

The Early Church Fathers Writings

Volume 63

THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS WRITINGS

Volume 63

Augustine: Expositions on the Psalms, 86 to 150

c. AD 392 – 420

S E R M O N I N D E X

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Volume 63: Augustine: Expositions on the Psalms, 86 to 150

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS VOLUME

How this book is arranged

This is the sixty-third 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 Augustine, *Expositions on the Psalms*, 86 to 150, from the period about AD 392 – 420.

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

Augustine was born at Thagaste in North Africa in AD 354. He taught rhetoric at Carthage, Rome and Milan, and after years as a Manichaean he was baptised at Milan by Ambrose in AD 387. He returned to Africa, was ordained a presbyter at Hippo about AD 391, and was bishop of Hippo from about AD 395 until his death in AD 430, while the Vandals were besieging the city. He wrote the *Confessions*, *The City of God* and *On the Trinity*, and a great body of sermons, letters and treatises against the Manichaeans, the Donatists and the Pelagians.

This volume completes the *Expositions on the Psalms*. It contains the long exposition of Psalm 118 in thirty-two sermons, and the fifteen *Songs of Degrees*, Psalms 119 to 133.

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

Expositions on the Psalms

*Psalms 86 to 150, including the long exposition of Psalm 118 and
the Songs of Ascents.*

Expositions on the Psalms: Psalms 86–150

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

AD 354–430

Augustine preached and dictated these expositions over some thirty years at Hippo. He follows the Greek numbering of the Psalms, which is one behind the Hebrew numbering for most of the Psalter, and he reads each psalm as the voice of Christ and of his body the Church. This volume holds Psalms 86 to 150.

PSALM 86

1. No greater gift could God have given to men than in making His Word, by which He created all things, their Head, and joining them to Him as His members: that the Son of God might become also the Son of man, one God with the Father, one Man with men; so that when we speak to God in prayer for mercy, we do not separate the Son from Him; and when the Body of the Son prays, it separates not its Head from itself: and it is one Saviour of His Body, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who both prays for us, and prays in us, and is prayed to by us. He prays for us, as our Priest; He prays in us, as our Head; He is prayed to by us, as our God. Let us therefore recognise in Him our words, and His words in us. Nor when anything is said of our Lord Jesus Christ, especially in prophecy, implying a degree of humility below the dignity of God, let us hesitate to ascribe it to Him who did not hesitate to join Himself unto us. ...He is prayed to in the form of God, in the form of a servant He prayeth; there the Creator, here created; assuming unchanged the creature, that it might be changed, and making us with Himself one Man, Head and Body. Therefore we pray to Him, through Him, in Him; and we speak with Him, and He speaks with us;

we speak in Him, He speaks in us the prayer of this Psalm, which is entitled, "A Prayer of David. For our Lord was, according to the flesh, the son of David; but according to His divine nature, the Lord of David, and his Maker. ...Let no one then, when he hears these words, say, Christ speaketh

not; nor again say, I speak not; nay rather, if he own himself to be in the Body of Christ, let him say both, Christ speaks, and I speak. Be thou unwilling to say anything without Him, and He saith nothing without thee. ... 2. "Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hear me" (ver. 1). He speaks in the form of a servant: speak thou, O servant, in the form of thy Lord: "Bow down Thine ear, O Lord." He bows down His ear, if thou dost not lift up thy neck: for unto the humble He draweth near: from him that is exalted He removes afar off, except whom He Himself hath exalted from being humble, God then bows down His ear unto us. For He is above, we below: He in a high place, we in a lowly one, yet not deserted. "For while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. For scarcely for a just man will one die: yet for a good man peradventure one would even dare to die:" but our Lord died for the wicked. For no merits of ours had gone before, for which the Son of God should die: but the more, because there were no merits, was His mercy great. How sure then, how firm is the promise, by which for the righteous He keepeth His life, who for the wicked gave His own death "For I am poor and in misery." To the rich then He boweth not down His ear: unto the poor and him that is in misery He boweth down His ear, that is, unto the humble, and him that confesseth, unto him that is in need of mercy: not unto him that is full, who lifteth up himself and boasteth, as if he wanted nothing, and saith, "I thank Thee that I am not as this Publican." For the rich Pharisee boasted of his merits: the poor Publican confessed his sins.

3. Yet do not take what I have said, my brethren, in such a way, as if God does not hear those who have gold and silver, and a household, and farms, if they happen to be born to this estate, or hold such a rank in the world: only let them remember the Apostle's words: "Charge those who are rich in this world, that they be not highminded. For those that are not high-minded are poor in God, and to the poor and needy and those in want He inclines His ear. For they know that their hope is not in gold and silver, nor in those things in which for a time they seem to abound. It is enough that riches ruin them not; it is enough that they do them no harm: for good they can do them none. What certainly profiteth is a work of mercy, done by a rich or by a poor man: by a rich man, with will and deed; by a poor man, with will alone. When therefore he is such an one as despiseth in himself everything which is wont to swell men with pride, he is one of God's poor: He inclines unto him His ear, for He knows that his heart is contrite. ... Was it really for

the merit of his poverty that the poor man was carried away by Angels, or was it for the sin of his riches that the rich man was sent away to be tormented?

In that poor man is signified the honour which is paid to humility, in that rich man the condemnation which awaits pride. I will prove shortly that it was not riches but pride which was tormented in that rich man. It is certain that the poor man was carried into the bosom of Abraham: of Abraham himself Scripture saith that he had here very much gold and silver, and was rich on the earth. If every one that is rich is hurried away to be tormented, how could Abraham have gone before that poor man, so as to be ready to receive him when carried to his bosom? But Abraham in his riches was poor, humble, reverencing all commands, and obeying them. So true was it that he counted all those riches for nothing, that on God's command he was ready to sacrifice his son, for whom he was keeping his riches. Learn therefore ye to be poor and needy, whether ye have anything in this world, or whether ye have not. ...

4. "Preserve Thou My Soul, for I am holy" (ver. 2). I know not whether any one could say this, "I am holy," but He who was in the world without sin: He by whom all sins were not committed but remitted. We own it to be His voice saying, "Preserve Thou My Soul, for I am holy; of course in that form of a servant which He had assumed. For in that was flesh, in that, was also a Soul. For He was not, as some have said, only Flesh and the Word: but Flesh and Soul also, and the Word, and all this, One Son of God, One Christ, One Saviour; in the forth of God equal to the Father, in the form of a servant the Head of the Church. When therefore I hear, "for I am holy," I recognise His voice: yet do I exclude my own? Surely He speaks inseparably from His body when He speaks thus. Shall I then dare to say, "For I am holy"? If holy as making holy, and as needing none to sanctify, I should be proud and false: but if holy as made holy, as it is written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy," then the body of Christ may venture, and that one Man "crying from the end of the earth," may venture with his Head, and under his Head, to say, "For I am holy.

For he hath received the grace of holiness, the grace of Baptism, and of remission of sins. ...Say unto thy God, I am holy, for Thou hast sanctified me: because I received, not because I had: because Thou gavest, not because I deserved. For on another side thou art beginning to do an injury to our Lord

Jesus Christ Himself. For if all Christians who are faithful and have been baptized in Him have put Him on, as the Apostle saith, "As many as are baptized in Christ have put on Christ: if they have been made members of His body, and say that they are not holy, they do injury to their Head, of whom they are members, and yet not holy. Look thou where thou art and from thy Head assume dignity. For thou weft in darkness, "but now light in the Lord. "Ye were sometime darkness," he saith: but did ye remain darkness? Was it for this the Enlightener came, that ye might still remain darkness, or that in Him ye might become light? Therefore, every Christian by himself, therefore also the whole body of Christ, may say, it may cry everywhere, while it suffers tribulations, various temptations and offences, it may say, "Preserve Thou my soul, for I am holy: my God, save Thy servant, that putteth his trust in Thee. See thou, that holy man is not proud, since he putteth his trust in God.

5. "Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for I have cried unto Thee all day" (ver. 3). Not "one day:" understand "all day" to mean continually: from the time that the body of Christ groans being in afflictions, until the end of the world, when afflictions pass away, that man groaneth and calleth upon God: and each one of us after his measure hath his part in that cry in the whole body. Thou hast cried in thy days, and thy days have passed away: another hath come after thee, and cried in his days: and thou here, he there, another elsewhere: the body of Christ crieth all the day, its members departing and succeeding one another. One Man it is that reaches to the end of the world: the same members of Christ cry, and some members already rest in Him, some still cry, some when we shall be at rest will cry, and after them others will cry. It is the whole body of Christ whose voice He hears, saying, "Unto Thee have I cried all the day." Our Head on the right hand of the Father intercedes for us: some members He recovereth, others He scourgeth, others He cleanseth, others He comforteth, others He is creating, others calling, others recalling, others correcting, others restoring.

6. "Make glad the soul of Thy servant: for unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul" (ver. 4). Make it glad, for unto Thee have I lifted it up. For it was on earth, and from the earth it felt bitterness: lest it should wither away in bitterness, lest it should lose all the sweetness of Thy grace, I lifted it up unto Thee: make Thou it glad with Thyself. For Thou alone art gladness: the whole world is full of bitterness. Surely with reason He admonishes His

members to lift up their hearts. May they hear and do it: may they lift up unto Him what on earth is ill. There the heart decayeth not, if it be lifted up to God. It thou hadst corn in thy rooms below, thou wouldest take it up higher, lest it should grow rotten. Wouldest thou remove thy corn, and dost thou suffer thy heart to rot on the earth? Thou wouldest take thy corn up higher: lift up thy heart to heaven. And how can I, dost thou say? What ropes are needed? what machines? what ladders? Thy affections are the steps: thy will the way. By loving thou mountest, by neglect thou descendest. Standing on the earth thou art in heaven, if thou lovest God. For the heart is not so raised as the body is raised: the body to be lifted up changes its place: the heart to be lifted up changes its will.

7. "For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious" (ver. 5). ...Even prayers are often hindered by vain thoughts, so that the heart scarcely remains fixed on God: and it would hold itself I so as to be fixed, and somehow flees from itself, and finds no frames in which it can enclose itself, no bars by which it may keep in its flights and wandering movements, and stand still to be made glad by its God. Scarcely does one such prayer occur amongst many. Each one might say that this happened to him, but that it happened not to others, if we did not find in the holy Scripture David praying in a certain place, and saying, "Since I have found my heart, O Lord, so that I might pray unto Thee. He said that he had found his heart, as if it were wont to flee from him, and he to follow it like a fugitive, and not be able to catch it, and to cry to God, "For my heart hath deserted me. Therefore, my brethren, thinking over what he saith here, I think I see what he meaneth by "gracious. I seem to feel that for this reason he calls God gracious, because He bears with those failings of ours, and yet expects prayer from us, in order to make us perfect:

and when we have given it to Him, He receives it gratefully, and listens to it, and remembers not those many prayers which we pour out unthinkingly, and accepts the one which we can scarcely find. For what man is there, my brethren, who, on being addressed by his friend, when he wishes to answer his address, sees his friend turn away from him and speak to another, who is there who would bear this? Or if you appeal to a judge, and set him up to hear you, and all at once, while you are speaking to him, pass from him, and begin to converse with your friend, who would endure this? Yet God endures the hearts of so many persons who pray and think of different things. ...What then? Must we despair of mankind, and say that every man is already con-

demned into whose prayers any wandering thoughts have crept and interrupted them? If we say this, my brethren, I know not what hope remains. Therefore because there is some hope before God, because His mercy is great, let us say unto Him, "For unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. And how have I lifted it up? As I could, as Thou gavest me strength, as I could catch it when it fled away. ...From infirmity I sink: heal Thou me, and I shall stand: strengthen Thou me, and I shall be strong. But until Thou do this, Thou bearest with me: "For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious, and of great mercy.

