perceive how the queen marveled at all the prudence of Solomon. At the same time inquire also why she did not say "all the wisdom," but "all the prudence" of Solomon; since indeed learned men will have prudence to be understood of human affairs, wisdom of divine. For this reason perhaps the Church too, now for the present, marvels at the prudence of Christ, while she is on earth and dwells among men. But when that which is perfect shall have come, and she shall have been translated from the earth to heaven, then she will see all his wisdom, when now not through an appearance, not through riddles, but face to face she will look upon each single thing.

¹⁵ She saw also the house which he built — without doubt the mysteries of his incarnation. For this is the house which wisdom built for herself. She saw the food of Solomon. Those, I think, of which he said: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, that I may accomplish his work. She saw also the seat of his servants. He means, I think, the ecclesiastical order, which is held in the seats of the episcopate or the presbytery. She saw the orderings, or stations, of his ministers. He mentions, as it seems to me, the order of deacons who stand by the divine ministry. But she saw also his garments. Those, I believe, with which he clothes them, of whom it is said: "As many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ. But his cup-bearers too — I reckon these are called the teachers, who mix the Word of God and doctrine for the peoples like wine, that it may gladden the hearts of the hearers. She saw also his burnt offerings — without doubt the mysteries of prayers and supplications. When, then, she had seen all these things in the house of the peaceable king — nay, of Christ — this black and beautiful one was

astounded, and said to him: "The word is true which I heard in my land concerning your word and your prudence. For because of your word, which I have recognized to be a true word, I have come to you.

16 For all the words which were spoken to me, and which I heard, when I was in my land — namely, from the teachers of the world and the philosophers — were not true. This alone is the true word, which is in you. But perhaps it may seem needful to inquire how the queen says this to the king, that "I did not believe those things which were told me concerning you," since surely she would not have come to Christ, had she not believed. But see whether we can solve in this way what is set down. "I did not," she says, "believe those who spoke to me. For I did not direct my faith toward those who spoke of you, but toward you — that is, I believed not men, but you, God. And through them indeed I heard, but to you I came, and I believed; with whom my eyes have seen far more things than were announced to me. For truly, when this black and beautiful one shall have come into the heavenly Jerusalem, and shall have entered into the vision of peace, she will look upon far more and more magnificent things than are now announced to her. For now it is as in a mirror and a riddle, but then she will see face to face, when she shall obtain those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have they ascended into the heart of man.

17 And then she will see that not even the half is of those things which she heard while set in this her land. Blessed, then, are the women of Solomon — without doubt the souls which become partakers of the Word of God and of his peace. Blessed are his servants who stand in his presence always. Not those who sometimes stand by, and sometimes do not stand by, but who always, and without intermission, stand by the Word of God — these are truly blessed. Such was also that Mary who sat at the feet of Jesus, and heard him, to whom the Lord himself also gave testimony, saying to Martha: "Mary has chosen the best part, which shall not be taken from her. Still further this black and beautiful one says: "Blessed is he who willed to give you upon the throne of Israel. For truly, because the Lord loved Israel, and willed that it should stand forever, he set you as king over it. Whom? The peaceable one, without doubt. For Christ is our peace, who made both one, and dissolved the middle wall of the partition. And after all these things, she gave, it says, a hundred and twenty talents of gold to king Solomon, did the queen of Sheba. This number, a hundred and twenty, is con-

secrated to the life of those men who were in the days of Noah, to whom this span of life is granted in which they are invited to repentance.

18 And this same number was also that of the years of the life of Moses. The Church therefore offers to Christ, in the appearance and weight of gold, not only the multitude of her meanings and understandings, but she shows her meanings to be consecrated to the law of God by this number which contains the years of the life of Moses. She offers also the sweetnesses of spices, such and so many as had never come. Understand by this either prayers, or works of mercy. For never had she either prayed so rightly as now, when she came to Christ, or worked so piously, as when she knew that her righteousness was not to be done before men, but before the Father who sees in secret, and will reward openly. But it is much, in places not their own, to pursue all together these things which seem to be taken up for the sake of testimony. Let these things suffice from the third book of Kings. Let us look at some of those things which we brought forward from the sixty-seventh psalm, where it says: "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hand to God before the rest.

19 For if you consider how out of the fault of Israel there is salvation for the nations, and how their fall gave the nations a way to enter in, you will perceive how the hand of Ethiopia — that is, the people of the nations — anticipates and goes before those to whom first the oracles of God were given, in coming to God; and how in this is fulfilled: "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hand to God before the rest"; and this black one becomes beautiful, even though the daughters of Jerusalem be unwilling, even though they envy and detract. But the testimony of the prophet also, which we have set down, where the Lord received even those who come from the places which are beyond the rivers of the Ethiopians, and bring victims to God, is, I think, to be perceived in a like sense. For it seems to me that he is said to be beyond the rivers of Ethiopia who is darkened with excessive and superabundant sins, and, infected with the black dye of malice, is rendered black and shadowy; and yet not even these does the Lord reject, but all who offer to God the sacrifices of a contrite spirit and a humbled heart — namely, those converted to him under the title of confession and repentance — are not rejected by him. For thus the peaceable one, our Lord, says: "Him that comes to me I will not reject.

20 But it may also seem to be said of those who, set beyond the rivers of the Ethiopians, shall come, they too, to God, bringing victims — who, after the whole fullness of the nations, which is compared to the rivers of the Ethiopians, has entered in, shall come, they too, and then all Israel shall be saved; and on this account they are called "beyond the rivers of the Ethiopians," as being further off and later than these spaces, in which the salvation of the nations runs and overflows. And so perhaps this seems to be fulfilled which he says, that "in that day you shall not be confounded" — all Israel — "for all your devices, in which you have acted impiously against me," against Christ. It remains that that testimony which we took up from Jeremiah be explained, where Abdemelech — no less an Ethiopian man, a eunuch — when he had heard that Jeremiah was cast into the pit by the princes of the people, leads him out thence. And I think it does not seem unfitting if we say that him whom the princes of Israel condemned, and cast into the pit of death, this foreigner and man of an obscure and degenerate nation — that is, the people of the nations — leads out of the pit of death, believing, namely, his resurrection from the dead, and by his faith this one, whom they had delivered over to death, recalls and leads back from the lower regions.

21 But this eunuch too is said to be an Ethiopian; I believe because he castrated himself for the kingdom of God, or also because he does not have the seed of malice in himself. He is also a servant of the king, because a wise servant rules over foolish masters. And Abdemelech is interpreted "servant of kings. And therefore the Lord, forsaking the people of Israel on account of their sins, directs his words to the Ethiopian, and sends the prophet to him, and to him says: "Behold, I am bringing my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and I will save you in that day, and I will not give you into the hands of men, but saving I will save you. And the cause of salvation to him is this, that he led the prophet out of the pit — that is, that by his faith, by which he believes that Christ rose from the dead, he is seen to have led him out of the pit. This dark, or black, and beautiful one has therefore very many testimonies, in which she may act freely, and with confidence say to the daughters of Jerusalem, that "I am indeed dark, or black, like the tents of Kedar, but beautiful like the skins of Solomon. Concerning the skins of Solomon I do not recall anything written expressly. But I think it can be referred to his glory, of which the Savior says: that "not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these.

22 Yet we find the very name of skins frequently mentioned in the tabernacle of testimony, as when it says: "And you shall make skins of goats' hair for a covering over the tabernacle of testimony; eleven skins you shall make, the length of one skin thirty cubits, and the breadth four cubits. The same measure also shall be for the eleven skins; and you shall join five skins together, and the other six together, and you shall fold back the sixth skin at the front of the tabernacle; and you shall make fifty loops along the edge of one skin, and fifty loops along the edge of the other skin, by which they may be joined one to another; and you shall make fifty bronze rings, and you shall join the skins by them, and it shall be one whole; and you shall fold back what remains over of the skins, the half of one skin, at the front of the tabernacle, and of the other half what remains over you shall veil the hinder parts of the tabernacle, a cubit on this side and a cubit on that, of that which abounds in the length of the skins, and the tabernacle shall be covered by it on this side and on that. I think, then, that mention is made of these in the Song of Songs, and that this is of that Solomon who is taken as the peaceable one. His, therefore, is the tabernacle, and the things which pertain to the tabernacle;

23 and especially if we consider that tabernacle which is called the true tabernacle, which God fixed and not man, and of which he says: "For Jesus entered not into the holy places made by hand, the copies of the true. If, therefore, the bride compares her beauty to the skins of Solomon, she speaks without doubt of the glory and beauty of those skins which cover that tabernacle which God fixed and not man. But if she has compared her blackness, which seemed to be reproached by the daughters of Jerusalem, to the skins of Solomon, then the skins of this tabernacle — which is called the copy of the true tabernacle — are to be understood; as being those which are indeed themselves black, inasmuch as they are woven of goats' hair, and yet furnish use and ornament to the divine tabernacle. But that, although she who speaks seems to be one person, she compared herself in blackness to several things, whether to the tents of Kedar or to the skins of Solomon, is thus to be taken: that though she seems one person, she is the Church — of whom there are, however, innumerable congregations, spread through the world, and immense assemblies and multitudes of peoples; just as the kingdom of heaven too is said to be one, and yet many mansions are recorded to be with the Father.

²⁴ But it can also be said of each single soul which, after very many sins, is converted to repentance, that she is black for her sins, but beautiful because of repentance and the fruits of repentance. Finally, of this very one who now says: "I am black and beautiful" — because she did not remain unto the end in that blackness — after these things the daughters of Jerusalem say concerning this same one: "Who is this that ascends made white, leaning upon her kinsman?" ²⁵ » Do not look upon me, because I am darkened, for the sun has despised me. « ²⁶ Darkened, or blackened: if the exposition seems fittingly suited to us which in the foregoing we wove either concerning the Ethiopian woman whom Moses took to wife, or concerning the queen of Sheba who came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, then rightly does this woman who is dusky or black and yet beautiful now seem to make satisfaction for her blackness or darkening, and to render the causes of it to those reproaching her, as one who is not such by nature, nor so created by her Maker, but has suffered this from accidental things. "From this," she says, "that the sun has despised me. In which she shows that the discourse is not about the blackness of the body, which indeed the sun is wont to darken and blacken when it looks upon a thing rather than when it despises it. So, in fine, they report even of that whole nation of the Ethiopians, in whom by now a certain blackness is inborn by the succession of the carnal seed, that in those regions the sun burns with keener rays, and that bodies once scorched and darkened remain so by the succession of an inbred defect. But the blackness of the soul is of a contrary order. For it is scorched not by the sun's regard but by its disregard, nor is it acquired by being born but by being negligent; and therefore, just as it is taken on through sloth, so too it is repelled and driven off through diligence.

²⁷ Finally, as I said above, this very woman who is now said to be black is recorded, toward the end of this Song, to ascend whitened, leaning upon her kinsman. She was made black, therefore, because she came down; but if she begins to ascend and to lean upon her kinsman, and to cleave to him, and by no means to be separated from him, she will be whitened and shining white; and, every blackness cast off, she will shine, bathed round with the light of the true light. She says now, therefore, to the daughters of Jerusalem, making satisfaction for her blackness: Do not suppose, O daughters of Jerusalem, that this blackness which you see in my face is natural; but know that it was made by the sun's disregard. For the Sun of justice, because he did not find

me standing upright, did not himself direct the straight rays of his light into me. For I am the people of the nations, who formerly did not look toward the Sun of justice, nor stood before the Lord; and therefore neither did he look upon me, but disregarded me, nor did he stand by me, but passed me over. And that this is so, even you who are called Israel will now, having experienced it in fact, come to know it and say: For just as, when I once did not believe, you were taken up and obtained mercy, and the Sun of justice regarded you, but disregarded and spurned me as one disobedient and unbelieving;

²⁸ so now, because you have become unbelieving and disobedient, I hope to be regarded by the Sun of justice and to obtain mercy. And that this disregard of the sun is mutual between us — that I first, for my disobedience, was disregarded, but you regarded; while now to you also has befallen not only the sun's disregard but even a certain blindness, though in part — I will bring forward for you a magnificent witness, and one privy to the heavenly secret, Paul, who speaks thus: For as you (speaking, without doubt, of the nations) once did not believe God, but now have obtained mercy through their unbelief; so also these have not believed in your mercy, that they too may obtain mercy. And again in another place he says: Because blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the nations should enter in. Hence, therefore, is in me this blackness which you reproach, because the sun has disregarded me on account of my unbelief and disobedience. But when I shall stand upright before him, and shall not be crooked in anything, nor turn aside to the right hand or to the left, but shall make straight paths for my feet, walking toward the Sun of justice in all his justifications without blame; then he too will look upon me uprightly, and there will be no crookedness, nor any cause of disregard, and then my light and my splendor will be restored to me;

²⁹ and this blackness which you now reproach will be so far driven away from me that I shall even deserve to be called the light of the world. So, therefore, this visible sun scorches and burns those bodies over which it has settled from the highest point of its balance; but those which are far off and set farther from that poisoning of it, it preserves in their fairness, and does not burn them at all, but illumines them. But the spiritual Sun, who is the Sun of justice, in whose wings health is said to be, on the contrary illumines those whom he finds of an upright heart and standing at the balance of his

splendor, and surrounds them with all radiance; whereas those who walk crookedly with him, he too, of necessity, not so much regards as disregards crookedly, their own inconstancy and instability bringing this upon them. For how can those who are perverse receive that which is straight? Just as if you were to apply the straightest ruler to a crooked piece of wood, the depravity of the material would indeed seem to be shown up by the ruler, yet it is not the ruler that imposed on the wood the cause of its crookedness. And therefore one must hasten to the straight ways, and stand in the paths of the virtues, lest perhaps the Sun of justice, walking uprightly, if he find us standing crooked and perverse, should disregard us and we be made blackened.

³⁰ For insofar as we are incapable of his light, so far shall we give place to darkness and blackness. For this is that very Sun who is also the true Light, illumining every man coming into this world, and who was in this world, and the world was made through him. For it was not through that visible light that the world was made, since that too is a portion of the world, but through that true Light; from which Light, if we walk perversely, we are said to be disregarded. For it too walks perversely toward us when we walk perversely, as it is written in the maledictions of Leviticus: "And if," he says, "you walk with me perversely, and refuse to obey me, I will add to you seven plagues. And after a little: "And if," he says, "you are not corrected, but walk with me perversely, I too will walk with you perversely"; or, as we read in other copies: "If you walk with me crookedly, I too will walk with you crookedly. And after some space he again says at the last: "And because they walked crookedly in my sight, I too will walk with them crookedly in fury. Now these things we have taken up in order to prove from them in what manner the sun is said to "despise," that is, to look crookedly. And it has been made plainly evident that he disregards those, and walks crookedly and perversely with those, who walk crookedly with him.

³¹ But let us not leave undiscussed this too which the present passage has suggested, that the sun seems to be of a twofold power: one by which it illumines, another by which it burns; but according to the things or materials lying beneath it, either it illumines something with light, or it darkens and hardens something with heat. According to these things, therefore, God is perhaps said also to have hardened the heart of Pharaoh, namely because the material of his heart was such that it received the presence of the Sun of justice not on that side by which it illumines, but on that by which it burns

and hardens: on this account, without doubt, that he too was afflicting the life of the Hebrews in hard works, and was making them work with clay and brick. And his heart, according to the things he pondered, was indeed clayey and muddy. And as this visible sun binds fast and hardens the material of clay, so the Sun of justice, by these same rays with which he was illumining the people of Israel, was hardening the heart of Pharaoh, in which were clayey thoughts, according to the very qualities of its own motions. And that these things are so, and that the servant of God writes through the Holy Spirit not a common history, as it seems to men, is shown also from this:

³² that where he reports that the children of Israel groaned, he does not say that they groaned from the clay, nor from the brick, nor from the straw, but "from their works," he says. And again: "And their cry," he says, "went up to God. He did not say from the clay and brick, but again, "from their works. Wherefore he also adds: "Because the Lord heard their groaning" — since indeed he does not hear the groaning of those who do not cry to the Lord out of their works. These things, although they may seem to be said by way of digression, nevertheless, admonished by the opportuneness of the passages, we have by no means judged should be omitted, especially since they have some likeness to this which she says — that she was darkened because the sun disregarded her — which indeed is shown to happen there where the cause of sins goes before; and there someone is darkened or scorched by the sun, where the material of sin subsists. But where there is no sin, the sun is said neither to scorch nor to darken, as is reported of the just man in the Psalms: "By day the sun shall not burn you, nor the moon by night. You see, therefore, that the sun never scorches the saints, in whom there is no cause of sins. For, as we have said, the sun is of a twofold power:

³³ the just indeed it illumines, but sinners it does not illumine, but scorches, since they too hate the light, because they do evil. Finally, on this account our God also is said to be a consuming fire, and none the less a light in which there are no shadows. Light, without doubt, to the just, and fire he becomes to sinners, that he may consume in them everything that he finds of corruptibility or frailty in their soul. And that in many places of Scripture both the sun and the fire are said to be, not this visible one, but that invisible and spiritual one, you too, if you review them, will find in abundance. ³⁴ » The sons of my mother fought against me, they set me as keeper in the vineyards; my own vineyard I have not kept. « ³⁵ Still she herself — who is in-

deed dark on account of her former sins, but beautiful on account of her faith and manner of life — says this too, affirming that the sons of her mother fought, not against her, but in her; and after this war which they waged in her, they appointed her keeper of the vineyards, not of one vineyard, but of many. She further establishes this same point: that besides those vineyards over which she was set as keeper by the sons of her mother, she had another vineyard of her own, which she did not keep. This is the plot of the drama proposed. But now let us inquire who is the mother of this bride whom she alleges, who also are her sons who fought in her, and, the war being finished, handed over to her the vineyards for her to keep — as though she could not have preserved them unless there had first been fighting by those men; but that she, having undertaken the keeping of the other vineyards, was unwilling or unable to preserve her own vineyard. Paul, writing to the Galatians, says: "Tell me, you who wish to be under the law, have you not heard the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one from the bondwoman and one from the free woman. But he who was from the bondwoman was born according to the flesh; but he who was from the free woman, according to the promise: which things are allegorical.

³⁶ For these are the two testaments, one indeed from Mount Sinai, bearing children into bondage, which is Hagar. For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia, which is compared to this present Jerusalem, and is in bondage with her sons. But the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. This heavenly Jerusalem, then, Paul says is the mother of us all who believe. Finally he adds in what follows and says: "Wherefore, brethren, we are not the sons of the bondwoman, but of the free, by which liberty Christ has set us free. Plainly, therefore, Paul declares that everyone who through faith obtains liberty in Christ is a son of the free woman; and this free woman he says is the Jerusalem above, which is the mother of us all. Of this mother, then, this very bride too is understood to be a daughter, in those who fought in her and appointed her keeper of the vineyards. Whence these men who had such great power — that they both waged war in her and set her in order as keeper of the vineyards — seem not to have been of any humble or contemptible station. We may, therefore, take the apostles of Christ as the sons of the bride's mother, that is, as sons of the heavenly Jerusalem, who fought first in her who is gathered from the Gentiles.

37 And they fought in order to conquer in her those whom she formerly held — the disposition of unbelief and disobedience, and every haughtiness exalting itself against the knowledge of Christ, as Paul says: "Destroying the reasonings, and every height that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ. They fought, therefore, not against her, but in her, that is, in her thoughts and heart, so that they might destroy and drive out all unbelief, every vice, and all the doctrines which, planted among the Gentiles, had grown into her by the false assertions of the sophists. There was, then, for the apostles of Christ a great war, until they should undermine out of her all the towers of falsehood and the walls of perverse doctrine, until they should overthrow the arguments of iniquity, and vanquish the demons who worked these things and kindled them in her heart. When, therefore, they had put to flight from her all the dispositions of the old unbelief, they do not leave her idle, lest perhaps through idleness the old things creep back again, and those things which were driven out return; but they give her a work to do, and consign to her the keeping of the vineyards. Let us take the vineyards as each and every one of the volumes of the law and the prophets. For each of them was like a full field which the Lord has blessed. These, then, these strong men, after the victory of the war, consign to her to be preserved and kept.

38 For they do not, as we said, leave her idle. But we can likewise take as vineyards the writings of the evangelists and the letters of the apostles themselves, which they handed over to be kept and cultivated by her who is gathered from the Gentiles, for whom also they fought. But in that she says that she did not keep her own vineyard, we may say that this is that learning in which each one was trained before the faith; which, without doubt, believing in Christ, she leaves and forsakes, and those things which seemed to her gains she counts as losses for the sake of Christ. Just as Paul too glories that the observances of the law, and all the glory of the Jewish institution, were to him only as dung, that he might be found in Christ not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God. As Paul, therefore, having received the faith of Christ, did not keep his own vineyard — namely, the observances of the Jewish tradition; and perhaps he did not keep it because, when the true vine had been planted by God, it was turned into the bitterness of a strange vine, and their vineyard was already the vine of Sodom, and their branch from Gomorrah, and the

cluster of bitterness in them, and their wine the fury of dragons, and the incurable fury of asps.

³⁹ So too among the Gentiles there were very many teachings of this kind, which, after those wars in which the teachers fought for the faith and the acknowledgment of Christ, she says were overcome. I think it should be reckoned altogether in the place of a crime if anyone should keep vineyards of this sort, and cultivate a field further planted with poisonous and harmful disciplines. And do not wonder if by these faults she who is gathered from the dispersion of the nations, and is now prepared as a bride for Christ, may sometime seem to have been liable. Recall how the first woman was seduced and made a transgressor: who is said to be saved in no other way than through the bearing of children — of those, at least, who remain in faith and charity with holiness. This, then, which is written of Adam and Eve, the Apostle thus affirms: "It is a great mystery in Christ and in the Church"; who so loved her that he gave himself up for her, while she herself was still ungodly, as he himself said: "For while we were still according to the time ungodly, Christ died for us. And again: "For while we were still unbelieving, Christ died for us.

⁴⁰ It is no wonder, therefore, if she who was seduced and made a transgressor, who was according to the time ungodly and a sinner, is said to have cultivated such a vineyard at that time, when she was still ungodly — a vineyard which she ought to leave, and by no means keep at all. But if it please to pursue also a third place of explanation, let us refer these things to each individual soul, which, being turned to God and coming to the faith, undoubtedly suffers the battles of thoughts and the struggles of demons striving to recall her to the allurements of her former life, or to the error of unbelief. But lest this happen, and lest again so much be permitted to the demons against her, divine Providence has provided that to all the little ones, and to those who cannot fight for themselves the battles against the wiles of the devil and of the demons — being as yet infants and sucklings in Christ — it should give protecting and defending angels: who are established as guardians and stewards by God over those who, placed in a weak age, cannot (as we said) fight for themselves. And that they may do this with greater confidence, it is granted to them always to see the face of the Father who is in heaven:

⁴¹ and these I think are the little ones whom he commanded to come to Christ, and permitted them, whom he said were not to be hindered, and who, he said, always see the face of the Father. Nor let it seem contrary to you, if this soul which tends toward God calls them the sons of her mother. For if the mother of souls is the heavenly Jerusalem, and the angels are nonetheless named heavenly, nothing will seem discordant if those who are heavenly in like manner as she is are called by her the sons of her mother. Above all these things, moreover, it will seem fitting and suitable that those whose one Father is God should have also one mother, Jerusalem. But in that she says, "My own vineyard I have not kept," she seems to indicate that those institutions and habits and purpose in which she was trained while living according to the old man were laudably not kept by her. But from the moment when, by the aid of the angels, she fought, conquered, and utterly put to flight from herself the old man with his deeds, she was established by them as keeper of the vineyards — namely, of the divine senses and doctrines, from which she might drink the wine that gladdens her heart.

⁴² » Tell me, you whom my soul has loved, where you pasture, where you have your resting-place at noon, lest perhaps I become like one who is veiled beside the flocks of your companions. « ⁴³ The bride is still speaking these words as well, but to the bridegroom, and no longer to the daughters of Jerusalem. Therefore, from the beginning where she says: "Let him kiss me," down to this place: "Beside the flocks of your companions," all that has been said are the words of the bride. But first her speech was directed to God, secondly to the bridegroom, thirdly to the young maidens; and, standing as it were midway between them and the bridegroom, and, as the dramatic form of the piece requires, having become like a leader of the middle chorus, she directs her words now to those maidens, now to him, and now also in answer to the daughters of Jerusalem. These last words, then, she now addresses to the bridegroom, asking of him where he pastures at noon and where he settles his flock, fearing lest, while she seeks him, she should stumble into those places where the companions keep their flocks stationed through the noontide. And she shows by these words that this bridegroom is also a shepherd: from the earlier passages we had learned that he is also a king—undoubtedly for the reason that he rules men; but a shepherd, for the reason that he pastures sheep; and a bridegroom, for the reason that he has a bride who reigns with him, according to what is written: "The queen stood

at your right hand in a gilded robe. This, then, for the present, is the sense of the drama itself, which is, as it were, its historical sense.

⁴⁴ But now let us seek the mystical understanding: and, so as to anticipate a little those things which are to be treated of in what follows, in order that it may be made clear what disposition she has toward the companions, let us recall what is written—that the queens are sixty, but that out of all there is one dove, and one perfect one, and as it were the mother of the kingdom; while the rest, now inferior, are those who are called the eighty concubines; and the young maidens, of whom there is no number, are placed after the order of the concubines. Now all these are the souls of those who, believing in Christ, are joined to him by diverse affections; so that, to speak by way of example, the Apostle calls the whole Church, under a certain figure, the body of Christ; and in that body he declares there to be diverse members, and that some are eyes, and others hands, and others also feet, and that each is fitted into this body according to the merits of their works and pursuits. According to this figure, then, these things also are to be understood; and we must think that in this nuptial drama some, joined to the bridegroom by a more excellent and more illustrious affection, are held with him in the place and affection of queens; that others, whose honor in their advancements is undoubtedly lower, are reckoned in the place of concubines;

⁴⁵ and others in that of the young maidens, who seem to be placed indeed outside the court, yet not outside the royal city; while the later ones, and after all those mentioned above, are those who are called sheep. But if we look more attentively, perhaps we shall even find others inferior to all of these, and last of all: namely, those who are counted among the flocks of his companions. For the companions too are said to have certain flocks, into which the bride does not wish to stumble, and on this account she asks of the bridegroom that he tell her where he pastures, where he takes his noonday rest, lest, she says, I become like one veiled beside the flocks of your companions. It is asked, then, concerning these companions who are said to have certain flocks, whether they do this while giving their service to the bridegroom, and acting under him as under the chief of shepherds—since they are named his companions; or whether they have something of their own, and set apart, and that is not in accord with the bridegroom's mind—since the bride shrinks back, and fears lest she should perhaps stumble into the

flocks of the companions while she seeks her bridegroom. But as to what she said:

⁴⁶ "Lest perhaps I become," not "veiled," but "like one veiled," consider whether by this she may not be hinting that there is some one, or some ones, of the companions, having as it were brides who themselves too have the nuptial habit, and are veiled and, as the Apostle says, have a covering and a sign of authority upon their head. And that a clearer explanation of this passage may be made, let us again follow out what is said in the order, as it were, of the drama. The bride demands of her bridegroom himself that he show her the place of his secret retreat and of his rest: since, impatient of love, she desires even at noon to hear the bridegroom, and that especially at the time when the light is brighter and the splendor of the day is perfect and pure, so that she may stand beside him as he pastures or refreshes his sheep; and she earnestly wishes to learn the way by which she ought to go to him, lest perhaps, if she be not taught the windings of this journey, she stumble into the flocks of the companions, and seem to be like one of those women who come veiled to his companions, and bear no modesty, nor fear to run about everywhere and to appear to many.

⁴⁷ But I, she says, who wish to be seen by no other but you alone, desire to know by what road I may come to you, so that it may be secret, so that there may be no one in the middle, so that no stranger or foreign onlooker may meet me. And perhaps on this account she seeks out those places in which the bridegroom knows his own sheep, and shows him her modesty, for the sake of which she does not wish to stumble into the flocks of the companions, so that he may usefully set apart his sheep from the companions, and pasture them by themselves; so that not only may the bride not be seen by others, but that she may also more secretly enjoy the hidden and ineffable mysteries of the bridegroom. Now, then, let us look at the matter point by point; and first indeed see whether we can say that the Lord, whose portion was Jacob and Israel the cord of his inheritance, is to be understood as the bridegroom, while his companions are those angels among whose number, when the Most High divided the nations and dispersed the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the nations according to the number, as it says, of the angels of God; and that these are perhaps the flocks of the bridegroom's companions—namely, all the nations, which have been set as cattle under the

angels as shepherds; but that the flock of the bridegroom are those of whom he himself said in the Gospel:

⁴⁸ "My sheep hear my voice. For see, and mark attentively, that he said: "My sheep," as though there were also other sheep which are not his, just as he himself also said in another place: "For you are not of my sheep. All of which particulars will be seen to fit suitably with this hidden mystery. And if these things are so, the bride fittingly wished the flock of each of the companions to be understood as his bride, whom she named as veiled. But since she was certain that she herself was above all those, she does not wish to seem like any one of them, inasmuch as she knew that she ought to excel those brides of the companions—whom the bride names as veiled—by as much as her bridegroom had of eminence over the companions. But even on this account she will further be seen to have had reasons for inquiring, since she knows it to be the concern of the good shepherd to seek out the best pastures for his sheep, and to find whatever groves are green and shady for rest from the noonday heat. This indeed the companions know not how to do as the bridegroom does, nor do they possess, in choosing pastures, either so much knowledge or so much solitude: and on this account she says: "Tell me where you pasture, where you have your resting-place at noon";

⁴⁹ desiring, namely, that time in which light is more abundantly poured upon the world, in which the day is more pure and the light purer and more full of bloom. Then, she says, tell me—you whom my soul has loved—where you pasture, where you have your resting-place at noon, lest perhaps I become like one veiled beside the flocks of your companions. The bride has now called the bridegroom by a new name. For knowing that he is the Son of charity, nay rather that he is himself the charity that is from God, she set upon him, as it were, this appellation: "Whom my soul has loved. And yet she did not say, "whom I have loved," but "whom my soul has loved"; knowing that the bridegroom's love is to be held not with any love whatsoever, but out of the whole soul, and out of all one's strength, and out of the whole heart. "Where you pasture," she says, "and where you have your resting-place. And I think that the prophet also, concerning this place which the bride now desires to learn from the bridegroom himself, and to hear of, being himself too placed under the same shepherd, says: "The Lord rules me," or as we read elsewhere: "The Lord pastures me, and nothing shall be lacking to me. And since he knew that other shepherds, through slothfulness or

through inexperience, place their flocks in more arid spots, concerning this best shepherd, the Lord, he said: "In a green place, there he has settled me.

⁵⁰ "He has brought me up beside the water of refreshment," showing that this shepherd provides and looks to give his sheep not only abundant waters, but also wholesome and pure ones, and such as refresh in every way. But since from this state, in which he had lived as a sheep under the shepherd, he was turned toward things rational and higher and advanced, and attained this through conversion, he adds and says: "He has converted my soul. He has led me out upon the paths of justice for his name's sake. From this point, indeed, since he had advanced so far as to walk the ways of justice—and justice undoubtedly has injustice assailing it, and it is necessary that he who walks the road of justice should have battles with adversaries—being converted in faith and hope, he says of them: "For even if I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will not fear evils, for you are with me. And after these things, as though rendering thanks to him who had imbued him with the shepherd's disciplines: "Your rod," he says, "and your staff, by which I seem to have been instructed for the office of shepherd, these have consoled me. From here, indeed, when he sees himself transferred from the shepherd's pastures to rational foods and mystical secrets, he adds and subjoins: "You have prepared a table in my sight against those who trouble me. You have made fat my head with oil, and how excellent is your inebriating cup!

⁵¹ And your mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord unto length of days. That first, then—that is, the pastoral instruction—was at the beginning of these things, that, being settled in a green place, he might be brought up beside the water of refreshment. But these things which follow are required concerning the advancements toward perfection. And since we have set forth about pastures and greenness, it seems fitting also to confirm from the Gospels the things we have said. I have found there too this good shepherd discoursing about the pastures of the sheep, where, in addition to his professing himself the shepherd, he also mentions that he is the door, and says: "I am the door; if anyone enters through me, he shall be saved, and shall go in, and go out, and shall find pastures. Him too the bride now questions, that she may hear from him and learn in what pastures he drives the sheep, or in what pleasant places he provides for the noonday heats; calling "noon" those secret places of the heart, namely, by which the soul obtains from the Word of God a brighter

light of knowledge. For this is the time in which the sun holds the loftier summit of its circuit. Whenever, then, Christ the Sun of justice manifests to his Church the lofty and difficult secrets of his virtues, he will be seen to teach the pleasant pastures and the noonday resting-places.

⁵²For when she still has the beginnings of learning, and receives from him, so to speak, the first rudiments of knowledge, then the Prophet says: "And he will help her in the morning, at daybreak. Now therefore, because she already seeks more perfect things, and desires loftier things, she demands the noonday light of knowledge. Hence too, I think, of Abraham, after the many instructions with which God, appearing to him, imbued him concerning each matter and taught him, it is afterward related that God was seen by him as he sat at the oak of Mamre by the door of his tent at noon. "And looking up," it says, "with his eyes, he saw, and behold three men were standing over him. But if we believe these things to have been written through the Holy Spirit, I do not think it pleased the divine Spirit in vain that even the time and hour of the vision should be committed to the pages of Scripture, unless the reckoning of this hour and time conferred something toward knowledge for the sons of Abraham, by whom, indeed, just as the works of Abraham are to be done, so also these visitations are to be hoped for. For he who can say: "The night has gone before, but the day has drawn near;

⁵³let us walk honorably as in the day, not in revelings and drunkenness, not in chamberings and wantonness, not in strife and rivalry"—and when he has passed through all these, he will be seen to have gone beyond this time in which the night has advanced and the day has drawn near, and to hasten not toward the beginning of the day, but toward noon, that he too may arrive at the grace of Abraham. For if the light which is in him, the light of the mind and the purity of the heart, shall be clear and splendid, this man will be seen to have the noonday time in himself; and through this purity of heart, as though placed at noon, he will see God, sitting at the oak of Mamre, which is interpreted "at the vision. He, then, who calls to the seeing of God sits at the vision at noon. Hence, finally, he is said to sit not within the tent, but outside at the door of the tent. For his mind is outside, placed outside the body—the mind of him who is far from bodily thoughts, far from carnal desires—and therefore God visits him, placed outside all these. Of the same mystery is it, too, that Joseph, when he had received his brothers in Egypt, pastures them at noon, and at noon they adore him with gifts.

⁵⁴ For this reason, finally, I think that concerning the things which the Jews committed against the Savior, none of the evangelists wished to write that these were done at noon—although the sixth hour indeed shows nothing other than the noonday time, yet none named noon. But Matthew said thus: "From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And Luke: "It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour, the sun failing. And Mark too: "But when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. From which it appears that in the visitation of Abraham, indeed, and in the banquet of the patriarchs at Joseph's, there was no need that this time should be signified under the name of the sixth number, but that it should be called noon. For the bride, who even then was being foreshadowed in those figures, wished to learn where the bridegroom pastured, and where he had his resting-place, and therefore she names noon.

⁵⁵ But the evangelists, in the things which they narrated, did not require the noonday time, but the number of the sixth hour—namely, to set forth the sacrifice of his victim, which was offered on the day of the Passover for the redemption of man, who was formed by God on the sixth day, after the earth had brought forth the living soul according to its kind, the quadrupeds, and the creeping things, and the beasts of the earth. On this account, therefore, in the present passage the bride desires to be illuminated with the full light of knowledge, lest, straying through inexperience, she become in any respect like those schools of teachers which are exercised not through the very wisdom of God, but through that of the philosophers and princes of this world. For this too the Apostle seems to say where he says that "we speak the wisdom of God hidden in a mystery, which none of the princes of this world knew. And again he signifies these same things when he says: "For we have not received the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we may know the things that have been given to us by God. On this account, then, the bride of Christ seeks the noonday resting-places, and demands from God the fullness of knowledge, lest she seem to be like one of the schools of the philosophers, which is named "veiled," for the reason that among them the fullness of the truth is covered and veiled.

⁵⁶ But the bride of Christ says: "But we, with unveiled face, behold the glory of God." ⁵⁷ » Unless you know yourself, O good (or beautiful) among women, go out yourself in the footsteps of the flocks, and pasture your kids

in the tents of the shepherds. « 58 Among the many other remarkable sayings, this one is reported to belong to Chilon alone—one of the seven whom fame among the Greeks celebrates as having been singular in wisdom—in which he says: "Know yourself," or "Come to know yourself. Yet Solomon, whom in our preface we showed to have preceded all of these in time and in wisdom and in the knowledge of things, says this to the soul—as though to a woman—speaking under a certain threat: Unless you know yourself, O beautiful among women, and recognize that the causes of your beauty descend from this, that you were made to the image of God, whereby there is in you the greatest measure of natural comeliness, and unless you come to know how beautiful you were from the beginning—although even now you already surpass the other women, and are called the only beautiful one among them—yet unless you know yourself, who you are (for I do not wish your beauty to seem good by comparison with lesser things, but that you should answer to yourself and to your own comeliness, weighed and made equal to it). And unless you do this, I command you to go out, and to be placed in the lowest footsteps of the flocks, and now to pasture not sheep nor lambs, but kids—those, that is, who for their depravity and wantonness are to stand at the left of the king who presides in judgment.

59 And when I have shown to you, brought into the royal chamber, what are the highest goods, if you do not know yourself, I will also show you what are the uttermost evils, so that from both you may profit, as much by the fear of evils as by the desire of goods. For if you do not know yourself, and live in ignorance of yourself, and have pursued no zeal for knowledge, without doubt you will have no tent of your own, but you will run about through the tents of shepherds, and now in the tents of one shepherd will pasture kids—a restless and wandering animal, and one assigned to sins. And these things you will suffer until by the very facts and by experience you understand how great an evil it is for the soul not to know itself, nor its own beauty, through which it excels the others—not virgins, but women, those namely who have suffered corruption and have not remained in the integrity of virginity. These are the things which the Bridegroom, after all those things which the Bride had spoken, says in the order of the drama set forth, rousing the Bride's spirits by a certain stern threat to the care of self-knowledge. But now, consequently, as with the rest, let us refer these things to Christ and to the

Church, who, speaking to His Bride—that is, to the souls of believers—places the summit of salvation and blessedness in the knowledge of oneself.

⁶⁰ How, then, the soul may know itself, I think can be explained neither easily nor briefly; yet according to our strength we shall attempt to open up a few things out of many. It seems to me, therefore, that the soul ought to grasp the knowledge of itself in a twofold manner: what it is in itself, and how it is moved—that is, what it has in substance, and what in its affections. For instance, that it may understand whether it be of good affection or not good, of upright and right purpose or not right; and indeed if right, whether it holds the same tenor toward all the virtues, both in understanding and in acting, or only toward things necessary and near at hand. And whether it is in a condition to receive advances, so as to be increased in the understanding of things and in the increase of virtues, or whether it stands still and settles in that, and in what it was able to attain; and whether it is at leisure only for cultivating itself, or whether it strives to be of profit to others and to confer some usefulness, whether in the word of teaching or in the examples of its deeds.

⁶¹ But if it recognizes itself not to be of good affection, nor of right purpose, in this very thing—that it may understand whether it is wholly lacking and far from the way of the virtues, or whether it is already set upon the road itself and already endeavors to advance, desiring to lay hold of the things that are before and to forget the things that are behind, but has not yet drawn near; or whether it is indeed close, yet has not yet come to perfection. But there also seems to be a work of the soul that knows itself, to know whether it is these same things, when it works evils, that it works out of affection and zeal, or out of a certain frailty and, as he says, doing as it were what it does not will and doing what it hates; and again, whether it appears to carry out the things that are good out of affections and right purpose. For example, whether it restrains anger in the presence of some persons but gives vent to it in the presence of others, or whether it always restrains it and gives it vent before no one at all. Likewise also sadness—whether in some affairs it casts it off but in others admits it, or whether in all affairs whatsoever it does not admit it. So too fear, and other things likewise which seem to be contrary to the virtues. Further, this also is a work of the soul that knows itself:

⁶² whether it is much desirous of glory, or little, or not at all. Which it gathers from this: whether it delights much, or moderately, or not at all in

praises; and whether in reproaches it is grieved a great deal, or little, or not at all. But also in giving and in receiving there are certain indications of the soul that knows itself: whether what it bestows and offers it does so with an affection so ready to share, and as though it be pleased that fairness be maintained among human beings; or whether, as he says, out of sadness or out of necessity, or certainly seeking favor either from those who receive or from those who hear. But also in receiving, the soul that knows itself will observe whether it holds indifferently the things it receives, or whether it rejoices as over some good. But such a soul will also weigh itself by the understanding, so as to know whether the hearing of any plausibility easily moves it, and whether it is filched away by the artifice or sweetness or cunning of speeches, or whether it rarely suffers this, or never at all. But let these things suffice as said by us concerning this kind of self-knowledge. For it is possible for anyone who wishes to gather other, innumerable things of like sort, by which the soul may be proved to know itself, and to contemplate its own beauty—which it received in its creation to the image of God—if it has been able to repair and restore it.

⁶³ This, then, is what the present discourse teaches the soul, under the figure of a woman, that it should recognize itself, and it says: Unless you know yourself; that is, unless you have led your senses through each of the things we have mentioned above, and have held the discernment of each—what things are to be done, what to be shunned, what is lacking to you and what abounds, what is to be amended and what to be kept: but if you have willed to act indifferently among the other souls of the common life of human beings, which here it calls women, among whom you are beautiful—inasmuch as you have already received the kisses of the Word of God and have looked into the secrets of His chamber; if, I say, you do not know yourself, but have willed to act indifferently like the common crowd, go out in the footsteps of the flocks, that is, be in the remaining flock; if after all these things that have been bestowed upon you, you do nothing excellent, and, not knowing yourself, have not set yourself apart from the herd-like manner of life. And you will be not only in the flock, but in the footsteps of the flocks. For he becomes last and lowest who has not understood his own primacy.

⁶⁴ And on this account, where he has neglected knowledge, it is necessary that he be carried about by every wind of doctrine unto the deception of errors, so that at one time he pitches his tent with that shepherd, that is, that

teacher of the word, but now with another; and thus he is carried about everywhere, pasturing not sheep—which is a simple animal—but kids, that is, wanton and restless senses assigned to sin, cultivating them for this very purpose with diverse teachers sought out to that end: and this will be the penalty of the fault of that soul which has not been zealous to recognize itself, and to follow that Shepherd alone who laid down His own soul for His sheep. This is the one species by which the soul ought to understand itself in its affections and acts. But that other part is deeper and more difficult, by which the soul—which nonetheless is already beautiful among women—is commanded to recognize itself. And if it is able to obtain this, let it hope for itself all good things; if not, let it know that it must go out after the footsteps of the flocks, and pasture kids in the tents of shepherds foreign to it. Let us therefore look, and let us begin according to our strength to discuss the knowledge of this part also. The divine word says through the prophet: "Kindle for yourselves the light of knowledge.

⁶⁵ But also, among the spiritual gifts, one gift indeed is the greatest, which is ministered through the Holy Spirit—the word of knowledge; of which knowledge that is the chief work which in the Gospel according to Matthew it says thus: "No one knows the Son except the Father, nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and he to whom the Son shall have willed to reveal Him. But in Luke it says thus: "No one knows what the Son is except the Father; and no one knows what the Father is except the Son, and he to whom the Son shall have willed to reveal Him. According to John, however, it is written thus: "As the Father knows me, and I know the Father. But in the forty-fifth psalm it says: "Be at leisure, and know that I am God. Therefore the chief office of knowledge is to know the Trinity; but in the second place, to know His creature, according to him who said: "For He gave me the true knowledge of the things that are, the substance of the world, and the power of the elements, the beginning, and the end, and the midst of the times," and the rest. Among these things, therefore, there will be also a certain self-knowledge of the soul, through which it ought to know what its substance is, whether corporeal or incorporeal, and whether simple, or composed of two or three, or indeed of more.

⁶⁶ But also, according to the questions of some, whether it was made, or altogether made by no one; and if it was made, how it was made; whether, as some think, its substance also is contained in the bodily seed, and its origin

is transmitted together with the origin of the body; or whether, coming perfect from without, it clothes itself with a body already prepared and formed within the female inward parts. And if it is so, whether it comes newly created, and then first made when the body appears to be formed, so that the cause of its making may be believed to have arisen from the necessity of animating the body; or whether, made before and of old, it is thought for some cause to come to the taking up of a body; and if it is believed to be led into this for some cause, what that cause may be, so that it can be recognized, is a work of knowledge. But this also is inquired: whether it is clothed with a body only once, and afterward, having laid it aside, seeks it no more, or whether, when it has laid aside what it once took up, it takes it up again; and if it should always have what it took up a second time, or whether it sometime casts it off again.

⁶⁷ And if indeed, according to the authority of the Scriptures, the consummation of the world is imminent, and this corruptible state will be changed into incorruptible, it does not seem doubtful that in the state of the present life it can come into a body a second or a third time. For if this is admitted, it necessarily follows that, with such successions following one upon another, the world would not know an end. And further, let the soul inquire into knowledge of itself: whether there is some order, or whether there are some spirits of the same substance as itself, but others not of the same, but different from it—that is, whether there are also other spirits rational as it is, and others lacking reason; and whether its substance is the same as that of the angels also, since a rational being is believed to differ in no way from a rational being. Or whether it is not indeed such by substance, but will be such by grace, if it has deserved it; or whether it can by no means be made like to the angels, unless the quality or likeness of its nature has received this. For it will seem possible that what has been lost may be restored, yet not that that be conferred which the Creator did not give from the beginning. But this too let the soul inquire into, toward knowing itself: whether the virtue of its soul can increase and decrease; or whether it is immutable, or, once acquired, no more flows away.

⁶⁸ But what need is there to mention more instances from what causes the soul may know itself, lest perchance, if it neglects to know itself perfectly, it be commanded to go out in the footsteps of the flocks, and to pasture kids, and not in its own tent but in the tents of shepherds—since it is ready at

hand for anyone willing to pursue these matters to take the very longest occasions from the things we have mentioned above, in which he may exercise himself in the word of knowledge according to his strength? But let these things be said by the Word of God also to the soul which is indeed set in advances, yet has not yet ascended to the summit of perfection. Which, indeed, for the reason that it makes progress, is called beautiful; but that it may be able to arrive at perfection, let the necessary threat be made to it—that unless through each of those things which we have said above it knows itself, and vigilantly exercises itself in the word of God and in the divine law, it will befall it to gather the opinions of divers persons about each of these matters, and to follow people who have spoken nothing excellent, nothing from the Holy Spirit. For this is to go out in the footsteps of the flocks, and to follow the teaching of those who have themselves also remained sinners, and could provide no remedy to those who sin.

⁶⁹ And whoever follows these will be seen to pasture kids—which surely hold the token of sinners—going about the tents of shepherds, that is, the diverse sects of the philosophers. Consider, therefore, more fully how terrible is that which is shadowed forth under this figure. "Go out," it says, "you, in the footsteps of the flocks. It speaks as though to a soul that is already within, and set within the mysteries; yet for the reason that it neglects to know itself and to inquire what it is, and what or how it ought to act, or what it ought not, it is said to it: "Go out, you"—as though one who, on account of this fault of sloth, is sent outside by Him who presides. So great is the peril of the soul to neglect the knowledge and recognition of itself. But perhaps, because we have given a twofold exposition of the soul's knowledge of itself, it will seem to someone that, according to that in which it neglects to examine concerning its own morals and acts, and to inquire concerning its advances, or to search out concerning its vices, it is deservedly said to it, "Go out," whereby it seems to be as it were driven outside from the interior places. But if according to the other version, in which we said that it ought to recognize its own nature and substance, and its state either in which it has been or in which it shall be, this will be thought grievous.

⁷⁰ For where will such a soul easily be found, so perfect, so powerful, to whom the reasoning and understanding of all these things lies open? To this we shall reply that the discourse which is in hand is not made to all souls, nor to the young maidens to whom here the Bridegroom speaks, nor to the outer

women, nor to the eighty concubines, nor to the sixty queens, but to her who alone among all women is called beautiful and perfect. Whence it appears that these things are said to certain beloved souls, to whom, though much grace of perceiving and understanding has been given by God, nevertheless neglect the parts of knowledge, and apply no zeal to knowing themselves. To these, therefore, the divine word issues its threat, because from those to whom much is given, much is required. And the lowly one indeed will be worthy of this pardon and mercy, but the powerful shall be tormented powerfully. If therefore you also, O soul, who are more beautiful and more eminent among the rest, for example in doctrines, neglect yourself and remain in ignorance of yourself, how will either those who desire to be edified be instructed, or those who contradict be convinced and refuted? Deservedly, therefore, with a certain threat it is said to it: Go out, you, in the footsteps of the flocks, and pasture your kids in the tents of the shepherds. To this can also be drawn that which Moses writes: "That if any Israelite woman commit adultery, let her be stoned;

71 but if she be a priest's daughter, let her be burned with fire. Thus, then, the threat will seem to be just against those who are able to be capable of self-knowledge and knowledge, but through sloth neglect it; against whom the Bridegroom's indignation is most just, because He knows that the negligence of one turns to the harm of many. For a soul of this kind will seem like either to him who hid the received denarius in the earth, lest the master of the money should acquire any gain from it; or to him whom God is said to have slain because he was malignant—Onan, that is, or Er—who, envying posterity, poured out upon the earth the received seeds of natural knowledge. The shepherds too, as we have already said before, if indeed this discourse of threat is made to the Church, are to be taken as the princes of this world, or those angels under whose care the remaining nations are held, whether allotted to this by lot, or led to it by certain more secret causes. But if this threat is referred to each individual soul that neglects to recognize itself, the wise men and masters of this age are to be understood, teaching the wisdom of this world:

72 so that in sum this may be understood, that it is necessary for the soul—especially that which is good and beautiful, watchful in its senses and its wit—to know itself, and to give diligence to the knowledge of itself through the exercises of teaching and divine studies, and through this to be led by the

Spirit of God and by the spirit of adoption. Or, if such a soul neglects itself and turns aside from divine studies, it is necessary that it give diligence to worldly studies and to the wisdom of the age, and be led by the spirit of this world again in fear. This the Apostle designates when he says: "But we have not received the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is from God. And again: "For you have not received again the spirit of bondage in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption, in which we cry: Abba, Father. These things, in the meantime, we have been able to bring forward concerning the present passage; now let us turn to what follows.

73 » I have compared you, my beloved, to my cavalry among the chariots of Pharaoh. « 74 The historical sense, indeed, seems to show this. As, he says, then in Egypt, when Pharaoh in pursuit of the people of Israel advanced with chariots and cavalry, my cavalry — that is, the cavalry of my Lord the bridegroom — far surpassed the chariots of Pharaoh, and was more excellent, seeing that it overcame them and sank them in the sea; so also you, my beloved bride, surpass all women, having been made like to my cavalry, which, being compared to the chariots of Pharaoh, is assuredly more powerful and more magnificent. This, for the meantime, seems to me to be the order of the words themselves and the arrangement of the sentences. But let us consider whether perchance, according to the mystical understanding, he calls those souls which are under that spiritual Pharaoh, and are set under the spiritual wickednesses, the chariots of Pharaoh and his four-horse teams, which he himself drives and leads to pursue the people of God, and to oppress Israel. For it is certain that the temptations and tribulations which the demons stir up against the saints, they stir up through certain souls fitted and suited for this very thing. Mounting upon these as upon chariots, they harass and assail either the Church of God, or each single one of the faithful.

75 But concerning the cavalry of the Lord, what this cavalry of his is — in Exodus, indeed, where the chariots of Pharaoh are overcome and sunk in the sea, we read nothing written, except only that the Lord cast the chariots of Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea. Yet we find in the fourth book of Kingdoms that Elisha, when his servant was terrified at the coming of the enemies who had come with cavalry and chariots, says to him: "Fear not, for they that are with us are more than they that are with them." And Elisha prayed," he says, "and said: Lord, open the eyes of this boy that he may see. And the Lord opened his eyes, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was

full of horsemen, and chariots of fire round about Elisha, which had come down to him. But also in the prophet Habakkuk we read plainly and evidently concerning the cavalry of the Lord, and that he mounts his horses. These, then, are the words of the Scripture: "Wilt thou be angry with the rivers, O Lord, or is thy fury against the rivers, or thine onset against the Red Sea? Thou that mountest thy horses, and thy cavalry is salvation. There are, then, horses of the Lord, upon which he mounts, and his cavalry.

⁷⁶ These I think to be none other than those souls which receive the bridle of his discipline, and bear the yoke of his sweetness, and which are led by the Spirit of God, and in this is salvation for them. In the Revelation of John we read that a horse appeared to him, and one sitting upon it faithful and true, and judging with justice, whose name is the Word of God. He says therefore: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon it was called faithful and true, and judging with justice and making war; and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and upon his head many diadems having a name written, which no one knows but he himself, and he was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood, and his name was called the Word of God. And his army was in heaven, and they followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen white and pure. But there is need of the grace of God, which may open to us the understanding of the words, whereby we may be able to perceive what these visions signify, what the white horse is, and who he is that sits upon it, whose name is the Word of God. And perhaps someone will say that the white horse is the body which the Lord assumed, and with which he who in the beginning was God the Word with God was either clothed or carried.

⁷⁷ But another will say it is the soul, which the firstborn of all creation assumed, and concerning which he said: "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. But another will think that it is both together, body and soul, as though, where there has been no sin, the horse is called white. Yet another, in the fourth place, will say that the Church, which is also named his body, is seen to be the white horse, as not having spot or wrinkle, which he himself sanctified for himself by the washing of water. And according to each of these particulars he will also take those things which follow — the soldiery of heaven, and the army of the Word of God, and how each single one of them, following the Word of God, sits upon white horses and is clothed in fine linen white and clean. To this white

horse, then, upon which he himself is carried who is called the Word of God, or to this heavenly cavalry which follows him upon white horses no less, Christ compares and makes like his Church. But "among the chariots of Pharaoh" we may also take thus: that as much as here the cavalry of the Lord conquers and surpasses the cavalry and chariots of Pharaoh, so much do you, who are fair among women, surpass and conquer all the remaining souls which still bear the yoke of Pharaoh and endure him as their rider;

⁷⁸or else, assuredly, that this cavalry of mine, which, cleansed by the washing of water, has been made pure and shining white, and has been counted worthy to have the Word of God as its rider, has been taken from the chariots of Pharaoh. For from thence come all who believe, because Christ came into this world to save sinners. In this way, then, the sense of this little verse may be explained: to my cavalry, which was formerly among the chariots of Pharaoh, and now follows me upon white horses, having been purified in the washing of water, I judge you like, my beloved. Blessed, therefore, are those souls which have bowed their back to receive the Word of God as rider upon themselves, and endure his bridle, that wherever he wills he may turn them, and drive them with the reins of his precepts: because now they walk no longer by their own will, but are led and led back to all things by the will of their rider.

⁷⁹And perhaps it will seem, according to this — that the Church has been gathered out of many souls, and has received the example of life from Christ — that it received this not so much from the deity itself of the Word of God, which assuredly transcends those acts or affections which ought to be given to men as an example, but that that soul which was assumed by him, in which was the highest perfection, is the one set forth as an example, and that this itself is here called "my beloved"; whose likeness the Church too ought to have, which is gathered out of many souls — namely those which had formerly been under the yoke and chariots of Pharaoh, and are called the cavalry of the Lord. But which of the two expositions may seem to accord better with the proposed verse, you too who read shall judge.

⁸⁰» How beautiful your cheeks have become, like a turtledove's, your neck like little necklaces. « ⁸¹The sequence of the drama seems to have this consequence: that after the bridegroom had employed a rather severe threat toward the bride, warning her that unless she came to know herself she would go forth in the tracks of the flocks and would pasture not sheep but

kids, she blushed over the severity of the command; and the redness of shame, spreading over her face, made her cheeks beautiful, and much more lovely than they had been. And not only her cheeks, but her neck too was rendered so comely, as though adorned with the little chains of necklaces. The beauty of the cheeks, then, is compared to turtledoves, because by birds of this sort both the seemliness of the face and its liveliness are indicated at once. This is the explanation of the dramatic narrative. But let us come to the matter itself. The apostle Paul, writing to the Church of the Corinthians, speaks thus: "But the body is not one member, but many. And if the foot should say, 'Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body,' it is not on that account not of the body; and if the ear should say, 'Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body,' it is not on that account not of the body. If the whole body is an eye, where is the hearing? If the whole is hearing, where is the smelling? But now God has placed each single member in the body as He willed.

82 And when he had discussed many things about this, at the last he says: "But you are the body of Christ, and members in part. And again, writing to the Ephesians, he says: "Subject to one another in the fear of Christ. Let wives be subject to their husbands as to the Lord: for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the Church, He Himself the Savior of the body. But as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let wives be subject to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved His Church and delivered Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her by the washing of water in the word, that He Himself might prepare for Himself a glorious Church having no spot or wrinkle or anything of this kind, but that she might be holy and immaculate. And a little after: "For no one," he says, "ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ also does the Church, because we are members of His body," and the rest. By these things, therefore, we are taught how the bride of Christ, which is the Church, is also His body and members. If, then, you hear the members of the bridegroom named, understand that the members of the Church are meant.

83 Among these, just as there are some who are called eyes, doubtless for the light of understanding and knowledge, and others ears for hearing the word of teaching, others hands for good works and religious ministries, so there are also others who may be called His cheeks. Now the cheeks are said

to be the parts of the face in which the seemliness and modesty of the soul are recognized: by which, without doubt, those among the members of the Church are indicated who cultivate the seemliness of chastity and modesty. For these, therefore, it is said to the whole body of the bride: "How beautiful your cheeks have become! And observe that He did not say, "How beautiful your cheeks are," but "How beautiful they have become"; so as to show that they were not indeed so beautiful before, but that after she received the kisses of the bridegroom, and He who spoke through the prophets was first present, and cleansed His Church for Himself by the washing of water, and made her to have no spot or wrinkle, and granted her the knowledge of Himself, then her cheeks became beautiful. For then chastity and modesty and virginity, which before had not existed, was diffused with beautiful comeliness over the cheeks of the Church. Yet this comeliness of the cheeks, that is, of modesty and chastity, is compared to turtledoves.

⁸⁴ They say that the nature of turtledoves is of this sort, that neither does the male approach any female besides one, nor does the female endure more than one male; so that if it happen, one being taken away, that the other survives, together with its mate the love of intercourse is extinguished in it. Fittingly, therefore, is the likeness of the turtledove applied to the Church, either because after Christ she knows no marriage with another husband, or because in her there flits about, as it were, a multitude of turtledoves, of continence and modesty. According to this understanding let us also take the neck of the bride. By this, without doubt, ought to be understood those souls who take up the yoke of Christ, who says: "Take up My yoke upon you, for My yoke is sweet. Her obedience, therefore, is called her neck. Her neck, then, has become beautiful like little necklaces, and rightly so. For what the disobedience of transgression had before made unsightly, now the obedience of faith has made beautiful and lovely. "Your neck, therefore, has become beautiful like little necklaces. For to both is understood the phrase "has become beautiful. By "little necklaces" here He means the fastenings or clasps of necklaces which are wont to sit upon the neck, from which is drawn down, and descends over the whole neck, the rest of the ornament. To this very ornament, then, which is wont to be placed upon the neck and throat, He compared the neck of the bride.

⁸⁵ And we understand what is said in this way. We said that the neck is called subjection and obedience, because she takes up as it were the yoke of

Christ for His sake, and offers the obedience of faith to Him. The ornament, therefore, of her neck is obedience, which is Christ. For He Himself was first made obedient even unto death; and just as through the disobedience of one, namely Adam, many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of one, namely Christ, many are made righteous. The ornament, therefore, and necklace of the neck of the Church, is the obedience of Christ. But the neck of the Church too, that is, her obedience, has been made like to the obedience of Christ, which is the necklace of the neck. Great, therefore, is the praise of the bride in this, great the glory of the Church, where the imitation of her obedience follows after the obedience of Christ, which the Church imitates. This same appearance of a necklace is also mentioned in Genesis, given by the patriarch Judah to Tamar his daughter-in-law, when he lay with her as with a harlot. This mystery is not open to all. By this it is understood that Christ gave to the Church, which He had gathered out of the prostitution of many teachings, these pledges of future perfection, and placed this necklace of obedience upon her neck.

86 » We will make you likenesses of gold with markings of silver, until the king be in his repose. « 87 We said above that this little book, arranged in the manner of a drama, is woven together by a change of speakers; and so now these words seem to be spoken to the bride by the friends or companions of the bridegroom, who, according to the mystical understanding — and, as we have already said above — can be understood either as angels, or even as the prophets, or as the patriarchs. For it was not only when the Lord, after the baptism of John, was tempted by the devil in the wilderness that the angels departed and ministered to him, but they always ministered to her before the coming of his bodily presence. For the law also is said to have been ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator. And the Apostle, writing to the Hebrews, says: "For if the word spoken through angels was made firm. They therefore were, as it were, the managers and stewards set over the little bride together with the law as tutor, until the fullness of the times should come, and God should send his Son, born of a woman, made under the law, and should lead her out from under the managers and stewards and the tutor which is the law, so that she might receive the kisses of the very Word of God — that is, his teaching and his words.

88 Before, therefore, the time of these things was present to man, the bride was cultivated in many ways by the ministry of angels, who then ap-

peared to men and spoke those things which the matter and the occasion required. For do not suppose that the bride, or the Church, is spoken of only from the coming of the Savior in the flesh, but from the beginning of the human race, and from the very foundation of the world — nay rather, that with Paul as my guide I may trace the origin of this mystery yet higher, even before the foundation of the world. For thus he says: "Even as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him, predestinating us unto the adoption of sons. But also in the Psalms it is written: "Remember your congregation, O Lord, which you gathered from the beginning. For the first foundations of the congregation were laid straightway from the beginning, whence also the Apostle says that the Church is built not only upon the foundation of the apostles, but also of the prophets; and among the prophets is numbered also Adam, because he prophesied a great mystery concerning Christ and the Church, saying: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh. For evidently concerning these his words the Apostle says that "this is a great mystery.

⁸⁹ But I speak concerning Christ and the Church. But the same Apostle also, when he says: "For if Christ loved the Church, so that he delivered himself up for her, sanctifying her with the washing of water," by no means shows that she did not exist before — for how could he have loved her who did not exist? — but without doubt he loved her who did exist. And she existed in all the saints who had been made from the beginning of the age. Loving her, therefore, he came to her. And just as her children shared in flesh and blood, so likewise he himself was made a partaker of the same, and delivered himself up for them. For they themselves were the Church which he loved, that he might either increase her in number, or cultivate her in virtues, or by the charity of perfection transfer her from the earth to heaven. From the beginning, therefore, the prophets ministered to her, and the angels also ministered. For what else was taking place then, when three men appeared to Abraham as he sat by the oak of Mamre? — although that manifestation showed something more than the ministry of angels, for there the mystery of the Trinity was being made known. This was also the case in Exodus, where the angel of the Lord is said to have appeared to Moses in a flame of fire in the bush.

90 But immediately in what follows the Lord and God is written to speak in the angel, and he himself is designated the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Reading which, certain of the heretics have said that the God of the law and the prophets is far inferior to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit; and they have stretched out their impiety to such a point that they place fullness indeed in Christ and in the Holy Spirit, but imperfection and weakness in the God of the law. But these things elsewhere. Now, however, our purpose is to show how the holy angels who before the coming of Christ managed the guardianship of the bride while she was as yet a little child, are themselves the friends and companions of the bridegroom who seem to say to her: "We will make you likenesses of gold with markings of silver, until the king be in his repose. They indicate, therefore, that they themselves make for the bride not gold (for neither did they have such gold as was worthy to be offered to the bride), but they promise that they will make for her, in place of gold, likenesses of gold — and not one likeness, but many. So too they speak concerning silver, but as though having a small quantity of silver material, they promise to make for her not likenesses, but markings of silver;

91 inasmuch as there did not abound in them so great a quantity of silver material that they could produce from it any connected and solid work, but only markings, and certain small signs like points, which they might interweave into that work which they made for her out of the likeness of gold. These ornaments, therefore, the friends of the bridegroom — those of whom we spoke above — make for the bride. But what secret is contained in these things, and what the very novelty of the expression brings to birth, let us pray to the Father of the almighty Word and bridegroom, that he himself may open to us the barred doors of this mystery, whereby we may be illumined not only to understand these things, but also to set them forth, and, according to the measure of those who are going to read, to receive them with the moderation of spiritual speech. We have often shown in many places that the appearance of gold holds the figure of the invisible and incorporeal nature; but silver, the power of the word and of reason; according to which the Lord says through the prophet: "I gave you silver and gold; but you made silver and golden things for Baal" — showing through these and saying, that "I gave you sense and reason, whereby you might be able both to

perceive me as God and to worship me; but you have transferred both the sense and the reason which is in you to the worshipping of demons.

92 But also the oracles of the Lord, "the chaste oracles," are called "silver tried by fire. And likewise in another place the tongue of the just man is spoken of as "kindled silver. But the cherubim are called golden, since indeed they are interpreted as "the fullness of the knowledge of God. But also the candlestick in the tabernacle of the testimony was commanded to be set up golden and solid; which seems to me to hold the form of the natural law, in which the law of knowledge is held. But what need is there to heap up many testimonies, when it is at hand for those willing to know that in many places of Scripture this is indicated — that gold is to be referred to the sense and the mind, but silver is to be referred to the word and to oracles? Now therefore let us hasten to contemplate how, according to those things which we have set forth, the friends of the bridegroom say that they make for the bride likenesses of gold with markings of silver. It seems to me, therefore, that the law which was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator, inasmuch as it has "a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things," and "whatever befell those who are recounted in the law befell them in a figure and not in truth" — all these things were likenesses of gold, not true gold.

93 Namely, that true gold is understood in those things which are incorporeal and invisible and spiritual; but the likeness of gold, in which is not the truth itself but the shadow of the truth, is to be taken as these corporeal and visible things. For example, a likeness of gold was that tabernacle made by hand, concerning which the Apostle says: "For Jesus did not enter into the holy places made by hand, the copies of the true, but into heaven itself. Therefore the things which are in the heavens, invisible and incorporeal, those are the true; but these which are on the earth, visible and corporeal, are said to be copies of the true, not the true. These, therefore, are what are called likenesses of gold; among which are also the ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat, and the cherubim, and the altar of incense, and the table of the shewbread, and the loaves, but also the veil, and the columns and bars, and the altar of holocausts, and the temple itself, and all the things that are written in the law. All these were likenesses of gold. But even the visible gold itself, in that it was visible, was not true gold, but was a likeness of that true invisible gold. These likenesses of gold, therefore, the friends of the bride-

groom — namely the angels and the prophets — made for the bride, the Church, they who ministered in the law and in the other mysteries. This, I think, Paul also understood when he said:

94 "In the religion of angels, in the things which he has seen, vainly puffed up by the sense of his flesh. All Jewish worship and religion, therefore, are likenesses of gold. But when anyone has been converted to the Lord, and the veil has been taken away from him, then he will see the true gold; likenesses of which gold, before it was present and offered itself to be known, its friends made for the bride, that admonished and provoked by those likenesses she might conceive a desire of the true gold. For this Paul indicates was done, when he says: "But these things befell them in a figure. And they were written for our sake, upon whom the end of the ages has come. But the "end" of which Paul speaks, do not understand as the bodily one. For the bodily end will find many for whom these things were not written; for neither will such men receive an understanding concerning them. But understand the end of the ages as the perfection of things, which surely is said to have come to Paul and to those like him, and for their sakes these things are said to have been written.

95 But these things we have said in a digression, wishing to show how the friends of the bridegroom say to the bride that they make for her likenesses of gold with markings of silver — namely through those things which in the law and the prophets they handed down in writing by means of figures and images and likenesses and parables. Yet there are among these also certain small markings of silver — that is, indications of the spiritual sense of the word and of the reasonable interpretation, though very rare and scanty. For before the coming of the Lord scarcely anywhere did any of the prophets disclose a little of the hidden discourse; for example, as Isaiah when he says: "The vineyard of the Lord of Sabaoth is the house of Israel, and the house of Judah is his beloved new planting. And again elsewhere: "The many waters are many peoples. And Ezekiel, naming two sisters, Oholah and Oholibah, distinguishes the one to be Samaria and the other Judaea; and wherever such things are disclosed with the prophets themselves interpreting, these are called markings of silver.

96 But when the Savior and our Lord Jesus Christ came, making all things known by the word of his power, in his passion an indication was given that the things which were held in secret places and were hidden should be

brought forth into the light and come to manifestation — through this, that the veil of the temple, by which the Holy of Holies and the secret things were veiled, was rent from the top of it to the bottom, announcing that it would be made plain to all what within was seen to be covered. So therefore that which was ministered through the angels and the prophets was a likeness of gold, with the small and scanty markings of silver. But these things which were handed down through our Lord Jesus Christ himself are placed in true gold and in solid silver. For this which was made through the friends of the bridegroom, the likeness of gold with markings of silver, is not promised to abide forever; but a time is set for it by those very ones who say: "Until the king be in his repose.

⁹⁷ For when reclining he shall have slept "as a lion, and as a lion's whelp," and after this the Father shall have raised him up, and he shall have risen from the dead, if there be any who are conformed to his resurrection, they will no longer abide in the likeness of gold — that is, not in the worship of corporeal things — but they will receive the true gold from him, believing and hoping not in the things that are seen but in those that are not seen, nor in those that are on earth but in those that are in the heavens, "where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God," and they will say that "even if we have known Christ at one time according to the flesh, yet now we no longer know him so. No longer, therefore, will they use the small markings of silver, but silver spread out in breadth. For they will hear that in that likeness of gold the rock which is said to follow and to furnish drink to the people is Christ, and the sea is baptism, and the cloud is the Holy Spirit, and the manna is the Word of God, and the paschal lamb is the Savior, and the blood of the lamb is the passion of Christ, and the veil which is in the Holy of Holies by which those divine and secret things were covered is his flesh;

⁹⁸ and other things beyond number will be made plain from his resurrection, no longer small, as before, but disclosed by a most ample exposition. But further, that what he says — "Until the king be in his repose" — may become clearer, we will also bring forward from the second prophecy of Balaam, which contains this concerning Christ: "There shall arise," he says, "a star out of Jacob, and a man shall come forth from his seed, and shall have dominion over many nations. His kingdom shall be exalted above Gog, and his kingdom shall grow. God shall lead him out of Egypt, as the glory of the unicorn, and he shall devour the nations of his enemies, and shall suck out

the marrow of their fatness, and shall shoot them with his darts. Reclining he shall rest as a lion, and as a lion's whelp. Who shall raise him up? Consider therefore from these things more carefully, and see how every likeness of gold is recorded to stand until the last time — that is, until the repose of the king. After these things, therefore, his kingdom shall be exalted above Gog — that is, above the housetops — namely when it shall have been transferred from the earth to the heavenly things above the housetops. But concerning these things we have treated more fully, as the Lord granted, in the book of Numbers.

99 Let us indeed inquire whether also to the holy fathers themselves and to the prophets who ministered the word before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, the grace of this perfection and of the true gold was given; or whether they only understood these future things and foresaw in the spirit the things to come; and whether for this reason alone the Lord said concerning Abraham that "he desired to see his day, and saw it, and rejoiced" — namely that in the spirit he foresaw the future things. And perhaps that saying too confirms more that this is so, which says: "Many just men desired to see the things which you see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which you hear, and heard them not. Although neither could there have been lacking to them the perfection that comes from faith. For the things which we believe to have been done, these they believed with a greater expectation as things to come. As therefore the faith of things past brought to the summit of perfection those who believe from the coming of Christ, so also did the faith of things to come bring those others.

100 But if the exposition be referred to each individual soul, it will be seen that, so long as the soul is as yet little and imperfect, and placed under tutors and stewards — whether the teachers of the Church, or the angels who are said to be the guardians of the little ones and always to see the face of the Father who is in heaven — likenesses of gold are made for it, since it is not nourished with the solid and strong foods of the Word of God, but is imbued with likenesses; as, if we may so say, it is taught with parables and examples, for the sake of which Christ himself also is said "to grow in age and in wisdom and in grace with God and men. In those likenesses, therefore, it is imbued, and there come to be for it small markings of silver. For to those who are being imbued there are sometimes opened certain small and rare things of the more secret mysteries, that they may conceive a desire of great-

er ones. For neither can anything be desired if it be utterly unknown. And therefore to those beginning and set in the first stages of instruction, just as not all things are to be laid open suddenly, so neither are the spiritual mysteries to be utterly hidden;

101 but, as the divine discourse says, markings of silver are to be made, and certain sparks of spiritual understanding are to be introduced into their souls, that they may in a manner take a taste of the sweetness that is to be desired, and not — as we have said — if it be utterly unknown, be in no way desired. But that we name the soul "little," let no one so take it as though it were called little according to substance; but if to anyone instruction is lacking, and in whom the understanding is scanty and the skill very small, this soul we call little. Therefore it is fitting that these things be done until the king be in his repose — that is, until such a soul make progress unto this, that it may receive the king, and have him reclining within itself. For thus this king says, that "I will dwell in them and walk in them" — assuredly those who furnish to the Word of God so great a breadth of their heart, that he is even said to walk about in them, namely in the ampler spaces of understanding and of a more widely diffused knowledge. So therefore he is also said to recline in that soul, without doubt, concerning which the Lord himself says through the prophet: "Upon whom shall I rest, save upon the humble and quiet, and him that trembles at my words?"

102 This king, therefore, who is the word of God, has in that soul which has now come to perfection his repose; provided, however, that there be in it no vice, but that it be full of holiness, full of piety, faith, charity, peace, and all virtues. For then it delights the king to recline and to have his repose. For to this soul the Lord was saying, that "I and my Father will come, and will sup with him, and will make our abode with him. Where, therefore, Christ sups with it, and where he makes his abode, why should he not recline? Blessed is that breadth of the soul, blessed the couch of that mind, where the Father and the Son — as I do not doubt — together with the Holy Spirit reclines, sups, and makes his abode. With what riches, do you think, with what abundance are such guests fed? Peace there is the first food; humility is set on at the same time, and patience, meekness also and kindness, and — that which is of the highest sweetness to it — purity of heart. But charity holds the chief place in this banquet. In such a manner, therefore, even by a third exposition it will be seen able to be referred to each individual soul, that

which he says: "We will make you likenesses of gold with markings of silver, until the king be in his repose."

103 » My nard gave forth its odor (or, his odor). « 104 In the manner of a drama, this appears to be shown: that after these words the bride entered in to the bridegroom and anointed him with her ointments, and, in some wondrous fashion, as though the nard which before had given no odor while it was with the bride, then gave forth its odor when it touched the body of the bridegroom—so that he seems not so much to have taken odor from the nard as the nard to have taken it from him. But if we read according to that variant which is found in other copies, "My nard gave forth his odor," something still more divine is discovered: namely, that this ointment of nard with which the bridegroom was anointed took not only its own odor, which is naturally wont to be in nard, but the very odor of the bridegroom himself, and the nard carried back his odor to the bride—so that in that with which she anointed him, it received the odor of the bridegroom through the office of the ointment itself. And this is what she seems to say: "My nard, with which I anointed the bridegroom, returning to me brought back to me the odor of the bridegroom, and, as though its own natural odor were overcome by the fragrance of the bridegroom, brought to me his sweetness. This is what the exposition of the historical drama holds; but let us now come to the spiritual understanding.