That is, not only "of mercy," but "of great mercy: for as our iniquity abounds, so also aboundeth Thy mercy. "Unto all that call upon Thee. What is it then which Scripture saith in many places: "They shall call, and I will not hear them"? Yet surely Thou art merciful to all that call upon Thee; but that some call, yet call not upon Him, of whom it is said, "They have not called upon God. They call, but not on God. Thou callest upon whatever thou lovest: thou callest upon whatever thou callest unto thyself, whatever thou wishest to come unto thee. Therefore if thou callest upon God for this reason, in order that money may come unto thee, that an inheritance may come unto thee, that worldly rank may come unto thee, thou callest upon those things which thou desirest may come unto thee: but thou makest God the helper of thy desires, not the listener to thy needs. God is good, if He gives what thou wishest. What if thou wishest ill, will He not then be more merciful by not giving? Then, if He gives not, then is God nothing to thee; and thou sayest, How much I have prayed, how often I have prayed, and have not been heard! Why, what didst thou ask? Perhaps that thy enemy might die. What if he at the same time were praying for thy death? He who created thee, created him also: thou art a man, he too is a man; but God is the Judge:

He hears both, and He grants their prayer to neither. Thou art sad, because thou wast not heard when praying against him; be glad, because his prayer was not heard against thee. But thou sayest, I did not ask for this; I asked not for the death of my enemy, but for the life of my child; what ill did I ask? Thou askedst no ill, as thou didst think. What if "he was taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding. But he was a sinner, thou sayest, and therefore I wished him to live, that he might be corrected. Thou wishedst him to live, that he might become better; what if God knew, that if he lived he would become worse? ...If, therefore, thou callest on God

as God, be confident thou shalt be heard: thou hast part in that verse: "And of great mercy unto all that call upon Thee." ...

8. Think, brethren, and reflect what good things God giveth unto sinners: and learn hence what He keepeth for His own servants. To sinners who blaspheme Him every day He giveth the sky and the earth, He giveth springs, fruits, health, children, wealth, abundance: all these good things none giveth but God. He who giveth such things to sinners, what thinkest thou He keeps for His faithful ones? Is this to be believed of Him, that He who giveth such things to the bad, keepeth nothing for the good? Nay verily He doth keep, not earth, but heaven for them. Too common a thing perhaps I say when I say heaven; Himself rather, who made the heaven. Fair is heaven, but fairer is the Maker of heaven. But I see the heavens, Him I see not. Because thou hast eyes to see the heavens: a heart thou hast not yet to see the Maker of heaven: therefore came He from heaven to earth, to cleanse the heart, that He may be seen who made heaven and earth. But wait thou with full patience for salvation. By what treatment to cure thee, He knoweth: by what cutting, what burning, He knoweth. Thou hast brought sickness on thyself by sinning: He comes not only to nurse, but also to cut and to burn. Seest thou not how much men suffer under the hands of physicians, when a man promises them an uncertain hope? Thou wilt be cured, says the physician: thou wilt be cured, if I cut.

It is a man who speaks, and to a man that he speaks: neither is he sure who speaks, nor he who hears, for he who is speaking to the man hath not made man, and knows not perfectly what is passing in man: yet at the words of a man who knows not what is passing in man, man sooner believeth, submits his limbs, suffers himself to be bound, often without being bound is cut or burned; and receives perhaps health for a few days, even when just healed not knowing when he may die: perhaps, while being healed, dies; perhaps cannot be healed. But to whom hath God promised anything, and deceived him? 9 "Fix my prayer in Thy ears, O Lord" (ver. 6). Great earnestness of him who prays! That is, let not my prayer go out of Thine ears, fix it then in Thine ears. How did he travail that he might fix his prayer in the ears of God? Let God answer and say to us; Wouldest thou that I fix thy prayer in My ears? Fix My law in thy heart; "and attend to the voice of my prayer."

10. "In the day of my trouble I have cried unto Thee, for Thou hast heard me" (ver. 7). A little before he had said, All the day have I cried, all the day

have I been troubled. Let no Christian then say that there is any day in which he is not troubled. By "all the day" we have understood the whole of time. What then, is there trouble even when it is well with us? Even so, trouble. How is there trouble? Because "as long as we are in the body we are absent from the Lord. Let what will abound here, we are not yet in that country whither we are hastening to return. He to whom foreign travel is sweet, loveth not his country: if his country is sweet, travel is bitter; if travel is bitter, all the day there is trouble. When is there not trouble? When there is joy in one's country. "At Thy right hand are delights for evermore. "Thou shalt fill me with joy," he saith, "with Thy countenance: that I may see the delight of the Lord. There toil and groaning shall pass away: there shall be not prayer but praise; there Alleluia, there Amen, the voice in concord with Angels; there vision without failing and love without weariness. So long therefore as we are not there, ye see that we are not in that which is good. But do all things abound? If all things abound, see if thou art assured that all things perish not.

But I have what I had not: more money is come to me which I had not before. Perhaps more fear too is come, which thou hadst not before: perhaps thou wast so much the more secure as thou wast the poorer. In fine, be it that thou hast wealth, that thou hast redundance of this world's affluence, that thou hast assurance given thee that all this shall not perish; besides this, that God say unto thee, Thou shalt remain for ever in these things, they shall be for ever with thee, but My face thou shalt not see. Let none ask counsel of the flesh: ask ye counsel of the Spirit: let your heart answer you; let hope, faith, charity, which has begun to be in you, answer. If then we were to receive assurance that we should always be in affluence of worldly goods, and if God were to say to us, My face ye shall not see, would ye rejoice in these goods? Some one might perhaps choose to rejoice, and say, These things abound unto me, it is well with me, I ask no more. He hath not yet begun to be a lover of God: he hath not yet begun to sigh like one far from home. Far be it, far be it from us: let them retire, all those seductions: let them retire, those false blandishments: let them be gone, those words which they say daily unto us, "Where is thy God?

Let us pour out our soul over us, let us confess in tears, let us groan in confession, let us sigh in misery. Whatever is present with us besides our God, is not sweet: we would not have all things that He hath given, if He gives not

Himself who gave all things. 11. "Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord" (ver. 8). What did he say? "Among the gods," etc. Let the Pagans make for themselves what gods they will; let them bring workmen in silver and in gold, furbishers, sculptors; let them make gods. What kind of gods? Having eyes, and seeing not; and the other things which the Psalm mentions in what follows. But we do not worship these, he says; we do not worship them, these are symbols. What then do ye worship? Something else that is worse: for the gods of the gentiles are devils. What then? Neither, say they, do we worship devils. Ye have certainly nothing else in your temples, nothing else inspires your prophets than a devil. But what do ye say? We worship Angels, we have Angels as gods. Ye know not altogether what Angels are. Angels worship the one God, and favour not men who wish to worship Angels and not God. For we find Angels of high rank forbidding men to adore them, and commanding them to adore the true God. But when they say Angels, suppose they mean men, since it is said, "I have said, Ye are Gods, and all the children of the Most Highest. Whatever man thinks to the contrary, that which was made is not like Him who made it. Except God, whatever else there is in the universe was made by God. What a difference there is between Him who made, and that which was made, who can worthily imagine?

Therefore this man said, "there is none like unto Thee, O Lord: there is not one that can do as thou doest. But how much God is unlike them he said not, because it cannot be said. Let your Charity attend: God is ineffable: we more easily say what He is not than what He is. Thou thinkest of the earth; this is not God: thou thinkest of the sea; this is not God: of all things which are in the earth, men and animals; this is not God: of all things which are in the sea, which fly through the air; this is not God: whatever shines in the sky, the stars, sun and moon; this is not God: the heaven itself; this is not God: think of the Angels, Virtues, Powers, Archangels, Thrones, Seats, Principalities; this is not God. What is He then? I could only tell thee, what He is not. Askest thou what He is? What "the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor hath risen up into the heart of man." ...

12. "All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord" (ver. 9). He has announced the Church: "All nations." If there is any nation which God hath not made, it will not worship Him: but there is no nation which God hath not made; because God made Adam and Eve, the source of all nations, thence all nations sprang. All nations therefore

hath God made. When was this said? When before Him there worshipped none but a few holy men in one people of the Hebrews, then this was said: and see now what it is which was said: "All nations that Thou hast made," etc. When these things were spoken, they were not seen, and they were believed: now that they are seen, why are they denied? "All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy Name."

13. "For Thou art great, and doing wondrous things: Thou alone art the great God" (ver. 10). Let no man call himself great. Some were to be who would call themselves great: against these it is said, "Thou alone art the great God. For what great thing is ascribed to God, when it is said that He alone is the great God? Who knows not that He is the great God? But because there were to be some who would call themselves great and make God little, against these it is said, "Thou alone art the great God. For what Thou sayest is fulfilled, not what those say who call themselves great. What hath God said by His Spirit? "All nations. What saith he, whoever he is, who calleth himself great? "Far from it: God is not worshipped in all nations: all nations have perished, Africa alone remains. This thou sayest, who callest thyself great: another thing He saith who alone is the great God. What saith He, who alone is the great God? "All nations. I see what the only great God hath said: let man be silent, who is falsely great; great only in appearance, because he disdains to be small. Who disdains to be small? He who saith this. Whoever will be great among you, said the Lord, shall be your servant. If that man had wished to be the servant of his brethren, he would not have separated them from their mother:

but when he wishes to be great, and wishes not to be small, as would be for his welfare, God, who resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble, because He alone is great, fulfilleth all things which He predicted, and contradicteth those who blaspheme. For such persons blaspheme against Christ, who say that the Church has perished from the whole world, and is left only in Africa. If thou wert to say to him, Thou wilt lose thy villa, he would perhaps scarcely keep from laying his hand upon thee: and yet he says, that Christ has lost His inheritance, redeemed by His own Blood! See now what a wrong he does, my brethren. The Scripture says, "In a wide nation is the king's honour; but in the domination of the people is the affliction of a prince. This wrong then thou dost unto Christ, to say that His people is di-

minished to that small number. Was it for this thou wast born, for this thou tallest thyself a Christian, that thou mayest grudge Christ His glory, whose sign thou sayest that thou bearest on thy forehead, and hast lost out of thy heart? In a wide nation is the king's honour: acknowledge thy King: give Him glory, give Him a wide nation. What wide nation shall I give Him, dost thou say? Choose not to give Him from thy own heart, and thou wilt give aright. Whence am I to give? thou wilt say. Lo, give from hence:

"All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. Say this, confess this, and thou hast given a wide nation: for all nations in One are one: this is very oneness. For as there is a Church and Churches, and those are Churches which also are a Church, so that is a nation which was nations: formerly nations, many nations, now one nation. Why one nation? Because one faith, one hope, one charity, one expectation. Lastly, why not one nation, if one country? Our country is heavenly, our country is Jerusalem: whoever is not a citizen of it, belongs not to that nation: but whoever is a citizen of it is in that one nation of God. And this nation, from the east to the west, from the north and the sea, is extended through the four quarters of the whole world. This God saith: From the east and west, from the north and the sea, give glory to God. This He foretold, this He fulfilled, who alone is great. Let him therefore who would not be little cease from saying this against Him who alone is great: for there cannot be two great, God and Donatus.