105 Let us here set the bride, the Church, in the person of Mary, who fittingly indeed is said to bring a pound of ointment of precious spikenard, and to anoint the feet of Jesus and wipe them with her hair, and in a certain manner to receive and recover unto herself, through the hair of her head, the ointment tintured by the quality and power of his body; and drawing to herself the odor not so much of nard through the ointment as of the very Word of God, through the hairs with which she wiped his feet, and putting upon her own head not so much the fragrance of nard as of Christ; and to say that "my nard, applied to the body of Christ, gave back his odor. Consider, then, how these very things are reported. "Mary," it says, "brought a pound of ointment of precious spikenard, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. And the house," it says, "was wholly filled with the odor of the ointment. This surely indicates that the odor of the teaching which proceeds from Christ, and the fragrance of the Holy

Spirit, filled the whole house of this world and the house of the whole Church.

¹⁰⁶ Or certainly it filled the whole house of that soul which received a share of the odor of Christ, offering first the gift of its faith, as it were the ointment of nard, and receiving from this the grace of the Holy Spirit and the fragrance of spiritual teaching. What difference, then, does it make whether in the Song of Songs the bride anoints the bridegroom with ointment, or in the Gospel the disciple anoints the master and Mary anoints Christ, hoping, as we have said, that from this ointment there should return to her the odor of the word and the fragrance of Christ—so that on this very account she may say: "We are the good odor of Christ unto God"? And since that ointment was full of faith and of precious affection, on this account Jesus too bore witness to her, saying: "She has wrought a good work upon me. So then, again, in the Song of Songs, after some passages, he embraces the emissions of the bride, just as here the work of Mary; for he says: "Thy emissions are a paradise with the fruit of apple-trees. Cyprus with nards. Nard and saffron. He embraces, therefore, in these also the sendings-forth and the gifts of the bride. We have indeed observed that in those things which we have just now mentioned, he set nard first in the plural, afterward in the singular;

¹⁰⁷ which I think was said according to that principle, because the merchant of the kingdom of heaven first trades in many pearls, until he arrives at one precious one. And perhaps in that he said, "Thy emissions are a paradise with the fruit of apple-trees," he indicates those fruits together with the many nards, which we bring from the instructions and the prophetic teaching. But from the teaching of our very Lord Jesus Christ our emissions and gifts have not many nards, but one. But now let us return to her who says, "My nard gave forth its odor"; and see whether we can understand this also here in the present passage: that, if ever we have been able wholly and fittingly to expound the deity of Christ, and to set forth his power and majesty with worthy assertions, then perhaps she will deservedly say—whether that Church, or the soul which has been able thus manifestly to expound his glory: "My nard gave forth its odor. Nor ought it to seem a wonder if Christ, just as he is a fountain and rivers of living water proceed from him, and just as he is bread and gives life, so also is nard and gives back odor, and is an

ointment, by which those who have been anointed become anointed ones (christs), as he says in the Psalm: "Touch not my anointed ones.

¹⁰⁸ And perhaps according to that which the Apostle says of those who have their senses exercised to the discernment of good or evil, Christ is made each several thing to each several sense of the soul. For on this account he is called the true light, that the eyes of the soul may have wherewith to be illumined; on this account also the word, that the ears may have what they hear; on this account also the bread of life, that the taste of the soul may have what it may taste. On this account, therefore, he is called also an ointment or nard, that the smell of the soul may have the fragrance of the word. On this account too he is called palpable and to be handled with the hand, and the word made flesh, that the hand of the inner soul may be able to touch of the word of life. But all these are one and the same Word of God, which, here changed severally to the affections of the discourse, leaves no sense of the soul without experience of its grace.

¹⁰⁹ » A bundle of a drop is my kinsman to me; he will abide (or dwell) in the midst of my breasts. « ¹¹⁰ These, as it seems, are still the words of the bride speaking to the young maidens. Earlier she had said that her nard had given its fragrance to the bridegroom, and that through the ointment with which she had anointed him she had received back the fragrance of its scent; but now she says: My kinsman is fragrant to me with a drop, and this drop not diffused nor scattered at random, but bound together and compressed, so that, namely, the odor of its very sweetness may be rendered thicker and stronger. And this one, she says, though he be of such a kind, tarries and abides in the midst of my breasts, and makes his rest and his dwelling in the place of my bosom. But since the bride has now for the first time called him her kinsman, and frequently uses the designation of this name through nearly the whole text of the little book, I think it worthwhile that we first inquire into the cause of this appellation, and expound what he is called a kinsman, or from what. A "kinsman" (*fraternus*) is the term for a brother's son. Let us first inquire who is the bride's brother, whose son this one is held to be. See whether we can say that the bride is indeed the Church from the Gentiles, but her brother the former people, and a brother, as the matter indicates, who is the elder.

¹¹¹ Since therefore Christ according to the flesh is born from that people, on this account he is called by the Church of the Gentiles the son of her

brother. So then, when she says: My kinsman is to me a bundle of a drop, she indicates the sacrament of his bodily nativity. For in a certain way the body seems to be a binding and a kind of bond of the soul, which as a bundle of the drop is bound fast to Christ by the divine power and sweetness. But if the things that have been said are referred to each individual soul, the binding of the drop is understood as the compacting of the doctrines of continence and the knottedness of the divine sentences. For the reasons of the faith are interwoven with one another and bound fast by the bonds of truth. Finally, he says too that every vessel that is bound is clean, but that unclean which shall have been loosed and not tied. Of this thing this was the figure, that Christ, in whom there was never any uncleanness of sin, is called a bundle of a drop. And therefore the soul ought not to touch anything loosened, and which is not supported by reason and bound fast by the truth of doctrines, lest it become unclean. For whoever shall touch what is unclean will be unclean according to the law. For an irrational sense, alien from the wisdom of God, will touch him and will make him unclean.

¹¹² But see whether perhaps we can take the Son of God in the flesh to be called a drop, and named as something short and small, just as Daniel says of him: A little stone cut from the mountain without hands, and made after these things a great mountain. Or as in the little book of the twelve prophets it is likewise said that there shall be a drop which shall gather the people together. For it is thus written in the prophets: And it shall be, out of a drop of this people Jacob shall be gathered and gathered together. For it was fitting that he who was coming to gather together not only Jacob but also all the nations — which, as the prophet says, are reckoned as a drop from a bucket — emptying himself of the form of divinity, should himself become as it were a drop, and thus come to gather together the drop of the nations, the drop likewise of the remnants of Jacob. But also in the forty-fourth psalm it is said to the beloved, to whom also the psalm itself is ascribed: Myrrh and drop and cassia from thy garments. From the garments therefore of the Word of God, which is the teaching of wisdom, there proceeds myrrh, the token, that is, of the death undertaken for the human race. The drop, as we said above, is the divesting of the form of divinity, the condescension of the servile form assumed.

¹¹³ Cassia too, since that kind of herb is said to be nourished and to grow together by unceasing waters, indicates the redemption of the human race

given through the waters of baptism. Thus therefore the bride, speaking as it were in a nuptial drama, says that her kinsman as a binding of the drop tarries in the midst of her breasts: by the breasts, as we have already said above, understand the principal part of the heart, in which the Church holds Christ, or the soul holds the Word of God, bound and fastened by the bonds of her desire. For if anyone binds fast the Word of God in his heart with all his affection and with all his love, he alone will be able to receive the odor of its fragrance and sweetness. ¹¹⁴ » A cluster of henna, my kinsman, is to me in the vineyards of Engedi. «

¹¹⁵ As far as concerns the explanation of the letter itself, there is something ambiguous in what it says: "A cluster of henna is to me as a kinsman"; for a flowering vine is also called henna, since it too bears a certain flowering fruit put forth in the manner of a blossoming grape. But the words seem to refer rather to the fruit of the vine, since mention has been made of the vineyards of Engedi. Now Engedi is a district of the land of Judaea, flourishing not so much in vineyards as in balsams. This, then, will be the historical sense of the bride speaking to the maidens, so that she is understood to be saying, first indeed: "My nard renders to me the fragrance of my bridegroom. Second: "My kinsman has become to me a bundle of myrrh lingering between my breasts. Third: "A cluster of henna from the vineyards of Engedi, surpassing everything that there is among fragrances and flowers of sweetness"; namely, that the maidens hearing these things may be roused more and more toward love and affection for the bridegroom. And she names them one by one and in order — first her nard, then the myrrh, and after these also the cluster of henna — so that through these she may teach certain steps and advances of love. But let us now see what the spiritual understanding holds.

¹¹⁶ For if this which is called a cluster is to be referred to the fruit of the vine — just as we receive the Word of God as wisdom and power and the treasure of knowledge, and many other things, so also is he called the true vine. As therefore in those in whom wisdom and knowledge are brought about, not suddenly, but through certain advances and steps, according to the zeal and intention and faith of those who share in him whether in wisdom, or in knowledge, or in virtue, he renders them wise and knowing and vigorous in virtues; so also in those in whom the true vine is brought about, he does not suddenly produce for them ripe and sweet clusters, nor is there

suddenly made for them the wine that is sweet and gladdens the heart of man, but first he produces for them only the sweetness of fragrance in the blossom. This cluster is recorded to be flowering in the vineyards of Engedi, so that the grace of its fragrance may be sent into the beginnings of the soul, that after these things it may be able to endure the bitterness of tribulations and temptations which are stirred up for those who believe on account of the Word of God;

¹¹⁷ and so at last he offers the sweetness of its ripeness, until he leads them to the winepresses where the blood of the grape is poured out, the blood of the new testament which is drunk on the feast day in the upper rooms, where the great couch is prepared. So then, through these individual advances of steps must they proceed who, initiated through the sacrament of the vine and the cluster of henna, are borne toward perfection, and strive to drink the cup of the new testament received from Jesus. But if the henna is to be taken as a tree of its own kind, whose fruit — indeed its flower — is said to possess not so much the sweetness of fragrance as also the power of warming and cherishing: without doubt there is taken that virtue of the bridegroom by which souls grow warm toward faith in him and love, which was touching those who said: "Was not our heart burning within us, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

¹¹⁸ Or certainly, since this cluster is said to be flowering from the vineyards of Engedi — and Engedi is interpreted as "the eye of my temptation" — if there is anyone who is able to have understanding of how the life of man upon earth is a temptation, and understands how one is snatched away from temptation in God, and who recognizes the character of his own temptation, so that it may be said of him that in all these things he did not sin with his lips before God: to such a one the Word of God becomes a cluster of henna from the vineyards of Engedi. It must be observed, however, that the words of the bride are so reported that both the nard and the bundle of myrrh and the cluster of henna are for herself alone, inasmuch as she has now ascended into these advances. For the soul alone that is perfect is the one that has so pure and purified a fragrance of itself that it can grasp the fragrance of the nard, and of the myrrh, and of the henna proceeding from the Word of God, and can draw in the grace of the divine fragrance.

COMMENTARY ON THE SONG OF SONGS — BOOK THREE

¹ English translation of Origen of Alexandria's *Commentary on the Song of Songs* (*Commentarium in Canticum Canticorum*), in the Latin translation of Rufinus of Aquileia (c. 410). Translated from the OCR-corrected Migne *Patrologia Graeca* 13 (Delarue) base text. Rufinus's translation is intrinsically incomplete, running only as far as *Song of Songs* 2:15. This English translation is in the public domain.

BOOK THREE

² » Behold, you are beautiful, my neighbor; and behold, you are beautiful; your eyes are doves' « ³ Now for the second time the bridegroom joins with the bride in word and conversation. And in his first discourse he invited her to this, that she should come to know herself, telling her that she was indeed good among women, but that unless she came to know herself, she would suffer certain things. And, as one who has swiftly run to the recognition of herself by sense and understanding, he compares her to his horses, or to the cavalry, with which he overthrew the chariots of Pharaoh. At the same time he also compares her cheeks, on account of their remarkable modesty and the swiftness of her manner of life, to turtledoves, and her neck to the fillets of ornaments. But now he already professes her to be beautiful, and beautiful not as before merely among women, but as one who is near to himself; and he raises the title of her praise still higher, and affirms that she is beautiful not only when she is near to him, but also that, if it should happen to her to be absent, even so she is beautiful. For this is indicated in that, when he had said, "Behold, you are beautiful, my neighbor," he adds after this, absolutely and without any qualification, "Behold, you are beautiful. But in what went before he had not praised her sight, I believe because her spiritual understanding had not yet advanced to contemplation; now therefore he says, "Your eyes are doves'.

⁴ Her great progress in this is shown, that she who before was called only beautiful among women is now called beautiful as one near to him, receiving without doubt the splendor of her comeliness from the bridegroom himself, so that, having once taken her beauty from him, even if it should befall her to suffer a little the bridegroom's absence, she nonetheless remains beautiful. But that her eyes are compared to doves — this surely comes about because she now understands the divine Scriptures not according to the letter

but according to the spirit, and beholds in them the spiritual mysteries. For the dove is a token of the Holy Spirit. To understand the law and the prophets in a spiritual sense, then, this is to have the eyes of a dove. And here indeed her eyes are called doves' eyes, whereas in the Psalms a soul of this kind desires that the wings of a dove be given to her, so that she may be able to fly into the understanding of spiritual mysteries and to rest in the courts of wisdom. But also, if anyone can sleep — that is, be settled and rest in the midst of the lots, and understand the reason, and know the cause of the divine judgment — not only are the wings of a dove, by which she may fly amid spiritual understandings, promised to her, but wings covered with silver, that is, with the ornaments of word and reason.

5 Her shoulder-blades too are said to become like gold, where the constancy of faith and the stability of the doctrines of the perfect is indicated. Therefore, if Christ is said to be the head, I think nothing seems absurd if the eyes also of those who according to the inner man understand spiritually and judge spiritually are said to be the Holy Spirit. And on this account perhaps in the law, just as a lamb was appointed, by whose sacrifice the people might be purified at the Pascha, so also doves were appointed, by which a man is purified upon entering this world. But to speak now of this too, and to discuss the qualities of the sacrifices, seems too long a digression, and by no means suited to the work proposed. Let it suffice, however, to have recalled these things, for what the present discourse contains: "Your eyes are doves'. As if he were saying: your eyes are spiritual, seeing spiritually, understanding spiritually. It can perhaps still be understood by a deeper mystery, that what he said, "Behold, you are beautiful, my neighbor," is understood to be said of the present age, because the Church is beautiful even here, when she is near to Christ and when she imitates Christ. But that he said again, "Behold, you are beautiful," can pertain to the age to come, where now she is fair and beautiful not only by imitation but by her very own perfection;

6 so that there he says her eyes are doves, that by the name of the two eyes the two doves may be understood to be the Son of God and the Holy Spirit. And do not wonder if they are called doves together, since each of them is likewise called an advocate, as John the evangelist declares, calling the Holy Spirit indeed the Paraclete, which is "advocate"; and of Jesus Christ he says nonetheless in his Epistle that he himself is an advocate with the Father for our sins. But also in Zechariah the prophet the two olive trees placed at the

right and at the left of the lampstand are believed nonetheless to designate the Only-begotten and the Holy Spirit. 7 » Behold, you are good, my kinsman, and indeed comely; our couch is shady « 8 Now for the first time the bride seems to have looked more attentively upon the beauty of her bridegroom, and to have considered, with those eyes which were said to be a dove's, the splendor and comeliness of the Word of God. For in truth one cannot first perceive or recognize how great is the magnificence in the Word, unless one first receives eyes like a dove's, that is, spiritual understanding. But by the couch which she says she has in common with the bridegroom, there seems to me to be indicated this body of the soul, in which, while still set there, she has been held worthy to be taken up into fellowship with the Word of God. And she calls it shady, inasmuch as it is not dry but fruitful, and, as it were, wooded with the denseness of good work. But these things the bride says—the soul, that is, which already has a dove's eyes. Those, however, who merely believe the bridegroom, yet have not been able to perceive how great is the beauty in the Word of God, say: "And we saw him, and he had no comeliness nor beauty, but his form was unsightly and wanting beyond the sons of men. But she who has profited well and has surpassed the rank of the maidens and the eighty concubines and the sixty queens, that soul can say: "Behold, you are comely, my kinsman, and indeed beautiful.

9 But also, if, while still set in the body, I understand the denseness of the spiritual senses and the understanding of the divine Scriptures woven together with such frequent shade that the more scorching heat—which is wont to burn up and dry the fruits of many—cannot nevertheless darken me, nor can any force of temptations dry up the seed of faith in me, then I can say that "our couch is shady. But when she says "our couch," indicating, as it were, that the place of her own body is common to her with the bridegroom, understand it to be said after that likeness by which Paul also said that "our bodies are members of Christ. For when he says "our bodies," he shows the body to be, as it were, the bride's. But when he mentions "the members of Christ," he indicates that these same bodies are also the bridegroom's body. If, then, these bodies are shady, as we said above, filled, that is, with good works and heaped with the denseness of spiritual senses, of such as these it can be said: "By day the sun shall not burn you, nor the moon by night. For the sun of temptation does not scorch the just man who rests under the shade

of the Word of God. For that sun which scorches the just man is not damnable; but rather that one which transfigures itself into an angel of light. Good, therefore, and comely is the kinsman called;

10 and the more he can be gazed upon with spiritual eyes, so much the more beautiful and fair is he found; because not only will his own comeliness and beauty appear wondrous, but also to the one gazing and looking upon him there will arise a great splendor and a new and wondrous beauty of form, according to that which the Apostle, gazing upon the beauty of the Word of God, says: "For though our outward man is corrupted, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Rightly, therefore, does such a soul have its body as a couch in common with the Word. For the divine power reaches even to the grace of the body, when it places in it either the gift of chastity, or of continence, and the grace of the other good works. Consider indeed whether perhaps that body also which Jesus assumed can be named a couch common to him with the bride, since indeed through it the Church seems to be joined to Christ and to have been able to receive a share of the Word of God, according to which he is called the mediator of God and men, and according to which the Apostle says: "For in him we have access through faith into the hope of the glory of God."

11 » The rafters of our houses are cedars, our beams are cypresses « 12 The bridegroom seems to be replying graciously to those things which had earlier been spoken by the bride, so as to teach her of what sort these shared dwellings are, and what kind of framing material is found in them. This is what the literal narrative holds. But the Church seems to be described by Christ — the Church which is a spiritual house, the house of God, as Paul teaches when he says: "But if I tarry long, that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. If, then, the Church is the house of God, since all things that the Father has are the Son's, the Church is the house of the Son of God. But frequently they are also called "Churches" in the plural, as he says in that place: "We have no such custom, neither the Churches of God. And again, Paul writes to the Churches of Galatia, and John to the seven Churches. So then, whether it be the Church or the Churches, they are the house of the bridegroom and of the bride, or the house of the soul and of the Word, in which the rafters are of cedar. We read also of certain "cedars of God," over which the vine that was brought over

from Egypt is said to have stretched out its shoots, or its branches, as it says in the Psalms:

13 "Its shadow covered the mountains, and its branches the cedars of God. Evidently, therefore, through these words certain persons in the Church are named "cedars of God. When, then, the bridegroom says, "The rafters of our houses are cedars," we ought to understand that those who roof over the Church are cedars of God, and that some of these, the stronger ones, are called beams. And I think that fittingly those who administer the episcopate well in the Church can be called beams, by which the whole building is supported and covered, whether from the ruin of the rains or from the burning heat of the sun. But in the second place after these, I think the presbyters are called rafters; and the beams indeed are called cypresses, in which there is both a more robust strength and a scent of sweetness, whereby he designates the bishop as both solid in works and fragrant in the grace of doctrine. But similarly he also called the rafters cedars, so that by this he might indicate that the presbyters ought to be full of the virtue of incorruption and of the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ.

14 » I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valleys: as the lily among the thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters « 15 He who is the Bridegroom and the Word and Wisdom seems to be speaking of himself and of the Bride to his friends and companions. But according to the order of the exposition we have set forth, Christ is to be understood as speaking these things about the Church, and to be saying that he himself is the flower of the field and the lily of the valleys. A field is the term for a level stretch of earth, to which cultivation is applied and which is tilled by farmers. The valleys, on the other hand, indicate places that are rather rocky and untilled. But we can also understand that field to be the people that was cultivated through the prophets and the law, and the rocky and untilled valley to be the place of the Gentiles. This Bridegroom, then, was a flower among the people of the Jews; but since the law brought no one to perfection, for that reason the Word of God could not in that people advance to flower and arrive at the perfection of its fruits. Yet in that valley of the Gentiles he became a lily. But what kind of lily? Such, without doubt, as he himself in the Gospels says the heavenly Father clothes. And: "Not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these. So the Bridegroom becomes a lily in this

valley, in that the heavenly Father clothed him with such a garment of flesh as not even Solomon in all his glory could possess.

16 For Solomon did not have flesh that was immaculate and in no way whatever subject to sin, apart from the desire of a man and the embrace of a woman. But he also seems to show the reason why he who had been a flower in the field willed to be a lily in the valleys. For although he had been a flower in the field for a long time, he says that no flower came forth from that field itself in imitation and likeness of himself. But once he had become a lily in the valleys, straightway by his near imitation there is likewise made a lily; so that it was worth the effort, since he himself became a lily, that also what is near to him — that is, each soul that draws near to him and follows his example and imitation — should become a lily. Therefore, when he says, "As a lily in the midst of thorns, so is my beloved in the midst of the daughters," we shall take it as said of the Church of the Gentiles, either because she has emerged, as it were from thorns, out of the midst of the unfaithful and unbelieving, or because she is said to be set in the midst of thorns on account of the bitings of heretics clamoring around her. And this will seem the more likely from the fact that he says: "So is my beloved in the midst of the daughters."

17 For he would not have called those souls "daughters" who had never at all come to believe. All heretics, therefore, first come to belief, and after this they turn aside from the way of faith and from the truth of the doctrines. Just as the apostle John also says in his Epistle: "They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would surely have remained with us. But we can also refer this to each individual soul, and say that for the soul which, on account of its simplicity and its levelness or evenness, can be called a field, the Word of God becomes a flower and teaches the beginnings of good works. But for those who now seek deeper things and search out things more profound, as it were in the valleys, he becomes a lily, whether on account of the brightness of chastity or the splendor of wisdom, so that they too may become lilies bursting forth from the midst of thorns — that is, fleeing the thoughts and worldly cares that in the Gospel are compared to thorns.

18 » Like an apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my kinsman among the sons. In his shadow I longed to be and I sat down, and his fruit is sweet in my throat « 19 It was fitting indeed that the bridegroom should

speak also of himself, of what he was in the field, and also of what he was in the valleys; and of the bride, of who she was and of what sort she was held to be among the other daughters. But it was not fitting that the bride, in answering these things, should say anything of herself, but rather that she should be wholly moved toward admiration of the bridegroom and should cling to his praises. She therefore compares him to an apple tree. But lest, from the resemblance of the word, some of the simpler folk should think the apple tree (*arbor mali*) to be an evil tree and named from evil (*malitia*), let us say "the tree of meli," using indeed a Greek word, but one better known to any of the simpler Latin speakers than "mali. For it is better that we offend the grammarians than that we place some stumbling-block before the readers in the explanation of the truth. She compares him, then, to a meli tree, and his companions to the rest of the trees of the wood. But she says the bridegroom is so like this meli tree that she even says she longed to sit beneath his shadow, and she declares that his fruit has been made sweet to her in her throat. And she seems to speak these things to the young maidens, just as the bridegroom too spoke earlier to his companions.

20 But let us now consider, according to the mystery, whom the bride calls "sons," among whom she asserts that the bridegroom excels, like a meli tree, the rest of the trees of the wood; and see whether we can, according to the things we expounded in a twofold way above concerning the daughters and the thorns, so here too understand that the "sons" are said to be either those who once were and are not, or the multitude of the heavenly ministers. For to all men in the beginning belongs that which is written: "I said: You are gods and all of you sons of the Most High. But a difference intervened through this which he says: "But you shall die as men, and shall fall like one of the princes. And this too has regard to that matter: "For who among the clouds shall be equal to the Lord? or who shall be likened to him among the sons of God? As therefore the meli tree is among the rest of the trees of the wood, so is the bridegroom among the sons, having a fruit which excels all not only in taste but also in fragrance, and which refreshes two senses of the soul alike, that is, both taste and smell together. For with varied provisions Wisdom prepares her table for us. On it she not only sets the bread of life, but also sacrifices the flesh of the Word;

21 and she not only mixes wine in her bowl, but also applies apples fragrant enough and sweet, which render sweetness not only in the mouth and

on the lips, but, delivered to the inner throat, preserve their sweetness. And we can take the trees of the wood to be those angels who have been seen to have arisen as the authors and abettors of each heresy, so that the Church seems, comparing the sweetness of the doctrine of Christ to the harshness of the heretical dogmas and their barren and unfruitful teaching, to say: that the ecclesiastical dogmas, which are proclaimed in the Church of Christ, are indeed pleasant and sweet apples; but that the trees of the wood are those things which are affirmed by the various heretics. And of these unfruitful trees of the wood it will seem to be said, what is written in the Gospel: "Behold, now the axe is laid to the roots of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire. The bride's kinsman, then, is like a meli tree in the Church of Christ; but the other heresiarchs, like the unfruitful trees of the wood, are by the divine judgment, as by an axe, to be cut down and cast into the fire.

22 Therefore in the shadow of this meli tree the bride longs to abide — or the Church, as we said, in the protection of the Son of God, or the soul fleeing all the remaining doctrines and clinging to the one Word of God alone, whose sweet fruit she also has in her throat, that is, by meditating unceasingly on the law of God, and by always ruminating upon it like a clean animal. But concerning the naming of this shadow, beneath which the Church says she longed to sit, I do not think it absurd, if we bring forward into the midst those things which we can find in the divine Scriptures, so that it may be recognized more worthily and more divinely what the shadow of this meli tree is. Jeremiah says in the Lamentations: "The Spirit of our countenance, Christ the Lord, was taken in our corruptions, to whom we said: In his shadow we shall live among the nations. You see, then, how the prophet, moved by the Holy Spirit, says that life is furnished to the nations from the shadow of Christ; and how should his shadow not furnish us with life, when even at the conception of his body it was said to Mary: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you. If therefore there was an overshadowing of the Most High at the conception of his body, deservedly shall his shadow give life to the nations.

23 And deservedly does his bride, the Church, long to sit beneath the shadow of the meli tree, without doubt that she may become a partaker of the life which is in his shadow. But the shadow of the remaining trees of the wood is such that whoever sits beneath it seems to sit in the region of the

shadow of death. But still, that the passage which we have in hand may be rendered more and more plain, let us inquire how the Apostle too says that the law has a shadow of the good things to come, and mentions that all the things which were written either concerning the feast days, or the sabbaths, or the new moons, are a shadow of the good things to come — namely in those things which were performed according to the letter; and how he declares that all the worship of the ancients is an example and shadow of the heavenly things. And if this is indeed so, all those whoever were under the law are shown to have sat beneath the shadow of the law, and to have had rather a shadow of the true law. But we are strangers to their shadow, since we are not under the law, but under grace. Yet although we are not under that shadow which the letter of the law made, we are nevertheless under a better shadow. For in the shadow of Christ we live among the nations.

24 And there is a certain advancement to come from the shadow of the law to the shadow of Christ; so that, because Christ is life, and truth, and the way, we may be made first in the shadow of the way, and in the shadow of life, and in the shadow of truth, that we may comprehend in part, and in a mirror and in an enigma, so that after these things, if we walk along this way, which is Christ, we may be able to arrive at this, that we may comprehend face to face those things which before we had seen as though in a shadow and in an enigma. For no one will be able to arrive at those things which are true and perfect, unless he has first desired and longed to abide in this shadow. But Job too says that all the life of men is a shadow upon the earth; I believe because of the fact that the soul in this life is overshadowed by the veil of this dense body. All those, then, who are in this life must of necessity be in a certain shadow. But some indeed are sitting in the region of the shadow of death — those assuredly who do not believe in Christ. But the Church says with confidence: "In the shadow of the bridegroom I longed to be and I sat down";

25 although certainly there was a time when one, abiding beneath the shadow of the law, could be defended from the harshness of the burning and heat. But that time has passed; one must now come to the shadow of the meli tree; and although one may make use of a different shadow, nevertheless every soul, so long as it is in the present life, seems to have a shadow necessary for it, because of that burning of the sun, I believe, which, when it has risen, straightway the seed that is not sunk with a deep root withers and perishes.

But the shadow of the law wards off this burning only slightly, whereas the shadow of Christ, in which we now live among the nations — that is, the faith in his incarnation — will turn it away utterly and extinguish it. For he who scorched those walking beneath the shadow of the law was seen, at the time of Christ's passion, to have fallen like lightning from heaven; although even the time of his shadow will be completed at the end of the age, because, as we said, after the consummation of the age we shall no longer see the truth through a mirror, nor in an enigma, but face to face. I think that also similar is that which is written: "Under the shadow of your wings I shall rejoice. But also in what follows in this little book the bride says thus:

26 "My kinsman is mine, and I am his, who feeds among the lilies until the day breathes, and the shadows are removed," teaching through this that a time will come when all shadows will be removed, and the truth alone will remain. And as for what she says: "And his fruit is sweet in my throat," this is for that soul to say which has nothing dead, nothing insensible in its throat, and is in nothing whatever like those of whom it is said: "Their throat is an open sepulchre. For whoever bring forth words of death and destruction from their throats, their throats are called sepulchres: such as are all those who either speak against the true faith, or bring forth something against the discipline of chastity, and justice, and sobriety. These, then, are they whose throats are sepulchres and places of death, from which words of death are brought forth. But the just man says: "How sweet are your words to my throat! And another, who taught the words of life, says thus: "Our mouth is open to you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged. And another too, who opened his mouth to the Word of God, says: "I opened my mouth and drew in the spirit."

27 » Bring me into the house of wine « 28 These are still the words of the bride, but they are directed, as I think, to the friends and intimates of the bridegroom, from whom she seems to ask that they bring her into the house of gladness, where wine is drunk and a banquet is prepared. For she who had already seen the royal chamber now desires also to enter the royal banquet and to enjoy the wine of gladness. We have already said above that the friends of the bridegroom are to be understood as the prophets and all who have ministered the word of God from the beginning of the world, to whom the Church of Christ, or the soul cleaving to the Word of God, may rightly say that they bring her into the house of wine, that is, where wisdom has

mingled her wine in the mixing-bowl, and beseeches through her servants everyone foolish and lacking in sense, saying: "Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you. This is the house of wine, and the house of the banquet, in which banquet all who come from the east and the west shall recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God. To this house and to this banquet the prophets lead the souls — those, at least, who hear and understand them. But so also do the holy angels and the heavenly powers who are sent in ministry, on account of those who receive the inheritance of salvation.

²⁹ This is the wine to which are inscribed those psalms which are entitled "for the winepresses. This is the wine gathered from that vine which says: "I am the true vine"; which the heavenly Father, the husbandman, has pressed out. This is the wine which those branches brought forth, which remained in Jesus not only on earth but also in heaven. For thus do I hear that which is said, that "every branch which does not remain in me cannot bear fruit. For no one produces the fruit of this wine except him who remains in the word, and in wisdom, and in truth, and in justice, and in peace, and in all the virtues. This is the wine with which even to be inebriated is deemed desirable by the just and by every holy person. This wine, I think, Noah too was even then contemplating in the spirit when he is said to have been inebriated; and David, marveling at the cup of this banquet, says: "And your cup which inebriates, how excellent it is! To this house of wine, therefore, the Church, or each soul desiring to enter into the things that are perfect, and to enjoy fully the doctrines of wisdom and the mysteries of knowledge, as with the sweetness of a banquet and the gladness of wine.

³⁰ It must indeed be known that, just as there is this wine which, pressed from the doctrines of truth, is mingled in the mixing-bowl of wisdom, so also there is a contrary wine, when sinners are wickedly inebriated, and those who receive the pernicious doctrines of false knowledge. Concerning whom Solomon says in Proverbs: "But these eat the food of impiety, and are inebriated with the wine of iniquity. Concerning this same wine of iniquity we also read written thus in Deuteronomy: "From the vine of the Sodomites is their vine, and their branch from Gomorrah; their grape is a grape of gall, and their cluster is one of bitterness for them; the fury of dragons is their wine, and the incurable fury of asps. But that wine which proceeds from the true vine is always new. For always, through the advances of those who learn,

the recognition of divine knowledge and wisdom is renewed. And therefore Jesus said to his disciples that "I will drink that new wine with you in the kingdom of my Father. For the recognition of secret things and the revelation of hidden things is always renewed through the wisdom of God, not only to men, but also to the angels and the heavenly powers.

31 » Set charity in order within me « 32 These are the words of the same bride to the same persons, except that perhaps the apostles of Christ may also be reckoned among those to whom these things are addressed. Now what she says—"Set charity in order within me"—has this sense. Without doubt all men love something, and there is no one who has come to that age at which he is now able to love and does not love something: as we also showed sufficiently in the preface of this work. But this love, or this charity, in some indeed proceeds fittingly arranged according to its own order, but in very many against order. And charity is said to be against order in someone when either he loves that which he ought not, or he loves that which he ought, but loves it more than is right, or less than is right. In such persons, then, charity is said to be disordered; but in those—whom I judge to be very few, namely those who walk along the way of life and do not turn aside, neither to the right nor to the left—in these alone is charity ordered and keeps its own order. And its order and measure is of this kind, for example: to love God there is no manner, no measure, save this alone, that you offer to Him all that you have. For in Christ Jesus God is to be loved with the whole heart, and the whole soul, and with all one's strength. In this, then, there is no measure.

33 But to love one's neighbor is already a certain measure. "You shall love," it says, "your neighbor as yourself. If therefore either in the love of God you do something less than you can and than is in your power; or between yourself and your neighbor you do not preserve equity, but have some difference; then charity is not ordered in you, nor does it keep its own order. But since our discourse is about the order of charity, let us inquire more diligently through the particulars, both whom it is fitting to love, and how much it is fitting to love. For if, as the Apostle says, we are members one of another, I think that we ought to have this affection toward our neighbors, that we love them not as bodies foreign to us, but as our own members. According to this, then, that we are members of one another, it will be fitting to have an equal and like love toward all. But according to this, that there are in the body certain members more honorable and more comely, while others are

less comely and inferior, I think that again, according to the merits and honor of the members, the measure of love too ought to be weighed. If therefore anyone proposes to do all things reasonably and to temper his acts and affections according to the Word of God, I think that toward each of these he ought both to know and to hold the order of charity.

³⁴ But that what we say may become clearer, let us make use of somewhat more evident indications. If someone, for example, labors in the Word of God and instructs and enlightens our souls, teaches the way of salvation, and hands down the order of living, does he not seem to you to be indeed a neighbor here too, yet much more to be loved than that other neighbor who has done none of these things? For although that other is indeed to be loved, in that we are members of one body and of one substance; yet this one much more, who, though he also has with us the right of a neighbor which other men also have, nevertheless gives this greater cause of charity toward himself, that he shows the way of God, and confers the salvation of the soul by the enlightenments of the divine Word. But if someone should call me back, when erring and set upon the precipice of a womanly sin, to the light of piety, and should snatch me from destruction itself and draw me back to salvation, and rescue me from the very jaws of eternal death, does it not seem to you that he, if it can be, is to be loved with that very fullness of charity with which we love God—after God? And lest you think that we presume thus of ourselves, hear the apostle Paul saying of those who labor in the Word of God:

³⁵ "That you may hold superabundantly in charity those who are such, on account of their work. Let us see yet another order of charity, that at least which is seen to be held toward neighbors. If there be someone who indeed does not have the grace of teaching or instructing, nor of preaching the word of the Lord, but is nevertheless a man of holy life, innocent, immaculate, and one who walks in the justifications and commandments of God without reproach, does such a man seem to you to be reckoned in the same order of charity as that one who does none of these things?—since either is called a neighbor. Should not this one too, on account of his work and the merit of his life, according to the Apostle's saying, likewise as that one who labors in the Word of God, be held superabundantly in charity on account of the work of his life? There is still another order of charity. For we are commanded to love even our enemies. But let us see whether even in them there

will be one single manner of love, or whether that saying which says, "Set charity in order within me," will have its place there. I think, then, that in these there is an order of charity, for example: there is a certain enemy of mine, who nevertheless in other respects acts well, is chaste, sober, keeping the commandments of God for the most part, yet erring in some things, as a man.

³⁶ There is another who is indeed likewise an enemy to us, yet is an enemy of his own life and soul, prepared for crimes, headlong into disgraceful deeds, counting nothing holy, nothing religious: does it not seem to you that even among enemies themselves a certain diversity of charity is to be held? I think indeed that from these things it has become sufficiently plain that the force of charity is one, yet it has many causes, and many orders of loving, and that on this account the bride now says, "Set charity in order within me," that is, teach me the diverse orders of charity. But if it still seems that something is to be added to these, we can also bring forward that which the Apostle says: "Husbands, love your wives as your own bodies, as Christ loved the Church. What then? Ought husbands indeed to love their wives, but ought they not at all to love other women in all chastity and holiness? Or will not these too seem to be among neighbors? But love is indeed to be bestowed either on a spouse, or on a mother, or on a sister, provided they be faithful, cleaving to God; and toward another woman is no love to be bestowed by us, according to that by which she herself is called a neighbor?

³⁷ But if this seems absurd, and chaste love ought, according to the order of the commandment, to be shown even toward them, then assuredly, among the very persons of women to whom love is to be bestowed, an order in charity and a fitting distinction must certainly be held. And with the greater honor is love to be shown to a mother; but in the next degree, with a certain reverence nonetheless, to sisters also. But with a proper and, from these, a set-apart manner is charity to be shown to spouses. And after these persons, according to merits and causes also, love is to be bestowed on each one in all chastity, as we have said. And according to these things we shall observe also concerning a father, or a brother, and other kinsfolk. But toward the holy ones who have begotten us in Christ, and also pastors and bishops, or the presbyters who preside over the Word of God, or those who minister well in the Church, or those who excel the rest in faith—how shall not, according to the merits of each one, an affection of charity be weighed

out far more eminent than can be held toward those who have done either none of these things or not fully? But also between faithful parents and unfaithful, and faithful brothers and unfaithful, and sisters, can it come about that a diverse order of charity is not held toward these individuals?