14. "Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth" (ver. 11). Thy way, Thy truth, Thy life, is Christ. Therefore belongeth the Body to Him, and the Body is of Him. I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. "Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way." In what way? "And I will walk in Thy truth." It is one thing to lead to the way, another to guide in the way. Behold man everywhere poor, everywhere in need of help. Those who are beside the way are not Christians, or not yet Catholics: let them be guided to the way: but when they have been brought to the way and made Catholics in Christ, they must be guided by Him in the way itself, lest they fall. Now assuredly they walk in the way. "Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way:" surely I am now in Thy way, lead me there. "And I will walk in Thy truth:" while Thou leadest I shall not err: if Thou let me go, I shall err. Pray then that He let thee not go, but lead thee even to the end. How doth He lead thee? By always admonishing, always giving thee His hand. And the arm of the Lord, to whom is it revealed? For

in giving His Christ He giveth His hand: in giving His hand, He giveth His Christ. He leadeth to the way, in leading to His Christ: He leadeth in the way, by leading in His Christ, and Christ is truth. "Lead me," therefore, "O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth:" in Him verily who said, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." For Thou who leadest in the way and the truth, whither leadest Thou, but unto life? In Him then, unto Him Thou leadest.

15. "Let my heart be made glad, so that it may fear Thy name. There is then fear in gladness. How can there be gladness, if fear? Is not fear wont to be painful? There will hereafter be gladness without fear, now gladness with fear; for not yet is there perfect security, nor perfect gladness. If there is no gladness, we faint: if full security, we rejoice wrongly. Therefore may He both sprinkle on us gladness, and strike fear into us, that by the sweetness of gladness He may lead us to the abode of security; by giving us fear, may cause us not to rejoice wrongly, and to withdraw from the way. Therefore saith the Psalm: "Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling: so also saith the Apostle Paul; "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you. Whatever prosperity comes then, my brethren, is rather to be feared: those things which ye think to be prosperous, are rather temptations. An inheritance cometh, there cometh wealth, there is an abundant overflow of some happiness: these are temptations: take care that they corrupt you not. Whatever prosperity also there is according to Christ, and the true love of Christ: if perhaps thou hast gained thy wife, who was of the party of Donatus: if thy sons have been made believers who were Pagans: if perhaps thou hast gained thy friend who wished to draw thee away to the theatres, and thou hast drawn him to the church:

if some hostile opponent of thine who was furiously mad against thee, laying aside his fury, has become gentle, and owned God, and now barks at thee no more, but cries with thee against wickedness: these things are pleasant. For what do we rejoice for, if we do not rejoice for these things? Or what other are our joys, but these? But because tribulations also abound, and temptations, and dissensions, and schisms, and other evils, without which this world cannot be, until iniquity pass away: let not that rejoicing make us secure, but let our heart be so made glad, as to fear the name of the Lord, lest it be made glad on one side, be stricken on another. Expect not security in journeying: if ever we wish for it here, it will be the birdlime of the body, not

the safety of the man. "Let my heart be made glad, so that it may fear Thy name."

16. "I will confess unto Thee, O Lord my God, in my whole heart, and I will glorify Thy name for ever" (ver. 12): "for great is Thy mercy toward me, and Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell" (ver. 13). Do not be angry, brethren, if I do not explain what I have said as though I were certain. For I am a man, and as much as is granted to me concerning the sacred Scriptures, so much I venture to speak: nothing of myself. Hades I have not yet seen, nor have you: and there will be perhaps another way for us, and not through Hades. These things are uncertain. But because Scripture, which cannot be gainsaid, says, "Thou hast delivered my soul from the nether-most hell," we understand that there are as it were two hells, an upper one and a lower one: for how can there be a lower hell, unless because there is also an upper? The one would not be called lower, except by comparison with that upper part. It appears then, my brethren, that there is some heavenly abode of Angels: there is there a life of ineffable joys, there immortality and incorruption, there all things abiding according to the gift and grace of God. That part of the creation is above. If then that is above, but this earthly part, where is flesh and blood, where is corruptibleness, where is nativity and mortality, departure and succession, changeableness and inconstancy, where are fears, desires, horrors, uncertain joys, frail hope, perishable existence;

I suppose that all this part cannot be compared with that heaven of which I was just now speaking; if then this part cannot be compared with that, the one is above, the other below. And whither do we go after death, unless there is a depth deeper than this depth in which we are in the flesh and in this mortal state? For "the body is dead," saith the Apostle, "because of sin. Therefore even here are the dead; that thou mayest not wonder because it is called infernum, if it abounds with the dead. For he saith not, the body is about to die: but, "the body is dead. Even now surely our body hath life: and yet compared with that body which is to be like the bodies of Angels, the body of man is found to be dead, although still having life. But again, from this infernum, that is from this part of Hades, there is another lower, whither the dead go: from whence God would rescue our souls, even sending thither His own Son. For it was on account of these two hells, my brethren, that the Son of God was sent, on all, sides setting free. To this hell he was sent by being born, to that by dying. Therefore it is His voice in that Psalm, not according

to any man's conjecture, but an Apostle explaining, when he saith, "For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.

Therefore it is here also either His voice, "Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell: or our voice by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself: for on this account He came even unto hell, that we might not remain in hell. 17. I will mention another opinion also. For perhaps even in hell itself there is some lower part where are thrust the ungodly who have sinned most. For whether in hell there were not some places where Abraham was, we cannot define sufficiently. For not yet had the Lord come to hell that He might rescue from thence the souls of all the saints who had gone before, and yet Abraham was there in repose. And a certain rich man when he was in torments in hell, when he saw Abraham, lifted up his eyes. He could not have seen him by lifting up his eyes, unless the one was above, the other below. And what did Abraham answer unto him, when he said, "send Lazarus. "My son," he said, "remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is at rest, but thou art tormented. And besides this," he said, "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that neither can we go to you, nor can any, one come from thence to us.

Therefore between these two hells, perhaps, in one of which the souls of the just have gotten rest, in the other the souls of the ungodly are tormented, one waiting and praying here, placed here in the body of Christ, and praying in the voice of Christ, said that God had delivered his soul from the nethermost hell, because He delivered him from such sins as might have been the means of drawing him down to the torments of the nethermost hell. ...Some one having a troublesome cause was to be sent to prison: another comes and defends him; what does he say when he thanks him? Thou hast delivered my soul out of prison. A debtor was to be hanged up: his debt is paid; he is said to be delivered from being hanged up. They were not in all these evils: but because they were in such due course towards them, that unless aid had been brought, they would have been in them, they rightly say that they are delivered from thence, whither they were not suffered by their deliverers to be taken. Therefore, brethren, whether it be this or that, consider me to be herein an inquirer into the word of God, not a rash assertor.

18. "O God, the transgressors of the law have arisen up against me" (ver. 14). Whom calleth he transgressors of the law? Not the Pagans, who have not received the law: for no one transgresseth that which he hath not received;

the Apostle saith clearly, "For where there is no law, there is no prevarication. Transgressors of the law he calls "prevaricators."Whom then do we understand, brethren? If we take this word from our Lord Himself, the transgressors of the law were the Jews. ...They did not keep the law, and accused Christ as if He transgressed the law. And we know what the Lord suffered. Thinkest thou His Body suffers no such thing now? How can this be? "If they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household? The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. The body also suffereth transgressors of the law, and they rise up against the Body of Christ. Who are the transgressors of the law? Do the Jews perchance dare to rise up against Christ? No: for it is not they that cause us much trouble. For they have not yet believed: they have not yet owned their salvation. Against the Body of Christ bad Christians rise up, from whom the Body of Christ daily suffereth trouble.

All schisms, all heresies, all within who live wickedly and engraft their own character on those who live well, and draw them over to their own side, and with evil communications corrupt good manners these persons "transgressing the law rose up against Me. Let every pious soul speak, let every Christian soul speak. That one which suffers not this, let it not speak. But if it is a Christian soul, it knows that it suffers evils: if it owns in itself its own sufferings, let it own herein its own voice; but if it is without suffering, let it also be without the voice; but that it may not be without suffering, let it walk along the narrow way, and begin to live godly in Christ: it must of necessity suffer this persecution. For "all," saith the Apostle, "who will live godly in Christ, suffer persecution." "And the synagogue of the powerful have sought after My soul." The synagogue of the powerful is the congregation of the proud. The synagogue of the powerful rose up against the Head, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, crying and saying with one mouth, Crucify Him, crucify Him: of whom it is said, "The sons of men, their teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword." They did not strike, but cried: by crying they struck, by crying they Crucified Him. The will of those who cried was fulfilled, when the Lord was crucified: 'And they did not place Thee before their eyes." How did they not place Him before them? They did not know Him God. They should have spared him as Man: what they saw, according to this they should have walked. Suppose that He was not God, He was man: was He therefore to be slain? Spare Him a man, and own Him God.

19. "And Thou, Lord God, art One who hast compassion and merciful, longsuffering, and very pitiful, and true" (ver. 15). Wherefore longsuffering and very pitiful, and One who hast compassion? Because hanging on the Cross He said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Whom prayeth He to? for whom doth He pray? Who prayeth? Where prayeth He? The Son prays to the Father, crucified for the ungodly, in the midst of very insults, not of words but of death inflicted, hanging on the Cross; as if for this He had His hands stretched out, that thus He might pray for them, that His "prayer might be directed like incense in the sight of the Father, and the lifting up of His hands like an evening sacrifice." 20. If therefore Thou art "true," "Look upon me, and have mercy upon me: give power unto Thy servant. Because Thou art "true," "give power unto Thy servant" (ver. 16). Let the time of patience pass away, the time of judgment come. How, "give power"? The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. He rising again will come even to earth Himself to judge: He will appear terrible who appeared despicable. He will show His power, who showed His patience; on the Cross was patience; in the judgment will be power. For He will appear as Man judging, but in glory: because "as ye saw Him go," said the Angels, "so He will come. His very form shall come to judgment; therefore the ungodly also shall see Him: for they shall not see the form of God. For blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. ...In the vision of the Father there is also the vision of the Son: and in the vision of the Son there is also the vision of the Father. Therefore He adds a consequence, and says: "Know ye not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? that is, both in Me seen the Father is seen, and in the Father seen the Son too is seen. The vision of the Father and the Son cannot be separated: where nature and substance is not separated, there vision cannot be separated.

For that ye may know that the heart ought to be made ready for that place, to see the Divinity of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, in which though not seen we believe, and by believing cleanse the heart that there may be able to be sight: the Lord Himself saith in another place, "He that hath My commands and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved by My Father: and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him. Did they not see Him, with whom He was talking? They both saw Him, and did not see Him? they saw something, they believed

something: they saw Man, they believed in God. But in the Judgment they shall see the same Lord Jesus Christ as Man, together with the wicked: after the Judgment, they shall see God, apart from the wicked.

21. "And save the Son of Thine handmaid." The Lord is the Son of the handmaid. Of what handmaid? Her who when He was announced as about to be born of her, answered and said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to Thy word." He saved the Son of His handmaid, and His own Son: His own Son, in the Form of God; the Son of His handmaid in the form of a servant. Of the handmaid of God, therefore, the Lord was born in the form of a servant; and He said, "Save the Son of Thine handmaid." And He was saved from death, as ye know, His flesh, which was dead, being raised again. ...And each several Christian placed in the Body of Christ may say, "Save the Son of Thine handmaid." Perhaps he cannot say, "Give power unto Thy servant:" because it was He, the Son, who received power. Yet wherefore saith He not this also? Was it not said to servants, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel"? and the servants say, "Know ye not that we shall judge Angels?" Each one therefore of the saints receiveth also power, and each several saint is the son of His handmaid. What if he is born of a pagan mother, and has become a Christian? How can the son of a pagan be the son of His handmaid: He is indeed the son of a pagan mother after the flesh, but the son of the Church after the Spirit.

22. "Show me a sign for good" (ver. 17). What sign, but that of the Resurrection? The Lord says: "This wicked and provoking generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonah." Therefore in our Head a sign has been shown already for good; each one of us also may say, "Show me a sign for good:" because at the last trumpet, at the coming of the Lord, both "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." This will be a sign for good. "That they who hate me may see it, and be ashamed." In the judgment they shall be ashamed unto their destruction, who will not now be ashamed unto their healing. Now therefore let them be ashamed: let them accuse their own ways, let them keep the good way: because none of us liveth without being ashamed, unless he first be ashamed and live anew. Now God grants them the approach of a healthy shame, if they despise not the medicine of confession: but if they will not now be ashamed, then they shall be ashamed, when "their iniquities shall convince them to their face." How shall they be ashamed? When they shall

say, "These are they whom we had sometimes in derision, and a parable of reproach. We fools counted their life madness: how are they numbered among the children of God! What hath pride profited us?" Then shall they say this: let them say it now, and they say it to their health. For let each one turn humbly to God, and now say, What hath my pride profited me? and hear from the Apostle, "For what glory had ye in those things of which ye are now ashamed?" Ye see that there is even now a wholesome shame while there is a place of penitence: but then one which will be late, useless, fruitless. ...

23. "For Thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me. "Hast holpen me," in struggle; "and comforted me," in sorrow. For no one seeketh comfort, but he who is in misery. Would ye not be consoled? Say that ye are happy, and ye hear, "My people" (now ye answer, and I hear a murmur, as of persons who remember the Scriptures. May God, who hath written this in your hearts, confirm it in your deeds. Ye see, brethren, that those who say unto you, Ye are happy, seduce you), "O My people, they that call you happy cause you to err, and disturb the way of your feet. So also from the Epistle of the Apostle James: "Be afflicted, and mourn: let your laughter be turned to mourning. Ye see what ye have heard read: when would such things be said unto us in the land of security? This surely is the land of offences, and temptations, and of all evils, that we may groan here, and deserve to rejoice there; here to be troubled, and there to be comforted, and to say, "For Thou hast delivered mine eyes from tears, my feet from falling: I will please the Lord in the land of the living. This is the land of the dead. The land of the dead passeth, the land of the living cometh. In the land of the dead is labour, grief, fear, tribulation, temptation, groaning, sighing: here are false happy ones, true unhappy, because happiness is false, misery is true.

But he that owneth himself to be in true misery, will also be in true happiness: and yet now because thou art miserable, hear the Lord saying, "Blessed are they that mourn. O blessed they that mourn! Nothing is so akin to misery as mourning: nothing so remote and contrary to misery as blessedness: Thou speakest of those who mourn, and Thou callest them blessed! Understand, He saith, what I say: I call those who mourn blessed. Wherefore blessed? In hope. Wherefore mourning? In act. For they mourn in this death, in these tribulations, in their wandering: and because they own themselves to be in this misery, and mourn, they are blessed. Wherefore do they mourn? The blessed Cyprian was put to sorrow in his passion: now he is comforted

with his crown; now though comforted, he was sad. For our Lord Jesus Christ still intercedeth for us: all the Martyrs who are with Him intercede for us. Their intercessions pass not away, except when our mourning is passed away: but when our mourning shall have passed away, we all with one voice, in one people, in one country, shall receive comfort, thousands of thousands joined with Angels playing upon harps, with choirs of heavenly powers living in one city. Who mourneth there? Who there sigheth? Who there toileth? Who there needeth? Who dieth there? Who there showeth mercy? Who breaketh bread to the hungry there, where all are satisfied with the bread of righteousness? No one saith unto thee, Receive a stranger;

there no one will be a stranger to thee: all live in their own country. No one saith unto thee, Set at one thy friends disputing; in everlasting peace they enjoy the Face of God. No one sixth unto thee, Visit the sick; health and immortality abide for ever. No one saith unto thee, Bury the dead; all shall be in everlasting life. Works of mercy stop, because misery is found not. And what shall we do there? Shall we perhaps sleep? If now we fight against ourselves, although we carry about a house of sleep, this flesh of ours, and keep watch with these lights, and this solemn feast gives us a mind to watch; what wakefulness shall that day give unto. Therefore we shall be awake, we shall not sleep. What shall we do? There will be no works of mercy, because there will be no misery. Perhaps there will be these necessary works which there are here now, of sowing, ploughing, cooking, grinding, weaving? None of these, for there will be no want. Thus there will be no works of mercy, because misery is past away: where there is no want nor misery, there will be neither works of necessity nor of mercy. What will be there? What business shall we have? What action? Will there be no action, because there is rest? Shall we sit there, and be torpid, and do nothing? If our love grow cold, our action will grow cold.

How then will that love resting in the face of God, for whom we now long, for whom we sigh, how will it inflame us, when we shall have come to Him? He for whom while as yet we see Him not, we so sigh, how will He enlighten us, when we shall have come to Him? How will He change us? What will He make of us? What then shall we do, brethren? Let the Psalm tell us: "Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house. Why? "They shall praise Thee for ever and ever. This will be our employment, praise of God. Thou lovest and praisest. Thou wilt cease to praise, if thou cease to love. But thou wilt not

cease to love, because He whom thou seest is such an One as offends thee not by any weariness: He both satisfies thee, and satisfies thee not. What I say is wonderful. If I say that He satisfies thee, I am afraid lest as though satisfied thou shouldest wish to depart, as from a dinner or from a supper. What then do I say? doth He not satisfy thee? I am afraid again, that if I say, He doth not satisfy thee, thou shouldest seem to be in want: and shouldest be as it were empty, and there should be in thee some void which ought to be filled. What then shall I say, except what can be said, but can hardly be thought? He both satisfies thee, and satisfies thee not: for I find both in Scripture.

For while He said, "Blessed are the hungry, for they shall be filled; it is again said of Wisdom, "Those who eat Thee shall hunger again, and those who drink shall thirst again. Nay, but He did not say "again," but he said, "still: for "shall thirst again" is as if once having been filled he departed and digested, and returned to drink. So it is, "Those who eat Thee shall still hunger: thus when they eat they hunger: and those who drink Thee, even thus when drinking, thirst. What is it, to thirst in drinking? Never to grow weary. If then there shall be that ineffable and eternal sweetness, what doth He now seek of us, brethren, but faith unfeigned, firm hope, pure charity? and man may walk in the way which the Lord hath given, may bear troubles, and receive consolations.

PSALM 87

1. The Psalm which has just been sung is short, if we look to the number of its words, but of deep interest in its thoughts. ...The subject of song and praise in that Psalm is a city, whose citizens are we, as far as we are Christians: whence we are absent, as long as we are mortal: whither we are tending: through whose approaches, undiscoverable among the brakes and thorns that entangle them, the Sovereign of the city made Himself a path for us to reach it. Walking thus in Christ, and pilgrims till we arrive, and sighing as we long for a certain ineffable repose that dwells within that city, a repose of which it is promised, that "the eye of man hath never seen" such, "nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into his heart to conceive;" let us chant the song of a longing heart: for he who truly longs, thus sings within his soul, though his tongue be silent: he who does not, however he may resound in human ears, is voiceless to God. See what ardent lovers of that city were they by whom these words were composed, by whom they have been handed down to us; with how deep a feeling were they sung by those! A feeling that the

love of that city created in them: that love the Spirit of God inspired; "the love of God," he saith, "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." Fervent with this Spirit then, let us listen to what is said of that city.

2. "Her foundations are upon the holy hills" (ver. 1). The Psalm had as yet said nothing of the city: it begins thus, and says, "Her foundations are upon the holy hills. Whose? There can be no doubt that foundations, especially among the hills, belong to some city. Thus filled with the Holy Spirit, and with many thoughts of love and longing for that city, as if after long internal meditation, that citizen bursts out, "Her foundations are upon the holy hills; as if he had already said something concerning it. And how could he have said nothing on a subject, respecting which in his heart he had never been silent? For how could "her foundations" have been written, of which nothing had been said before? But, as I said, after long and silent travailing in contemplation of that city in his mind, crying to God, he bursts out into the ears of men thus: "Her foundations are upon the holy hills. And, supposing persons who heard to enquire of what city he spoke he adds, "the Lord loveth the gates of Sion. Behold, then, a city whose foundations are upon the holy hills, a city called Sion, whose gates the Lord loveth, as he adds, "above all the dwellings of Jacob. But what doth this mean, "her foundations on the holy hills"? What are the holy hills upon which this city is built? Another citizen tells us this more explicitly, the Apostle Paul: of this was the Prophet a citizen, of this the Apostle citizen:

and they spoke to exhort the other citizens. But how are these, I mean the Prophets and Apostles, citizens? Perhaps in this sense; that they are themselves the hills, upon which are the foundations of this city, whose gates the Lord loveth. Let then another citizen state this clearly, that I may not seem to guess. Speaking to the Gentiles, and telling them how they were returning, and being, as it were, framed together into the holy structure, "built," he says, "upon the foundations of the Apostles and Prophets: and because neither the Apostles nor Prophets, upon whom the foundations of that city rest, could stand by their own power, he adds, "Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner stone. That the Gentiles, therefore, might not think they had no relation to Sion: for Sion was a certain city of this world, which bore a typical resemblance as a shadow to that Sion of which he presently speaketh, that Heavenly Jerusalem, of which the Apostle saith, "which is the

mother of us all; they might not be said to bear no relation to Sion, on the ground that they did not belong to the Jewish people, he addresses them thus: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Thou seest the structure of so great a city: yet whereon does all that edifice repose, where does it rest, that it may never fall?

"Jesus Christ Himself," he saith, "being the head corner stone." 3. ...But that ye may know that Christ is at once the earliest and the highest foundation, the Apostle saith, "Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Christ Jesus. How, then, are the Prophets and Apostles foundations, and yet Christ so, than whom nothing can be higher? How, think you, save that as He is openly styled, Saint of saints, so figuratively Foundation of foundations? Thus if thou art thinking of mysteries, Christ is the Saint of saints: if of a subject flock, the Shepherd of shepherds: if of a structure, the Pillar of pillars. In material edifices, the same stone cannot be above and below: if at the bottom, it cannot be at the top: and vice versa: for almost all bodies are liable to limitations in space: nor can they be everywhere or for ever; but as the Godhead is in every place, from every place symbols may be taken for It; and not being any of these things in external properties, It can be everything in figure. Is Christ a door, in the same sense as the doors we see made by carpenters? Surely not; and yet He said, "I am the door. Or a shepherd, in the same capacity as those who guard sheep? though He said, "I am the Shepherd. Both these names occur in the same passage: in the Gospel, He said, that the shepherd enters by the door: the words are, "I am the good Shepherd; and in the same passage, "I am the door:

and who is the shepherd who enters by the door? "I am the good Shepherd: and what is the door by which Thou, Good Shepherd, enterest? How then art Thou all things? In the sense in which everything is through Me. To explain: when Paul enters by the door, does not Christ? Wherefore? Not because Paul is Christ: but since Christ is in Paul: and Paul acts through Christ. The Apostle says, "Do ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me? When His saints and faithful disciples enter by the door, does not Christ enter by the door? How are we to prove this? Since Saul, not yet called Paul, was persecuting those very saints, when He called to him from Heaven, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Himself then is the foundation, and corner stone: rising

from the bottom: if indeed from the bottom: for the base of this foundation is the highest exaltation of the building: and as the support of bodily fabrics rests upon the ground, that of spiritual structures reposes on high. Were we building up ourselves upon the earth, we should lay our foundation on the lowest level: but since our edifice is a heavenly one, to Heaven our Foundation has gone before us: so that our Saviour, the corner stone, the Apostles, and mighty Prophets, the hills that bear the fabric of the city, constitute a sort of living structure. This building now cries from your hearts;

that you may be built up into its fabric, the hand of God, as of an artificer, worketh even through my tongue. Nor was it without a meaning that Noah's ark was made of "square beams," which were typical of the form of the Church. For what is it to be made square? Listen to the resemblance of the squared stone: like qualities should the Christian have: for in all his trials he never falls: though pushed, and, as it were, turned over, he falls not: and thus too, whichever way a square stone is turned, it stands erect. ...In earthly cities, one thing is the structure of buildings: another thing are the citizens that dwell therein: that city is builded of its own inmates, who are themselves the blocks that form the city, for the very stones are living "Ye also," says the Apostle, "as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, words that are addressed to ourselves. Let us then pursue the contemplation of that city.