³⁸ Beholding these diversities, and seeing that concerning all these things the knowledge of these matters seems necessary to the soul tending toward perfection, that it may be able to hold the measures of charity for each place and order, the bride says to the friends of the bridegroom, namely to those who minister the Word of God: "Set charity in order within me," that is, teach me and hand down to me how through each of these I ought to preserve the order of charity. For all men, as we have already said, according to this that they are like to us, are to be loved alike: nay, every rational creature is to be loved equally by us, inasmuch as we are rational. Yet something is to be added in charity to each one, in respect of this that he is a man, and of this that he is rational; if, for example, either in morals, or in work, or in purpose, or in pursuits he excels the rest; and for each of these, according to each one's own merit, to the general love there is to be added also something special of charity. But that a greater authority may be had concerning these things, let us take our example from God Himself. For He loves all things that are, equally, so that He hates none of the things He has made; for neither did He make anything that He would hold in hatred:

³⁹ not however for this reason did He love the Egyptians alike as the Hebrews, and Pharaoh as Moses and Aaron. Nor again did He love the rest of the sons of Israel alike as Moses and Aaron and Miriam; nor again did He love Aaron and Miriam alike as Moses, although it be true what is said to Him: "But You spare all, because they are Yours, O Lord, lover of souls; for the spirit of incorruption is in all things"; nevertheless He who disposed all things by measure and number and weight, according to the measure without doubt of each one tempers the balance also of His love. Shall we suppose that Paul was not loved by Him alike when he was persecuting the Church of God, and when he was loved while he himself was bearing persecutions and torments for her, and was saying that there was in him the solitude of all the Churches? It is much now that among these orders of charity we should insert even the affection of hatred, which seems contrary to this affection of charity; because the Lord also says: "I will be an enemy to your enemies and I will oppose your adversaries. And again: "If you stand by a

sinner, and by him whom the Lord hates, you are his friend. Which indeed have this same solution as that which was said: "Honor your father and your mother"; and again:

⁴⁰ "He who does not hate father and mother," and the rest, in which assuredly the excess of charity toward God seems to generate a contrary affection toward those who are adversaries, since there can be no concord of light with darkness, and of Christ with Belial, nor the same portion for the faithful with the unfaithful. These things, then, concerning the orders of charity having been set forth as we could, it is plain for the understanding what it is that the bride, that is the Church, or the soul tending toward perfection, asks to be granted to her by the friends of the bridegroom; since indeed she had asked to be brought into the house of wine, where without doubt she had understood that, among all those things which she had seen, the grace of charity is preeminent and surpassing, and she had learned that charity itself is the greatest of all, and alone is the charity that never falls: therefore she demands that she may learn its order, lest perchance, doing something disordered, she should receive some wound from it, as is said in the later passages: "I am wounded with charity. But whether we take these things to be said by angels, from whom she asks to be instructed and fortified, nothing absurd will appear; according to that which is said of the people of God: "Rejoice, O nations, with His people, and let all the angels of God strengthen them. And as is said elsewhere:

⁴¹ "The angel of the Lord encamps round about those who fear Him, and will deliver them. And again elsewhere: "Do not despise one of these least ones who are in the Church, for their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. But also in the Apocalypse of John the Son of God gives testimony to the angel of Thyatira for the charity which the angel himself ordered in the Church committed to him. For thus it is written: "I know your works and your charity, and your faith and ministry, and your patience, and your latter works greater than the former. But even if we refer these things to the prophets, who ministered the Word of God before the coming of the bridegroom, so that through their teaching the Church may be seen to wish to learn the order of charity, that is, to be instructed by the prophetic volumes, it will not appear absurd. But also all the saints who have departed from this life, still having charity toward those who are in this world—if they be said to bear care for their salvation, and to help them by

their prayers, and by their intervention with God—it will not be unfitting. For it is written thus in the books of the Maccabees: "This is Jeremiah the prophet of God, who always prays for the people. But also that these things are said to the apostles, as I have already said above, will not seem foreign:

⁴² for through these all the Church of God, or the soul seeking God, is brought into the house of wine, as we said above, and is filled with aromatic spices and odors, and is composed unto the better, as we read in the later passages, and we are taught the order and reason of charity. ⁴³ » Strengthen me with perfumes, surround me with apples, for I am wounded by love « ⁴⁴ In the Greek, indeed, it reads: "Strengthen me with myrrhs"; and by naming "myrrh" a certain kind of tree, which the Latins, supposing it to be so called, rendered as "myrrha," they interpreted it as "perfumes. The sequence of the discourse, then, is of this sort: after the bride had heard the words from the mouth of the bridegroom himself, and had entered the chamber of the king, and the house of wine and the place of the banquet and of wisdom, and had beheld therein the victims and the mixing-bowl blended with his sacred mysteries, then, as if stupefied in admiration of all these things, and wounded, she nonetheless asks of these same friends and companions of the bridegroom that she be strengthened, and, as though fainting, be supported, leaning a little upon the myrrh-tree or the ash-tree. For, struck by the wound of love, she seeks out the solace of trees and of woodlands. These things according to the letter. But that we may be able to pursue from these the spiritual understanding, we have need of that grace which Solomon himself deserved to obtain from God, who learned the natures of all the roots and trees and shrubs that are God's, so that we too might know both what the property and what the nature of the myrrh-tree is, from which a spiritual exposition may fittingly be drawn. Now this is the only thing that could reach us concerning the knowledge of this tree: that it has a sweet fragrance only, yet bears no fruit.

⁴⁵ But the ash-tree is known to all as one that not only bears fruit, but bears fruit most sweet and most agreeable. All men, therefore, are called trees, whether good or evil, and fruitful or unfruitful, as the Lord also says in the Gospel: "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad"; and: "Every tree that does not bear good fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire. Three distinctions, then, seem to exist among men. There are certain ones who bear no fruit at all, and others who

do bear fruit. But among those who bear fruit, the fruits are either bad or good. Here, therefore, the bride, that is, the Church of Christ, asks to be strengthened, and indeed to be made to recline upon a single ash-tree bearing good fruits: and rightly and fittingly. For upon these the Church is strengthened and surrounded, namely upon those who bear fruit and grow in good works. But what does it mean that she wishes to be strengthened among the myrrhs, that is, among unfruitful trees that delight in fragrance alone? I think that those who delight in fragrance alone, and do not yet bear the fruits of faith, are those whom Paul names in writing to the Corinthians, whom he calls: "Those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place of theirs and of ours.

⁴⁶ Insofar, then, as they call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, they have within themselves a certain sweetness of fragrance from the very invocation of the name. But insofar as they do not approach the faith with all confidence and freedom, they bear no fruits of faith. In this passage we may understand the catechumens of the Church, upon whom the churches are in some part strengthened. For they too have within themselves no little confidence and very much hope that they also may one day become fruit-bearing trees and be planted in the paradise of God by the Father himself, the husbandman. For it is he who plants trees of this sort in the Church of Christ, which is the paradise of delights: as the Lord also says, "Every planting which my heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. The Church, therefore, is surrounded among the ash-trees and rests upon them. And what ash-trees are those souls to be reckoned which are daily renewed unto the image of him who created them. For because through their renewal the sons of God restore the image, deservedly they too are called ash-trees, since their bridegroom himself was also said above to be "as an ash-tree among the trees of the wood. And do not wonder if this same one is called both the tree of life and various other things, since the same is also named the true bread, and the true vine, and the Lamb of God, and many other things.

⁴⁷ For the Word of God becomes all these things to each one, according as the measure or the desire of the partaker demands: even as the manna also, though it was a single food, yet rendered to each one the flavor of his own desire. He offers himself, then, not only as bread to the hungry and wine to the thirsty, but also, to those who wish to take delight, he presents himself as

fragrant fruits. Therefore the bride, as though now refreshed and well fed, asks to be supported among the ash-trees, knowing that in the Word there is for her not only every food, but also every delight: and among these especially she ranges to and fro, while she feels herself wounded by the darts of love. If there is anywhere anyone who has ever burned with this faithful love of God, if there is anyone who, as the prophet says, has received the sweet wound and the blow of his chosen dart, if there is anyone who has been pierced by the lovely spear of his knowledge, so that he sighs for him with longings by day and by night, is able to speak of nothing else, is unwilling to hear anything else, knows not how to think of anything else, and finds no pleasure in desiring or coveting or hoping for anything besides him: that soul deservedly says, "I am wounded by love";

⁴⁸ and I received the wound from him of whom Isaiah says, "And he set me as a chosen dart, and in his quiver he hid me. With such a wound does it befit God to strike souls, with such darts and spears to transfix them, and to wound them with saving wounds: so that, because God is love, they too may say, "For I am wounded by love. And indeed in this, as it were, love-drama the bride says that she has received the wounds of love: but likewise a soul fervent toward the wisdom of God can say, "I am wounded by wisdom," namely that soul which was able to gaze upon the beauty of his wisdom. And another soul, beholding the magnificence of his power and admiring the might of the Word of God, can say, "I am wounded by his power. Such a one, I believe, was she who said, "The Lord is my light and my savior, whom shall I fear? But another soul too, fervent toward the love of his justice, and beholding the justice of his dispensations and of his providence, says without doubt, "I am wounded by his justice. And another, regarding the immensity of his goodness and mercy, speaks likewise. But this wound of love, by which the bride proclaims herself wounded, is the general one of all these. Yet it must be known that, just as there are these darts of God, which inflict upon the soul that has a desire of good things the wound of salvation:

⁴⁹ so also there are the fiery darts of the evil one, by which the soul that is not protected by the shield of faith is wounded unto death. Of these the prophet says: "Behold, the sinners have bent the bow, they have prepared their arrows in their quiver, to shoot in the dark the upright of heart. Here he calls the invisible demons "sinners shooting from concealment," and they are the ones who have certain darts of fornication, others of covetousness

and avarice, by which very many are wounded. They also have shafts of boastfulness and vainglory: but these are exceedingly subtle, so that the soul scarcely feels itself transfixed and wounded by them, unless it is clothed with the armor of God and stands watchful and immovable against the wiles of the devil, covering itself on every side with the shield of faith, and leaving absolutely no part of the body bare of faith. But however many weapons the demons may fashion, if they find the mind of a man fortified with faith, even though they be fiery, even though they burn with the flames of lusts and the conflagrations of vices, faith when full extinguishes them all.

50 » His left hand is under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me
« 51 This is indeed the description of a love-drama hastening toward the marriage of bridegroom and bride, and it runs its course, as it were, in rather more openly bodily terms of the body. But turn yourself more swiftly to the life-giving Spirit, and, fleeing from bodily terms, look closely at what the left hand of the Word of God may be, what the right hand, and also what the head of his bride — that is, of the perfect soul, or of the Church — and do not let a carnal and passible understanding sweep you away. For here this is the right hand and left hand of the bridegroom, which is spoken of concerning Wisdom in the Proverbs, where it says: "For length of life is in her right hand, and in her left hand are riches and glory. And just as here you will not therefore suppose Wisdom to be some woman because she seems to be called by a feminine name, so neither in this case, because the Word of God as bridegroom is spoken of in the masculine gender, ought you to understand his left hand or his right hand in a bodily way, or to perceive the embraces of the bride according to the feminine gender of the "soul";

52 but the Word of God — although among the Greeks it is uttered in the masculine, and among us in the neuter gender — is nevertheless to be conceived, in these matters of which we speak, as being above the masculine and neuter and feminine gender, and above absolutely everything that has regard to this: and not only the Word of God, but also his Church, and the perfect soul, which is likewise named the bride. For so also the Apostle says: "For in Christ there is neither male nor female, but we are all one in him. Now these things are set down, on account of men who cannot hear otherwise except by these words which are in common use, after the manner of human speech in the divine Scripture: so that we may hear them indeed by known and customary words, yet may understand them with that meaning

which is worthy of divine and incorporeal realities. For just as he who says that he is a lover of the beauty of wisdom shows this — that he has transferred the natural affection of love which is in him to the pursuits of wisdom — so also here the bride, whether the soul or the Church, demands that her bridegroom, who is the Word of God, may with his left hand support her head, and with his right hand embrace and hold fast all the rest of her body. Now the left hand is that in which Wisdom is said to contain riches and glory.

⁵³ But what riches has the Church, and what glory, except those which she has received from him who, though he was rich, was made poor, that by his poverty the Church might be made rich? And what is the glory? That, without doubt, of which he says: "Father, glorify thy Son" — designating, without doubt, the glory of the Passion. Therefore faith in the Passion of Christ is the glory and riches of the Church, which are contained in his left hand. And the left hand of the Word of God I think ought to be understood in this way: since indeed there are in him certain dispensations enacted before the Incarnation, and there are also some enacted through the Incarnation. That part of the Word of God which was accomplished in the dispensations before the assumption of flesh can be seen as the right hand; but this which was accomplished through the Incarnation may be called the left hand. Whence too the left hand is said to have riches and glory. For through the Incarnation he sought riches and glory — namely, the salvation of all. But in the right hand is said to be length of life: by which, without doubt, is indicated that part of him which in the beginning was with God, God the Word — its everlastingness. This left hand, then, the Church, whose head is Christ, desires to have under her head, and to have her head fortified by faith in his Incarnation;

⁵⁴ but to be embraced by his right hand — that is, to acknowledge and to be instructed in those things which, even before the time of this dispensation carried out through the flesh, are held in secret and hidden places. For there all things are to be thought of as being the right hand, where nothing is contained of the miseries of sins, nothing of the fall of frailty. But the left hand is where he healed our wounds and bore our sins, being himself made sin and a curse for us. All which things, although they support the head and the faith of the Church, will nevertheless rightly be called the left hand of the Word of God. In which he is also recorded to have endured certain

things beyond that nature which is wholly the right hand, and wholly light, splendor, and glory. ⁵⁵ » I have adjured you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the powers and by the strengths of the field, that you lift up and awaken love, until it please «

⁵⁶ The bride still speaks to the young maidens, urging them and exhorting them, indeed even adjuring them by those things which she knows to be dear and lovely to them, so that if perhaps they have begun to lift up love — which lies, as it were, dormant within them — and to rouse it, being still asleep among them, they may lift it up and rouse it up only so far as the bridegroom shall will, and may do nothing in it less than his will allows. For this is the perfection of the loving bride: that she wills that nothing be done by anyone contrary to the mind and will of him whom she loves. And that they may do this neither negligently nor sluggishly, they are adjured by the powers of the field — that is, by the seedlings and shrubs that are in the field — and by its strengths, doubtless by the things that have been sown in it. In such an order and such a composition of words is the text of the historical drama set forth. Now, then, let us seek out what secret it conceals within. Every soul is, above all, a daughter of Jerusalem, one that has a certain field of its own, which has been conferred upon it by a certain secret allotment of merits through Jesus. Such was also that field of Jacob, by whose sweetness the patriarch Isaac, moved, said in mystical utterances:

⁵⁷ "Behold, the smell of my son is like the smell of a full field, which the Lord has blessed. Each soul, therefore, as we have said, has its own field; for so also is its manner of life, which is its field. In this field the soul which is loving and zealous for the Word labors much and strives to plant good perceptions, and to cultivate all the virtues of the mind — and not only the virtues of the mind, but also the strengths of works, by which, namely, the ministries of the commandments may be fulfilled. There is therefore, as we have said, to each soul its own field which it cultivates and plants and sows according to those things which we have said. But there is also of all the daughters of Jerusalem together one certain and common field, of which Paul says: "You are God's husbandry. Let us take this field to be the common exercise of ecclesiastical faith and manner of life, in which it is certain that there are heavenly powers, the strengths of spiritual graces. For each single soul which is here now called a daughter of Jerusalem, knowing that it has for its mother the heavenly Jerusalem, must needs contribute something to-

ward the cultivation of this field, and desire that it be made worthy of a heavenly possession.

⁵⁸ In the powers, then, of this field, the Church declares that the love of Christ is lifted up and roused by the young maidens who have the beginnings of faith, and she says to them: If you lift up and rouse love until it please; that is, if you have now come to this, that you begin to be led not by the spirit of fear but by that of adoption, and have so advanced in this that perfect love within you casts out fear, and so that you lift up and exalt love within you and rouse it — then lift it up for so long, and exalt it for so long, as the son of love himself shall will, nay rather, as he himself shall will who is of God, love itself; lest perchance, thinking that the measures of human love suffice, you should do toward God, in the love of God, something less than is worthy. For this alone is the measure of love: that one be loved only as much as he himself wills; but the will of God is always the same, and is never changed. Never, therefore, is any change, or any end, admitted in the love of God. It is indeed to be noted that she did not say, if you receive love, but if you lift it up — as being something that is indeed within you, but lies and is not yet raised up.

⁵⁹ And she did not say, if you find, but if you rouse love — as being something that is indeed within, but lies and sleeps in them, until it finds one to awaken it. This same love, I believe, Paul too was awakening, then still sleeping in the disciples, when he said: "Rise up, you who sleep, and you shall touch Christ." ⁶⁰ » The voice of my kinsman « ⁶¹ It is fitting that we frequently remind ourselves that this little book is woven together in the manner of a drama. For the present little verse that we have set before us indicates something of this kind: that whereas the bride's speech had been addressed to the young maidens, the daughters of Jerusalem, suddenly, as though from afar, she perceived the voice of the bridegroom speaking with certain others, and, breaking off the speech she was making to the maidens, the bride turned her ear to the sound that had reached her, and said: The voice of my kinsman. Now understand the bridegroom to have been recognized by the bride at first, before he appeared to her eyes, by his voice alone; but after this to have appeared also to her sight, leaping upon certain mountains near to that place in which the bride was staying, and passing over the hills and mountains with certain great strides—or rather not so much strides as bounds—in the manner of a stag or a goat, and thus coming to his bride

with all haste. But when he arrived at the house within which the bride was dwelling, understand that he stood for a little while behind the house, in such a way that he was indeed perceived to be present, yet did not yet wish to enter the house openly and evidently, but first, as under the guise of a lover, wished to gaze upon the bride through the windows.

⁶² Understand further that certain nets and snares had been set near the bride's house, so that if perchance she herself, or any of her companions among the daughters of Jerusalem, should at some time go out, she might be caught. And it is certain that the bridegroom came to these nets: and since he could not be caught by them, but, being made stronger than they, he tore the nets themselves apart, and, treading upon them, passed over; and after he had accomplished this work, he says: Arise, come, my near one, my bride; and this he says in order that by the very deed he may show her how she ought with confidence to despise the nets which the enemy had stretched out for her, and not to seek out those which she had already seen to be torn asunder by him. And still further, to rouse the bride the more to hasten to him, he says to her: Since all the time that seemed burdensome has passed, and the winter which seemed to have arisen as a cause of trouble for her has departed, and the useless rains have gone away, and now the time of flowering has come, delay not at all to set out upon the journey of coming to me. For behold, the farmers too, because the springtime has now smiled forth, are tending the vines; and the sound now of other birds, now also the pleasing note of the turtledove in springtime, is heard.

⁶³ But the fig tree also, in the sure mildness of spring, has put forth its bud; and the vines indeed so little doubt the calm of the season that they now dare to bring forth their flowers and their fragrance. These things indeed let him say to the bride concerning the calm of the season, that she may dare with greater confidence to seize the journey of proceeding to the bridegroom. But he also describes to her the place in which he wishes her to rest with him; and he says that by the covering of a certain rock which is adjacent to the wall itself, or serves in place of a wall, a most shady place is formed; and to this place he wishes her to come, and, the covering being removed, there to behold her unveiled face, so that face to face she may become known to her bridegroom, and that the bridegroom may not only see her face unveiled and clear, but may there also hear her voice, being now assured both that her face is beautiful and that her voice is sweet and delight-

ful. These things we have joined together by anticipation, lest we should seem to interrupt the order of the drama and the thread of the narrative. But by anticipating a little we have carried forward the order of the story up to that place where he says: For your voice is sweet, your face is comely. Now therefore, taking it up again, let us see first what it is that he says:

⁶⁴ The voice of my kinsman. By his voice alone Christ is first recognized by his Church. For first he sent forth his voice beforehand through the prophets, and though he was not seen, yet he was heard. And he was heard through those things which were announced concerning him: and for so long the bride, that is, the Church which was being gathered together from the beginning of the age, heard his voice alone, until she should see him with her own eyes, and say: ⁶⁵ » Behold, here he comes leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills « ⁶⁶ For he was leaping upon the prophetic mountains and the holy hills — those, that is, who in this world bore his image and form. But even if you place him among the apostles, as one already leaping upon the mountains and towering above all men, and upon the hills, it will nonetheless be not unfitting to apply it to those who were chosen and sent by him in the second rank. For among these he is made "like a roe and a fawn of the harts": like a roe, because his voice excels all sight; and like a hart, because he comes for the destruction of the serpent. But every single soul — if indeed there be any that is bound fast by love of the Word of God — whenever it is set within a debate of discourse, as everyone knows who has experienced how it is when one is brought into a tight place and hemmed in by the straits of propositions and questions; whenever the riddles or the obscure sayings of the Law and the prophets shut it in, then, if perchance the soul should feel him present and receive from afar the sound of his voice, it is at once lifted up; and when he begins more and more to draw near to its senses and to illuminate the things that are obscure, then it sees him leaping upon the mountains and hills — suggesting to it, that is, the lofty and exalted meanings of understanding:

⁶⁷ so that this soul may with good reason say, "Behold, here he comes leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. Now we say this not forgetting that already in the preceding passages he has spoken to the bride while set present before her: but because, as we have often said, this little book contains the form of a drama, some things are now said as to one present, and some also as to one absent; and thus the interchange of persons

is carried on, so that either order may be seen fittingly to proceed. For although the bridegroom promises and says to his bride — that is, to those who are his chosen disciples — "Behold, I am with you all the days even unto the consummation of the age"; yet again through parables he says that "a householder called his servants, and distributed to each one money for the sake of trading, and set out on a journey. And again he says, "That he went away to seek for himself a kingdom. And again it is said as of an absent bridegroom, that "at midnight a cry arose of those who said that the bridegroom cometh. Thus, therefore, now the bridegroom is present and teaches, now he is said to be absent and is longed for; and each will aptly suit either the Church or the soul. For when the Church is permitted to suffer persecutions and tribulations, he seems to her to be absent.

⁶⁸ And again, when she advances in peace and is established in faith and good works, he is understood to be present. But the soul too, when it seeks some meaning and desires to recognize the obscure and hidden things, so long as it cannot find them, the Word of God is without doubt absent from it. But when what is sought comes to meet it and appears, who doubts that the Word of God is present, and illuminates the mind and affords it the light of knowledge? And again we feel him withdrawn from us and again present, through each of the several things that are either opened or closed within our senses. And this we endure up to the point at which we are made such that he deigns not only to visit us again, but even to remain with us — according to what he answered when asked by a certain disciple who said: "Lord, how is it that thou beginnest to manifest thyself to us, and not to this world? The Savior replied: "If any man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him. If therefore we too wish to see the Word of God and the bridegroom of the soul leaping upon the mountains and exulting over the hills, let us first hear his voice;

⁶⁹ and when we have heard him in all things, then we shall also be able to see him, according to those things whereby the bride in the present passage is described as having seen him. For she too, although she had also seen him before, had nevertheless not seen him as now, leaping upon the mountains and bounding over the hills, nor bending down through her windows, nor looking forth through the lattices, but rather it seems that she had seen him before in the time of winter. For now she says to him for the first time, "That

the winter is past. Therefore, as it indicates, he appears to the bride even through the winter — that is, in the time of tribulations and temptations. But there is also that other visitation, in which she is visited a little, and again forsaken, that she may be proved, and again is sought, that her head may be sustained, and that she may be wholly embraced, lest perchance she either waver in faith, or her body be weighed down by the burden of temptations. And therefore it seems to me that that was the time of winter, when she was begging that her head — that is, the summit of faith — be held up by the bridegroom's left hand, and that his right hand embrace her whole body. But now this vision, which appears from the mountains and hills, designates, I think, the heights and powers of spiritual graces.

⁷⁰ And that he is said to look forth through the windows seems to me to afford light to the senses. And the nets which he breaks apart and shatters, I think, indicate the diabolical snares, inasmuch as it is now, as it were, when the winter of temptations is over and done. There are shown also the signs of spring and summer, as it is said in the Psalms: "The summer and the spring, thou hast made them. Thence at last the Church has also brought forth the flowers of the perfect, the temptations being overcome, and the dispensation of pruning being accomplished, as will be shown in its own places when we come to discourse upon these things. ⁷¹ » Behold, here he comes leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills « ⁷² We have already followed out the historical sense; but now we must consider how Christ, in coming to the Church, leaps upon the mountains and bounds over the hills. For "bounding" rather than "passing over" belongs more properly to the sense of the passage before us. Isaac, indeed, as he walked and advanced, kept growing greater, until he became very great. But Paul made his progress no longer by walking, but by running, when he says: "I have finished the course. Yet our Savior, the Bridegroom of the Church, is said neither to walk nor to run, but to leap and to bound over these things. For if you consider how in a brief span of time the Word of God ran through a world held captive by false superstitions, and recalled it to the acknowledgment of the true faith, you will understand how he leaps upon the mountains — surmounting, that is, by his leaps whatever great kingdoms there are, and bending them to receive the knowledge of the divine religion; and how he bounds over the hills, when he swiftly subdues even the lesser kingdoms and brings them to the piety of true worship; and thus, passing from place to place, from kingdom to kingdom,

from province to province by the illumination of his preaching — through him who said that "from Jerusalem round about even unto Illyricum he had filled up the Gospel of God" — you will understand how he comes leaping upon the mountains and bounding over the hills.

⁷³ But it can also be understood in another way, as we have already said above, since indeed Moses wrote of him, and the prophets likewise proclaimed him. Yet this proclamation, in the reading of the Old Testament, has a veil laid over it: but where, for the bride — the Church, that is, once she has turned to him — the veil has been removed, she suddenly sees him leaping upon those mountains, namely the volumes of the Law, and upon the hills of the prophetic Scripture, not so much appearing as bounding forth into evident manifestation; as if, for example, unrolling the several pages of the prophetic reading, she were to find Christ bounding forth out of them, and, the veil by which he was before covered being now at last removed, through the several passages of the readings she might behold him bubbling up and emerging and now breaking forth into evident manifestation. For this reason, I believe, Jesus himself, when he came to be transfigured, was not in any plain or valley, but climbed a mountain, where he was also transfigured; that you may know that he always appears on mountains or on hills, and that he may teach you not to seek him anywhere save on the mountains of the Law and the prophets. And that the saints, each of them, are called mountains, you will find indicated in many places of Scripture, as it says in the Psalms: "His foundations are in the holy mountains. And again:

⁷⁴ "I have lifted up my eyes unto the mountains, whence help shall come to me. For in tribulations we take our help from the meanings of the divine Scriptures. We may still further take the mountains upon which the Word of God is said to leap, and, as it were, to be borne along more freely, to be the New Testament; but the hills, from which, as though long pent up and concealed, he bounds forth, to signify the volumes of the Old Testament. Moreover, in Jeremiah too the hunters and fishers who are sent to catch men unto salvation are said to catch them on the mountains and hills; for thus he says: "Behold, I send many fishers, and many hunters, and they shall catch them upon every mountain and upon every hill. Which I think is rather to be fulfilled in the time to come, at the consummation of the age, so that when the angels have been sent, according to the Gospel parable, at the time

of harvest to separate the wheat from the tares, whoever is of a loftier life and of a more eminent conversation may be found either on the mountains or on the hills. He will not be found in low and abject places, lest there he seem to be mingled with the tares: but placed among the loftier meanings, and in the eminence of faith, ever cleaving to the Word of God as it leaps upon the mountains and bounds upon the hills.

⁷⁵ And this very thing is said, likewise by another parable but with the same meaning, in the Gospel: "He that is on the housetop, let him not come down to take anything out of the house. This most rich saying of the present verse can still suggest yet another sense to us. For it is possible that everyone also who believes in God with full faith may be called either a mountain or a hill, according, that is, to the quality of his life and the greatness of his understanding; and even if he was at some time a valley, as Jesus advances in age, and wisdom, and grace, "every valley shall be filled. But all the proud and lofty, like mountains and hills, shall be humbled: since "whosoever exalteth himself shall be humbled, and whosoever humbleth himself shall be exalted. For of these it is said: "They that trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion," and of Jerusalem it is said: "The mountains are round about it. Whence I think that with good reason our Savior also — since he too is called "a stone cut out of a mountain without hands," and is said to have become "a great mountain," even as King of kings and High Priest of high priests — may also be called Mountain of mountains. But that a third exposition too may have its place, let the word be directed to each individual soul.

⁷⁶ If there be any who are more capable of receiving the word of God, who have drunk of the water given them by Jesus, and it has become in them "a fountain of living water springing up unto life eternal" — in those, namely, in whom the word of God bubbles up with frequent and abundant meanings, as with perennial streams; in these, made worthily mountains and hills of life and knowledge and doctrine, the word of God is most fittingly said to leap and to bound, having become in them, by the affluence of doctrine, "a fountain of living water springing up unto life eternal." ⁷⁷ » My brother is like a roe, and to the fawn of the stags upon the mountains of Bethel « ⁷⁸ That the roe and the stag are reckoned among the clean animals is plainly shown by what is written in Deuteronomy, for it is written in this manner: "For these are the animals which you shall eat: the calf, and the lamb from the flocks, and the he-goat from among the goats, the stag and

the roe, and the buffalo and the tragelaph, and the ibex, the camel and the leopard. But that a holy person is also compared to a stag is found in many passages of divine Scripture, as in the Psalm, where it says: "As the stag longs for the fountains of waters, so my soul longs for you, O God. Yet in the words which we have taken from Deuteronomy, this too seems worthy of no careless consideration: what dignity of order he observed in enumerating the clean animals, that first he should write of the calf, second the lamb, third the he-goat. But among those which, according to the same Moses, are not offered at the altar, he names first the stag, second the roe; and so after these he describes the remaining animals in order. The reason for these things will become clear and evident to those to whom a more abundant spiritual grace has been granted in the gift of knowledge through the Holy Spirit.

⁷⁹ Meanwhile, since it now falls to us in the exposition of the present verse to speak of the stag and the roe, it seems fitting to gather together, so far as we are able, from the divine Scriptures the things that are related of these animals — of which the same Moses, when he was speaking of the flesh that might be eaten in every desire of the soul, not offered at the altar, said, "like the roe and the stag. And the twenty-eighth Psalm says something excellent, where, writing in order of the powers and efficacy of the voice of God, it says of the stag in this manner: "The voice of the Lord perfecting the stags," that is, making the stags perfect, "and he will reveal the thickets. For just as the voice of the Lord is said to cut through the flame of fire, and to shake the desert, so it is recorded to perfect the stags and to reveal the thickets. But in Job also we find it related thus of the stag, where the Lord, speaking to Job through the whirlwind and the cloud, says: "Or have you observed the bringing forth of the stags, or numbered their months full unto the birth, and loosed their pains, or nourished their young, or will you send forth their offspring without pains? Their young will break away, and be multiplied in birth; they will go out, and not return? To these must also be joined those things which we read in the Proverbs in this manner:

⁸⁰ "The stag of friendships, and the foal of graces, speaks to you. These, for the present, are the things concerning the stag that could come to us as written. Which we have taken up for this purpose, that we may speak not in the teaching of human wisdom, but in the teaching of the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. And therefore let us call upon God the Father of the Word, that he may manifest to us the mysteries of his Word, and re-

move our understanding from the teaching of human wisdom, and exalt and lift it up to the teaching of the Spirit, so that we may speak not those things which carnal hearing perceives, but those things which the will of the Holy Spirit contains. Paul the apostle teaches us that the invisible things of God are understood from the visible things, and that those things which are not seen are contemplated by reason and likeness from those things which are seen; showing by this that this visible world teaches concerning the invisible, and that this earthly arrangement contains certain patterns of the heavenly things; so that from these things which are below we may be able to ascend to those which are above, and from those things which we see on earth may perceive and understand those things which are held in the heavens. To some likeness of these, that through them the diversities might more easily be gathered and perceived, the Creator gave a likeness of the creatures which are on earth.

⁸¹ And perhaps, just as God made man to his own image and likeness, so also he founded the other creatures by likeness to certain other heavenly images; and perhaps each single thing that is on earth has so much of an image and likeness in the heavenly things, that even the grain of mustard seed, which is least of all seeds, has something of an image and likeness in the heavens; and this — that such a certain alternation of nature is compounded for it, that though it be the least of all seeds, it becomes greater than all herbs, so that the birds of heaven can come and dwell in its branches — bears a likeness not only of some heavenly image, but of the very kingdom of heaven itself. So then it is possible that the other seeds too which are on earth may have something of likeness and reason in the heavenly things. But if the seeds, then without doubt the shrubs too; and if the shrubs, then without doubt the living creatures too, whether of the winged, or the creeping, or the four-footed. But this also can further be understood:

⁸² that just as the grain of mustard seed holds not one single likeness of the kingdom of heaven and of the dwelling of the birds in its branches, but has also another likeness or image, namely of the perfection of faith — so that if anyone should have faith like a grain of mustard seed, he may say to the mountain, "Remove yourself," and it will remove — so it is possible that the others too may bear the appearance and image of the heavenly things not in some one respect, but in many. And whereas there are, for example, several powers in the grain of mustard seed which hold images of heavenly

things, that is its last and furthest use which is held among men in bodily service. So also may it be understood in the rest, whether seeds, or shrubs, or roots of herbs, or even in living creatures; that they indeed provide bodily service and use to men, but have the forms and images of incorporeal things by which the soul may be taught, and instructed to contemplate those things also which are invisible and heavenly. And this, perhaps, is what that writer of divine wisdom says:

⁸³ "For he himself gave me the true knowledge of the things that are, so that I might know the substance of the world, and the powers of the elements, the beginning, and the end, and the middle of the times, the changes of the vicissitudes, and the conversions of the seasons, and the circles of the year, and the positions of the stars, the natures of animals, and the rages of beasts, the violences of the winds, and the thoughts of men, the differences of shrubs, and the powers of roots; and whatsoever things are hidden and manifest, I have known. See therefore whether from these words of Scripture we may be able to gather more lucidly and evidently the things which we have proposed to examine. For this writer of divine wisdom, when he had enumerated each single thing, said at the last that he had received the knowledge of the hidden and the manifest things: showing without doubt that each one of those things which are in the manifest is referred to some one of those things which are in the hidden; that is, that each single visible thing has something of likeness and reason to the invisible things. Since therefore it is impossible for a man living in the flesh to know anything of the hidden and invisible things, unless he has conceived some image and likeness from the visible things;

⁸⁴ for this reason I think that he who made all things in wisdom so created each single kind of visible things on earth, that in them he might place a certain teaching and knowledge of the invisible and heavenly things; whereby through these the human mind might ascend to spiritual understanding, and might seek the causes of things in the heavenly places, so that, taught through the wisdom of God, it might itself also be able to say: "The things that are in the hidden, and the things that are in the manifest, I have known. According to these things also it knows the substance of the world, not only this visible and corporeal one, which is open to view, but also that incorporeal and invisible one which is in the hidden. It knows also the elements of the world, not only the visible, but also the invisible, and the

powers of both. But also the beginning which it speaks of, and the end, and the middle of the times: it speaks indeed of the beginning of the visible world, which Moses designates as no beginning before six full thousands of years; the middle also according to the reckoning of times, and that end which is hoped for when heaven and earth shall pass away. But according to the knowledge of the hidden things, it speaks of that beginning which he understands whom the wisdom of God shall teach, which no times, no ages, can comprehend. And the middle, those things which now are;

⁸⁵ but the end, those things which are to come, that is, the perfection and consummation of the universe, which nevertheless can be conjectured and understood from these visible things. But also the changes of the vicissitudes, and the conversions of the seasons, the circle of the year — from those things which are seen it refers to the invisible changes and vicissitudes of corporeal things. The circles too of the temporal and present years it refers to certain more ancient and everlasting years, according to him who said: "And I had the eternal years in mind. But also the positions of the stars he did not hesitate to refer from those things which are openly seen to those things which are in the hidden — of which hidden and manifest things he merited the knowledge; and he says that there is a certain race of holy ones which descends especially from the stock of Abraham, like the stars of heaven. But also he declared that the glory of the future resurrection is stars, according to the knowledge of the hidden things, following him who said: "One is the glory of the sun, and another of the stars. For star differs from star in glory; so also is the resurrection of the dead.

⁸⁶ Unless these things were understood according to this, that which he says — "The natures of animals, and the rages of beasts" — the Savior would never have said in the Gospels, "Tell that fox," nor would John have said of certain men, "Serpents, generation of vipers," nor again would the prophet say of some that they "became stallion horses," and likewise another: "Man, when he was in honor, did not understand; he was compared to the senseless beasts of burden, and was made like unto them. But he too diligently knew the rages of beasts who said: "Their fury is according to the likeness of a serpent, like the deaf asp, and stopping its ears. This will be the reasoning also concerning that which he says, "the violences of the winds": speaking visibly indeed of winds, and of the blasts of the air, but invisibly of the violences of unclean spirits, which Paul too named "winds of doctrine. After these it fol-

lows that he should know the thoughts of men: corporeally indeed those which proceed from the human heart, but invisibly he should understand those who cast into men evil and most wicked thoughts, as it is written in the Gospel: "When the devil had put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray the Lord. And in the Proverbs it is said: "If the spirit of one having power should rise up against you, do not forsake your place, for soundness restrains great sins. But there is also some author of good thoughts:

⁸⁷ on account of which I think it is written in the Psalms too: "Blessed is the man whose help is from you, O Lord; he has disposed ascents in his heart. And again: "The thought of man shall confess to you, and the remnants of thought shall keep a feast day to you. Thus therefore all things, according to those things which we have said before, can be referred from the visible to the invisible, and from the corporeal to the incorporeal, and from the manifest to the hidden, so that the very creature of the world may be understood to have been founded by a certain dispensation through the divine wisdom, which by the very things and examples may teach us the invisible from the visible, and transfer us from the earthly to the heavenly. But these reckonings are not only held in all creatures, but the divine Scripture too has been written with a certain such art of wisdom. For on account of certain hidden and mystical things, the people is visibly led out of Egypt, and makes its way through the earthly deserts, where there was the biting serpent, and the scorpion, and where there were no waters, and the other things which are related to have been done in these places. All which things, as we have said, hold the forms and images of certain hidden things. And not only in the scriptures of the ancients, but also in the deeds of our Lord and Savior which are related in the Gospels, will you find this.