4. "The Lord loveth the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob" (ver. 2). I have made the foregoing remarks, that ye may not imagine the gates are one thing, the foundations another. Why are the Apostles and Prophets foundations? Because their authority is the support of our weakness. Why are they gates? because through them we enter the kingdom of God: for they proclaim it to us: and while we enter by their means, we enter also through Christ, Himself being the Gate. And twelve gates of Jerusalem are spoken of, and the one gate is Christ, and the twelve gates are Christ for Christ dwells in the twelve gates, hence was twelve the number of the Apostles. There is a deep mystery in this number of twelve "Ye shall sit," says our Saviour, "on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. If there are twelve thrones there, there will be no room for the judgment-seat of Paul, the thirteenth Apostle, though he says that he shall judge not men only, but even Angels; which, but the fallen Angels? "Know ye not, that we shall judge Angels," he writes. The world would answer, Why dost thou boast that thou shalt be a judge? Where will be thy throne? Our Lord spoke of

twelve thrones for the twelve Apostles: one, Judas, fell, and his place being supplied by Matthias, the number of twelve thrones was made up: first, then, discover room for thy judgment-seat; then threaten that thou wilt judge.

Let us, therefore, reflect upon the meaning of the twelve thrones. The expression is typical of a sort of universality, as the Church was destined to prevail throughout the whole world: whence this edifice is styled a building together into Christ: and because judges come from all quarters, the twelve thrones are spoken of, just as the twelve gates, from the entering in from all sides into that city. Not only therefore have those twelve, and the Apostle Paul, a claim to the twelve thrones, but, from the universal signification, all who are to sit in judgment: in the same manner as all who enter the city, enter by one or the other of the twelve gates. There are four quarters of the globe: East, West, North, and South: and they are constantly alluded to in the Scriptures. From all those four winds; our Lord declares in the Gospel that He will call his sheep "from the four winds; therefore from all those four winds is the Church called. And how called? On every side it is called in the Trinity: no otherwise is it called than by Baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: four then being thrice taken, twelve are found. Knock, therefore, with all your hearts at these gates: and let Christ cry within you: "Open me the gates of righteousness. For He went before us the Head: He follows Himself in His Body. ...

5. "Very excellent things are said of thee, thou city of God" (ver. 3). He was, as it were, contemplating that city of Jerusalem on earth: for consider what city he alludes to, of which certain very excellent things are spoken. Now the earthly city has been destroyed: after suffering the enemy's rage, it fell to the earth; it is no longer what it was: it exhibited the emblem, and the shadow hath passed away. Whence then are "very excellent things spoken of thee, thou city of God"? Listen whence: "I will think upon Rahab and Babylon, with them that know Me" (ver. 4). In that city, the Prophet, in the person of God, says, "I will think upon Rahab and Babylon. Rahab belongs not to the Jewish people; Babylon belongs not to the Jewish people; as is clear from the next verse: "For the Philistines also, and Tyre, with the Ethiopians, were there. Deservedly then, "very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou city of God: for not only is the Jewish nation, born of the flesh of Abraham, included therein, but all nations also, some of which are named that all may be understood. "I will think," he says, "upon Rahab: who is that harlot? That

harlot in Jericho, who received the spies and conducted them out of the city by a different road:

who trusted beforehand in the promise, who feared God, who was told to hang out of the window a line of scarlet thread, that is, to bear upon her forehead the sign of the blood of Christ. She was saved there, and thus represented the Church of the Gentiles: whence our Lord said to the haughty Pharisees, "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. They go before, because they do violence: they push their way by faith, and to faith a way is made, nor can any resist, since they who are violent take it by force. For it is written, "The kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Such was the conduct of the robber, more courageous on the cross than in the place of ambush. "I will think upon Rahab and Babylon. By Babylon is meant the city of this world: as there is one holy city, Jerusalem; one unholy, Babylon: all the unholy belong to Babylon, even as all the holy to Jerusalem. But he slideth from Babylon to Jerusalem. How, but by Him who justifieth the ungodly: Jerusalem is the city of the saints; Babylon of the wicked: but He cometh who justifieth the ungodly: since it is said, "I will think" not only "upon Rahab," but "upon Babylon," but with whom? "with them that know Me." ...

6. Listen now to a deep mystery. Rahab is there through Him, through whom also is Babylon, now no longer Babylon, but beginning to be Jerusalem. The daughter is divided against her mother, and will be among the members of that queen to whom is said, "Forget thine own people, and thy father's house, so shall the king have pleasure in thy beauty. For how could Babylon aspire to Jerusalem? How could Rahab reach those foundations? How could the Philistines, or Tyre, or the people of the Ethiopians? Listen to this verse, "Sion, my mother, a man shall say. There is then a man who saith this: through whom all those I have mentioned make their approach. Who is this man? It tells if we hear, if we understand. It follows, as if a question had been raised, through whose aid Rahab, Babylon, the Philistines, Tyre, and the Morians, gained an entrance. Behold, through whom they come; "Sion, my mother, a man shall say; and a man was born in her, and Himself the Most High hath founded her" (ver. 5). What, my brethren, can be clearer? Truly, because "very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou city of God. Lo, "Sion, O mother, a man shall say. What man? "He who was born in her. It is then the man who was born in her, and He Himself hath rounded her.

Yet how can He be born in the city which He Himself founded? It had already been founded, that therein He might be born.

Understand it thus, if thou canst: "Mother Sion, he shall say; but it is "a man" that "shall say, Mother Sion; yea, a man was born in her: and yet "he hath founded her" (not a man, but), "the Most High. As He created a mother of whom He would be born, so He founded a city in which He would be born. What hope is ours, brethren! On our behalf the Most High, who founded the city, addresses that city as a mother: and "He was born in her, and the Most High hath founded her." 7. As though it were said, How do ye know this? All of us have sung these Psalms: and Christ, Man for our sake, God before us, sings within us all. But is this much to say, "before us," of Him who was before heaven and earth and time? He then, born for our sakes a man, in that city, also founded her when He was the Most High. Yet how are we assured of this? "The Lord shall rehearse it when He writeth up the people" (ver. 6), as the following verse has it. "The Lord shall declare, when He writeth up the people, and their princes. What princes? "Those who were born in her; those princes who, born within her walls, became therein princes: for before they could become princes in her, God chose the despised things of the world to confound the strong. Was the fisherman, the publican, a prince? They were indeed princes: but because they became such in her. Princes of what kind were they? Princes come from Babylon, believing monarchs of this world, came to the city of Rome, as to the head of Babylon: they went not to the temple of the Emperor, but to the tomb of the Fisherman. Whence indeed did they rank as princes? "God chose the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and the foolish things He hath chosen, and things which are not as though they were, that things which are may be brought to nought.

This He doth who "from the ground raises the helpless, and from the dunghill exalts the poor. For what purpose? "That He may set him with the princes, even with the princes of His people. This is a mighty deed, a deep source of pleasure and exultation. Orators came later into that city, but they could never have done so, had not fishermen preceded them. These things are glorious indeed, but where could they take place, but in that city of God, of whom very excellent things are spoken? 8. So thus, after drawing together and mingling every source of joyous exultation, how doth he conclude? "The dwelling as of all that shall be made joyous is in Thee" (ver. 7). As if all made

joyous, all rejoicing, shall dwell in that city. Amid our journeyings here we suffer bruises: our last home shall be the home of joy alone. Toil and groans shall perish: prayers pass away, hymns of praise succeed. There shall be the dwelling of the happy; no longer shall there be the groans of those that long, but the gladness of those who enjoy. For He will be present for whom we sigh: we shall be like Him, as we shall see Him as He is: there it will be our whole task to praise and enjoy the presence of God: and what beyond shall we ask for, when He alone satisfies us, by whom all things were made? We shall dwell and be dwelt in; and shall be subject to Him, that God may be all in all. "Blessed," then, "are they that dwell in Thy house. How blessed? Blessed in their gold, and silver, their numerous slaves, and multiplied offspring? "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: for ever and ever they will be praising Thee. Blessed in that sole labour which is rest! Let this then be the one and only object of our desire, my brethren, when we shall have reached this pass. Let, us prepare ourselves to rejoice in God: to praise Him.

The good works which conduct us thither, will not be needed there. I described, as far as I could, only yesterday, our condition there: works of charity there will be none, where there will be no misery: thou shalt not find one in want, one naked, no one will meet you tormented with thirst, there will be no stranger, no sick to visit, no dead to bury, no disputants to set at peace. What then wilt thou find to do? Shall we plant new vines, plough, traffic, make voyages, to support the necessities of the body? Deep quiet shall be there; all toilsome work, that necessity demands, will cease: the necessity being dead, its works will perish too. What then will be our state? As far as possible, the tongue of a man thus told us. "As it were, the dwelling of all who shall be made perfect is in Thee. Why does he say, "as it were"? Because there shall be such joy there as we know not here. Many pleasures do I behold here, and many rejoice in this world, some in one thing, others in another; but there is nothing to compare with that delight, but it shall be "as it were" being made joyful. For if I say joyfulness, men at once think of such joyfulness as men use to have in. wine, in feasting, in avarice, and in the world's distinctions. For men are elated by these things, and mad with a kind of joy:

but "there is no joy, saith the Lord, unto the wicked. There is a sort of joyfulness which the ear of man hath not heard, nor his eye seen, nor hath it entered into his heart to conceive. "As it were, the dwelling of all who shall be made joyful is in Thee. Let us prepare for other delights: for a kind of

shadow is what we find here, not the reality: that we may not expect to enjoy such things there as here we delight in: otherwise our self-denial will be avarice. Some persons, when invited to a rich banquet, where there are many and costly dishes yet to come on, abstain from breaking their fast: if you ask the reason, they tell you that they are fasting: which is indeed a great work, a Christian work. Yet be not hasty in praising them: examine their motives: it is their belly, not religion, that they are consulting. That their appetite may not be palled by ordinary dishes, they abstain till more delicate food is set before them. This fast then is for the gullet's sake. Fasting is undoubtedly important: it fights against the belly and the palate; but sometimes it fights for them.

Thus, my brethren, if ye imagine that we shall find any such pleasures in that country to which the heavenly trumpet urges us on, and on that account abstain from present enjoyments, that ye may receive the like more plentifully there, ye imitate those I have described, who fast only for greater feasting, and abstain only for greater indulgence. Do not ye like this: prepare yourselves for a certain ineffable delight: cleanse your hearts from all earthly and secular affections. We shall see something, the sight of which will make us blessed: and that alone will suffice for us. What then? Shall we not eat? Yes: we shall eat: but that shall be our food, which will ever refresh, and never fail. "In Thee is the dwelling of all who shall be, as it were, made joyful. He has already told us how we shall be made joyful. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: for ever and ever they will be praising Thee. Let us praise the Lord as far as we are able, but with mingled lamentations: for while we praise we long for Him, and as yet have Him not. When we have, all our sorrows will be taken from us, and nothing will remain but praise, unmixed and everlasting. Now let us pray.