⁸⁸ Therefore, if all things which are in the manifest are, according to those things which we have approved above, referred to certain things which are in the hidden, it follows without doubt that this visible stag, or roe, which is written of in the Song of Songs, is, according to the reckoning of its nature which they bear corporeally, referred to certain causes of incorporeal things, so that to those hidden and invisible stags it may seem able to apply what was said: "The voice of the Lord perfecting the stags. For what perfection comes from the voice of the Lord to these visible stags? Or what teaching ever descended to them from the voice of the Lord? But if we seek spiritual stags, whose form and image that corporeal animal holds, you may find

that they can be led to the height of perfection from the voice of the Lord. But also of what stags it was fitting that the Lord should guard the young, and that it was proper for him to stand by, as one providing the offices of healing, to the ones giving birth, until they should bring forth such offspring as would oppose and persecute the race of serpents — as is worthy already of the divine majesty, we ought to observe of what sort of stags it befits God to guard the young, lest they fall into miscarriage;

⁸⁹ but also to number their months full unto the birth, and to keep their labors and pains, so that their generations may not fall in vain, but that their birth may be perfect, and that they may travail so long until Christ be formed in them. The young of stags of this kind the Lord nourishes — of those, that is, who cast their thought upon the Lord, that he himself may nourish them, and he himself may guard the pains of their birth, when out of the fear of God they have conceived in the womb, and travailed, and brought forth the spirit of salvation. The pains of birth of this kind the Lord himself guards and cares for. But he also sends forth their pains, that going they may go, and weep bearing their seeds, and be in the pains of men and be scourged with men, lest perhaps pride hold them. These same stags also break away, as he says, their young. For those whom they have begotten through the Gospel, they break away from the bonds of sins, and from the snares of the devil, that they may no longer be held bound to their will. These too shall be multiplied, and, as he says, shall not return. For they will not imitate the wife of Lot, they will not go back behind. For they know that he who puts his hand to the plow, if he looks back, will not be fit for the kingdom of heaven;

⁹⁰ but they always forget the things that are behind, and reach forth to the things that are before them. For such stags the voice of the Lord makes to be perfect. Which voice of the Lord, but that which is held in the law and in the prophets, and reached even unto John, who was the voice of one crying in the desert? For the very voice of John, who said, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God," made stags perfect, that they might be perfect in the same understanding and in the same knowledge. For he who is such rightly says: "As the stag longs for the fountains of waters, so my soul longs for you, O God. And who else will the stag of friendships seem to be but he who slew that serpent which had seduced Eve, and, pouring into her the poisons of sin by the blasts of his speech, had infected all the off-

spring of posterity with the contagion of transgression: and had come to loose in his own flesh the enmities which the harmful mediator had wrought between God and man? But the foal of graces can be taken as the Holy Spirit, from whom those thirsting and desiring God obtain spiritual graces and heavenly gifts. But all these things have been said by us so that the cause might become more manifest by which the bride seems to compare her brother to the fawn of stags.

⁹¹ But if this too must be inquired — why he is compared not, as elsewhere, to a stag, but to the fawn of stags — consider this: that though he was in the form of God, a son was given to us, and a child was born to us, whose power is upon his shoulder. Therefore, then, the fawn of stags, because a little child was born. And perhaps the stags can be taken as all the holy ones, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and David, and Solomon, and all from whose seed Christ descended according to the flesh. Which stags the voice of the Lord makes perfect, and theirs is this fawn, who was born from them according to the flesh as a child. That also moves me which is written in the hundred and third Psalm, where it says: "The high mountains for the stags. And indeed of the stags we have already said above that all the holy ones are taken, who for this reason came into this world, that they might destroy the poisons of the serpent. But let us see what the high mountains may be, as being those which seem set apart for the stags alone, and to which none unless he be some stag can ascend. I think that he called the persons of the Trinity the high mountains, to whose capacity none ascends unless he be made a stag.

⁹² But those same which here are called "high mountains" in the plural, are in other places called "a high mountain" in the singular; as Isaiah says: "Ascend upon a high mountain, you who bring good tidings to Zion. Lift up your voice in strength, you who bring good tidings to Jerusalem. For the same which there is a Trinity on account of the distinction of the persons, is here understood as one God on account of the unity of substance. Let these things suffice concerning the fawn of stags. Now let us see how the brother is also compared to the roe or the little doe. This animal, as far as the Greek words are concerned, has obtained its name from seeing and from looking forth more clearly. And who is there who so sees as Christ sees? For he alone is the one who sees, that is, who knows the Father. For even if those who are pure of heart are said to be about to see God, they will see him, without

doubt, by his own revealing, since the roe too has in its nature that it not only itself sees and beholds most keenly, but also provides sight to others. For those who have skill in medicine assert that there is within the entrails of this animal a certain humor which drives away the dimness of the eyes, and sharpens the more dull sights.

⁹³ Rightly therefore is Christ compared to the roe or the little doe, because he not only himself sees the Father, but also makes him to be seen by others, whose sight he himself has cured. But observe, lest hearing that the Father is seen, you should perceive something corporeal, and think God visible. The sight by which God is seen is not of the body, but of the mind, and of the spirit. Which the Savior himself also, distinguishing it in the Gospel by its proper word, said: "No one sees the Father except the Son. Finally, to those also whom he makes to see God, he gives the spirit of knowledge, and the spirit of wisdom, that through that spirit they may see God. And therefore he said to the disciples that "he who sees me, sees the Father also. And surely we will not be so foolish as to think that whoever saw him according to the body also saw the Father: otherwise the Scribes too, and the Pharisees, and the hypocrites, and Pilate who struck him with scourges, and all the people who cried, "Crucify, crucify him," seeing Jesus according to the flesh, would also have seen God the Father. Which surely seems to be not only absurd, but also impious.

⁹⁴ For just as, when the crowds were pressing him as he went with the disciples, none of those who pressed and crushed him is said to have touched him, except that woman alone who came suffering a flow of blood and touched the fringe of his garment, and to her alone he bears testimony, saying, "Someone touched me, for I felt power go forth from me"; so also, when there were many who saw him, none is said to have seen him, except he who knew that he is the Word of God and the Son of God: in whom, surely, the Father is said at once to be known and to be seen. But let this also not escape us, that first he is compared to the roe, and now to the fawn of stags, though surely the stag seems a larger animal than the roe. But consider whether rather this reckoning is to be held in these things: that since the salvation of believers consists in two ways, through the knowledge of faith and the perfection of works, the reckoning of faith — which, as we have said, is compared to the roe on account of the gaze and inspection of contemplation — is held to be the first grade of salvation; but in the second place is recorded

the perfection of works, which holds the form of the stag conquering and destroying the poisons of serpents, that is, the diabolical arts.

⁹⁵ If therefore the bride says that her brother is like a roe, or the fawn of stags, upon the mountains of Bethel — and Bethel is interpreted "house of God" — then the mountains which are in the house of God can be taken as the volumes of the law and the prophets, but also the evangelical and apostolic ones, in which both the faith of God is perfected and contemplated, and the perfection of works is spoken of and fulfilled. ⁹⁶ » Behold, he stands here behind our wall, leaning over the windows, looking through the lattices. My kinsman answers, and says to me « ⁹⁷ When I consider the difficulties of investigating the meanings in these words that are set before us in the words of Scripture, I see that I suffer something like what happens to a man who advances to track down his prey with the sharp scent of a keen-nosed hound: where sometimes it is the custom that, when the hunter, intent upon the tracks, has thought himself to be near the quarry hidden in its lurking-places, suddenly he is disappointed of the indications of the tracks, and again, fixing the scent more firmly, he retraces backward the very paths he had opened up, until he finds the place at which the quarry, shaking itself loose more deeply, secretly betook itself to another path; and when the hunter has found this, he pursues it more eagerly, more certain in the hope of the prey, and more secure by the firmness of the track. So therefore we too, when the tracks of the explanation we have set before us have in a manner slipped away from us, retracing the little way we have measured out, and pursuing an order of exposition plainer than it seemed before, we hope that the Lord our God may deliver into our hands the prey which, when we have prepared it, and seasoned it according to the knowledge of our mother Rachel with the salt of the rational word, we may deserve to obtain the blessings from our spiritual father Jacob.

⁹⁸ On which account it seems necessary, as we have said, briefly to repeat what has been said, and to re-weave the earlier explanation, so that whatever meaning is clearer may be opened up. It seems to me, then, that from the beginning of the drama set before us the bride is to be understood as standing outside at a crossroads, and, on account of her love for the bridegroom, looking this way and that in case perhaps he should come to her, in case perhaps he should appear; and she is unwilling to set out on any road while she does not know from which direction he is more likely to come, and she

stands not at home but outside, and is driven by longing for him, and says: "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth"; but when the bridegroom comes, she says: "Your breasts are better than wine," and the rest, up to the place where she says: "We will run after you. After these things, being beloved and receiving from the bridegroom himself a return of love, she is led into his chamber, and says: "The king has brought me into his chamber. But also the rest of the things that are afterward written, she speaks placed within to the bridegroom, in the presence and attendance of the maidens of the bride and the companions of the bridegroom.

99 Yet the bridegroom is to be understood, inasmuch as he is a man, as not always in the house, nor always sitting beside the bride placed within the house: but he goes out frequently, and she, as if anxious with love for him, seeks him when absent; but at times too he returns to her. On which account, throughout the whole little book, the bridegroom is seen at one time to be sought as though absent, at another time to speak as though present with the bride. But the bride herself, when she had seen through many and magnificent things in the bridegroom's chamber, asks that she too be brought into the house of wine. And when, having entered there, she had perceived that the bridegroom, inasmuch as he is a man, had not remained in the house, she again, driven about by love for him, went outside, and going around she wanders about the house as she enters, and looks out on every side for when the bridegroom may return to her; and behold, suddenly she sees him coming down to the house in which the bride, anxious with love for him, is aflame, surpassing the ridges of the neighboring mountains with immense leaps. But when the bridegroom reaches the wall of the house, he stands for a little while behind it, considering, as usually happens, something, and turning it over in his mind.

100 But now, he too feeling something of love toward the bride, and using his own height, which reaches up to the windows of the house — which windows have some part of the work that is, as they say, of lattice — and then he leans indeed through the windows, but being taller than the windows, he reaches up to the upper parts of them, which are marked out, as we have said, with lattice-work, and looking out from there he addresses the bride, and says to her: 101 » Rise up, come, my neighbor, my beautiful one, my dove « 102 These are the matters which, as we indicated above, seemed to us to present the greatest difficulty both in setting the order straight and in

opening up their meaning. And this, I think, our present renewed investigation of the words will have rendered clearer. But the spiritual interpretation in these passages is not held to be so laborious and difficult. For the soul, the bride of the Word, which abides in the royal house — that is, in the Church — is taught by the Word of God, who is her Bridegroom, whatever things have been laid up and stored away within the royal hall and the king's chamber. In this house, which is the Church of the living God, she learns also the cellars of that wine which has been gathered from the holy winepresses — cellars of wine not only new but also old and sweet, which is the teaching of the law and the prophets. And when she has been sufficiently trained in these, she may receive into herself Him who was in the beginning with God, God the Word — yet He does not always remain with her, for this is not possible for human nature; but at one time she is visited by Him, and at another she is abandoned, so that she may desire Him the more.

103 And when she is visited by the Word of God according to the sense of the verse set before us, He is said to come to her leaping over the mountains — that is, revealing to her the lofty and elevated meanings of heavenly knowledge, so that He arrives even at the building up of the Church, which is the house of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth, and He stands beside the wall, or behind the wall, so that He is neither wholly hidden nor entirely out in the open. For the Word of God, and the discourse of knowledge, does not appear set out in public and openly, nor to be trampled underfoot; but when it has been sought, it is found, and it is found not, as we said, placed in the open, but covered over, and lying hidden as it were behind a wall. But the soul which is said to be in the Church is not understood to be set within buildings of walls, but placed within the defenses of faith and the buildings of wisdom, and covered over by the lofty summits of charity. Therefore a good resolve, and faith in right doctrines, makes the soul to be in the house of the Church; certain members of which house are called either the chamber, or the house of wine, or others of this kind, according, that is, to the grades of graces and the varieties of spiritual gifts.

104 So then the wall too is now a certain part of this house, which can signify the firmness of doctrines; beneath which the Bridegroom is said to stand, and in which He is so great and so lofty that He rises above the whole building, and looks upon the bride, that is, the soul; and not yet indeed does He show Himself open and wholly manifest to her, but, as it were looking

through the nets, He urges her on and provokes her not to sit within, sluggish, but to go out to Him without; and to strive so that now she may see Him not through windows and nets, nor through a mirror in a riddle, but going forth outside, face to face. For now, since she cannot yet gaze upon Him thus, He therefore stands not before her, but behind her and behind the wall. And He leans in through the windows, which without doubt lay open for the receiving of light to illuminate the house. Through these, then, the discourse of God, leaning in and looking through, provokes the soul to rise up and to come to Him. But we may understand the windows to be the bodily senses, through which either death or life enters into the soul; for so does it signify when the prophet Jeremiah speaks concerning sinners, saying: "Death has climbed up through your windows. How does death climb up through the windows?"

¹⁰⁵ If the eyes of a sinner should look upon a woman, and he should commit adultery with her in his heart, thus death has entered into the soul through the windows of the eyes. But also when someone receives an empty hearing, and especially of the false doctrines of perverse knowledge, then through the windows of the ears death enters into the soul. But if the soul, beholding the adornment of the world, and from the beauty of creatures perceiving God the Maker of all, should marvel at His works, and praise the Creator of the works, then life enters into the soul through the windows of the eyes. And also when it inclines its hearing to the Word of God, and delights in the reasonings of His wisdom and knowledge, to this soul, through the windows of the ears, the light of wisdom enters. Through these windows, then, the Word of God looking through, and directing His gaze toward the soul His bride, exhorts her to rise up and to come to Him — that is, to leave behind bodily and visible things, and to hasten to the incorporeal and invisible and spiritual things. Since the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Thus also the Spirit of God is said to go about, and to seek out worthy souls, which can fittingly and rightly be made into a dwelling-place of wisdom.

¹⁰⁶ But that He is said to look through the nets of the windows, this without doubt signifies that, so long as the soul is placed in the house of this body, it cannot grasp the wisdom of God naked and open, but through certain examples and indications and images of visible things it contemplates those things which are invisible and incorporeal; and this is for the Bride-

groom to look upon her through the nets of the windows. But if we should expound these things of Christ and the Church, the house in which the Church dwelt is the Scriptures of the law and the prophets. For there is the king's chamber, filled with all the riches of knowledge and wisdom. There too is the house of wine, that is, the teaching either mystical or moral, which gladdens the heart of man. Coming, then, Christ stood a little while behind the wall of the Old Testament. For He stood behind the wall, when He was not made manifest to the people; but when the time was at hand, and He began to appear through the windows of the law and the prophets — that is, through those things which had been foretold concerning Him — and to show Himself to the Church seated within the house, that is, within the letter of the law, He provokes her to go out from there, and to come outside to Him.

¹⁰⁷ For unless she goes out, unless she comes forth, and advances from the letter to the spirit, she cannot be joined to her Bridegroom, nor associated with Christ. He calls her, therefore, and invites her to come from carnal things to spiritual, from visible to invisible, from the law to the Gospels. And therefore He says to her: "Rise up, come, my neighbor, my beautiful one, my dove. And that we may also anticipate some of the things that are to be said afterward, fearing to lose the sense which presents itself in this place: for this reason perhaps He also says that to her, that "the winter too has passed, the rain has gone away," at the same time indicating also the time of His passion, that, the winter being past and the showers cast down, He Himself suffered; and at the same time signifying also this by spiritual understanding, that up to that time in which Christ suffered, there were showers upon the earth. For the Lord still commanded the showers — that is, the prophets — to rain the rain of the word upon the earth. But since up to John the Baptist the prophetic offices are brought to an end, rightly are the showers said to have gone away and departed. But the prophetic showers ceased not to the harm of believers, but for the greater gains of the Church. For what need is there of showers, where the river of God gladdens the city?

¹⁰⁸ where in the heart of each of the believers there becomes a fountain of living water springing up unto life eternal? What need of showers, where now the flowers have appeared in our land, and from the coming of the Lord the fig tree is no longer cut down, which before had brought forth no fruit? For now it has already put forth its unripe figs. But the vines too have given

their fragrance. Whence also a certain one from that vineyard said: "For we are the good fragrance of Christ unto God in every place, among those who are being saved, and among those who are perishing. But these things, as we indicated above, we have set forth before we presumed to come to the very passages of Scripture, lest perchance the sense which seemed to present itself at the moment should escape us: now let us take up again how He is said to look through the nets. It is written: "For not in vain are nets stretched out for the birds. And again: "The just man, if he should fall into sin, is bidden to flee, just as the roe from the snares, and the bird from the nets. Full, therefore, is the life of mortals of the snares of offenses, full of the nets of deceptions, which he stretches out against the human race who against the Lord is called the giant hunter Nimrod. For who is the true giant other than the devil, who also rebels against God?

¹⁰⁹For the snares of temptations, and the traps of ambushes, are called the nets of the devil. And since the enemy had stretched out these nets everywhere, and had entangled almost all in them, there needed to be someone who should become stronger and more eminent than they, and should crush them, so that He might be able to open a way for those who follow Him. For this reason, therefore, the Savior too, before He came into wedlock and fellowship with the Church, was tempted by the devil, so that overcoming the nets of temptations He might look through them, and through them call her to Himself, showing her without doubt and teaching her that it was not through leisure and delights, but through many tribulations and temptations, that she must come to Christ. There was, therefore, no other who could overcome those nets. For all have sinned, as it is written. And again, as the Scripture says: "There is not a just man upon the earth who will do good, and will not sin. And again: "No one is clean from filth, not even if his life should be of one day. He alone, therefore, is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who committed no sin, but the Father made Him to be sin for us, in the likeness of the flesh of sin, that from sin He might condemn sin. He came, therefore, to those nets, but He alone could not be entangled in them:

¹¹⁰nay rather, having burst and crushed them, He gives to His Church confidence, so that she may now dare to make void the snares, and to pass through the nets, and with all eagerness to say: "Our soul, like a sparrow, has been snatched from the snare of the hunters; the snare has been crushed, and we have been set free. But who crushed the snares, except He who alone could

not be held in them? Although He too was in death voluntarily, and not, as we, by the necessity of sin. For He alone it is who was free among the dead. And because He was free among the dead, therefore, having conquered him who held the dominion of death, He drew away the captivity which was held in death. And He not only raised Himself from the dead, but also those who were held in death He at the same time roused up, and at the same time made to sit in the heavenly places. For ascending on high He led captivity captive, not only leading forth souls, but also raising up their bodies, as the Gospel testifies that many bodies of the saints were raised up, and appeared to many, and entered into the holy city of the living God, Jerusalem. This exposition concerning the nets has been taken up by us in the second place. Let it indeed be the reader's judgment which of them cannot but be more worthily fitted to mystical utterances.

COMMENTARY ON THE SONG OF SONGS — BOOK FOUR

¹ English translation of Origen of Alexandria's Commentary on the Song of Songs (*Commentarium in Canticum Canticorum*), in the Latin translation of Rufinus of Aquileia (c. 410). Translated from the OCR-corrected Migne *Patrologia Graeca* 13 (Delarue) base text. Rufinus's translation is intrinsically incomplete, running only as far as Song of Songs 2:15. This English translation is in the public domain.

BOOK FOUR

2 » Rise, come, my neighbor, my beautiful one, my dove; for behold, the winter has passed, the rain has gone and departed of itself, the flowers have appeared in the land, the time of pruning has come, the voice of the turtle-dove has been heard in our land. The fig tree has put forth its shoots, the flowering vines have given forth their fragrance. « ³ What the sequence of the drama contains we have already described above; but now let us consider what either the Word of God is to be understood as saying to the soul that is worthy of it and suited to it, or what Christ is to be understood as saying to the Church. But meanwhile let the Word of God first speak to this beautiful and comely soul, to whom, through the bodily senses -- that is, through the gaze of reading and through the hearing of teaching -- he appeared as if through windows, and showed the loftiness of his greatness, so that in the passages above he spoke to her while leaning over, and calling her forth, that she might come outside, and, being now made to be beyond the bodily

senses, might cease to be in the flesh, so that she might deservedly hear: "But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit. For the Word of God would not call her his neighbor in such a way unless he joined himself to her and became one spirit with him; nor would he call her beautiful unless he saw his image being renewed in her from day to day; and unless he saw her capable of receiving the Holy Spirit, who descended in the form of a dove upon Jesus in the Jordan, he would not say to her: "My dove. For she had conceived a love of the Word of God, and desired to come to him in swift flight, saying:

4 "Who will give me wings like a dove, and I shall fly, and be at rest? I shall fly with the senses, I shall fly with the spiritual understandings, and I shall be at rest when I have laid hold of the treasures of his wisdom and knowledge. For I think that, just as those who receive the death of Christ, and mortify their members upon the earth, become sharers in the likeness of his death, so also those who receive the power of the Holy Spirit, and are sanctified by him, and filled with his gifts -- since he himself appeared in the form of a dove -- may themselves also become doves, that they may fly up from earthly and bodily places to the heavenly ones, lifted up on the wings of the Holy Spirit. But that this may be the fitting time in which these things can come to be, he consequently added: "For behold," he says, "the winter has passed, the rain has gone. For the soul is not joined and united to the Word of God before every winter of disturbances and every storm of vices has departed from her, so that she may no longer be tossed about, and carried around by every wind of doctrine.

5 When, therefore, all these things have departed from the soul, and the tempest of desires has fled from her, then the flowers of the virtues will begin to bloom in her; then the time of pruning also will come to her mind, and if anything superfluous and less useful has been in her senses or understandings, it will be cut away, and she will be recalled to the buds of spiritual understanding. Then also she will hear the voice of the turtledove -- that voice, without doubt, of the wisdom which the dispenser of the word speaks among the perfect, the higher wisdom of God which is hidden in a mystery. For this is what the naming of the turtledove indicates. For this bird passes its life in more secret places, remote from the multitude, either loving the deserts of the mountains or the hidden recesses of the woods, always set far from the multitude, and a stranger to the crowds. But what else is there that befits the opportuneness and the loveliness of this time? "The fig tree," he says, "has put

forth its shoots. Not yet, indeed, the fruits themselves of the Spirit, which are joy, charity, peace, and the rest, but nevertheless the spirit of man -- which in him is singularly named the fig tree -- already begins to bring forth their shoots. For just as generally in the Church the various trees are understood to be each of the souls of believers, of which it is said:

6 "Every tree which my heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. And again Paul, who says that he is a fellow worker of God in God's husbandry, himself also says: "I planted, Apollos watered. But the Lord too in the Gospels: "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or the tree bad, and its fruit bad. Just as, therefore, generally in the Church the several believers are understood as various trees, so also in each soul the various virtues and its various efficacies are understood as various trees. There is, therefore, also in the soul a certain fig tree which puts forth its shoot; there is also a vine which may flower, and give forth its fragrance. The branches of this vine the heavenly Father, the husbandman, prunes, that they may bring forth much fruit. But this vine first, by the sweetness of the fragrance which is given forth from the flower, gladdens the sense of smell; according to him who said: "For we are the good fragrance of Christ to God in every place. Seeing, therefore, these beginnings of the virtues in the soul, the Word of God calls her to himself, that she may hasten and go forth; and, casting aside all bodily things, may come to him, that she may become a partaker of his perfection.

7 Therefore, then, to her who as it were still lies prostrate and is bent down upon bodily things, he first says: Rise up; and to her who, as it were, has straightway obeyed and complied with the one calling her, he gives praise and she hears: My neighbor, and my dove. And after this, lest she tremble at the whirlwinds of temptations, he announces to her that the winter has departed, and the rain has passed and gone away for itself. And he has finely signified the nature of vices and sins by uttering one wonderful saying, so that he calls "winter" and "rain" of this kind that which descends from the offense and storm of vices, indicating that it has gone away for itself, and by this that sins have no substance. For the vices that fall away from a man are not gathered together into some other substance of sins, but they go away for themselves, and dissolved into their own selves they vanish, and are reduced to nothing. And therefore he said, "it has gone away for itself." There comes about, then, a tranquility of the soul when the Word of God

appears to it and sin ceases; and thus at last, when the vineyard is in flower, the virtues and the young trees of good works will begin to bring forth fruit.

⁸ But now again Christ speaks these things to the Church, and sets the whole span of the present age within the circuit of a year. And by "winter" he indicates that time in which either the hail and whirlwinds and the remaining blows of the ten plagues scourged the Egyptians; or when Israel was enduring diverse wars; or even when it resisted the Savior himself, and, seized by the whirlwind of unbelief, was sunk in the shipwreck of faith. Since, therefore, by their offense salvation has been made for the nations, he now calls the Church to himself, and says to her: Rise up, and come to me, for now the winter which drowned the unbelievers, and was holding you back in ignorance, has withdrawn. But the rain also has passed away, that is, now I will no longer command the clouds—namely the prophets—to rain the rain of the Word upon the lands; but the very voice of the turtledove, that is, the very wisdom of God itself, will speak in the lands, and will say: I who was speaking am myself present. The flowers, therefore, of the believing peoples and of the rising Churches have appeared in the land. But the time of pruning also has come, through faith in my passion and resurrection. For sins are cut off and excised from men, when in baptism the remission of sins is granted.

⁹ The voice of the turtledove, as we have said, is now heard in the lands not through diverse prophets, but through the mouth of the wisdom of God itself. And the fig tree buds forth, which can be understood in the fruits of the Holy Spirit, which now for the first time are opened and shown to the Church; or even in the letter of the law, which before the coming of Christ was closed and constricted, and covered over with a certain garment of carnal understanding. But from his presence and coming there was brought forth from it the bud of spiritual understanding, and the green and living sense which was hidden in it appeared, so that the Church, which was hidden by Christ within the fig tree—that is, within the law—should not appear dry and following the letter that kills, but the flowering and life-giving spirit.

¹⁰ But the vines also are said to flower, and to have given their fragrance. Now the diverse Churches which are held throughout the world can indeed be called flowering vines, or vineyards. For the vineyard of the Lord of Sabaoth is the house of Israel, and the house of Judah is his beloved young plant. These vineyards, therefore, when they first come to the faith, are said

to flower; but when they are adorned through the religion of their works with sweetness, they are said to have given their fragrance; not without reason, I think, that he did not say, "they gave a fragrance," but "their own fragrance": so as to show that there is present in each soul the force of possibility and the freedom of will, by which it can do all that is good. But because this good of nature, plucked away by the occasion of transgression, had been bent either to ignominy or to wantonness, when it is repaired through grace, and restored through the teaching of the Word of God, it renders without doubt that fragrance which God the first Creator had implanted in it, but which the fault of sin had taken away. And by "vines" or "vineyards" there can also be understood the heavenly and angelic powers, which bestow upon men their fragrance, that is, the good of teaching and instruction, by which they instruct and imbue souls, until they come to perfection and begin to be made capable of God. Just as the Apostle also, writing to the Hebrews, says:

¹¹ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth in ministry for the sake of those who receive the inheritance of salvation? And therefore men are said to receive from these, as it were, the first flower and fragrance of good works: but the very fruits of the vine they are to hope for from him who said: I will not drink of the offspring of this vine, until I drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father. Those perfect flowers and fruits, therefore, are to be hoped for from him: but the beginnings and, so to speak, the sweetness of making progress can be ministered by the heavenly powers, or certainly through those who were saying, as we said above, that we are the good fragrance of Christ to God in every place. ¹² But we can also understand in yet another way these matters that are before us, so that we may say that there seems to be here, as it were, a certain prophecy made to the Church, by which she is called to the promises of things to come — so that, as it were, after the consummation of the age, when the time of the resurrection has arrived, it is said to her: Arise. And because this word at once designates the work of the resurrection — as though, made brighter and more splendid by the resurrection, she is invited to the kingdom — it is said to her: Come, my neighbor, my beautiful one, my dove, for the winter has passed. By "winter" he undoubtedly names the storms and whirlwinds of this present life, by which human life is tossed about with the tempests of temptations. That winter, then, has passed with its rains, and has gone its way. Each one has done for himself in this life everything that he has done. But the flowers are

the beginning of the promises to come. Understand as the time of pruning the axe laid to the root of the tree at the consummation of the age, that it may cut down every tree not bearing good fruit.

¹³ But mark as the voice of the turtledove — which is heard in the writings of the promise, which the meek shall receive in their inheritance — the person of Christ teaching face to face, and no longer through a mirror and in a riddle. And let the fig tree that puts forth its shoot be reckoned the fruit of the whole congregation of the just. But those holy and blessed angelic powers, with whom each of the elect and the blessed shall be joined out of the resurrection — who shall be as the angels of God — these are themselves the vines and the flowering vineyards, which impart their fragrance to each soul, and the grace which it first received from its Creator, and now has recovered again after it had been lost; and by the sweetness of the heavenly fragrance they at last drive away from them the stench of mortality and corruption, once it has been cast off.

¹⁴ » Arise and come, my neighbor, my dove, into the coverings of the rock, beside the outwork. Show me your face, and make your voice heard by me, for your voice is sweet and your face is beautiful. « ¹⁵ According to the order of the drama set forth, the bridegroom, who leaping upon the mountains and bounding over the hills had come to the bride, looking upon her and gazing through the windows, now in the second place says to her: Arise, come, my neighbor, my beautiful one, my dove. But now he adds this also, in order to show her the place to which she ought to come, which place is set under the covering and shelter of the rock. And let this same place be not so much beside the wall as beside a certain outwork. Now it is called an "outwork" when, outside the walls that encircle the city, another wall is drawn, and there is a wall before the wall. Then next, as though for the sake of reverence the bride herself is covered over and veiled, the bridegroom himself asks that, coming to that place which he showed above — being, as it were, more secret — she may there, with the veil as it were thrown back, show him her face. And because out of much reverence the bride would be silent, the bridegroom at some point desires also to hear her voice, and to be delighted in her words, and he says that she should make her voice heard by him. It seems, however, that her face is not entirely unknown to him, nor is he ignorant of her voice, but that something has come between, in which he has neither seen her face nor heard her voice.

¹⁶ Let this be the text of the drama set forth. To which this also is added, that the season of spring seems to be in progress, since flowers are recorded to have appeared in the earth, and the voice of the turtledove to sound, and the trees to have put forth their shoot. On account of this, as at an opportune time, he calls the bride forth to advance — she who undoubtedly had remained the whole winter within the enclosures of the house. But these things seem to me (so far as pertains to the historical narrative) to confer no benefit upon readers, nor at least to preserve any consequence of the narrative itself, such as we find in the other histories of Scripture. Hence it is necessary to transfer everything to the spiritual understanding. ¹⁷ First, then, understand for me the winter of the soul, when it is still tossed by the waves of the passions, and beaten by the storms of the vices and by the harsh blasts of the malignant spirits. While she is set in these, the Word of God does not exhort her to go outside, but to gather herself within herself, and to be united on every side, and to be sheltered against the destructive blasts of the malignant spirits. Then no flowers of studies in the divine writings are with her, nor do the secrets of deeper wisdom and the hidden mysteries resound as it were through the voice of the turtledove. But neither does her sense of smell receive anything of grace as it were from the flowers of the vineyard, nor is her sight delighted as it were in the shoot of the fig tree; but it is enough that in the tempests of temptations she remain safe and fortified from the fall of sin. But if she obtains this, that she endure unharmed, the winter passes for her, and spring comes to her. For it is spring for her when rest is given to the soul, tranquillity to the mind. Then the Word of God comes to her, then it calls her to itself and exhorts her to go out, not only outside the house, but outside the city: that is, that she may come to be not only outside the vices of the flesh, but outside whatever is bodily and visible contained in the world. For we have already clearly shown above, figuratively in the law, what the city is.

¹⁸ The soul, therefore, is called forth beyond the wall, and is led as far as the outwork, when, casting away and leaving behind those things which are seen and are temporal, she presses on toward those things which are not seen and are eternal. This journey, then, is shown to her as one to be made under the covering of the rock, not under the naked air, nor in such a way that she should suffer the burning of the sun, lest she become dark again, lest she say again, "the sun has looked askance at me"; and for this reason she makes this

journey under the covering of the rock. But this covering itself He does not wish to be of leaves or of linen cloths or of skins, but He wills the rock to be her covering — that is, the firm and solid teachings of Christ. For that the rock itself is Christ, Paul declares, saying: "And the rock was Christ. If, then, the soul is covered and veiled with the doctrine and faith of Christ, she can safely arrive at that hidden place where, with unveiled face, she may contemplate the glory of the Lord. And rightly is this covering of the rock believed to be safe, since Solomon too says of it in the Proverbs that the tracks of the serpent cannot be detected upon the rock. For he says thus: "There are three things which it is impossible for me to understand, and a fourth which I do not know:

19 the tracks of a flying eagle, and the way of a serpent upon a rock, and the paths of a ship on the sea, and the ways of a man in his youth. The tracks of the serpent, therefore — that is, certain signs of sin — cannot be found in this rock which is Christ, because He alone is the one who did no sin. By the true covering, then, of this rock, the soul arrives safely at the place of the outwork — that is, at the contemplation of things incorporeal and eternal. Of this same rock, under another figure of speech, David says in the thirty-ninth psalm: "And He set my feet upon a rock, and directed my steps. And do not wonder if in David this rock is, as it were, the foundation and footing of the soul by which she journeys to God, while in Solomon it is the covering of the soul reaching toward the mystical secrets of wisdom; since Christ Himself is now called the way by which believers walk, and now also the forerunner, as Paul says: "Whither the forerunner Jesus has entered in for us. Like to this also is that which is said by God through Moses: "Behold, I have set you in a hole of the rock, and you shall see My back parts. Therefore this rock, which is Christ, is not closed on every side, but has a hole. And the hole of the rock is that which reveals God and makes Him known to men.

20 No one, then, sees the Father except the Son; no one, then, sees the last things of God — that is, the things which come to pass in the last times — except one placed in the hole of the rock, namely when he has learned those things by the revelation of Christ. And here too, under the covering of the rock, the Word of God invites the soul, made near to Himself, to the place of the outwork, as we have already said above, to the contemplation of those things which are not seen and are eternal; and there He says to her: "Show me your face" — assuredly that He may see whether she has upon her coun-

tenance anything still of the old veil, or whether she can behold the glory of the Lord with fearless gaze, so that she may say these very words: "And we saw His glory, as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. But also, when she has become worthy that it may be said of her as it was said of Moses, that "Moses spoke, and the Lord answered him," then is fulfilled in her that which He says: "Make me hear your voice."

²¹ But a great praise of her is shown in what is said: Your voice is sweet. For thus the most wise prophet David spoke: "May my discourse be sweet to him. And the voice of the soul is sweet when it speaks the word of God, when it expounds concerning faith and the doctrines of truth, when it explains the dispensations of God and his judgments. But if either foolish talk, or scurrility, or vanity proceeds from her mouth, or an idle word, for which an account must be rendered in the day of judgment, that voice is unsweet and unpleasant. From such a voice Christ turns away his hearing. And therefore every perfect soul sets a guard upon her mouth, and a door of restraint about her lips, so that she may always bring forth such speech as, seasoned with salt, may give grace to the hearers, and that the Word of God may say of her, "Your voice is sweet. "But also your face," he says, "is beautiful. If you understand that face of which Paul speaks: "But we all with unveiled face"; and again when he says: "But then face to face": then you will see what is the face of the soul which is praised by the Word of God and is said to be beautiful. That face, without doubt, which is daily renewed after the image of him who created it, which has in itself no spot, or wrinkle, or anything of this kind, but is holy and immaculate;

²² such as Christ also presented the Church to himself, namely the souls which have come to perfection, which all together make up the body of the Church. Which body will assuredly appear beautiful and comely, if the souls out of which that body is made up remain in every beauty of perfection. For just as, when the soul is in anger, it renders the countenance of the body troubled and fierce; but when it persists in gentleness and tranquillity, it renders the appearance placid and mild: so also the face of the Church is pronounced either comely or foul according to the virtues and morals of believers, according to that which we read written: "The trace of the heart in good things, a cheerful countenance. And again elsewhere: "The face of a glad heart is flourishing, but of one placed in sorrows the countenance is mournful. Therefore the heart is glad when it has in itself the Spirit of God: whose

first fruit is charity, the second is joy. From these I think certain wise men of the world took up that saying by which one says, that only the wise man is beautiful, but every wicked man is foul. It remains for us to say something also more openly concerning the word "before-the-wall" (*promuralis*). Which, as we said above, indicates that there is a wall before a wall, which is also said in this manner in Isaiah: "Set a wall, and around the wall. A wall is the fortification of a city.

²³ But another wall before the wall, or around the wall, designates greater and stronger fortifications. By which it is shown that the word of God, calling the soul and leading it away from bodily affairs and corporeal senses, desires to teach it concerning the mysteries of the age to come, and thence to gather fortifications for it, so that, fortified and surrounded by the hope of things to come, it may in no way be either conquered by allurements or wearied by tribulations. ²⁴ Now let us also see how these words may be spoken by Christ to the Church, who is near to him and beautiful. And beautiful to no one else but to him alone. For this is what he means when he says, my beautiful one. This one, then, Christ rouses up, and to her he announces the Gospel of the resurrection, and therefore he says: Arise, come, my neighbor, my beautiful one. And because he also gave her the wings of a dove, after she slept in the midst of the lots: now the Church was called midway between the two callings of Israel, because first Israel was called, and afterward, when he himself stumbled and fell, the Church of the Gentiles was called; but when the fullness of the Gentiles has entered in, then again all Israel, being called, shall be saved. In the midst, therefore, of these two lots the Church sleeps. And on this account he gave her the silvered wings of a dove, which signifies the rational wings within the gifts of the Holy Spirit. And the hinder parts of her back, either "in the greenness of gold," as some read, or, as others have it written, "in the paleness of gold. This can show that that later calling which the Apostle says will come from Israel will not be in the observance of the law, but in the preciousness of faith. For faith, flowering with virtues, bears the appearance of the greenness of gold.