PSALM 88

1. The Title of this eighty-seventh Psalm contains a fresh subject for enquiry: the words occurring here, "for Melech to respond," being nowhere else found. We have already given our opinion on the meaning of the titles *Psalmus Cantici* and *Canticum Psalmi*: and the words, "sons of Core," are constantly repeated, and have often been explained: so also "to the end; but what comes next in this title is peculiar. For "Melech" we may translate into Latin "for the chorus," for chorus is the sense of the Hebrew word Melech. ...The Passion of our Lord is here prophesied. Now the Apostle Peter

saith, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps; this is the meaning of "to respond. The Apostle John also saith, "As Christ laid down His life for us, so ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren; this also is to respond. But the choir signifies concord, which consists in charity: whoever therefore in imitation of our Lord's Passion gives up his body to be burnt, if he have not charity, does not answer in the choir, and therefore it profiteth him nothing. Further, as in Latin the terms Precentor and Succentor are used to denote in music the performer who sings the first part, and him who takes it up; just so in this song of the Passion, Christ going before is followed by the choir of martyrs Unto the end of gaining crowns in Heaven.

This is sung by "the sons of Core," that is, the imitators of Christ's Passion: as Christ was crucified in Calvary, which is the interpretation of the Hebrew word Core. This also is "the understanding of Aeman the Israelite: words occurring at the end of this title. Aeman is said to mean, "his brother: for Christ deigns to make those His brethren, who understand the mystery of His Cross, and not only are not ashamed of it, but faithfully glory in it, not praising themselves for their own merits, but grateful for His grace: so that it may be said to each of them, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile," just as holy Scripture says of Israel himself, that he was without guile. 2. "O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before Thee" (ver. 1). Let us therefore now hear the voice of Christ singing before us in prophecy, to whom His own choir should respond either in imitation, or in thanksgiving. "O let my prayer enter into Thy presence, incline Thine ear unto my calling" (ver. 2). For even our Lord prayed, not in the form of God, but in the form of a servant; for in this He also suffered. He prayed both in prosperous times, that is, by "day," and in calamity, which I imagine is meant by "night." The entrance of prayer into God's presence is its acceptance: the inclination of His ear is His compassionate listening to it: for God has not such bodily members as we have. The passage is however, as usual, a repetition.

3. "For my soul is filled with evils, and my life draweth nigh unto hell" (ver. 3). Dare we speak of the Soul of Christ as "filled with evils," when the passion had strength as far as it had any, only over the body? ...The soul therefore may feel pain without the body: but without the soul the body cannot. Why therefore should we not say that the Soul of Christ was full of the

evils of humanity, though not of human sins? Another Prophet says of Him, that He grieved for us: and the Evangelist says, "And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy: and our Lord Himself saith unto them of Himself, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. The Prophet who composed this Psalm, foreseeing that this would happen, introduces Him saying, "My soul is full of evils, and My life draweth nigh unto hell. For the very same sense is here expressed in other words, as when He said, "My soul is sorrowful, even unto death. The words, "My soul is sorrowful," are like these, "My soul is full of evils: and what follows, "even unto death," like, "my life draweth nigh unto hell.

These feelings of human infirmity our Lord took upon Him, as He did the flesh of human infirmity, and the death of human flesh, not by the necessity of His condition, but by the free will of His mercy, that He might transfigure into Himself His own body, which is the Church (the head of which He deigned to be), that is, His members in His holy and faithful disciples: that if amid human temptations any one among them happened to be in sorrow and pain, he might not therefore think that he was separated from His favour: that the body, like the chorus following its leader, might learn from its Head, that these sorrows were not sin, but proofs of human weakness. We read of the Apostle Paul, a chief member in this body, and we hear him confessing that his soul was full of such evils, when he says, that he feels "great heaviness and continual sorrow in heart for his brethren according to the flesh, who are Israelites. And if we say that our Lord was sorrowful for them also at the approach of His Passion, in which they would incur the most atrocious guilt, I think we shall not speak amiss. Lastly, the very thing said by our Saviour on the Cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," is expressed in this Psalm below, "I am counted as one of them that go down into the pit" (ver. 4):

by them who knew not what they were doing, when they imagined that He died like other men, subjected to necessity, and overcome by it. The word "pit" is used for the depth of woe or of Hell. "I have been as a man that hath no help." 4. "Free among the dead" (ver. 5). In these words our Lord's Person is most clearly shown: for who else is free among the dead but He who though in the likeness of sinful flesh is alone among sinners without sin? ...He therefore, "free among the dead," who had it in His power to lay down His life, and again to take it; from whom no one could take it, but He

laid it down of His own free will; who could revive His own flesh, as a temple destroyed by them, at His will; who, when all had forsaken Him on the eve of His Passion, remained not alone, because, as He testifies, His Father forsook Him not; was nevertheless by His enemies, for whom He prayed, who knew not what they did, ...counted "as one who hath no help; like unto them that are wounded, and lie in the grave. But he adds, "Whom thou dost not yet remember: and in these words there is to be remarked a distinction between Christ and the rest of the dead. For though He was wounded, and when dead laid in the tomb, yet they who knew not what they were doing, or who He was, regarded Him as like others who had perished from their wounds, and who slept in the tomb, who are as yet out of remembrance of God, that is, whose hour of resurrection has not yet arrived.

For thus the Scripture speaks of the dead as sleeping, because it wishes them to be regarded as destined to awake, that is, to rise again. But He, wounded and asleep in the tomb, awoke on the third day, and became "like a sparrow that sitteth alone on the housetop," that is, on the right hand of His Father in Heaven: and now "dieth no more, death shall no more have dominion over Him. Hence He differs widely from those whom God hath not yet remembered to cause their resurrection after this manner: for what was to go before in the Head, was kept for the Body in the end. God is then said to remember, when He does an act: then to forget, when He does it not: for neither can God forget, as He never changes, nor remember, as He can never forget. "I am counted" then, by those who know not what they do, "as a man that hath no help: while I am "free among the dead," I am held by these men "like unto them that are wounded, and lie in the grave. Yet those very men, who account thus of Me, are further said to be "cut away from Thy hand," that is, when I was made so by them, "they were cut away from Thy hand; they who believed Me destitute of help, are deprived of the help of Thy hand:

for they, as he saith in another Psalm, have digged a pit before me, and are fallen into the midst of it themselves. I prefer this interpretation to that which refers the words, "they are cut away from Thy hand," to those who sleep in the tomb, whom God hath not yet remembered: since the righteous are among the latter, of whom, even though God hath not yet called them to the resurrection, it is said, that their "souls are in the hands of God," that is, that "they dwell under the defence of the Most High; and shall abide un-

der the shadow of the God of Heaven. But it is those who are cut away from the hand of God, who believed that Christ was cut off from His hand, and thus accounting Him among the wicked, dared to slay Him. 5. "They laid Me in the lowest pit" (ver. 6), that is, the deepest pit. For so it is in the Greek. But what is the lowest pit, but the deepest woe, than which there is none more deep? Whence in another Psalm it is said, "Thou broughtest me out also of the pit of misery." "In a place of darkness, and in the shadow of death," whiles they knew not what they did, they laid Him there, thus deeming of Him; they knew not Him "whom none of the princes of this world knew." By the "shadow of death," I know not whether the death of the body is to be understood, or that of which it is written, "That they walked in darkness and in the land of the shadow of death, a light is risen on them," because by belief they were brought from out of the darkness and death of sin into light and life. Such an one those who knew not what they did thought our Lord, and in their ignorance accounted Him among those whom He came to help, that they might not be such themselves.

6. "Thy indignation lieth hard upon Me" (ver. 7), or, as other copies have it, "Thy anger; or, as others, "Thy fury: the Greek word *qumoj* having undergone different interpretations. For where the Greek copies have *orgh*, no translator hesitated to express it by the Latin *ira*; but where the word is *qumoj*, most object to rendering it by *ira*, although many of the authors of the best Latin style, in their translations from Greek philosophy, have thus rendered the word in Latin. But I shall not discuss this matter further: only if I also were to suggest another term, I should think "indignation" more tolerable than "fury," this word in Latin not being applied to persons in their senses. What then does this mean, "Thy indignation lieth hard upon Me," except the belief of those, who knew not the Lord of Glory? who imagined that the anger of God was not merely roused, but lay hard upon Him, whom they dared to bring to death, and not only death, but that kind, which they regarded as the most execrable of all, namely, the death of the Cross: whence saith the Apostle, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree. On this account, wishing to praise His obedience which He carried to the extreme of humility, he says, "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death; and as this seemed little, he added, "even the death of the Cross;

and with the same view as far as I can see, he says in this Psalm, "And all thy suspensions," or, as some translate "waves," others "tossings," "Thou hast brought over Me. We also find in another Psalm, "All thy suspensions and waves are come in upon Me," or, as some have translated better, "have passed over Me: for it is dihlqon in Greek, not eishlqon: and where both expressions are employed, "waves" and "suspensions," one cannot be used as equivalent to the other. In that passage we explained "suspensions" as threatenings, "waves" as the actual sufferings: both inflicted by God's judgment: but in that place it is said, "All have passed over Me," here, "Thou hast brought all upon Me. In the other case, that is, although some evils took place, yet, he said, all those which are here mentioned passed over; but in this case, "Thou hast brought them upon Me. Evils pass over when they do not touch a man, as things which hang over him, or when they do touch him, as waves. But when he uses the word "suspensions," he does not say they passed over, but, "Thou hast brought them upon Me," meaning that all which impended had come to pass. All things which were predicted of His Passion impended, as long as they remained in the prophecies for future fulfilment.

7. "Thou hast put Mine acquaintance far from Me" (ver. 8). If we understand by acquaintance those whom He knew, it will be all men; for whom knew He not? But He calls those acquaintance, to whom He was Himself known, as far as they could know Him at that season: at least so far forth as they knew Him to be innocent, although they considered Him only as a man, not as likewise God. Although He might call the righteous whom He approved, acquaintance, as He calls the wicked unknown, to whom He was to say at the end, "I know you not." In what follows, "and they have set Me for an abhorrence to themselves;" those whom He called before "acquaintance," may be meant, as even they felt horror at the mode of that death: but it is better referred to those of whom He was speaking above as His persecutors. "I was delivered up, and did not get forth." Is this because His disciples were without, while He was being tried within? Or are we to give a deeper meaning to the words, "I cannot get forth" as signifying, "I remained hidden in My secret counsels, I showed not who I was, I did not reveal Myself, was not made manifest"? And so it follows,-

"My eyes became weak from want" (ver. 9). For what eyes are we to understand? If the eyes of the flesh in which He suffered, we do not read that His eyes became weak from want, that is, from hunger, in His Passion, as is often

the case; as He was betrayed after His Supper, and crucified on the same day: if the inner eyes, how were they weakened from want, in which there was a light that could never fail? But He meant by His eyes those members in the body, of which He was Himself the head, which, as brighter and more eminent and chief above the rest, He loved. It was of this body that the Apostle was speaking, when he wrote, taking his metaphor from our own body, "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?" etc. What he wished understood by these words, he has expressed more clearly, by adding, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." Wherefore as those eyes, that is, the holy Apostles, to whom not flesh and blood, but the Father which is in Heaven had revealed Him, so that Peter said, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God," when they saw Him betrayed, and suffering such evils, saw Him not such as they wished, as He did not come forth, did not manifest Himself in His virtue and power, but still hidden in His secrecy, endured everything as a man overcome and enfeebled, they became weak for want, as if their food, their Light, had been withdrawn from them.