²⁵ But it can also be said that the Church sleeps, or rests, in the midst of those lots, in the midst of the two testaments; and her wings are silvered from the senses of the law. The gold on the hinder parts of her back can be understood as the gift of the evangelical office. To this Church, then, Christ says: Come, my dove, and come in the covering of the rock; teaching her to

come covered, lest she suffer anything from the temptations that rush upon her, but let her walk covered under the shadow of the rock, saying: The Spirit of our countenance, Christ the Lord, of whom we said: In his shadow we shall live among the nations. And she walks covered and veiled, because she ought to have power over her head, on account of the angels. But when she has come to the place before the wall, that is, to the state of the age to come, there he says to her: Show me your face, and make your voice heard by me, for your voice is sweet. He wishes the voice of his Church to be made heard, because whoever shall confess him before men, he also will confess him before his Father who is in heaven. For your voice is sweet.

26 And who does not admit that the voice of the catholic Church confessing the true faith is sweet, but that the voice of the heretics is unsweet and unpleasant, who speak not the doctrines of truth, but blasphemies against God, and iniquity against the Most High? So too the face of the Church is beautiful, but that of the heretics base and foul; if, however, there is anyone who well knows how to test the beauty of a countenance, that is, if anyone is spiritual who knows how to examine all things. For among the unskilled and animal men, the sophisms of falsehood seem more beautiful than the doctrines of truth. But concerning the place before the wall we can further add this also, that the place before the wall is the bosom of the Father, in which the only-begotten Son, being placed, sets forth all things and declares to his Church whatsoever things are contained in the secret and hidden bosom of the Father. Whence one who had been taught by him said: No one has ever seen God. The only-begotten Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father, he himself has declared him. Hither, then, Christ calls his bride, that he may teach her about all the things that are held with the Father, and may say: For I have made known to you all things which I heard from my Father; and that he may say again: Father, I will that where I am, there also may be my minister.

27 » Catch us the little foxes that destroy the vineyards, and our vineyards shall flourish. « 28 According to the order of the drama the speaker has changed, for now the bridegroom no longer speaks to the bride, but to the companions, and to them he says that they should catch the little foxes that lie in wait for the vineyards, where they have first put forth their buds, and do not allow them to reach the flower. He commanded, therefore, that they be caught, taking counsel for the welfare and benefit of the vineyards. But

these things, as we have begun to do, must be examined by spiritual exposition. And I think that if you consider these things concerning the soul which joins itself to the Word of God, the foxes ought to be understood as the opposing powers and the wickednesses of demons, which through depraved thoughts and perverse understanding destroy the flower of virtues in the soul and kill the fruit of faith. Therefore the foresight of the Word of God, who is the Lord of hosts, commands his angels who are sent for service, on behalf of those who receive the inheritance of salvation, that they catch from each soul thoughts of this kind sent in by the demons, so that, these being cast out, the souls may be able to bring forth the flower of virtue. And they catch the evil thoughts in this way:

²⁹ when they suggest to the mind that these are not from God, but are from the malignant spirit, and they give to the soul the discernment of spirits, so that it may understand which thought is according to God, and which is from the devil. But that you may know that there are thoughts which the devil sends into the hearts of men, see in the Gospel what is written: "When the devil," it says, "had put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray him. There are, therefore, thoughts of this kind which are cast by the demons into the hearts of men. But because divine Providence is not lacking, lest perhaps through importunity of this kind the freedom of the will should be disturbed, and there be no just cause for judgment, therefore the care of men is entrusted to the kindly angels and friendly powers, so that when the deceivers, like foxes, begin to assail a man, they may lift him up with their right-hand helps. And therefore it is said: "Catch us the little foxes. Fittingly indeed he commands that they be caught and seized while they are still little. For while an evil thought is in its beginnings, it can easily be cast out of the heart. But if it is frequently repeated, and remains for a long time, it without doubt leads the soul to consent; and after consent, once it has been confirmed within the heart, it is certain that it tends toward the disposition of sin.

³⁰ While therefore it is in its beginnings, and is little, it ought to be caught and cast out, lest, if it should become grown and inveterate, it can then no longer be expelled. Finally, Judas too had the beginning of evil in the love of money, and this was for him the little fox. But when the Lord saw the soul of Judas, like a flowering vineyard, being harmed by this too, wishing to catch it and cast it out of him, he entrusted to him the money-bags,

so that, possessing what he loved, he might cease from covetousness. But he, inasmuch as he had the freedom of his own will, did not embrace the wisdom of the physician, but gave himself up rather to that counsel by which his soul was being destroyed, than to that by which it was being healed.

³¹ But if we understand these things of Christ and the Church, the discourse will seem to be directed to the teachers of the Church, and a charge to be laid upon them concerning the catching of the foxes that lay waste the vineyards. Now by "foxes" we may understand the perverse teachers of heretical doctrines, who by the cunning of their arguments seduce the hearts of the innocent, and lay waste the Lord's vineyard so that it may not flourish in the right faith. A precept, therefore, is given to the catholic teachers, that while these foxes are still small, and have not yet deceived many souls, but the depraved teaching is only at its beginning, they should make haste to convict and restrain them, and to refute by the word of truth those who contradict, and to catch them by true assertions. For if these foxes remain in their first principles and grow strong, their word creeps like a cancer and becomes incurable; so that many are found who, deceived by them, now begin to fight on their behalf and to defend the authors of the error they have taken up. Thus, then, it is fitting to catch the foxes while they are small, and at the very first beginnings to confute the deceitful sophisms of the heretics with true assertions. But that the assertion of both our expositions may shine forth more clearly, let us gather from the divine volumes wherever mention has been made of this animal.

³² We find, then, in the sixty-second Psalm that it is said of the impious: "But they have sought my soul in vain; they shall go into the lower parts of the earth, they shall be delivered into the hands of the sword, they shall be portions for foxes. But also in the Gospel according to Matthew the Savior answered the scribe who said to him, "Master, I will follow you wherever you go": "The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven have nests where they may rest, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. And likewise in the Gospel according to Luke, to those who said to the Lord, "Go out, and depart hence, for Herod wishes to kill you," Jesus answered: "Go and tell that fox: Behold, I cast out demons and accomplish healings today and tomorrow, and on the third day I shall be consummated. In the book of Judges also, Samson, when the wife who was of the race of the Philistines had been taken from him, said to her father: "I am innocent this time before the Allo-

phyli, for I will do evil to you. And Samson went, and took three hundred foxes, and took torches, and bound tail to tail, and set one torch between the two tails of the foxes, and kindled fire in the torches, and sent them through the harvests of the Allophyli, and burned all their harvests and their stubble, and their vineyards, and their olive groves.

³³ And further, in the second book of Ezra, where Tobiah the Ammonite hindered the building of those who had returned from captivity, that they might build the temple and the wall, he said to the Allophyli: "Will these men sacrifice, or eat things offered in this place? Do not the foxes go up, and will they not destroy the wall of these men which they are building of stones? These, for the present, are the things that could occur to us from the divine Scriptures, in which the memory of this animal has been made, so that from these every wise reader may prudently conjecture whether we have used a fitting exposition in the things that have been set before us, for explaining that which it says: "Catch us the little foxes. And although it is laborious to explain each of the things we have taken up by way of example, nevertheless we shall briefly touch upon what we can.

³⁴ And first, in the sixty-second Psalm, let us see, where, when the impious were persecuting the soul of the just man, he sang, saying: "But they have sought my soul in vain; they shall go into the lower parts of the earth, they shall be delivered into the hands of the sword, they shall be portions for foxes." In which it is surely shown that the depraved teachers, wishing by vain and empty words to deceive the soul of the just man, are said to go into the lower parts of the earth—being wise, as it were, in earthly things, and speaking of the earth, and descending into its lower parts, that is, into the depth of foolishness. For I think that those who live more carnally, because they harm only themselves, are said to be earth and to dwell in the earth. But those who understand the Scriptures with earthly and carnal senses, and by so teaching deceive others—for this very reason, that they contrive certain subtleties and arguments of carnal and earthly wisdom, they are said to enter into the lower parts of the earth: or certainly it is thus, because those who teach earthly things sin more grievously than those who merely so live, a still heavier punishment threatens them; and these same are prophesied to be delivered into the hands of the sword, perhaps of that flaming and turning sword.

³⁵ But let us also see how they become the portions of foxes. Every soul is either a portion of God, or a portion of whoever has received power over men. For when the Most High divided the nations and scattered the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God, and the Lord's portion became Jacob. Since, then, it is established that every single soul is either in the portion of God or in the portion of some other, seeing that through the freedom of the will it is possible for each one to pass over from the portion of another — either to the portion of God, if with his help he chooses the better, or, if more wickedly, to the portion of the demons — hence mention is made of these in the psalm: "Those who have sought the soul of the just in vain shall be the portions of foxes," as if it said that they shall be the portions of the worst and most wicked demons: so that every malicious and crafty power, through which the deceptions and frauds of a false knowledge have been introduced, is figuratively called foxes;

³⁶ and those who are led into this error, and are unwilling to acquiesce in the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the teaching which is according to godliness, but suffer themselves to be deceived by such, these shall become the portions of foxes of that kind, and shall enter with them into the lower parts of the earth. These same are also those in whom, according to the Gospel, these foxes which we mentioned above are said to have holes, in which the Son of Man has not where to lay his head. Herod too, we must believe, was named a fox for his deceitful cunning. For concerning Samson, who is recorded to have caught three hundred foxes, and to have bound them together by their tails, and to have set burning torches in the midst of the tails, and to have sent them through the harvests of the Philistines, and to have burned them up along with the standing grain and the olive groves and the vineyards, the explanation of this form or figure seems to me exceedingly difficult. Nevertheless let us attempt to knock at some of these things according to our strength, and let us suppose, as our exposition in the foregoing maintains, that the foxes are the deceitful and perverse teachers.

³⁷ These Samson, who holds the image of the true and faithful teacher, catching them by the word of truth, will bind tail to tail — that is, he will confute those who are opposed to him and who think and teach things at variance with one another; and, taking from their own words their premises and conclusions, he will send the fire of his conclusion into the crop of the

Philistines, and out of their own arguments will burn up all the fruits and vineyards and olive groves of that most wicked generation. But the very number of the three hundred foxes, which were divergent and dissonant from one another, indicates the threefold form of sins. For every sin is committed either in deed, or in word, or in the consent of the mind. Yet not even that which we said is written in the second book of Ezra is wholly to be passed over: where, when the Holy of Holies was being built — that is, when the faith of Christ and the mysteries of his saints were being founded — the enemies of the truth and the adversaries of the faith, who are the wise of this world, seeing the walls of the Gospel rise up without the art of grammar and without philosophical skill, say, as with a certain mockery, that this can very easily be destroyed by the cleverness of words through cunning fallacies and dialectical arguments. Let these things, meanwhile, said about the examples we have taken up, suffice as far as brevity could allow.

³⁸ Now let us return to our theme. ³⁹ It seems, then, that in the Song of Songs a command is given by the bridegroom to the virtues that are dear to him, that they should catch and refute the opposing powers which lie in wait for the souls of men, lest these powers exterminate the beginnings of faith and the flower of the virtues under the appearance of some secret and hidden wisdom—hiding themselves, like foxes in their holes, in those men who have offered themselves up to these second matters. And in order that they may the more easily be confuted and refuted, while they are still little foxes and hold only the beginnings of a most wicked persuasion, the command is given that they be caught. For if perchance they should grow and become larger foxes, they can no longer be caught by the enemies of the bridegroom, but perhaps by the bridegroom himself alone. But the holy teachers too, and the masters of the Church, just as they have received power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, so also they receive power even to catch foxes. For thus power has been given to them over every power of the enemy.

⁴⁰ Without doubt one of the enemy's powers is the fox, which exterminates the flowering vineyards, and which, while it is still small, is commanded to be caught—just as in the hundred and thirty-seventh psalm he is called blessed who takes and dashes the little ones of Babylon against the rock, and does not permit the Babylonian understanding to grow and increase within himself, but while it is still small in its beginnings dashes it down and holds it against the rock: for then it is easily destroyed. So, then, let the order run

thus: "Catch us the little foxes, which foxes exterminate the flowering vineyards. When it says "us," this means "me the bridegroom and the bride"; or "me and you who are my companions. It can also be taken thus: "Catch us the foxes," and afterward, "the little ones exterminating the vineyards," so that it refers not so much to the foxes as to the vineyards, so that the little vineyards seem to be the ones that can be exterminated—that is, the small souls, which have only beginnings and are not firm and robust, and can be injured by the opposing powers. As it is said in the Gospel: "If anyone shall scandalize one of these little ones. In this it is shown that a great and perfect soul cannot be scandalized, but a small and untrained one can, as it is said in the psalm: "Much peace to those who love your name, and there is no scandal for them.

⁴¹ By a similar example, therefore, it can be seen that any little vineyard, a soul that is beginning, can be injured by the foxes—that is, by malignant or depraved teachers—but a perfect and strong one cannot. But if these foxes are caught by good teachers and cast out of the soul, then it will advance in the virtues and flourish in faith. Amen. ⁴²[Commentary ends here at Song of Songs 2:15 — Rufinus's translation goes no further (intrinsic).]

COMMENTARY ON THE SONG OF SONGS — PROLOGUE

¹ English translation of Origen of Alexandria's Commentary on the Song of Songs (*Commentarium in Canticum Canticorum*), in the Latin translation of Rufinus of Aquileia (c. 410). Translated from the OCR-corrected Migne *Patrologia Graeca* 13 (Delarue) base text. Rufinus's translation is intrinsically incomplete, running only as far as Song of Songs 2:15. This English translation is in the public domain.

PROLOGUE

²[opening (Migne coll. 61–62, absent from the PG 13 scan) supplied from Baehrens GCS 33] ³ This little book is an epithalamium, that is, a wedding-song, and it seems to me to have been written by Solomon in the manner of a drama, which he sang after the likeness of a bride about to be wed and burning with heavenly love toward her bridegroom, who is the Word of God. For she has fallen deeply in love with him — whether it be the soul, which was made after his image, or the Church. But what words this magnificent and perfect bridegroom himself has used toward the soul or the Church joined to him, this same Scripture teaches us. What the young maid-

ens, the companions of the bride, have said as well, standing together with the bride herself, and likewise what the friends and companions of the bridegroom have said, we learn nonetheless from the same book, which is entitled the Song of Songs. For the opportunity was given even to the friends of the bridegroom themselves to say certain things — those things, at least, which they had heard from the bridegroom himself, rejoicing over his union with the bride. A discourse is therefore made by the bride herself, not only to the bridegroom but also to the maidens; and again the discourse of the bridegroom is directed not only to the bride, but also to the friends of the bridegroom. And this is what we said above, that the wedding-song was written in the manner of a drama.

4 For a thing is called a drama when a story is enacted upon the stage, as it is wont to be, where different characters are introduced; and, as some come on and others in turn go off, the text of the narrative is completed by different persons speaking to different persons. Each of these things this Scripture contains in its own order, and its whole body is formed of mystical utterances. But first we ought to know that, just as a childish age is not moved to passible love, so neither is the little and infant age of the inner man admitted to grasp these words — the age, that is, of those who are nourished in Christ with milk, not with strong food, and who now for the first time long for the reasonable milk that is without guile. For in the words of the Song of Songs there is that food of which the Apostle speaks: "But solid food belongs to the perfect"; and it requires such hearers as, according to their capacity for receiving it, have their senses exercised for the discernment of good and evil. And indeed the little ones whom we have mentioned, if they should come to these passages, it may be that they will gain nothing from this Scripture, yet neither will they be greatly harmed, whether in reading the very things that are written, or in reviewing the things that are to be said for their explanation.

5 But if anyone should approach who is a man only according to the flesh, to such a one no small danger and peril will arise from this Scripture. For, not knowing how to hear the names of love with pure and chaste ears, he will turn every hearing away from the inner man to the outer and carnal man, and will be turned from the spirit to the flesh, and will nourish carnal desires in himself, and by occasion of the divine Scripture he will seem to be stirred and incited to the lust of the flesh. For this reason, therefore, I give

warning and counsel to everyone who is not yet free from the troubles of flesh and blood, and who does not withdraw from the affection of material nature, that he abstain wholly from the reading of this little book and of the things that are said in it. For they say that among the Hebrews this too is observed: that unless a man has arrived at a perfect and mature age, he is not even permitted to hold this little book in his hands. And we have received from them that this also is kept: since it is their custom that all the Scriptures be handed down to boys by their teachers and by their sages, together with those which they call deuteroseis, these four things are reserved to the last — that is, the beginning of Genesis, in which the creation of the world is described;

6 and the beginnings of the prophet Ezekiel, in which the account of the cherubim is given, and the end, in which the building of the temple is contained; and this book of the Song of Songs. Therefore it seems necessary to me, before we come to examine the things written in this little book, first to discourse briefly about love itself, which is the chief cause of its writing; and after these things, about the order of Solomon's books, among which this book seems to be placed in the third position; then also about the title of the little book itself, why it is inscribed the Song of Songs; and further, how it seems to be composed in the manner of a drama and as a play upon the stage, of the kind that is wont to be enacted by the changing of characters.

7 Among the Greeks, indeed, very many learned men, wishing to track down the pursuit of truth, put forth many and varied writings concerning the nature of love, even in the style of dialogues, attempting to show that the power of love is nothing other than that which leads the soul up from the earth to the lofty heights of heaven, and that one cannot arrive at the highest blessedness except when the desire of love provides the impulse. Moreover, questions on this matter are reported to have been proposed as it were at banquets—among those, I suppose, among whom a banquet not of foods but of words was being held. Others, too, left behind writings on certain arts by which this love might seem able to be engendered or increased in the soul. But carnal men have dragged these arts down to vicious desires and to the mysteries of a blameworthy love. Let it be no wonder, then, if among us also—where the more numerous the simple appear, the more numerous also the unskilled—we have called a discussion on the nature of love difficult and close to danger;

⁸since even among the Greeks who seem learned and wise there have nevertheless been some who did not receive these things as they are written, but, taking occasion from what has been said about love, plunged into the lapses of the flesh and into the precipices of unchastity, either taking certain admonitions and incitements from those things that had been written, as we mentioned above, or setting forth the writings of the ancients as a cloak for their own incontinence. Therefore, lest we too fall into anything of this kind, perceiving in a vicious and carnal manner those things that were written well and spiritually by the ancients, let us stretch out to God the palms both of our body and of our soul, that the Lord who gave the word to those who preach the gospel with much power may grant to us also, in his power, the word by which we may be able to show, from those things that have been written, an understanding that is sound and fitted to the edification of chastity, whether regarding the very name or the nature of love.

⁹At the beginning of the words of Moses, where the constitution of the world is recorded, we find that two men are said to have been created. The first was made according to the image and likeness of God, the second was formed from the mud of the earth. The apostle Paul, knowing this well and being clearly instructed in these matters, wrote in his letters more openly and evidently that there are two men in each and every person. For he said thus: "For though our man who is outside is corrupted, yet the one who is within is renewed day by day. And again: "For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man," and how many other things like these does he write? Hence I think that no one ought now to doubt that Moses wrote in the beginning of Genesis concerning the making or fashioning of two men, since he sees that Paul, who certainly understood better than we do the things written by Moses, says that there are two men in each and every person. Of these he records that one, that is the inner man, is renewed day by day; but the other, that is the outer man, he declares to be corrupted and weakened in certain saints and men such as Paul was. But if it should seem to anyone that something must still be doubted about this, it will be better explained in its proper places.

¹⁰Now, however, let us pursue the reason for which we have made mention of the inner and outer man. For from these things we wish to show that in the divine Scriptures, through homonyms — that is, through similar appellations, or rather through the very same terms — both the members of

the outer man and the parts and affections of that inner man are named, and that these are compared with one another not only in terms but in the very realities themselves. For example, someone is a boy in age according to the outer man, who can grow and be brought to the age of a young man, and thence, by successive increases, arrive at the perfect man and become a father. But we have wished to use these names so that we might set down terms consonant with the divine Scripture, namely with that which was written by John. For he says: "I have written to you, boys, because you have known the Father; I have written to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning; I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. It is certainly evident, and I think it is doubted by no one at all, that John here calls them boys or adolescents or young men, or even fathers, according to the age of the soul, not according to the age of the body.

¹¹ But Paul too says in a certain place: "I could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal; as to little ones in Christ I gave you milk to drink, not solid food. A little one in Christ is without doubt so named according to the soul, not according to the age of the flesh. Finally, this same Paul also says in another place: "When I was a little one, I spoke as a little one, I was wise as a little one, I thought as a little one. But when I became a man, I destroyed the things that were of a little one. And again elsewhere he says: "Until we all meet into the perfect man, into the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ. For he knows that all who believe will meet into the perfect man, and into the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ. Therefore, just as these names of ages which we have mentioned are ascribed by the same terms both to the outer man and to the inner, so also you will find that the names of the bodily members are transferred to the members of the soul — or rather, these are to be called the operations and affections of the soul. It is said, then, in Ecclesiastes: "The eyes of the wise man are in his head. Likewise in the Gospel: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Also in the prophets:

¹² "The word of the Lord which came by the hand of the prophet Jeremiah," or of any other. Similar too is that which he says: "But your foot did not stumble. And again: "But my feet were moved a little. Evidently also the belly of the soul is designated where it is said: "Lord, from fear of you we have conceived in the womb. For who would doubt of it, when it is said: "Their throat is an open sepulcher"? And again: "Cast down, O Lord, and divide their

tongues. But also that which is written: "You have broken the teeth of sinners. And again: "Break the arm of the sinner and of the malignant one. And what need is there for me to gather more of these, since the divine Scriptures are filled with most abundant testimonies? From these it is evidently shown that these names of members can by no means be fitted to the visible body, but must be referred to the part and powers of the invisible soul; for although they indeed have similar terms, yet they openly and without any ambiguity carry the significations not of the outer but of the inner man. There is, therefore, for this material man, who is also called the outer, food and drink akin to his own nature — that corporeal and earthly food, namely. And likewise for the spiritual man himself, who is also called the inner, there is his own proper food, such as that living bread which came down from heaven.

¹³ But there is also that drink from that water which Jesus promises, saying: "Whoever shall drink of this water which I give him shall not thirst forever. Thus, therefore, throughout all things a similarity of terms is set down according to each man, but the property of the realities is kept distinct for each, and to the corruptible corruptible things are furnished, but to the incorruptible incorruptible things are set forth. Hence it comes about that certain simpler people, not knowing how to distinguish and separate what things in the divine Scriptures are to be assigned to the inner man and what to the outer, deceived by the similarities of terms, have betaken themselves to certain foolish fables and empty fabrications; so that they even believed that after the resurrection corporeal foods must be used, and drink taken not only from the true vine that lives unto the ages, but also from these vines and the fruits of the wood. But of these things we shall see elsewhere.

¹⁴ Now therefore, as we distinguished in the preceding observation, there is indeed, according to the inner man, one kind of person without children and barren, but another abounding in children. In accordance with this we also note that saying: "The barren has borne seven, and she who was fruitful in children has grown weak. And as it is said among the blessings: "There shall not be among you one without children nor a barren woman. Therefore, if these things are so, just as there is said to be a certain carnal love, which the poets have also called Cupid, according to which he who loves sows in the flesh; so also there is a certain spiritual love, according to which that inner man who loves sows in the spirit. And to say it more plainly, if

there is anyone who still bears the image of the earthly according to the outer man, he is driven by an earthly desire and love. But he who bears the image of the heavenly according to the inner man is driven by a heavenly desire and love. And the soul is driven by heavenly love and desire when, having beheld the beauty and comeliness of the Word of God, it has fallen in love with His splendor, and has received from Him a certain dart and wound of love.

¹⁵ For this Word is the image, and the brightness of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, in whom were created all things that are in the heavens, and that are on the earth, whether visible or invisible. Therefore, if anyone can with a capacious mind conceive and consider the beauty and comeliness of all these things which were created in Him, being struck by the very loveliness of things and pierced by the magnificence of their splendor as by a chosen arrow, as the prophet says, he will receive from Him a saving wound, and will burn with the blessed fire of His love. It is fitting also for us to know this: that just as an unlawful love and one contrary to law can befall the outer man — for example, that he should love not a betrothed nor a wife, but either a harlot or an adulteress — so also there can befall the inner man, that is, the soul, a love directed not toward the lawful bridegroom whom we have said to be the Word of God, but toward some adulterer and corrupter. This the prophet Ezekiel plainly declares under this same figure, where he introduces Oholah and Oholibah under the guise of Samaria and Jerusalem, corrupted by an adulterous love, as the passage itself of the prophetic Scripture shows to those willing to know more fully.

¹⁶ But this spiritual love of the soul is kindled sometimes indeed, as we have taught, toward certain spirits of wickedness, and sometimes toward the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, who is the faithful bridegroom and is called the husband of the learned soul, whose bride she herself is named especially in this Scripture which is here in hand, as we shall show more fully, the Lord granting it, when we begin to explain the words of the little book itself. ¹⁷ Now it seems to me that divine Scripture, wishing to guard against any stumbling arising among its readers under the name of love, has for the sake of the weaker sort designated by the more respectable term "charity" or "affection" (*dilectio*) that which among the wise of this world is called desire (*cupido*) or love (*amor*). For example, when it says of Isaac: "And he took Rebecca, and she became his wife, and he loved her. And again of Jacob and

Rachel Scripture likewise says: "Now Rachel was fair in her eyes and beautiful in appearance, and Jacob loved Rachel, and said: I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter. But this changed use of the word appears more evidently in the case of Amnon, who fell in love with his sister Tamar. For it is written: "And it came to pass after these things, that Absalom the son of David had a sister very beautiful of countenance, and her name was Tamar, and Amnon the son of David loved her. Here "loved" is put for "fell in love with. "And Amnon was so troubled," it says, "that he fell sick on account of Tamar his sister: for she was a virgin, and it seemed hard in the eyes of Amnon to do anything to her. And a little later, concerning the violence which Amnon inflicted upon Tamar his sister, Scripture speaks thus:

¹⁸"And Amnon would not hearken to her voice, but prevailed over her, and humbled her, and lay with her, and Amnon hated her with an exceeding great hatred: for the hatred with which he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her. And so both in these passages, and in many other places, you will find that divine Scripture has shunned the word "love" (*amor*) and has put "charity" and "affection" (*dilectio*) instead. Sometimes, though rarely, it does name love by its proper word, and it invites and incites souls toward it, as when it says in Proverbs concerning wisdom: "Love her, and she will keep you; surround her, and she will exalt you; honor her, and she will embrace you. But also in that little book which is called the Wisdom of Solomon, it is written thus concerning wisdom itself: "I became a lover of her beauty. And I think that only where no occasion of stumbling seemed to appear did it insert the very name of love. For what passion, or what unseemliness, could anyone discern in the love of wisdom, or in one who professes himself to be a lover of wisdom? For if it had said that Isaac fell in love with Rebecca, or Jacob with Rachel, some unseemly passion might well have been understood through these words with regard to the holy men of God, especially among those who do not know how to ascend from the letter to the spirit.

¹⁹But most plainly, in this very little book which is now in hand, the name of love has been exchanged for the word "charity," in the place where it says: "I have adjured you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my kinsman, that you tell him that I am wounded with charity"; whereas it might indeed have said: "I am struck by the dart of his love. Therefore it makes no difference in the divine Scriptures whether it be called charity, or love, or af-

fection, except that the name of charity is exalted to such a degree that even God himself is called charity, as John said: "Beloved, let us love one another, for charity is of God, and everyone who loves is born of God, and knows God; but he who does not love does not know God, for God is charity. And although it belongs to another occasion to say something about those things which we have brought forward from John's Epistle by way of example, nevertheless it has not seemed absurd to touch briefly upon a few points. "Let us love one another," he says, "for charity is of God"; and a little later: "God is charity. In this he shows both that God himself is charity, and again that he who is of God is charity. But who is of God, except that one who says: "I came forth from God, and came into this world"? But if God the Father is charity, and the Son is charity;

20 and the charity of the Father and the charity of the Son are one thing, not one person; then consequently the Father and the Son are rightly said to be one. And therefore Christ is fittingly called charity, just as he is called wisdom, and power, and justice, and word, and truth. And therefore Scripture says that if charity remains in us, God remains in us. And God, that is, the Father and the Son, who also come to him who is perfect in charity, according to the word of the Lord and Savior who says: "I and the Father will come to him, and will make our abode with him. It must therefore be understood that this charity which is God, when it has been in anyone, loves nothing earthly, nothing material, nothing corruptible. For it is contrary to its nature to love anything corruptible, since it is itself the fount of incorruption. For it alone is that which has immortality: seeing that God is charity, who alone has immortality, dwelling in light inaccessible. But what else is immortality but eternal life, which God promises he will give to those who believe in him, the only true God, and in Jesus Christ his Son whom he sent? For this reason therefore, first of all and before all things, this is said to be lovable and pleasing to God: that one should love the Lord his God with his whole heart, and with his whole soul, and with all his strength.

21 And because God is charity, and the Son who is of God is charity, he requires something like himself in us: so that through this charity which is in Christ Jesus, who is charity, we may be joined as it were by a certain kindred affinity through the name of charity; just as that man too, who was already joined to him, said: "Who shall separate us from the charity of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Now this charity loves every man as a

neighbor. For it was on this account that the Savior rebuked a certain man who supposed that a just soul does not keep the laws of kinship toward that soul which is entangled in iniquities: and for this reason he wove that parable which says that a certain man fell among robbers while he was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he indeed blames the priest and the Levite, who, seeing the half-dead man, had passed by; but he embraces the Samaritan who showed mercy, and by his response he confirmed that this man had been neighbor to the very one who had posed the question, and said to him: "Go, and do you likewise. For indeed by nature we are all neighbors to one another. But by the works of charity that one becomes a neighbor who is able to do good to him who is not able.

²² Whence also our Savior became a neighbor to us, and did not pass us by when we lay half-dead from the wounds of the robbers. Therefore it must be understood that the charity of God always tends toward God, from whom it drew its origin, and looks toward the neighbor, with whom it has entered into partnership, inasmuch as he too was created alike in incorruption. So then, whatever things have been written concerning charity, receive them as though said concerning love, caring nothing for the names. For the same power is displayed in both. But if anyone should say that we are also called to love money, a harlot, and other evil things likewise, by the same word which seems to be derived from charity: it must be understood that in these cases charity is named not properly but by abuse. Just as, for example, the name "God" is principally in him from whom are all things, and through whom are all things, and in whom are all things: which of course openly proclaims the power and nature of the threefold singularity. But in the second place, and, so to speak, by abuse, Scripture also calls "gods" those to whom the word of God comes, as the Savior confirms in the Gospels. But the heavenly powers too seem to be called by this name, when it is said: "God stood in the assembly of the gods, and in the midst he judges the gods.

²³ But in the third place, now not by abuse but falsely, the gods of the nations, the demons, are so called, when Scripture says: "All the gods of the nations are demons. And so the name of charity is first in God, on account of which we are commanded to love God with our whole heart, with our whole soul, and with all our strength, inasmuch as he is the one from whom we have this very thing, that we are able to love. In him without doubt it is already contained that we should love wisdom, and justice, and piety, and

truth and all the virtues equally. For to love God and to love good things is one and the same. In the second place, by a name as it were derived from that one by abuse, we are also commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves. But the third is that which is falsely named under the title of charity: to love either money, or pleasures, or whatever pertains to corruption and error. It therefore makes no difference whether God be said to be loved (*amari*) or loved (*diligi*). Nor do I think that anyone can be blamed if, just as John names God charity, he himself should name him love. In short, I remember that a certain one of the saints, Ignatius by name, said concerning Christ: "But my love is crucified"; nor do I judge him worthy of reproach for this.

²⁴ But it should be understood that everyone who loves either money, or the things in the world that belong to corruptible matter, drags down the power of charity which is from God to earthly and perishable things, and abuses the things of God for the ends that God does not will. For God did not give to human beings the love of these things, but the use of them. We have discussed these matters at somewhat greater length, wishing to distinguish more openly and more attentively concerning the nature of charity and love, lest perhaps — since Scripture says that God is charity — everything that is loved, even if it be corruptible, should be thought to be from God, and this be reckoned as charity and love. But it is shown that charity is indeed a thing of God, and his gift, yet it is not always taken up by human beings for those things which are God's, and which God wills to be his work. But this too must be understood, that it is impossible for human nature not always to love something. For everyone who has reached that age which they call puberty loves something, either less rightly, when he loves what he ought not, or rightly and usefully, when he loves what he ought. But some drag this affection of love, which is implanted in the rational soul by the Creator's benefaction, either toward the love of money and the pursuit of avarice, or toward the securing of glory, and they become greedy for empty glory;

²⁵ or toward the pursuit of harlots, and they are found captives of shamelessness and lust; or toward other things similar to these they pour out the power of so great a good. But even when this love is directed toward the various arts that are ministered by the hand, or is applied through the pursuits of the present life — not only the necessary ones, as, for example, to say, toward the art of wrestling, or the exercises of running, or indeed even toward geometry, or music, or arithmetic, and toward other disciplines of this kind —

not even so does its use seem to me to be taken in a commendable way. For if that which is good is also commendable, and good in the proper sense is understood not in relation to bodily uses, but first in God and in the virtues of the soul, then it follows that the love is commendable which is fitted to God and to the virtues of the soul. And that this is so is shown by the very definition of the Savior, where, being asked by someone what was the greatest commandment of all, and the first in the law, he answered: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength." And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. And he added: "On these two commandments the whole law hangs, and the prophets";

²⁶showing through these two that just and lawful love consists, and that on these the entire law and the prophets hang. But also that which he says: "You shall not commit adultery; you shall not kill; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness"; and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up anew in this word, in which he says: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" — which will be explained more easily in this manner. ²⁷ Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, a woman burning with love for some man and longing to be received into partnership with him: will she not do everything in such a way, and so govern all her movements, that she may know how to please him whom she loves — lest perhaps, if she should do anything contrary to his will, that most excellent man should reject and spurn partnership with her? Will this woman, who is aflame toward the love of that man with her whole heart, her whole soul, and all her strength, be able to commit adultery, when she knows that he loves chastity? or murder, when she knows him to be gentle? or theft, when she knows that generosity pleases him? or will she covet what belongs to another, she who has all her own desires occupied with the love of that man? Thus, therefore, in the perfection of charity, every commandment is said to be renewed, and the force of the Law and the Prophets to hang. On account of this good of charity or of love, the saints are neither straitened in tribulation, nor in perplexity driven to despair, nor cast down and destroyed; but that which is present, momentary, and light in their tribulation works for them beyond measure an eternal weight of glory. For this present, momentary, and light tribulation is not spoken of for all, but for Paul and for those who are like him:

²⁸ because they have the perfect charity of God in Christ Jesus poured out in their heart through the Holy Spirit. So too, in the end, love of Rachel did not allow the patriarch Jacob, placed for seven continuous years amid labors, to feel the burning of the daytime heat and the nighttime cold. So I hear Paul himself, kindled in this love, saying: "Charity suffers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, charity never falls. There is nothing, therefore, which he who loves perfectly does not endure. But when we do not endure many things, it is certain that this is because we do not have the charity which endures all things. And if we do not bear certain things patiently, it is for this reason: that charity is lacking to us, which suffers all things. In the wrestling too which is ours against the devil, that we frequently fall, there is no doubt that this happens because there is not in us that charity which never falls. This love, therefore, the present Scripture speaks of, by which the blessed soul makes use of and is inflamed toward the Word of God; and it sings this wedding song through the spirit, by which the Church is joined and united to her heavenly bridegroom Christ, desiring to be mingled with him through the Word, that she may conceive from him, and may be able to be saved through this chaste generation of children, when they shall have remained in faith and holiness with sobriety:

²⁹ inasmuch as they are conceived from the seed indeed of the Word of God, but brought forth and begotten either by the immaculate Church, or by the soul that requires nothing corporeal, nothing material, but burns with the love of the Word of God alone. These things, for the present, could occur to us concerning love, or charity, which is treated of in this wedding song of the Song of Songs. But it must be known that there are as many things which ought to be said about this charity as about God: since he himself is charity. For just as no one knows the Father except the Son, and him to whom the Son shall will to reveal him, so no one knows his charity except the Son. And likewise the Son himself also — since he too is charity, and this charity is from God the Father — no one knows except the Father. Yet according to this, that God the Father himself is called charity, so also is the Son, who proceeds from the Father, and therefore knows the things that are in God, just as the spirit of man knows the things that are in man. But now the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, goes about seeking whether he may find any souls worthy and capable, to whom he may reveal the greatness of this charity which is from God.

³⁰ Now therefore, invoking God the Father himself, who is charity, let us through that charity which is from him come also to the discussion of what remains. ³¹ And let us first attempt to inquire concerning this: what is the reason that, whereas the Church of God has received three books written by Solomon, the first of them set down is the book of Proverbs, the second the one called Ecclesiastes, and in the third place is held the volume of the Song of Songs. The considerations, then, that can occur to us in this matter are these. The general branches of learning by which one arrives at the knowledge of things are three, which the Greeks called ethics, physics, and theoretics; these we may call moral, natural, and inspective (contemplative). Some among the Greeks, indeed, also placed logic in the fourth number, which we may call rational. Others said that it is not something external, but is woven and joined throughout the whole body by means of these three disciplines which we mentioned above. For logic — or, as we say, the rational — is that which seems to contain the principles of words and sayings, and their proprieties and improprieties, and to teach the genera and species and figures of each of the several sayings; and this discipline it is fitting not so much to separate as to insert and interweave with the others. But that is called moral through which an upright manner of living is fitted, and habits tending toward virtue are prepared.