8. He continues, "And I have called upon Thee. This indeed He did most clearly, when upon the Cross. But what follows? "All the day I have stretched forth My hands unto Thee," must be examined how it must be taken. For if in this expression we understand the tree of the Cross, how can we reconcile it with the "whole day"? Can He be said to have hung upon the Cross during the whole day, as the night is considered a part of the day? But if day, as opposed to night, was meant by this expression, even of this day, the first and no small portion had passed by at the time of His crucifixion. But if we take "day" in the same sense of time (especially as the word is used in the feminine, a gender which is restricted to that sense in Latin, although not so in Greek, as it is always used in the feminine, which I suppose to be the reason for its translation in the same gender in our own version), the knot of the question will be drawn tighter: for how can it mean for the whole space of time, if He did not even for one day stretch forth His hands on the Cross? Further, should we take the whole for a part, as Scripture sometimes uses this expression, I do not remember an instance in which the whole is taken for a part, when the word "whole" is expressly added.

For in the passage of the Gospel where the Lord saith, "The Son of Man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," it is no extraordinary licence to take the whole for the part, the expression not being

for three "whole" days and three whole nights: since the one intermediate day was a whole one, the other two were parts, the last being part of the first day, the first part of the last. But if the Cross is not meant here, but the prayer, which we find in the Gospel that He poured forth in the form of a servant to God the Father, where He is said to have prayed long before His Passion, and on the eve of His Passion, and also when on the Cross, we do not read anywhere that He did so throughout the whole day. Therefore by the stretched-out hands throughout the whole day, we may understand the continuation of good works in which He never ceased from exertion.

9. But as His good works profited only the predestined to eternal salvation, and not all men, nor even all those among whom they were done, he adds, "Dost thou show wonders among the dead? (ver. 10). If we suppose this relates to those whose flesh life has left, great wonders have been wrought among the dead, inasmuch as some of them have revived: and in our Lord's descent into Hell, and His ascent as the conqueror of death, a great wonder was wrought among the dead. He refers then in these words, "Dost Thou show wonders among the dead? to men so dead in heart, that such great works of Christ could not rouse them to the life of faith: for he does not say that wonders are not shown to them because they see them not, but because they do not profit them. For, as he says in this passage, "the whole day have I stretched forth My hands to Thee: because He ever refers all His works to the will of His Father, constantly declaring that He came to fulfil His Father's will: so also, as an unbelieving people saw the same works, another Prophet saith, "I have spread out my hands all day unto a rebellious people, that believes not, but contradicts. Those then are dead, to whom wonders have not been shown, not because they saw them not, but since they lived not again through them. The following verse, "Shall physicians revive them, and shall they praise Thee?

means, that the dead shall not be revived by such means, that they may praise Thee. In the Hebrew there is said to be a different expression: giants being used where physicians are here: but the Septuagint translators, whose authority is such that they may deservedly be said to have interpreted by the inspiration of the Spirit of God owing to their wonderful agreement, conclude, not by mistake, but taking occasion from the resemblance in sound between the Hebrew words expressing these two senses, that the use of the word is an indication of the sense in which the word giants is meant to be

taken. For if you suppose the proud meant by giants, of whom the Apostle saith, "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? there is no incongruity in calling them physicians, as if by their own unaided skill they promised the salvation of souls: against whom it is said, "Of the Lord is safety. But if we take the word giant in a good sense, as it is said of our Lord, "He rejoiceth as a giant to run his course; that is Giant of giants, chief among the greatest and strongest, who in His Church excel in spiritual strength. Just as He is the Mountain of mountains; as it is written, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be manifested in the top of the mountains: and the Saint of saints:

there is no absurdity in styling these same great and mighty men physicians. Whence saith the Apostle, "if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. But even such physicians, even though they cure not by their own power (as not even of their own do those of the body), yet so far forth as by faithful ministry they assist towards salvation, can cure the living, but not raise the dead: of whom it is said, "Dost Thou show wonders among the dead? For the grace of God, by which men's minds in a certain manner are brought to live a fresh life, so as to be able to hear the lessons of salvation from any of its ministers whatever, is most hidden and mysterious. This grace is thus spoken of in the Gospel. "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him;" ...in order to show, that the very faith by which the soul believes, and springs into fresh life from the death of its former affections, is given us by God. Whatever exertions, then, the best preachers of the word, and persuaders of the truth through miracles, may make with men, just like great physicians: yet if they are dead, and through Thy grace have not a second life, "Dost Thou show wonders among the dead, or shall physicians raise them? and shall they" whom they raise "praise Thee"? For this confession declares that they live:

not, as it is written elsewhere, "Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not." 10. "Shall one show Thy loving-kindness in the grave, or Thy faithfulness in destruction?" (ver. 11). The word "show" is of course understood as if repeated, Shall any show Thy faithfulness in destruction? Scripture loves to connect loving-kindness and faithfulness, especially in the Psalms. "Destruction" also is a repetition of "the grave," and signifies them

who are in the grave, styled above "the dead," in the verse, "Dost thou show wonders among the dead?" for the body is the grave of the dead soul; whence our Lord's words in the Gospel, "Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." 11. "Shall thy wondrous works be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land where all things are forgotten?" (ver. 12), the dark answers to the land of forgetfulness: for the unbelieving are meant by the dark, as the Apostle saith, "For ye were sometimes darkness;" and the land where all things are forgotten, is the man who has forgotten God; for the unbelieving soul can arrive at darkness so intense, "that the fool saith in his heart, There is no God." Thus the meaning of the whole passage may thus be drawn out in its connection: "Lord, I have called upon Thee," amid My sufferings; "all day I have stretched forth my hands unto Thee" (ver. 13). I have never ceased to stretch forth My works to glorify, Thee. Why then do the wicked rage against Me, unless because "Thou showest not wonders among the dead"? because those wonders move them not to faith, nor can physicians restore them to life that they may praise Thee, because Thy hidden grace works not in them to draw them unto believing: because no man cometh unto Me, but whom Thou hast drawn. Shall then "Thy loving-kindness be showed in the grave"? that is, the grave of the dead soul, which lies dead beneath the body's weight: "or Thy faithfulness in destruction"? that is, in such a death as cannot believe or feel any of these things. "For how then in the darkness" of this death, that is, in the man who in forgetting Thee has lost the light of his life, "shall Thy wondrous works and Thy righteousness be known." ...

12. But that those prayers, the blessings of which surpass all words, may be more fervent and more constant, the gift that shall last unto eternity is deferred, while transitory evils are allowed to thicken. And so it follows: "Lord, why hast Thou cast off my prayer?" (ver. 14), which may be compared with another Psalm: "My God, My God, look upon me; why hast Thou forsaken me?" The reason is made matter of question, not as if the wisdom of God were blamed as doing so without a cause; and so here. "Lord, why hast Thou cast off my prayer?" But if this cause be attended to carefully, it will be found indicated above; for it is with the view that the prayers of the Saints are, as it were, repelled by the delay of so great a blessing, and by the adversity they

encounter in the troubles of life, that the flame, thus fanned, may burst into a brighter blaze.

13. For this purpose he briefly sketches in what follows the troubles of Christ's body. For it is not in the Head alone that they took place, since it is said to Saul too, "Why persecutest thou Me?" and Paul himself, as if placed as an elect member in the same body, saith, "That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh." "Why then, Lord, hast Thou cast off my soul? why hidest Thou Thy face from me?" "I am poor, and in toils from my youth up: and when lifted up, I was thrown down, and troubled" (ver. 15). "Thy wraths went over me: Thy terrors disturbed me" (ver. 16). "They came round about me all day like water: they compassed me about together" (ver. 17). "A friend Thou hast put far from me: and mine acquaintance from my misery" (ver. 18). All these evils have taken place, and are happening in the limbs of Christ's body, and God turns away His face from their prayers, by not hearing as to what they wish for, since they know not that the fulfilment of their wishes would not be good for them. The Church is "poor," as she hungers and thirsts in her wanderings for that food with which she shall be filled in her own country: she is "in toils from her youth up," as the very Body of Christ saith in another Psalm, "Many a time have they overcome me from my youth. And for this reason some of her members are lifted up even in this world, that in them may be the greater lowliness. Over that Body, which constitutes the unity of the Saints and the faithful, whose Head is Christ, go the wraths of God: yet abide not: since it is of the unbelieving only that it is written, that "the wrath of God abideth upon him. The terrors of God disturb the weakness of the faithful, because all that can happen, even though it actually happen not, it is prudent to fear; and sometimes these terrors so agitate the reflecting soul with the evils impending around, that they seem to flow around us on every side like water, and to encircle us in our fears.

And as the Church while on pilgrimage is never free from these evils, happening as they do at one moment in one of her limbs, at another in another, he adds, "all day," signifying the continuation in time, to the end of this world. Often too, friends and acquaintances, their worldly interests at stake, in their terror forsake the Saints; of which saith the Apostle, "all men forsook me: may it not be laid to their charge. But to what purpose is all this, but that early in the morning, that is, after the night of unbelief, the prayers

of this holy Body may in the light of faith prevent God, until the coming of that salvation, which we are at present saved by hoping for, not by having, while we await it with patience and faithfulness. Then the Lord will not repel our prayers, as there will no longer be anything to be sought for, but everything that has been rightly asked, will be obtained: nor will He turn His face away from us, since we shall see Him as He is: nor shall we be poor, because God will be our abundance, all in all: nor shall we suffer, as there will be no more weakness: nor after exaltation shall we meet with humiliation and confusion, as there will be no adversity there: nor bear even the transient wrath of God, as we shall abide in His abiding love: nor will His terrors agitate us, because His promises realized will bless us:

nor will our friend and acquaintance, being terrified, be far from us, where there will be no foe to dread.

PSALM 89

1. Understand, beloved, this Psalm, which I am about to explain, by the grace of God, of our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be of good cheer, because He who promised, will fulfil all, as He has fulfilled much: for it is not our own merit, but His mercy, that gives us confidence in Him. He Himself is meant, in my belief, by "the understanding of Aethan the Israelite:" which has given this Psalm its title. You see then, who is meant by Aethan: but the meaning of the word is "strong." No man in this world is strong, except in the hope of God's promises: for as to our own deservings, we weak, in His mercy we are strong. Weak then in himself, strong in God's mercy, the Psalmist thus begins: "I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, for ever: with my mouth will I make known Thy truth unto all generations" (ver. 1).