³² That is called natural in which the nature of each single thing is examined, so that nothing may be done in life contrary to nature, but each single thing may be assigned to those uses for which it was brought forth by the Creator. That is called inspective, by which, going beyond visible things, we contemplate something of divine and heavenly things, and behold these with the mind alone, since they surpass bodily sight. These, then, as it seems to me, the wise men among the Greeks, having taken them from Solomon — inasmuch as he, being far prior to them in age and time, had learned these things earlier through the Spirit of God — put forward as though they were their own discoveries, and, having comprised them in the volumes of their teachings, left them to be handed down to posterity. But these things, as we have said, Solomon discovered before all others, and taught them through the wisdom which he received from God, as it is written: "And God gave prudence to Solomon, and wisdom exceeding much, and breadth of heart like the sand which is on the shore of the sea; and wisdom was multi-

plied in him above all the ancient sons of men, and above all the wise men of Egypt.

³³ Solomon, therefore, wishing to distinguish and separate from one another these three which we have said above to be general disciplines — that is, the moral, the natural, and the inspective — set them forth in three little books, each of them also fitted in its own order consequently. First, then, in Proverbs he taught the moral part, composing the rules of life, as was fitting, in concise and brief maxims. But the second, which is called natural, he comprised in Ecclesiastes: in which, discoursing much concerning natural things, and separating the empty and vain from the useful and necessary, he admonishes that vanity is to be abandoned, and that the useful and right things are to be pursued. The inspective part also he handed down in this little book which is in our hands, that is, in the Song of Songs, in which he instills into the soul the love of heavenly and divine things under the figure of the bride and bridegroom, teaching that one must come to fellowship with God by the ways of charity and love. And that, in laying the foundations of true philosophy and in establishing the order of disciplines and instructions, the rational part was not hidden from him, nor cast aside by him, he evidently shows at the very beginning of his Proverbs. First of all, by this very fact, that he entitled his little book "Proverbs" — which name, of course, signifies that one thing is said openly, but another is indicated inwardly.

³⁴ For this both the common usage of proverbs teaches, and John in the Gospel writes that the Savior spoke thus, saying: "These things I have spoken to you in proverbs; the hour will come when I shall no longer speak to you in proverbs, but shall announce to you plainly concerning the Father. So much, then, in the very inscription of the title. But in what immediately follows he adds a discrimination of speech, distinguishes knowledge from wisdom, and instruction from wisdom, and sets down the understanding of words as something distinct, and says that prudence consists in this, that one may be able to detect the subtlety of words. He also distinguishes true justice from the direction of judgment; and he even names a certain shrewdness as necessary for those whom he instructs — that, I believe, through which the craftiness of sophisms may be understood and avoided. And therefore he says that to the innocent shrewdness is given through wisdom, doubtless lest they be deceived in the word of God by sophistic fraud. But in this he seems to me to

make mention of the rational discipline, through which the significations of words and sayings are discerned, and the proper meaning of each utterance is distinguished with sure reasoning. In which it is especially fitting that boys be trained. For this he urges, when he says: "That he may give to the younger boy sense and reflection.

³⁵ And because he who is trained in these things necessarily governs himself rationally through what he has learned, and balances his life more moderately, therefore he says: "But the understanding one will acquire the means of guidance (helms). After this, moreover, recognizing that in the divine words — by which through the prophets the order of living was delivered to the human race — there are diverse figures of speech and various species of expression; knowing that among them there is held a certain figure which is called a parable, and another which is called an obscure saying, and others which are named enigmas, and others which are called sayings of the wise, he writes: "You will understand also a parable and an obscure discourse, and the sayings of the wise, and enigmas. Through these several things, then, he manifestly and evidently sets forth the rational part, unfolding, after the manner of the ancients, great and perfect meanings in concise and brief maxims.

³⁶ And these, if anyone should meditate upon them in the law of the Lord day and night, and if anyone, like the just man whose mouth meditates the wisdom of the Lord, shall be able to investigate them more diligently, he will also be able to find them — provided nevertheless that he has sought rightly, and, seeking, has knocked at the door of wisdom, asking of God that it may be opened to him, and that he may be worthy to receive through the Holy Spirit the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge, and to be made a partaker of that wisdom which was saying: "For I was extending my words, and you were not hearing. And rightly did she say that she extends her words in the heart of him to whom God has given, as we said above, breadth of heart. For the heart of that man is enlarged who is able to explain, with a broader teaching, those things which have been briefly said in mysteries, by means of assertions taken from the divine volumes. It is fitting, therefore, according to this same teaching of the most wise Solomon, that he who desires to know wisdom should begin from moral instruction, and understand that which is written: "You have desired wisdom; keep the commandments, and the Lord will give it to you.

³⁷ For this reason, then, this master, who first teaches men divine philosophy, set the little book of Proverbs as the beginning of his work, in which, as we have said, the moral part is handed down: so that when one has advanced in understanding and in morals, he may come also to the discipline of natural understanding, and there, distinguishing the causes and natures of things, may recognize that vanity is to be abandoned, but that one must hasten toward the eternal and everlasting; and therefore, after Proverbs, one comes to Ecclesiastes, which teaches, as we have said, that all visible and corporeal things are transient and fragile — which, of course, when he who is devoted to wisdom has discerned to be so, he will without doubt despise and disdain them, and, renouncing (so to speak) the whole world, he will stretch out toward the invisible and eternal things, which indeed are taught by spiritual senses, but under certain veiled figures of love, in the Song of Songs. For this book holds the last place for this reason, that one may then come to it when one has both been cleansed in morals, and has learned the knowledge and distinction of corruptible and incorruptible things, through which he may in no way be able to take offense at these figures by which the love of the bride toward the heavenly bridegroom — that is, of the perfect soul toward the Word of God — is described and formed.

³⁸ For when those things have been premised by which the soul is purified through acts and morals, and is led into the discernment of natural things, then one comes fittingly to matters of doctrine and to the mystical things, and ascends to the contemplation of the divinity by a sincere and spiritual love. This threefold form, then, of divine philosophy I think was also prefigured in those holy and blessed men, on account of whose most holy institutions the most high God willed to be called the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. Abraham sets forth, as it were, moral philosophy, through obedience. For so great was his obedience and observance of the commandments that, when he heard: "Go forth from your land, and from your kindred, and from the house of your father," he did not delay, but did it at once — nay rather, he did something even greater. For hearing that he should sacrifice his son, not even then does he doubt, but he obeys the precept: and, to give to posterity an example of the obedience which is moral philosophy, he did not spare even his only son. Isaac also holds to natural philosophy, since he both digs wells and searches out the depths of things.

³⁹ But Jacob too holds the inspective place, inasmuch as he was named Israel on account of the contemplation of divine things, and saw the camps of heaven, and beheld the house of God and the ways of the angels — that is, the ladder stretched out from earth to heaven. Whence also with good reason we find that these three blessed men set up altars to God, that is, consecrated the advances of their philosophy, namely that they might teach that these things are to be referred not to human arts, but to the grace of God. But they also dwell in tents, so that through these they may show that neither on earth is anything of one's own to be possessed by him who is devoted to divine philosophy, but that he must always be advancing, not so much from place to place as from the knowledge of inferior things to the knowledge of perfect things. But you will find also many other things in the divine Scriptures which designate this order — which we have said is contained in the little books of Solomon — according to this same form: but to pursue these now would be long, since we have another matter in hand. If anyone, then, has fulfilled the first part in the amending of morals and the keeping of commandments, which is designated through Proverbs;

⁴⁰ and after this, when the vanity of the world has been detected, and the fragility of transient things perceived, has come to this — that he renounces the world and all that is in the world: he will consequently come also to the contemplation and the desiring of those things which are not seen and are eternal. Yet, that we may be able to attain to these, we have need of divine mercy, if perchance we may be strong enough, having perceived the beauty of the Word of God, to be kindled in a saving love for Him, so that He also may deign to love such a soul as He has perceived to have a desire for Him.

⁴¹ After these things, the logical order of our discourse requires us to speak also about the very title, the Song of Songs. For this is similar to those things which in the tabernacle of the testimony are called the Holy of Holies, and to those things which in the book of Numbers are mentioned as the works of works, and to those things which in Paul are called the ages of ages. But in what way the Holy of Holies differs from the holy things in Exodus, and in what way the works of works differ from the works in the book of Numbers, we have stated, as far as we were able, in our treatises. And concerning the age of ages too, in the places where it occurs, it has not been passed over; and, so that we may not repeat the same things, let those suffice. Now, therefore, let us first inquire what the songs are, of which songs this is said to be the

Song. I think, then, that the songs are those which of old were sung through the prophets or through the angels. For the Law is said to have been ministered through angels by the hand of a mediator. All those things, therefore, which were announced through them, were songs going before, sung by the friends of the bridegroom. But this is a single song, which was now to be sung, in the manner of an epithalamium, by the bridegroom himself as he was about to receive his bride to himself:

⁴² in which the bride no longer wishes to have it sung to her through the friends of the bridegroom, but now desires to hear the words of the bridegroom himself present, saying: "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth. Whence also it is rightly preferred to all songs; for the other songs which the Law and the prophets sang seem to have been chanted to a bride still small, and to one who has not yet entered the vestibules of mature age; but this song is chanted to one grown up, and now very strong, and who is now capable of the manly power and the perfect mystery. According to which it is said of her that she is one, a perfect dove. As a perfect bride, therefore, of a perfect man, she has received the words of perfect doctrine. The first song, then, Moses and the children of Israel sang to God when they saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore, and when they saw the strong hand and the exalted arm of the Lord, and they believed God and his servant Moses. Then they sang, saying: "Let us sing to the Lord, for he is gloriously glorified.

⁴³ But I judge that no one can come to that perfect and mystical song, and to that perfection of the bride which is contained in this Scripture, unless he first walk through the dry ground in the midst of the sea, and the water become for him a wall on the right hand and on the left, and thus he escape from the hands of the Egyptians; so that he may see them dead on the seashore, and, gazing upon the strong hand of the Lord, because he slew the Egyptians, may believe the Lord and his servant Moses. And by Moses I mean the Law and the Gospels and all the divine Scriptures; for then he will rightly sing and say: "Let us sing to the Lord, for he is gloriously glorified. But this Song one will sing when first he has been freed from the servitude of the Egyptians. And after these things, when he has passed through all these things which are written in Exodus and in Leviticus, and has come to this, that he is taken up into the divine numbers, then again he will sing the second Song, when he has gone out from the valley of Zared, which is interpreted "an alien descent," and has come to the well concerning which it is

written: "And the Lord said to Moses: Gather the people together, and I will give them water from the well to drink. For there he will sing and say: "Consecrate the well to it.

⁴⁴ The princes dug it, the kings of the nations hewed it out in their kingdom, when they ruled over them. But concerning these things it has been said more fully in the book of Numbers, according as the Lord granted us. It behooves one, therefore, to come to the well which was dug by the princes and hewn out by the kings, in which work no common person labors, but all the princes, all the kings — that is, royal and princely souls, which seek out the depth of the well that contains the living water. After that song one comes to the song of Deuteronomy, concerning which the Lord says: "And now write for yourselves the words of this song, and teach it to the children of Israel, and put it into their mouth, that this song may be to me for a testimony among the children of Israel. And see how great and of what sort this song is, for whose hearing the earth does not suffice, but heaven too is called together. For he says: "Give heed, O heaven, to the things I shall speak, and let the earth hear the words from my mouth. See how great, how immense are the things that are said. "Let my utterance be awaited," he says, "like rain, and let it descend like dew, like snow upon the grass, and upon the hay, because I have invoked the name of the Lord," and the rest. The fourth song is in the book of Judges, concerning which it is written:

⁴⁵ "And Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying: When the leaders in Israel began, in the purpose of the people, bless ye the Lord. Hear, O kings, and give ear," and the rest. But she who sings these things ought to be a bee, whose work is such that both kings and ordinary folk use it for health. For Deborah, who sings this song, is interpreted "a bee," and Barak too along with her: and Barak is interpreted "lightning-flash. And this song is sung after victory, because no one can sing what is perfect until he has conquered his adversaries. So, finally, in the song itself it is said: "Arise, arise, Deborah, rouse up the thousands of the people. Arise, arise, sing a song, arise, Barak. But concerning these things too you will find matters more fully discussed in those little discourses which we have published on the book of Judges. The fifth song after these is in the second book of Kingdoms, when David spoke to the Lord the words of this song in the day in which the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from

the hand of Saul, and he said: "The Lord is my rock and my fortress, the Lord my deliverer, my God shall be my keeper.

⁴⁶ If, then, you too can consider who are the enemies of David whom he overcomes and lays low in the first and second book of Kingdoms, and how he was made worthy to merit the help of the Lord and to be delivered from enemies of this kind: then you too will be able to sing that fifth song. The sixth is the song in the first book of Chronicles, where David appointed Asaph and his brothers at the beginning to praise the Lord, and the beginning of this song is such: "Praise the Lord and give thanks and call upon him in his name, make known his wishes among the peoples, sing to him, and speak a hymn, recount all his devisings which the Lord has made," etc. It must be known, however, that the song which is in the second book of Kingdoms is very like the sixteenth psalm. But that which is in the first book of Chronicles, in its beginnings indeed, up to that place where it says: "And among the prophets do not deal maliciously," is like the one hundred and fourth psalm. But the latter portions, from this place on, bear a likeness to the first parts of the ninety-fifth psalm, where it is said: "Sing to the Lord, all the earth," up to that place where it says: "For he comes to judge the earth. Therefore, if the number of songs is to be concluded within these, this book of the Song of Songs will seem to be placed in the seventh position.

⁴⁷ But if anyone should think that the song of Isaiah also is to be numbered with the rest — although it does not seem very fitting that the song of Isaiah should be thought to have preceded, since Isaiah wrote in far later times — nevertheless, if anyone should think that prophetic sayings are to be weighed not by their times but by their meaning, he will add that song also; and he will say that this which Solomon sang is the Song of Songs not only of those which were to be sung before, but also of those which seemed to be sung afterward. But if anyone should think that some should be taken also from the book of Psalms — wherever in it either "a song" is written or "a song of a psalm" — he will gather together a multitude of preceding songs. For he will join to the rest also the fifteen songs of the steps together: and inquiring into the virtues of the individual songs, and from these gathering the steps of the advancing soul and again composing the order and sequence of the spiritual progress, he will be able to show with how magnificent strides the bride, advancing through all these things, comes at last to the chamber of the bridegroom, going forth into the place of the wondrous tabernacle,

even to the house of God, with the voice of exultation and confession, the sound of one feasting;

⁴⁸and coming, as we have said, even to the very chamber of the bridegroom, that she may hear and speak all these things which are contained in the Song of Songs. ⁴⁹But before we come to the body of the little book itself, we can also inquire into these matters: why is it that Solomon, who in these three little books seems to comply with the will of the Holy Spirit, is in Proverbs indeed called "Solomon the son of David, who reigned in Israel"; whereas in the second book he is not written down as Solomon, but it says, "the words of the Preacher (Ecclesiastes), the son of David, king of Israel in Jerusalem"; and he writes himself to be the son of David, just as in the first, and king of Israel, but there he sets down "proverbs," here "words"; and himself, whom there he named Solomon, here he calls Ecclesiastes. And whereas there he had set down only the nation over which he had reigned, here he set down both the nation and designates the place of his reign, Jerusalem. But in the Song of Songs he writes neither the name of the nation, nor the place in which he reigns, nor at all that he is king, nor that he has David for his father, but only says, "The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's own. And although it seems difficult to me either to examine, or to be able to attain, the differences among these, or in any way to bring forth openly what has been investigated and to entrust it to these pages:

⁵⁰nevertheless, insofar as either our own understanding or the hearing of those who read can grasp it, we shall attempt to open up a few things. That in very many places Solomon bears the type of Christ, whether according to the fact that he is called "peaceable," or according to the fact that "the queen of the south came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon," I think there is no room for doubt. He therefore, both according to the fact that he is called the son of David, reigns in Israel, and according to the fact that he reigns over those kings, on account of which he himself is called King of kings, reigns. And again he is himself the true Ecclesiastes, who, when he was in the form of God, emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, that he might gather together the Church; for from gathering together the Church he is called Ecclesiastes. And then, who is so Solomon, that is, peaceable, as our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made for us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and peace? Therefore in the first book, that of Proverbs, when he instructs us in moral disciplines, he is said to be king in Israel, but

not yet in Jerusalem: because although we are called Israel on account of faith, nevertheless it has not yet been attained that we should seem to have arrived at the heavenly Jerusalem.

⁵¹ But when we shall have made progress, and it shall have come to this, that we are joined to the Church of the firstborn which is in heaven, and, with the ancient and natural causes more diligently examined, come to know that the heavenly Jerusalem is our mother: then already Christ himself becomes for us also Ecclesiastes, and is said to reign not only in Israel, but also in Jerusalem. But when it shall have come to the perfection of all things, and there shall be joined to him as a perfect bride the whole rational creation without exception—because he made peace through his blood not only for the things that are on earth, but also for those that are in heaven—then he shall be called Solomon only, when he shall have handed over the kingdom to God the Father, when he shall have made void all rule and authority. For he must reign until he puts his enemies under his feet, and the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed. And thus, when all things have been made peaceable and made subject to the Father, when God shall now be all in all, he shall be named Solomon only, that is, the peaceable one alone.

⁵² Fittingly, therefore, in this little book, which was to be written concerning the love of the bride and the bridegroom, for this reason also he is written down neither as son of David, nor as king, nor as anything else of these that could pertain to a bodily understanding, so that with good reason the bride, now already perfect, may say of him, "even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh, yet now we no longer know him thus"—lest anyone suppose that she loves something bodily, or set in the flesh, and lest some blemish be believed to be brought into her love. On this account the Song of Songs is Solomon's only, neither the son of David's, nor the king of Israel's, nor is there mingled in these at all any understanding of a carnal name. And do not wonder that, although our Lord and Savior is one and the same, we speak of him as, so to say, lesser in the first place in Proverbs, and then making progress in Ecclesiastes, and after these having perfection in the Song of Songs, since you may see these things written also in the Gospels, where for our sake he too is said to make progress in us. For thus it is reported, that "Jesus made progress in age and wisdom with God and men. I think, therefore, that for all these reasons he is written down neither as son of David, nor as king of Israel:

⁵³ but also for this reason still, that in the Song of Songs the bride had already made progress so far that it was something greater than the kingdom of Jerusalem is. For the Apostle says that there is a heavenly Jerusalem, and he records that believers draw near to it. This Bridegroom, then, to whom the bride now hastens, the same Paul, when he calls him the great high priest, writes of him as one who is not in the heavens, but has passed through all the heavens, and thither too this his perfect bride follows him—nay rather, cleaving to him and joined with him, thither she has ascended, for she has been made one spirit with him. Whence it seems to me that he said also to Peter, who could not follow him at first, when he said, "Where I go, you cannot come now," that he said: "But you shall follow afterward. And that there is something greater even than Israel, we gather from this: that in the book of Numbers all Israel indeed is numbered, and the twelve tribes of Israel are reckoned under a fixed number; but the tribe of Levi, as being more eminent than the rest, is held to be above this number, and is by no means counted in the number of Israel. For it says thus: "This is the visitation in which the children of Israel were reckoned according to the houses of their families. All their visitation, with its host, was six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty.

⁵⁴ But the Levites were not numbered among them, as the Lord commanded Moses. You see how the Levites are set apart from the children of Israel as more eminent, and are not associated in their number. And again, the priests are written down as more eminent than the Levites. For thus it is contained in the same Scripture: "And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Take the sum of the Levites, and set them in the sight of Aaron the priest, and let them minister to him. You see in this too how it names the priests as superior to the Levites, and again sets the Levites as more eminent than the children of Israel? These things we have seen fit to discuss a little more carefully, wishing through them also to show the reason why, in the very titles of his books, Solomon has employed necessary distinctions, and from the very inscription of the title has designated one thing in Proverbs, another in Ecclesiastes, and yet another in the Song of Songs. And still, as to why in the Song of Songs, where perfection is now shown, he is written down neither as son of David nor as king, this too can be said: because when he was made a servant like his lord, and a disciple like his master, he now seems neither to be a

servant a servant—having been made, that is, like his lord—nor a disciple a disciple, inasmuch as he has been made like his master;

⁵⁵ but to have been indeed at one time a disciple, yet now to be like the master; and to have been indeed at one time a servant, yet now to be like the Lord. By a similar reasoning, therefore, it will seem that this can be observed also concerning the king and concerning those over whom he reigns, when the kingdom shall now be handed over to God the Father. But let this too not be hidden, that some write the title of this little book as "Songs of Songs," which is not rightly written. For it is called here not in the plural, but in the singular, "the Song of Songs. These things have been said by us as if in a preface concerning the superscription itself, or the title of the little book. Now then, with our Lord aiding us, let us set about the beginnings of the work itself, lest even that remain omitted by us which some have thought still to require concerning the very title and superscription of the book, which reads: "The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's own. For they take it as though this were "the Song of Songs of Solomon," so that out of his many songs he has marked this to be one.

⁵⁶ But how shall we accept an understanding of this kind, when neither has the Church of God taken up any songs of Solomon from outside to be read, nor is there held among the Hebrews—from whom the oracles of God seem to have been handed down to us—anything more in the canon beyond these three little books of Solomon which are also among us? Those who assert this, however, wish to confirm their opinion from this, that in the third book of Kingdoms it is written that there were almost many songs of Solomon, so that they may confirm this to be one out of many. This, then, is reported there: "And God gave prudence to Solomon, and wisdom exceeding much, and breadth of heart like the sand which is on the seashore, and Solomon became exceeding wise beyond the wisdom of all the ancients, and beyond all the wise men of Egypt, and beyond Ethan the Ezrahite and Heman, and Chalcal and Dorda the sons of Maol, and he was renowned among all the nations round about: and Solomon spoke three thousand parables, and his songs were five thousand. Out of these five thousand songs, then, they wish it to seem that this one song which we have is one: but until when, or where, they were sung, has come not only not to the use, but not even to the knowledge, of the Churches of God.

⁵⁷ But it is laborious, and far from the work we have set before us, if we should now wish to inquire how many books there are of which mention is made in the divine Scriptures, of which no reading at all has been handed down to us. But neither do we find that among the Jews there was any use of readings of this kind—which, whether because they contained certain things above human understanding, it pleased the Holy Spirit to take out of the midst, or because they were of those scriptures which are called apocryphal, on account of the fact that many things are found in them corrupted and against the true faith, handed down by the elders, it did not please them to give a place, nor to admit them to authority. It is above us to pronounce concerning such things. This, however, is plain, that many examples have been brought forth either by the apostles or by the evangelists, and inserted into the New Testament, which we have never read in these Scriptures that we hold as canonical, but which are nevertheless found in the apocrypha, and are evidently shown to have been taken from them. But not even so is a place to be given to the apocrypha; for the bounds which our fathers set are not to be crossed. For it may have come about that the apostles or evangelists, being filled with the Holy Spirit, knew what was to be taken from those Scriptures and what was to be rejected;

⁵⁸ but for us it is not without danger to presume anything of the kind, for us who have not so great an abundance of the Spirit. And therefore, concerning the present little verse, we hold that edition which we have expounded above, especially since there is contained in it an evident distinction, where it says: "The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's own. For if he had wished it to be understood that this was "of the songs of Solomon," he would surely have said, "The Song of Songs which are Solomon's," or "The Song from the songs of Solomon": but now, because he said "which is Solomon's," it is shown that this Song which is in our hands, and which was to be sung by him, is Solomon's. And let this suffice concerning the title which he set forth. Let us therefore now see also what follows.

Homilies on the Song of Songs

ORIGEN OF ALEXANDRIA

c. AD 185–253

Teacher and biblical scholar of Alexandria and Caesarea.

HOMILIES ON THE SONG OF SONGS — HOMILY 1

¹Latin source: J.-P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologia Latina* 23, cols. 1117–1130 (Jerome's Latin version of Origen's *Homiliae in Canticum canticorum*), via the *Corpus Corporum* digital text (University of Zurich). This English translation is in the public domain.

Want a professionally translated (non-free) version? Check out the Ancient Christian Writers translation by R. P. Lawson. — PREFACE OF JEROME (to the most blessed Pope Damasus)

²Origen, while in his other books he has surpassed all men, in the Song of Songs has surpassed himself. For having completed ten volumes, which come almost to twenty thousand lines, he expounds — first the Seventy Translators, then Aquila and Symmachus and Theodotion, and finally the fifth edition, which he writes that he found on the Actian shore — so magnificently and so plainly, that it seems to me there has been fulfilled in him what is said: The king has brought me into his chamber. And so, laying aside that work — because it is a matter of vast leisure, labor, and expense to render into the Latin tongue such great things, so worthy a work — these two treatises, which he composed after the manner of everyday speech for little ones still at the breast, I have translated faithfully rather than elegantly: offering you a taste of his meaning, not a full meal; that you may observe how greatly those things are to be esteemed which are great, when even these little ones can give such pleasure.

HOMILY 1

³[§1] Just as we have learned through Moses that certain things are not only holy, but holy of holies; and others not only sabbaths, but sabbaths of sab-

baths; so now we are taught, when Solomon writes, that there are certain things not only Songs, but the Song of Songs. Blessed indeed is he who enters the holy place, but more blessed he who enters the holy of holies. Blessed is he who keeps sabbaths, but more blessed he who keeps the sabbath of sabbaths. Blessed likewise is he too who understands the songs and sings them. For no one sings except at festivals; but far more blessed is he who sings the Song of Songs. And as he who enters the holy place still has need of many things, that he may be able to go in to the holy of holies; and he who celebrates the sabbath which was appointed by the Lord for the people still has much that is necessary, that he may keep the sabbath of sabbaths: in the same way, one is found only with difficulty who, passing through all the songs that are contained in the Scriptures, is able to ascend to the Song of Songs. You must go out from Egypt, and, having gone out from the land of Egypt, pass through the Red Sea, that you may be able to sing the first song, saying: Let us sing to the Lord, for gloriously has he been glorified.

⁴ But although you have spoken the first song, you are still far from the Song of Songs. Traverse the land of the desert spiritually, until you come to the well which the kings dug, that there you may sing the second song. After this, come to the neighborhood of the holy Land, that, stationed upon the bank of the Jordan, you may sing the song of Moses, saying: Give ear, O heaven, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. Again you have need to serve as a soldier under Jesus, and to possess the holy Land by inheritance, and that the bee may prophesy to you, and the bee judge you — Deborah is interpreted "bee" — that you may be able to learn also that song which is contained in the book of Judges. Then, ascending to the book of Kingdoms, come to the song sung when David was delivered from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul, and said: The Lord is my firmament, and my strength, and my refuge, and my deliverer. You must come as far as Isaiah, that with him you may say: I will sing a song to my beloved concerning my vineyard. And when you have passed through them all, mount up to higher things, that, a beautiful soul together with the Bridegroom, you may sing this Song of Songs as well.

⁵ [§2] Of how many persons it consists, I am uncertain. But, by your prayers and the Lord's revealing, I seem to have found four persons in it: a man and a bride; with the bride, maidens; with the bridegroom, bands of companions. Some things are said by the bride, others by the bridegroom, some

by the young girls, some by the companions of the bridegroom. For it is fitting that at a wedding there should be a throng of maidens with the bride, and a crowd of young men with the bridegroom. Do not seek all this outside: do not look beyond those who have been saved by the preaching of the Gospel. Understand Christ to be the Bridegroom, and the Church to be the Bride without spot or wrinkle, of whom it is written: That he might present to himself a glorious Church, having neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but that it should be holy and unblemished. But those who, though they are faithful, are nevertheless not such as the word just described, but seem to have obtained salvation only after a certain measure — understand that the souls of believers are the maidens with the bride; while the Angels and those who have come to the perfect man, understand to be the men with the bridegroom. Hence, then, there appear to me four ranks: one man and one woman, and two choirs singing in harmony with one another — the bride singing with the young girls, the bridegroom singing with his fellows.

6 And when you have understood this, hear the Song of Songs, and make haste to understand it, and to say with the bride the things which the bride says, that you may hear what the bride also heard. But if you cannot say with the bride the things she said, that you may hear the things spoken to the bride, make haste at least to become one with the companions of the bridegroom. And further, if you are lower even than they, be with the maidens who abide amid the bride's delights. For these are, in this book, at once the characters of a drama and of a wedding-song — from which the Gentiles too laid claim to the wedding-song and took up a poem of this kind. For the Song of Songs is indeed a wedding-song. First the bride prays; and at once, in the midst of her prayers, she is heard: she sees the bridegroom present, she sees the maidens joined to her company. Then the bridegroom answers her; and after the bridegroom's words, while he suffers for her salvation, the companions answer, saying that, until the bridegroom is at his rest and rises up from his passion, they will make certain ornaments for the bride. But now the very words must be set down, in which first the voice of the bride making entreaty is heard.

7 [S3] Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. Of which this is the sense: How long will my bridegroom send me kisses through Moses, send me kisses through the prophets? Now I long to touch his own lips; let him come himself, let him himself descend. She prays, therefore, to the Father of the

bridegroom, and says to him: Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. And because she is such that there is fulfilled upon her that prophetic word in which it is said: While you are yet speaking, I will say, Behold, here I am, the Father hears the bride of the bridegroom, and sends his Son. Seeing him whose coming she had implored, she ceases to pray, and speaks to him face to face: For your breasts are better than wine, and the fragrance of your ointments is above all spices. The Bridegroom, therefore, Christ, sent by the Father, comes anointed to the bride, and it is said to him: You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows. If the bridegroom has touched me, I too shall be of good fragrance; I too am anointed with ointments, and his ointments reach even to me, that I may be able to say with the Apostles: We are the good fragrance of Christ in every place. But we, when we hear these things, still reek with sins and vices, of which the penitent prophet speaks:

8 My scars have festered and are corrupted, because of my foolishness. Sin is of a foul odor; virtue breathes forth ointments, the figures of which you may read again in Exodus. For there too you will find storax, onycha, galbanum, and the rest. These indeed for incense. Then, for the perfumer's work, various ointments are taken, among which are spikenard and storax. And God, who made heaven and earth, speaks to Moses, saying: I have filled them with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, that they may make the works of the perfumer's art. God even teaches perfumers. 9[§4] If these things are not understood spiritually, are they not mere fables? Unless they have something of a secret in them, are they not unworthy of God? It is necessary, therefore, that he who knows how to hear the Scriptures spiritually — or who at least does not yet know, but desires to know — should strive with all his labor not to live according to flesh and blood, that he may become worthy of the spiritual secrets, and (to speak somewhat more boldly) worthy of a spiritual longing or love. For there is also a spiritual love. And just as there is a certain carnal food and another spiritual, and one drink of the flesh and another of the spirit, so there is a certain carnal love coming from Satan, and another love of the spirit, taking its beginning from God. And no one can be possessed by two loves. If you are a lover of the flesh, you do not receive the love of the spirit. If you have despised all bodily things — I do not say flesh or blood only, but silver and possessions, and the earth itself,

and heaven itself (for these shall pass away) — if you have scorned all these, and your soul is bound to none of them, nor are you held back by any love of vices, you can receive spiritual love. This, because the occasion has arisen, [I say] that we might say something of spiritual love.

¹⁰ Now it is profitable for us to keep Solomon's precept — or rather the precept of him who spoke through Solomon concerning wisdom, saying thus: Love her, and she will keep you; encompass her, and she will exalt you; honor her, that she may embrace you. There is a certain spiritual embrace; and would that it might come to pass that a deeper embrace of the bridegroom enclose my bride, that I too may be able to say what is written in the same book: His left hand is under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me. ¹¹ [§5] Therefore: Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. It is the custom of the Scriptures to put the imperative mood for the optative, as in that place: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name — for "would that it be hallowed"; and now in the present passage: Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for that which is "would that he might kiss me. Then she beholds the bridegroom: he comes anointed with ointments. Nor could he come to the bride otherwise, nor was it fitting that the Father should send the Son to the wedding otherwise. With various ointments he anointed him, and made him Christ; he comes breathing forth diverse fragrances, and hears, For your breasts are better than wine. Fittingly the divine word names one and the same thing, according to the quality of the places, by different words. When a victim is offered in the Law, and it wishes to show the understanding, it speaks of the "little breast of separation. But when someone reclines with Jesus and enjoys the sharing of his thoughts, it addresses not the "little breast," as above, but the "breast. Further, when the bride speaks to the bridegroom — because a nuptial song is being brought in — it names neither the "little breast," as in the sacrifice, nor the "breast," as in John the disciple, but "breasts," saying: For your breasts are better than wine.

¹² Share, as a bride, in the thoughts of the bridegroom, and you will know that thoughts of this kind make one drunk and glad. And just as the Lord's inebriating cup is altogether excellent, so the bridegroom's breasts are better than all wine: For your breasts are better than wine. In the midst of her prayers she turns her words to the bridegroom: And the fragrance of your ointments is above all spices. Not with one, but with all ointments the

bridegroom comes anointed. But if he will deign to come also to my soul, made his bride — how beautiful must she be, that she may draw him to herself from heaven, that she may make him come down to earth, that he may come to his beloved! With what beauty must she be adorned, with what love must she burn, that he may speak to her the things he spoke to the perfect bride: For your neck, for your eyes, for your cheeks, for your hands, for your belly, for your shoulders, for your feet! — concerning which, if the Lord grant it, we shall discourse: how the members of the bride are diversified, and how a different praise is spoken of each part, that after the discussion we may labor to have the like said also of our own soul. Better, then, are your breasts than wine. If you have seen the bridegroom, then you will understand that it is true which is said:

13 For your breasts are better than wine, and the fragrance of your ointments is above all spices. Many have possessed spices. The queen of the south brought spices to Solomon, and many others possessed spices; but however much anyone may have had, they cannot be compared to the fragrances of Christ, of which the bride now says: The fragrance of your ointments is above all spices. I think that Moses too had spices, and Aaron, and each one of the prophets. But if I have seen Christ, and perceived the sweetness and fragrance of his ointments, at once I pronounce sentence, saying: The fragrance of your ointments is above all spices. Your name is ointment poured out — a prophetic mystery. Only let the name of Jesus come into the world, and the ointment is proclaimed as poured out. In the Gospel too a woman, taking an alabaster jar of ointment of costly spikenard, poured it over the head and feet of Jesus. Observe diligently what the two women poured over the head of the Savior. For the sinful woman is shown to have poured over his feet, and she who is not called a sinner over his head. Observe, I say, and you will find, in the Gospel reading, that not fables and tales were written by the Evangelists, but mysteries. And so the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment — if what the sinful woman had is to be referred to the feet, and what the woman who was no sinner had, to the head.

14 Nor is it any wonder that the house was filled with the fragrance, since this world has been filled with it. In the same place it is written of Simon the leper and his house. I think that the leper, the prince of this world, is also called "Simon the leper," whose house at the coming of Christ was filled with sweet fragrance, when the sinful woman did penance, and the holy woman

drenched the head of Jesus with the fragrances of the ointment. ¹⁵ [§6] Your name is ointment poured out. As ointment, which by its outpouring scatters its fragrance far and wide, so the name of Christ has been poured out. Over all the earth Christ is named, in all the world the Lord is proclaimed. For his name is ointment poured out. Now the name of Moses is heard, which before was shut up only within the narrow bounds of Judea. For not one of the Greeks makes mention of him, nor in any history of Gentile letters do we find anything written about him or the rest. As soon as Jesus shone forth in the world, he led forth with him the Law and the Prophets, and truly was fulfilled, Your name is ointment poured out. Therefore the maidens have loved you. Because through the Holy Spirit the love of God has been poured out in our hearts, fittingly the name of "outpouring" is introduced: Your name is ointment poured out. As she says this, the bride beholds the maidens. When she was entreating the Father of the bridegroom, and speaking face to face to the bridegroom himself, the maidens were not yet present. But in the midst of her prayers the choir of young girls enters, and is praised by the bride's words: Therefore the maidens have loved you, and drawn you. And the maidens answer: We will run after you, toward the fragrance of your ointments. How beautifully do the bridegroom's attendants not yet have the confidence of the bride!

¹⁶ The bride does not follow behind his back, but enters at his side. She grasps the bridegroom's right hand, and her hand is held by the bridegroom's right hand. But the handmaids enter after him. There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and maidens without number. One is my dove, my perfect one; she is the only one of her mother, the only one of her who bore her. After you, therefore, we will run, toward the fragrance of your ointments. To those who walk with all uprightness it is said: After you we will run, toward the fragrance of your ointments, according to that word: I have finished the course; and that: Those who run in the stadium all run indeed, but one receives the prize. The prize is Christ; and these maidens, whom we recognize as standing outside because of the beginning of their love, according to that example — But the friend of the bridegroom, standing and hearing him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice — undergo something of the same kind. When the bridegroom enters, they remain outside; but the bride — beautiful, perfect, without spot, without wrinkle — having entered into the bridegroom's chamber, into the royal

inner sanctuary, returns to the maidens, and announces to them the things which she alone has beheld, and says:

17 [§7] The king has brought me into his chamber. She does not say, "he has brought us, the many, into his chamber." The many remain outside; into the chamber the bride alone enters, that she may see the dark and hidden treasures, and report to the maidens: The king has brought me into his chamber. Again the maidens, that is, the very great throng of brides who are but beginning, when the bride has entered the bridegroom's chamber and beholds the riches of her husband, while they await his coming, sing joyfully together: We will exult and be glad in you. They rejoice at the bride's perfection. There is no rivalry in the virtues. This love is clean, this love is without vice. We will exult and be glad in you; we will love your breasts. She who is the greater already enjoys the milk of your breasts, and says, exulting: Better are your breasts than wine. But these who bring exultation and gladness — for they are maidens — bring love, and say: We will exult and be glad in you. We will love — not "we love," but "we will love" — your breasts above wine. Then they speak to the bride: Equity has loved you. They praise the bride, giving her the name of "equity" from her own virtues: Equity has loved you. Again the bride answers the maidens:

18 [§8] I am black and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Do not look at me, because I am darkened, for the sun has looked askance at me. She is beautiful indeed, and I can find in what way the bride is beautiful. But we ask how she is black, and, without whiteness, is fair. She did penance for her sins, and conversion bestowed beauty upon her; and therefore she is sung as beautiful. But because she is not yet cleansed from all the filth of her sins, not yet washed in salvation, she is called black; yet she does not remain in that dark color. And so she becomes white, when she rises to greater things, and begins to ascend from lowly things to the heights, and it is said of her: Who is this that comes up made white? And, that the mystery of the perfected one may be described more plainly, it does not say, as is read in most manuscripts, leaning upon her kinsman — that is, ἐπιστηριζομένη — but ἐπιστηθίζομένη, that is, reclining upon his breast. And significantly it is said of the soul of the bride and of the word, "reclining upon his breast," because there is the ruling part of our heart. Whence, departing from carnal things, we ought to perceive spiritual

things, and to understand that it is far better to love thus than to cease from love. She ascends, then, reclining upon the breast of her kinsman;

¹⁹ and she who now, at the opening of the Song, is set down as black, is sung of, at the end of the wedding-song: Who is this that comes up made white? We have understood how the bride is both black and beautiful. But if you too do not do penance, beware lest your soul be called black, and foul, and you be disfigured with a twofold ugliness: black because of past sins, and foul because you persist in the same vices. But if you do penance, your soul will be black because of former offenses, but because of penance it will have something, so to speak, of an Ethiopian beauty. And because I have once named the Ethiopian, I wish to summon Scripture as witness to this discourse. Aaron and Miriam murmur, because Moses has an Ethiopian woman for a wife. And now Moses takes an Ethiopian woman for a wife, since his law has passed over to this Ethiopian woman of ours. Let Aaron murmur — the priesthood of the Jews; let Miriam also murmur — their Synagogue: Moses cares nothing for the murmuring; he loves his Ethiopian woman, of whom it is also said elsewhere through the Prophet: From the ends of the rivers of Ethiopia they shall bring offerings; and again: Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God before others. Beautifully, "before others. For just as, in the Gospel, that woman with the issue of blood anticipated the healing of the synagogue-ruler's daughter, so Ethiopia, while Israel was sick, was healed.

²⁰ By their offense, salvation came to the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy. I am black and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem. And you, soul of the Church, turn your word to the daughters of Jerusalem, and say: The bridegroom loves me more, he cherishes me more than you, who are many daughters of Israel. You stand outside, and see the bride entering the chamber. Let no one doubt that she who is called black is a black woman who is beautiful. Who are we, that we should come to know God, that we should proclaim the Songs of the Song, that we should come from the ends of Ethiopia, from the end of the earth, to hear the wisdom of the true Solomon? And when the voice of the Savior is heard thundering: The queen of the south shall come at the judgment, and shall condemn the men of this generation, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here — hear the mystic things that are said. The queen of the south comes from the ends of the earth: the Church; and she condemns the men of this generation, that is, the

Jews given over to flesh and blood. She comes from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon — not of him who is proclaimed in the Old Testament, but of this one who in the Gospel is greater than Solomon.

²¹ I am black and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem: black as the tents of Kedar, beautiful as the curtains of Solomon. For to both she answers: I am black and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. The very names too agree with the bride's beauty. The Hebrews say that Kedar is interpreted "darkness. I am black, then, as the tents of Kedar, as the Ethiopians; beautiful, as the curtains of Solomon, which he arranged for the ornament of the tabernacle at that time when he built the temple with the utmost zeal and labor. For Solomon was rich, and no one surpassed him in all his wisdom. As one of these things: I am black and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Do not look at me, because I am darkened. She has given satisfaction concerning her blackness, and, having turned through penance to better things, she announces to the daughters of Jerusalem that she is indeed black, yet beautiful, according to what we have expounded above, and says: Do not look at me, because I am darkened. Do not, she says, marvel that I am of a swarthy color: the sun has looked askance at me — for with its full ray the brightness of its light shone upon me, and I was darkened by its heat. For I did not receive its light within me as was fitting, as the dignity of the sun required.

²² By their offense salvation came to the Gentiles, and again, by the unbelief of the Gentiles, knowledge to Israel. You have both in the Apostle.

²³ [§9] The sons of my mother fought against me. It must be considered how the bride says, The sons of my mother fought against me, and when a fight of her brothers rose up against her. Look at Paul, the persecutor of the Church, and you will understand how a son of her mother fought against her. The persecutors of the Church did penance, and her adversaries, turned back again to their sister's standards, preached the faith which before they destroyed. In this prophetic spirit the bride now, singing, says: They fought against me; they set me as a keeper in the vineyards; my own vineyard I have not kept. I, the Church, I, the bride, I, without spot, have been set as keeper of very many vineyards by the sons of my mother, who once had fought against me. Bound by which anxiety and care, while I keep many vineyards, I have not guarded my own vineyard. Understand this for me of Paul, or of

any other of the saints, who is anxious for the salvation of all; and you will see how, not keeping his own vineyard, he keeps the vineyards of others. And how, that he may gain others, he himself in certain respects suffers loss. And though he was free from all, he made himself a servant, that he might gain all: made weak to the weak, a Jew to the Jews;

²⁴ to those who were under the Law, as under the Law, and the rest — and he says, my own vineyard I have not kept. Then she beholds the bridegroom, who, when beheld, has withdrawn. And frequently he does this throughout the whole song, which, unless a man experiences it himself, he cannot understand. Often — God is my witness — I have beheld the bridegroom drawing near to me, and being present with me as much as possible; then, when he suddenly withdrew, I could not find what I was seeking. Again, therefore, I desire his coming, and sometimes he comes again; and when he has appeared, and been grasped by my hands, again he slips away; and when he has slipped away, again he is sought by me. And this I do repeatedly, until I truly hold him, and go up, leaning upon my kinsman.

²⁵ [§10] Tell me, you whom my soul has loved, where you feed, where you lie down at noon. I do not ask for other times — when you feed in the evening, when at dawn, when at the sun's setting: I seek that time when, in the full-flowering day, in full light, you dwell in the splendor of your majesty. Tell me, you whom my soul has loved, where you feed, where you lie down at noon. Observe diligently wherever you read of "noon. At Joseph's, his brothers hold their meal at noon. At noon the angels are received into Abraham's hospitality, and other things of this kind. Seek, and you will find that the divine Scripture takes up no word in vain or by chance. Who, do you think, is worthy among us to reach even to noon, and to see where the bridegroom feeds, where he lies down? Tell me, you whom my soul has loved, where you feed, where you lie down at noon. For unless you tell me, I begin to be tossed about in wandering; and while I seek you, I run into the flocks of others; and because I am ashamed before others, I begin to cover my face and my mouth. For I am a beautiful bride, and I do not show my bare face to others, but to you alone, whom I have long since kissed. Tell me, you whom my soul has loved, where you feed, where you lie down at noon;

²⁶ lest I become as one veiled over the flocks of your companions. That I may not suffer this, that I may not become veiled, that I may not cover my mouth, and, coming at last to others, begin perhaps to love even those

whom I do not know: therefore tell me where I may seek you, and find you at noon, lest perchance I become as one veiled over the flocks of your companions. After these words the bridegroom warns her, and says: Either you know yourself, that you are the bride of the king, and beautiful, and made beautiful by me — since I presented to myself a glorious Church, having neither spot nor wrinkle — or know that, if you do not know yourself and are not aware of your dignity, you will suffer the things that follow. And what are these? If you do not know yourself, O beautiful among women, go forth in the tracks of the flocks, and feed — not flocks of sheep, not of lambs, but your goats. For he will set the sheep on the right hand, and the goats on the left.

27 [§11] If you do not know yourself, O beautiful among women, go forth in the tracks of the flocks, and feed your goats in the tents of the shepherds. In the tracks, he says, of the shepherds you will become the last; not among the sheep, but among your goats, dwelling with whom you cannot be with me, that is, with the good shepherd. I have likened you to my cavalry among the chariots of Pharaoh. If you wish to understand, O bride, how you ought to know yourself, learn to whom I have compared you, and now you will see that you are such a one as ought not to be disfigured, when you have known your own beauty. What, then, is it? I have likened you to my cavalry among the chariots of Pharaoh. I know the bridegroom to be a horseman, the prophet saying: And his riding is salvation. You are likened, therefore, to my cavalry among the chariots of Pharaoh. As much as my cavalry — I who am the Lord, and drown in the waves Pharaoh, and his crested ones, and his riders, and his horses, and his chariots — as much, I say, as my cavalry differs from the horses of Pharaoh, so much are you, O bride, O soul of the Church, better than all the daughters, better than all souls that are not of the Church. If, then, you are a soul of the Church, you are better than all souls; if you are not better, you are not of the Church. I have likened you to my cavalry among the chariots of Pharaoh, my love. Then he describes the beauty of the bride with spiritual love.

28 [§12] Your cheeks are as those of a turtledove. He praises her face, and is kindled by the blush of her cheeks. For the beauty of women is said to be greatest in the cheeks. So let us too understand the beauty of the soul to be in its cheeks. But her lips and her tongue let us proclaim to be her understanding. Your neck is as a necklace. As an ornament which is wont to hang from

the necks of virgins, and is called ὀρμισκος (a little necklace), so, even without this adornment, your neck itself is an ornament. [§13] After these things the bridegroom is at his rest; he has lain down as a lion, he has slept as a lion's whelp, so that thereafter it may be asked: Who shall rouse him? While he sleeps in the meantime, the companions of the bridegroom, the Angels, appear to the bride, and console her with these words: We cannot make ornaments of gold for you; for we are not so rich as your bridegroom, who bestows on you a golden necklace. We will make a likeness of gold; for we do not have gold. And in this too there is cause for gladness, if we make likenesses of gold, if we make studs of silver. We will make you likenesses of gold, with studs of silver. But not for all time; only until your bridegroom rises from his couch. For when he has risen, he himself will make you gold, he himself will make silver, he himself will adorn your mind and understanding, and you will be truly rich in the bridegroom's house, a beautiful bride — to whom be glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILIES ON THE SONG OF SONGS — HOMILY 2

¹Latin source: J.-P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologia Latina* 23, cols. 1130–1144 (Jerome's Latin version of Origen's *Homiliae in Canticum canticorum*), via the Corpus Corporum digital text (University of Zurich). This English translation is in the public domain.

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²(From the place where it is written, "My spikenard has given forth its fragrance," as far as the place where it says, "For your voice is sweet, and your form beautiful.") [§1] All the motions of the soul God, the maker of the universe, created for good; but through our use of them it often comes to pass that things which are good by nature lead us into sins, while we misuse them ill. One of the motions of the soul is love, which we use well for loving, if we love wisdom and truth. But when our love has fallen away to worse things, we love flesh and blood. You, therefore, as a spiritual person, hear spiritually the words of love being sung, and learn to transfer the motion of your soul and the burning of natural love to better things, according to that word: Love her, and she will keep you; encompass her, and she will exalt you. "Husbands, love your wives," says the Apostle; but he did not stop at what he had said, "Husbands, love your wives"; rather, knowing that there is a love of husbands even for their own wives which is dishonorable, and knowing that

there is a love which is pleasing to God, he taught how husbands ought to love their wives, adding: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church." And these things we have said by way of preface to the matters which are to be discussed hereafter.

³[§2] Since the friends of the bridegroom, while the king is reposing on his couch — for he has slept restfully as a lion, and a lion's whelp — had promised the bride that, until he should rise up, they would make likenesses of gold and silver, not having gold as the bridegroom does; and since in a manner, in other words, the bridegroom's passion was proclaimed: not unreasonably does the bride answer to these things, and she herself, understanding a certain dispensation of the passion, [says] to that which she had heard, We will make you likenesses of gold with studs of silver, while the king is on his couch, she says: My spikenard has given forth its fragrance. A little bundle of a droplet is my kinsman to me; he shall abide between my breasts. How, then, shall we fit to it what went before, While the king is on his couch, that which follows, My spikenard has given forth its fragrance? The Gospel says that there came a woman having an alabaster jar of costly ointment of spikenard — not that sinful woman, but a holy one, of whom now I speak. For I know that Luke spoke of the sinful woman; but Matthew and John and Mark spoke not of a sinful woman. There came, then, not that sinful woman, but a holy one, whose name too John inserted; for it was Mary who had the alabaster jar of costly ointment of spikenard, and she poured it over the head of Jesus.

⁴ Then, when some were indignant at this — not all the disciples, but Judas alone, saying, This could have been sold for three hundred denarii, and given to the poor — the Master and Savior answered: The poor you have always with you; but me you have not always. For in doing this beforehand she has done it for the day of my burial. Therefore, wherever this Gospel shall be preached, what she has done shall also be told, in memory of her. In the figure, then, of this woman who now says, My spikenard has given forth its fragrance, that woman poured ointment over the head of the Lord; and you too, therefore, take up spikenard, that after you have drenched the head of Jesus with sweet fragrance, you may be able boldly to declare, My spikenard has given forth its fragrance, and to hear Jesus' answering word: Wherever this Gospel shall be preached in all the world, what she has done shall also be told in memory of her. Your deed too shall be proclaimed among all the na-

tions. But when will you do this? If you have become as the Apostle, and have said, We are the good fragrance of Christ to God in every place, in those who are saved and in those who perish: your good works are spikenard. But if you have sinned, your sins will reek with a foul odor. For the penitent says: My scars have festered and are corrupted because of my foolishness.

5 It was not of spikenard that the Holy Spirit purposed now to speak, nor of that ointment which we behold with our eyes, that the Evangelist writes, but of spiritual spikenard, of the spikenard which has given forth its fragrance. 6[§3] A little bundle of stacte — that is, of a drop, or a droplet — is my kinsman to me. A drop of ointment, cassia, galbanum, we read in Exodus, by the Lord's command, compounded into the incense, that is, into the priestly anointing. If, then, you see my Savior descending to earthly and lowly things, you will see how, by great power and divine majesty, a certain small droplet has flowed down to us. Of this droplet the Prophet too sang, saying: And it shall come to pass, from the droplet of this people Jacob shall be gathered together. And just as, according to another sense, a stone was cut from the mountain without hands — the coming of our Savior in the flesh — for it was not the whole mountain that descended to earth, nor could human frailty contain the greatness of the whole mountain, but a stone from the mountain, a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, descended into the world: so, according to another understanding, he is called a droplet. For it was fitting that (since all the nations are reckoned as a droplet of the bucket) he who for the salvation of all became all things should become also a droplet, to set them free. For what did he not become for our salvation? We are empty; and he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant. We are a foolish people and not wise;

7 and he became the foolishness of preaching, that the foolishness of God might be made wiser than men. We are weak; the weakness of God was made stronger than men. Since, therefore, all the nations are reckoned as a droplet of the bucket, and as the turn of a balance, therefore he became a droplet, that through him a fragrance might come forth from our garments, according to that word: Myrrh, and a droplet, and cassia from your garments, from the ivory houses, whence the daughters of kings have made you glad in your honor — which in the forty-fourth psalm are said to the bride. A little bundle of a droplet is my kinsman to me. Let us consider what the Church means by the name of "kinsman," she who speaks this of her kinsman: we are

gathered from the Gentiles. Our Savior is the son of her sister, that is, of the Synagogue. For there are two sisters, the Church and the Synagogue; the Savior therefore, as we have said, being the son of the Synagogue her sister, the husband of the Church, the bridegroom of the Church, is the kinsman of his bride: A little bundle of a droplet is my kinsman to me; he shall abide between my breasts. Who is so blessed as to have as a guest, in the ruling part of the heart, between the breasts, in his own bosom, the Word of God? For this is what is sung: He shall abide between my breasts.

8 If your breasts have not been broken, the divine word shall dwell between them. It was fitting, in a nuptial song, that "breasts" should be named rather than "breast. And it is evident why, for the exposition of that which says, He shall abide between my breasts, this has been taken up: if your breasts have not been broken, between your breasts shall abide the divine word. Whence did I say, "if your breasts have not been broken"? From Ezekiel. For in that place where Jerusalem is rebuked by the Lord's voice, among other things it is said to her: In Egypt your breasts were broken. The breasts of the chaste are not broken; but the breasts of harlots hang wrinkled with loose skin. The breasts of the pure are upright, and swelling with virginal vigor. They receive the word of the bridegroom, and say: He shall abide between my breasts.

9 [§4] A cluster of cypress is my kinsman to me. The beginning is of the word, in the Word; and the beginning of cypress, that is, of flowering, is in the bud, whence she says: A cluster of cypress — that is, of flowering — is my kinsman to me. The cluster of cypress is not for all, but for those who are worthy of its flower. To others the grape is varied; to her alone who is black and beautiful he offers himself in the beauty of the flower. A cluster of cypress is my kinsman to me. She does not say simply, "A cluster of cypress is my kinsman," but with the addition, "to me," to teach that he is not a cluster of cypress to all. But let us see in what regions this cluster of the bride is. In the vineyards of Engedi, which is interpreted "eye of temptation. In the vineyards, then, of the eye of temptation, a cluster of cypress is my kinsman to me. The eye of temptation is in the present life. For we abide in temptation in this world; and human life upon earth is a temptation. While we are engaged in this light, we are in the vineyards of Engedi. But if afterward we deserve to be transplanted, we shall be transferred by our husbandman. And do not doubt that you can be transferred from the vineyards of Engedi to better

places. Our husbandman has by frequent practice already become skilled at transferring the vine.

¹⁰ For you brought a vine out of Egypt; you cast out the nations, and planted it. Its shadow covered the mountains, and its branches the cedars of God. And these things which we have expounded, let the bride have spoken of the bridegroom, signifying her love, and the lodging of the coming bridegroom — how, between her breasts, and in the secret place of her heart, the coming bridegroom takes his rest. Again the bridegroom's word is directed to her, and he says: ¹¹ [§5] Behold, you are beautiful, my love; behold, you are beautiful; your eyes are doves'. She says thus to the bridegroom: Behold, my kinsman is beautiful — she does not add, "and my love. But he, when he speaks to her, Behold, you are beautiful, adds, "and my love. But why does she not say, "Behold, he is beautiful, and near to me," but only, "Behold, he is beautiful"? Why does he say, not only, "You are beautiful," but "You are beautiful, my love"? If the bride be far from the bridegroom, she is not beautiful; she becomes beautiful then, when she is joined to the Word of God. And rightly is she now taught by the bridegroom to be near, and not to depart from his side. Behold, you are beautiful, my love; behold, you are beautiful. You begin indeed to be beautiful from this, that you are near to me. But after you have begun to be beautiful, even without the addition of "near," you are absolutely beautiful. Behold, you are beautiful, my love; behold, you are beautiful. Let us see also another praise of the beautiful one, that we too may strive to become the bride. Your eyes are doves'. He who has looked upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart: he does not have the eyes of a dove. But if anyone does not have the eyes of a dove, he enters, unhappy, the house of his brother, not keeping that which is enjoined in the Proverbs:

¹² Do not enter, unhappy one, into the house of your brother. (For that which the Seventy translated "unhappy," Aquila, expressing the Hebrew truth, rendered ἀγχοικον. But he who has the eyes of a dove sees rightly, and obtains mercy. For seeing rightly, he shall obtain mercy. And who sees rightly, except he who beholds with a chaste gaze and with pure eyes? Do not, then, understand me [to speak] only of these eyes of the flesh in what has been said — though to have understood it of these too is not useless — but, entering into the inner parts of your heart, and searching out with the mind those other eyes which are also enlightened by the commandment of

God (for the commandment of God enlightens the eyes): shine forth in that, labor, strive, that you may holily understand all the things that have been said, and hear the like things from the Spirit who descended in the form of a dove — because "your eyes are doves'. If you understand the Law spiritually, your eyes are doves'. If you understand the Gospel as the Gospel wills to be understood and preached, you see Jesus healing every languor and infirmity, not only at that time when these things were done carnally, but healing today also; and not only descending then to men, but descending today also, and being present — for Behold, he says, I am with you all the days, even to the consummation of the age — your eyes are doves'. Behold, you are beautiful, my love;

¹³ behold, you are beautiful; your eyes are doves'. The bride, hearing these praises of herself, renders to the bridegroom a return in praises: not that she bestows on him by her proclamation what he does not have, but, understanding and beholding his beauty, she says: ¹⁴ [§6] Behold, you are beautiful, my kinsman; yes, comely. Our couch is shady. I seek the couch on which the bridegroom rests with the bride, and, unless I am mistaken, it is the human body. For that paralytic in the Gospel who lay on his couch — and was bidden by the Savior's voice, when his pallet had been taken up, to go into his house — before he was healed, was lying upon the weak body of his members, which afterward was made firm by the power of God. Thus, then, do I understand: Take up your pallet, and go into your house. For the Son of God had not descended from heavenly things to earthly for this, to give commands about little couches, and not to allow one rising from his sickness to depart without his little couch. Take up, he says, your pallet, and go into your house. And you too, therefore, healed by the Savior, take up your pallet, and go into your house, that when the bridegroom comes to you, his bride, and has reclined in it with you, you may say: Behold, my kinsman is the bridegroom; yes, comely. Our reclining is shady. Behold, my kinsman is beautiful: he is both beautiful and shady. For by day the sun shall not burn you, neither the moon by night.

¹⁵ [§7] The beams of our houses are cedars. These are the words of the multitude. And they seem to me to be spoken by the men who are with the bridegroom, of whom the discourse spoke above — houses woven with beams of cedar, and roofed with cypresses. For instead of the thorn there shall come up the cypress, and instead of the nettle there shall come up the

myrtle. Seeking, then, of what nature these woods are, and finding the cedar to be incorruptible and the cypress of the best fragrance, labor you too so to roof your house, that of you too it may be said: The beams of our houses are cedars, and our rafters cypresses. After these things the bridegroom speaks.

¹⁶ [§8] I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys. For my sake, who was in the valley, he descended into the valley; and coming into the valley, he becomes a lily. Instead of the tree of life, which was planted in the paradise of God, he became the flower of the whole field, that is, of the whole world and of the entire earth. For what can so be the flower of the world as the name of Christ? His name is ointment poured out. Otherwise: by himself it is said, I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys. And these things indeed of himself. Then, praising the bride, he says: As a lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the lily cannot be compared to the thorns among which it always springs up, in the same way my love, above all the daughters, is a lily among thorns. Hearing this, the bride renders a return to the bridegroom, and, perceiving his sweetness too, she breaks forth into the voice of one who praises. For the fragrance of ointments, though it breathe sweetly and soothe the sense with its odor, is nevertheless not of such a kind as to be sweet to eat. But there is something which is of the best both in savor and in fragrance — that is, which delights the throat with sweetness and soothes the spirit with its scent. Such is the apple; its nature is such that it possesses both in itself. Therefore, wishing to praise not only the graciousness of the bridegroom's word, but also its sweetness, the bride says:

¹⁷ [§9] As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my kinsman among the sons. All woods, all trees, in comparison with the word of God, are reckoned barren thickets. Compared to Christ, everything you may name is a wild wood; and all things are unfruitful. For what things, compared to him, can be called fruitful? Even the trees which seemed to be bowed down with fruits, in comparison with his coming, are shown to be unfruitful. Therefore, as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my kinsman among the sons. Under his shadow I desired, and I sat. How beautifully she says, not "under his shadow I desire," but "under his shadow I desired"; and not "I sit," but "I sat. For in the beginning we cannot hold proper converse with him; but in the beginning, so to speak, we enjoy a certain shadow of his majesty. Whence also it is read in the Prophets: Christ the

Lord is the spirit of our countenance, to whom we said: Under his shadow we shall live among the nations; and we pass over from shadow to another shadow. For to those sitting in the region and shadow of death, a light has arisen for them. And we pass from the shadow of death to the shadow of life. Such are always the advances, that in the beginning one may desire at least to stand in the shadow of the virtues.

18 I think that for this reason the nativity of Jesus too began from a shadow, and was completed not in shadow but in truth. The Holy Spirit, he says, shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you. The nativity of Christ took its beginning from a shadow. And not only in Mary did his nativity begin from a shadow, but in you too, if you are worthy, the Word of God is born. See to it, then, that you can receive his shadow, and, when you have been made worthy of the shadow, there may come to you, so to speak, his body, from which the shadow is born. For he who is faithful in little will be faithful also in greater things. Under his shadow I desired, and I sat. You see that she did not always stand in the shadow, but passed thence to better things, saying: And his fruit is sweet in my throat. I, she says, desired to rest under his shadow; but after his shadow protected me, I was also satisfied with his fruit, and I say: And his fruit is sweet to my throat.

19 [§10] Bring me into the house of wine. The bridegroom stood outside, and was received by the bride; for he rested between her breasts. The neighboring maidens are not such as to deserve to have the bridegroom for a guest. To the multitude he speaks outside, in parables. How I fear that perhaps we many are the maidens! Bring me into the house of wine. Why do I remain so long outside? Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If anyone opens to me, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me. Bring me in. And now the divine word says the same: behold, Christ speaks, "Bring me in. To you catechumens also he speaks, "Bring me in" — not simply into the house, but into the house of wine. Let your soul be filled with the wine of gladness, with the wine of the Holy Spirit. And so bring into your house the bridegroom, the Word, Wisdom, Truth. But it can also be said to those who are not yet perfect: Bring me into the house of wine. Set love in order within me. Elegantly he said, "set in order. For the love of very many is disordered: what they ought to love in the first place, they love in the second; what in the second, they love in the first; what they ought to love fourth, they love third;

and again the third in the fourth place; and in most people the order of love is perverse.

²⁰ But the love of the saints is well-ordered. To bring this to understanding — what is said, "set love in order within me" — I wish to repeat some examples. The divine word wills you to love father, son, daughter; the divine word wills you to love Christ. Nor does it say to you, "Do not love your children, do not be joined in love to your parents. But what does it say? "Do not have a disordered love; do not love first father or mother, and then me; do not be held by the love of sons and daughters more than by love of me. He who loves father or mother above me is not worthy of me; he who loves son or daughter above me is not worthy of me. Recall your conscience concerning your affection for father, mother, or brother, and consider what love you have toward the word of God and of Jesus: at once you will detect that you love son and daughter more than the Word, that you love your parents more than Christ. Who, do you think, so advances among us, that he holds the love of the word of God chief and first among all, and puts his children in the second place? In the same way, love your wife. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but loves it as flesh. And the two, he says, shall be in one flesh — and not in one spirit. Love God also;

²¹ but love him not as flesh and blood, but as spirit. For he who cleaves to God is one spirit. Therefore love is well-ordered in the perfect. And that after God there may be set an order even among ourselves: the first commandment is that we love our parents; the second, that we love our children; the third, that we love our household. But if the son is bad, and the servant good, let the servant be placed in the love due a son. And so it will come about that the love of the saints is well-ordered. Our Master and Lord too, in the Gospel, establishing precepts about love, attached to the love of each one something proper, and gave the understanding of order to those who can hear the Scripture saying, "Set love in order within me. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your mind, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. You shall love your neighbor as yourself — not the neighbor with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and with all the mind. Again, he says: Love your enemies — and he did not add, "with all the heart. The divine word is not disordered, nor does it command impossible things, nor say, "Love your enemies as yourselves," but only, "Love

your enemies"; it is enough for them that we love them and do not hold them in hatred. But the neighbor, as yourself.

22 And God, with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength. If you have understood these things, and, having understood, have fulfilled them, you have done what is enjoined by the bridegroom's word: Bring me into the house of wine; set love in order within me. Who, do you think, among us is of well-ordered love? Strengthen me with ointments. One of the Translators put *οἶνανθῶν* [vine-blossoms]. But it is the bride who speaks: Stay me up with apples. With what apples? As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my kinsman among the sons. Therefore, stay me up with his apples, because I am wounded with love. How beautiful it is, how comely, to receive a wound from love! One has taken the dart of carnal love; another has been wounded by earthly desire: but do you bare your members, and offer yourself to the chosen dart, the beautiful dart — for God is an archer. Hear the Scripture speaking of this same dart; nay, that you may marvel the more, hear the dart itself speak, what it says: He set me as a chosen arrow, and in his quiver he kept me, and said to me: It is a great thing for you to be called my servant. Understand what the arrow says, and how it is chosen by God. How blessed a thing it is to be wounded by this dart!

23 With this arrow had those men been wounded who conferred among themselves, saying: Was not our heart burning within us on the way, when he opened to us the Scriptures? If anyone is wounded by our word, if anyone by the teaching of the divine Scripture, and can say, "I am wounded with love," perhaps this also follows for him. Why do I say "perhaps"? I set forth a plain sentence: His left hand is under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me. The word of God has wisdom both in the left hand and in the right, which, though it be manifold according to the variety of understanding, is in its foundation one. Solomon himself taught of the left and the right hand of wisdom, saying: For length and years of life are in her right hand; but in her left hand riches and glory. Therefore let his left hand be under my head, that it may make me rest, and let the bridegroom's arm become my pillow, that the ruling part of my soul may recline upon the word of God. His left hand is under my head. It is not profitable for you to have pillows which lamentation follows. In Ezekiel it is written: Woe to those who sew pillows under every elbow of the hand. Do not sew pillows, do not

seek rest for your head from elsewhere: you have the bridegroom's left hand; let it be under your head, and say:

²⁴ His left hand is under my head — and when you have it, all the things which are in the left hand are bestowed upon you. For you say, in his left hand are riches and glory, and his right hand shall embrace me. Let the bridegroom's right hand embrace you wholly. For length and years of life are in his right hand; and on this account you shall be of long life, and of many days, upon the good land which the Lord your God gives you. ²⁵ [§11] I have adjured you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the powers and the forces of the field. Of what does the bride adjure the daughters of Jerusalem? If you will raise up and awaken love. How long does love sleep in you, O daughters of Jerusalem, O maidens — love which does not sleep in me, because I am wounded with love? But in you, who are many, and maidens, and daughters of Jerusalem, the love of the bridegroom sleeps. I have adjured you, therefore, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you will raise up — and not only raise up, but also awaken — the love that is in you. The Creator of the universe, when he formed you, sowed in your hearts the seeds of love. But now, as it is said elsewhere, Justice slept in her, so love slumbers in you: according to what is also said elsewhere, "The bridegroom rested as a lion, and as a lion's whelp." Still, in the unbelieving and in those who are of a doubtful heart, the divine word slumbers; it is awake in the saints. It slumbers in those who are tossed by storms; but it is awakened by the voices of those who, while the bridegroom is awake, desire to be saved. At once, when he is awake, there is calm; at once the masses of the waves grow still, the contrary winds are rebuked, the raging of the billows is silent. When he sleeps, there is tempest, death, and despair. I adjure you, therefore, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the powers and the forces of the field. Of what field? Surely of that field of which it is said: the fragrance of a full field, which the Lord has blessed.

²⁶ [§12] If you will raise up and awaken love, until the voice of my kinsman will. Behold, here he comes, leaping over the mountains. This the Church still speaks, exhorting the maidens to prepare themselves for the coming of the bridegroom — if indeed he will to come, and to grant them his converse. While she is still speaking, therefore, the bridegroom comes, whom she points out with her finger, and says: Behold, here he comes, leaping over the mountains. Understand the bride to be the blessed and perfect soul, who sooner sees, sooner contemplates the coming of the Word, who

perceives that wisdom has come to her, that love has come to her, and says to those who do not see: Behold, here he comes. Pray that I too may be able to say: Behold, here he comes. For if I can discourse of the word of God, in a manner I too say, Behold, here he comes. Whither? Surely not where the valley is, not where the lowly places are. Whither does he come? Leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills. If you are a mountain, the word of God leaps upon you. If you cannot be a mountain, but are a hill, second to the mountain, he bounds over you. But how beautiful and fitting to the matters are the words. He leaps over the mountains, because they are greater; he bounds over the hills, because they are smaller. He does not bound over the mountains, he does not leap over the hills. Behold, here he comes, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills.

²⁷ [§13] My kinsman is like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bethel. These two animals are named more frequently in the Scriptures, and — that you may marvel the more — they are often set down joined together. And these are they, he says, which you shall eat, adding a little after, the roe and the hart. In the present book too the hart and the roe are named together. For in a manner these animals are akin and near to one another. The roe, that is, the dorcas, sees most sharply. The hart is a slayer of serpents. Who, do you think, is worthy among us, who according to the dignity of the place and of the mystery could set forth the full account? Let us pray the Lord to bestow on us understanding for the opening of the Scriptures, and that we may be able to say, How Jesus opened to us the Scriptures. What, then, do we say? That the dorcas — that is, the roe — according to the natural science of those who discourse of the natures of all animals, received its name from a power implanted in it. For from the fact that it sees more sharply — that is, ὀξύδερκέστερον — it is called dorcas. But the hart is the enemy and vanquisher of serpents, so that with the breath of its nostrils it draws them out of their caverns, and, the destructive power of their venom being overcome, delights in feeding upon them.

²⁸ Perhaps my Savior becomes a roe according to contemplation (θεωρία), a hart according to works. And what are these works? He himself slays serpents, when he cuts the throats of the opposing powers. Therefore I will say to him: You have crushed the heads of the dragons upon the water. My kinsman is like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of the house of God. For Bethel is interpreted "house of God. Not all mountains are the house of

God, but those which are the mountains of the Church. For there are found also other mountains, raised up and rising against the knowledge of God — the mountains of the Egyptians, and of the foreigners. Do you wish to know that my kinsman is like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bethel? Be a mountain of the Church, a mountain of the house of God, and the bridegroom will come to you, like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel. She perceives that the bridegroom has drawn nearer, who before was moving about upon the mountains and hills; she likens him as bounding and leaping, and, recognizing that after these things he has come to her and to the other maidens, she says:

29 [§14] Behold, here he is, behind our wall. If you have built a wall, and have made the building of God, he will come behind your wall, looking through the windows. One window is one sense: through this the bridegroom looks. Another window is another sense: and through this too the bridegroom carefully gazes. For through what senses does the word of God not look? But what it is to look through the windows, and how the bridegroom gazes through them, the following example will teach. Where the bridegroom does not look, there death is found climbing up, as we read in Jeremiah: Behold, death has climbed up through your windows. When you have looked upon a woman to lust after her, already death has climbed up through your windows. Leaning out through the nets. Understand that you walk in the midst of snares, and pass beneath overhanging engines. All things are full of nets; the devil has filled everything with snares. But if the word of God has come to you, and has begun to lean out from the nets, saying: Our soul, like a sparrow, has been snatched from the snare of the hunters; the snare is broken, and we are set free. Blessed are we by the Lord, who made heaven and earth. The bridegroom, then, leans out through the nets, making a way for you. Jesus descended to earth, subjected himself to the nets of the world.

30 Seeing a great flock of men entangled in the nets, and [seeing] that it could be cut apart by no other than himself, he came to the nets, taking on a human body, which was held by the snares of the hostile powers; he burst them apart for you, and you shall say: Behold, here he is, behind our wall, looking through the windows, leaning out through the nets. When he has leaned out, he says to you — my kinsman answers, and says: Rise up, come, my love; I have made you a way, I have cut apart the nets: so come to me, my

love: ³¹[§15] Rise up, come, my love, my beautiful one, my dove. Why does he say, "Rise up"? Why "make haste"? I for your sake bore the raging of the tempests; I received the billows which were owed to you. My soul was made sorrowful for you, even unto death. I rose from the dead, the stings of death being broken and the bonds of hell dissolved; therefore I say to you: Rise up, come, my love, my beautiful one, my dove: for behold, the winter is past, the rain is gone away, the flowers have appeared in the earth. I, rising from the dead, the tempest being stilled, have restored calm. And because, according to the dispensation of the flesh from the Virgin, and by the will of the Father, I grew, and advanced in wisdom and in age, the flowers have appeared in the earth; the time of pruning is at hand. The pruning is the remission of sins. For every branch, he says, abiding in me and bearing fruit, my Father cleanses, that it may bear greater fruit. Have fruits, and the former things which are unfruitful in you shall be taken away. For the time of pruning is at hand.

³²[§16] The voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land. Not without cause is a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons, taken in the sacrifices: for they are of equal worth, and it is never said separately, a pair only of pigeons, but a pair of turtledoves, and two young pigeons. The dove is the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit, when he speaks of great and more hidden mysteries, which many cannot receive, is signified by the name of the turtledove — that is, of that bird which dwells always on the ridges of the mountains and on the tops of the trees; but in the valleys, and in the things which reach even to men, the dove is taken. In short, the Savior, because he deigned to take on manhood, and came to earth, and there were then many sinners about the Jordan: therefore the Holy Spirit is not turned into a turtledove, but becomes a dove. Among us, because of the multitude of men, the tamer bird dwells. But the turtledove seems, for instance, to signify Moses and any one you please of the prophets who withdraw into the mountains and deserts, and there receive the words of God. The voice of the turtledove, then, has been heard in our land. The fig tree has put forth its green figs. From the fig tree learn the parable. When its branch has become tender, and has put forth leaves, know that summer is near. The word of God wishes to announce to us that, after the winter, after the storms, the harvest of souls has drawn near, and it says:

³³ [§17] The fig tree has put forth its green figs; the vines flower, they have given their fragrance. If the vines already burst into flower, the time will come, and there will be grapes. Rise up, come, my love, my beautiful one, my dove. These things which we have expounded above, the bridegroom speaks not while the maidens hear, but while the bride alone hears. But we wish now to hear his own word too, as he speaks to the bride. ³⁴ [§18] Rise up, come, my love, my dove; and come, my dove, under the covering of the rock. Moses too is placed under the covering of the rock, that he may see the hinder parts of God under the covering of the outwork. First come to that which is before the wall, and afterward you will be able to enter where the wall of the rock is. Show me your face. Up to the present day like things are said to the bride. For she did not yet have the confidence to contemplate, with unveiled face, the glory of the Lord. But because she is now adorned and set in order, it is said to her: Show me your face. For her voice was not yet so sweet that she deserved to have it said to her, Make me hear your voice. When, then, did she learn to speak? Be silent, and hear, O Israel, and you shall know what the Lord speaks. And her voice was made sweet to the bridegroom, according to that prophetic word: Let my petition be sweet to him. Then the bridegroom declares to her: And make me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet. If you open your mouth to the Word of God, the bridegroom will say to you: Your voice is sweet, your aspect beautiful. Wherefore, rising up, let us beseech the Lord that we may be made worthy of the bridegroom's word, of the wisdom of Christ Jesus, to whom is glory and dominion unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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