2. Let my limbs, he saith, serve the Lord: I speak, but it is of Thine I speak. "With my mouth will I make known Thy truth:" if I obey not Thee, I am not Thy servant: if I speak on my own part, I am a liar. To speak then from Thee, and in my own person, are two things: one mine, one Thine: Truth Thine, language mine. Let us hear then what faithfulness he maketh known, what mercies he singeth. 3. "For Thou hast said, Mercy shall be built up for ever" (ver. 2). It is this that I sing: this is Thy truth, for the making known of which my mouth serveth. In such wise Thou sayest, I build, as not to destroy: for some Thou destroyest and buildest not; and some whom Thou destroyest Thou dost rebuild. For unless there were some who were destroyed to be rebuilt, Jeremiah would not have written, "See, I have this day set thee

to throw down and to build. And indeed all who formerly worshipped images and stones could not be built up in Christ, without being destroyed as to their old error. While, unless some were destroyed not to be built up, it would not be written, "He shall destroy them, and not build them up." ... In what follows, he joins these two words, mercy and faithfulness; "For Thou hast said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: Thy truth shall be established in the Heavens: in which mercy and truth are repeated, "for all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth," for truth in the fulfilment of promises could not be shown, unless mercy in the remission of sins preceded. Next, as many things were promised in prophecy even to the people of Israel that came according to the flesh from the seed of Abraham, and that people was increased that the promises of God might be fulfilled in it;

while yet God did not close the fountain of His goodness even to the Gentiles, whom He had placed under the rule of the Angels, while He reserved the people of Israel as His own portion: the Apostle expressly mentions the Lord's mercy and truth as referring to these two parties. For he calls Christ "a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. See how God deceived not; see how He cast not off His people, whom He foreknew. For while the Apostle is treating of the fall of the Jews, to prevent any from believing them so far disowned of God, that no wheat from that floor's fanning could reach the granary, he saith, "God hath not cast away His people, whom He foreknew; for I also am an Israelite. If all that nation are thorns, how am I who speak unto you wheat? So that the truth of God was fulfilled in those Israelites who believed, and one wall from the circumcision is thus brought to meet the corner stone. But this stone would not form a corner, unless it received another wall from the Gentiles: so that the former wall relates in a special manner to the truth, the latter to the mercy of God. "Now I say," says the Apostle, "that Jesus Christ was a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.

Justly then is it added, "Thy truth shall Thou stablish in the Heavens: for all those Israelites who were called to be Apostles became as Heavens which declare the glory of God: as it is written by them, "The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handywork." ...Since, although they were taken up from hence before the Church tilled the I whole

world, yet as "their words reached to the ends of the world," we are right in supposing this which we have just read, "Thy truth shalt Thou stablish in the Heavens," fulfilled in them. 4. "Thou hast said, I have made a covenant with My chosen" (ver. 3). What covenant, but the new, by which we are renewed to a fresh inheritance, in our longing desire and love of which we sing a new song. "I have made a covenant with My chosen," saith the Psalmist: "I have sworn unto David My servant." How confidently does he speak, who understands, whose mouth serves truth! I speak without fear; since "Thou hast said." If Thou makest me fearless, because Thou hast said, how much more so dost Thou make me, when Thou hast sworn! For the oath of God is the assurance of a promise. Man is justly forbidden to swear: lest by the habit of swearing, since a man may be deceived, he fall into perjury. God alone swears securely, because He alone is infallible.

5. Let us see then what God hath sworn. "I have sworn," He saith, "to David My servant; thy seed will I establish for ever" (ver. 4). But what is the seed of David, but that of Abraham. And what is the seed of Abraham? "And to thy seed," He saith, "which is Christ. But perhaps that Christ, the Head of the Church, the Saviour of the body, is the seed of Abraham, and therefore of David; but we are not Abraham's seed? We are assuredly; as the Apostle saith, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. In this sense, then, let us take the words, brethren, "Thy seed will I establish for ever," not only of that Flesh of Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, but also of all of us who believe in Christ, for we are limbs of that Head. This body cannot be deprived of its Head: if the Head is in glory for ever, so are the limbs, so that Christ remains entire for ever. "Thy seed will I establish for ever: and set up thy throne to generation and generation. We suppose he saith, "for ever," because it is "to generation and generation: since he has said above, with "my mouth will I ever be showing Thy truth to generation and generation. What is "to generation and generation"? To every generation: for the word needed not as many repetitions, as the coming and passing away of the several generations.

The multiplication of generations is signified and set forth to notice by the repetition. Are possibly two generations to be understood, as ye are aware, my beloved brethren, and as I have before explained? for there is now a generation of flesh and blood: there will be a future generation in the resurrection of the dead. Christ is proclaimed here: He will be proclaimed

there: here He is proclaimed, that He may be believed in: there, He will be welcomed, that He may be seen. "I will set up Thy throne from one generation to another. Christ hath now a throne in us, His throne is set up in us: for unless he sate enthroned within us, He would not rule us: but if we were not ruled by Him, we should be thrown down by ourselves. He therefore sits within us, reigning over us: He sits also in another generation, which will come from the resurrection of the dead. Christ will reign for ever over His Saints. God has promised this; He hath said it: if this is not enough, God hath sworn it. As then the promise is certain, not on account of our deservings, but of His pity, no one ought to be afraid in proclaiming that which he cannot doubt of. Let that strength then inspire our hearts, whence Aethan received his name, "strong in heart: let us preach the truth of God, the utterance of God, His promises, His oath;

and let us, strengthened on every side by these means, glorify God, and by bearing Him along with us, become Heavens. 6. "O Lord, the very Heavens shall praise Thy wondrous works" (ver. 5). The Heavens will not praise their own merits, but Thy wondrous works, O Lord. For in every act of mercy on the lost, of justification of the unrighteous, what do we praise but the wondrous works of God? Thou praisest Him, because the dead have risen: praise Him yet more, because the lost are redeemed. What grace, what mercy of God! Thou seest a man yesterday a whirlpool of drunkenness, to-day an ornament of sobriety: a man yesterday the sink of luxury, to-day the beauty of temperance: yesterday a blasphemer of God, to-day His praiser: yesterday the slave of the creature, to-day the worshipper of the Creator. From all these desperate states men are thus converted: let them not look at their own merits: let them become Heavens, and praise the wondrous works of Him by whom they were made Heavens. ...

7. "For who is he among the clouds, who shall be compared unto Thee, Lord! (ver. 6). Is this to be the praise of the Heavens, is this to be their rain? What? are the preachers confident, because "none among the clouds shall be compared unto the Lord"? Does it appear to you, brethren, a high ground of praise, that the clouds cannot be compared with their Creator? If it is taken in its literal, not in its mystical meaning, it is not so: what? are the stars that are above the clouds to be compared with the Lord? what? can the Sun, Moon, Angels, Heavens, be even compared with the Lord? Why is it then that he says, as if he meant some high praise, "For who is he among the

clouds? etc. We understand, my brethren, those clouds, as the Heavens, to be the preachers of truth; Prophets, Apostles, the announcers of the word of God. ...If therefore the clouds are the preachers of the truth, let us first enquire why they are clouds. For the same men are Heavens and clouds: Heavens from the brightness of the truth, clouds from the hidden things of the flesh: for all clouds are obscure, owing to their mortality: and they come and go. It is on account of these very obscurities of the flesh, that is, of the clouds, that the Apostle saith, "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness.

You see at this moment what a man is saying: but what he has in his heart, you cannot see: what is forced from the cloud, you see, what is kept within the cloud, you see not. For whose eyes pierce the cloud? The clouds therefore are the preachers of the truth in the flesh. The Creator of all things Himself came in the flesh. ...We are called clouds on account of the flesh, and we are preachers of the truth on account of the showers of the clouds: but our flesh comes in one way, His by another. We too are called sons of God, but He is the Son of God in another sense. His cloud comes from a Virgin, He is the Son from eternity, co-eternal with the Father. "Who is he then among the clouds, that shall be compared unto the Lord? and what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord? Let the Lord Himself say whether He can find one like unto Himself. "Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? Because I appear, because I am seen, because I walk among you, and perhaps at present I am become common; say, whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? Surely when they see a son of man, they see a cloud; but say, "Whom do men say that I am? In answer they gave Him the reports of men; "Some say that Thou art John the Baptist:

some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Many clouds and sons of God are here mentioned: for because they were righteous and holy, as the sons of God, Jeremias, Elias, and John are called also sons of God: in their character of preachers of God, they are styled clouds. Ye have said what clouds men imagine Me to be: do ye too say, "Whom say ye that I am? Peter replying in behalf of all, one for those who were one, answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God; not like those sons of God who are not made equal to Thee: Thou hast come in the flesh: but not as the clouds, who are not to be compared unto Thee. 8. ..."God is very greatly to be feared in the counsel of the righteous, and to be had in dread of all them that are

round about Him" (ver. 7). God is everywhere; who therefore are round about Him, who is everywhere? For if He has some round about Him, He is represented as finite on every side. Moreover, if it is truly said to God and of God, "of His greatness there is no end;" who remain, who are round about Him, except because He who is everywhere, chose to be born of the flesh on one spot, to dwell among one nation, in one place to be crucified, from one spot to rise again and ascend into Heaven. Where He did this, the Gentiles are round about Him. If He remained where He did these things, He would not be "great, and be had in dread of all them that are round about Him;" but since He preached when there in such a manner as to send preachers of His own name through all nations over the whole world; by working miracles among His servants, He is become "great, and to be had in dread of all them that are round about Him."

9. "O Lord God of Hosts, who is like unto Thee? Thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side" (ver. 8). Great is Thy power Thou hast made Heaven and earth, and all things that in them are: but greater still is thy loving-kindness, which has shown forth Thy truth to all around Thee. For if Thou hadst been preached only on the spot where Thou didst deign to be born, to suffer, to rise again, to ascend; the truth of that promise of God would have been fulfilled, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: but the promise, "that the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy," would not have been fulfilled, had not that truth been explained, and diffused to those around Thee from the spot where Thou didst deign to appear. On that spot Thou didst thunder out of Thy own cloud: but to scatter rain upon the Gentiles round about, Thou hast sent other clouds. Truly in Thy power hast Thou fulfilled what Thou hast said, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven."

10. ...For ye have heard, like men accustomed to the watering of the clouds of God, "Thy truth" then "is in the circuit of Thee." But when without persecutions, when without opposition, since it is said, that "He was born for a sign which shall be spoken against"? Since then that nation, where Thou didst deign to be born, and to dwell, was as a land separated from the waves of the heathen, so that it appeared dry and ready for watering with rain, while the rest of the nations were as a sea in the bitterness of their sterility; what do Thy preachers who scatter Thy truth in circuit of Thee, when the waves of that sea rage furiously? "Thou rulest the power of the sea" (ver. 9).

For what was the result of the sea raging thus, but the day which we are now keeping holy? It slew Martyrs, scattered seeds of blood, the harvest of the Church sprang up. Safely then let the clouds go forth: let them diffuse Thy truth in circuit of Thee, let them not fear the savage waves. "Thou rulest the power of the sea." The sea swells, buffets, and roars: but "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted beyond what ye are able:" and so, "Thou stillest the waves thereof when they rise."

11. Lastly, what hast Thou done in the sea itself, to pacify its rage, and to weaken it? "Thou hast humbled the proud as one that is wounded" (ver. 10). There is a certain proud serpent in the sea, of which another passage of Scripture speaks, "I will command the serpent, and he shall bite him;" and again, "There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to mock him," whose head He bruises above the water. "Thou," he says, "hast humbled the proud, as one that is wounded." Thou hast humbled Thyself, and the proud was humbled: for the proud held the proud ones through pride: but the great One is humbled, and by believing in Him become small. While the little one is nourished by the example of One who from greatness descended to humility, the devil has lost what he held: because the proud held only the proud. When such an example of humility was displayed before them, men learned to condemn their own pride, and to imitate the humility of God. Thus also the devil, by losing those whom he had in his power, has even himself been humbled; not chastened, but thrown prostrate. "Thou hast humbled the proud like one that is wounded." Thou hast been humbled, and hast humbled others: Thou hast been wounded, and hast wounded others: for Thy blood, as it was shed to blot the handwriting of sins, could not but wound him. For what was the ground of his pride, except the bond which he held against us. This bond, this handwriting, Thou hast blotted out with Thy blood: him therefore hast Thou wounded, from whom Thou hast rescued so many victims. You must understand the devil wounded, not by the piercing of the flesh, which he has not, but by the bruising of his proud heart. "Thou hast scattered Thine enemies abroad with Thy mighty arm."

12. "The heavens are thine, the earth also is Thine" (ver. 11). From Thee, over Thy earth they rain. Thine are the heavens, by whom is preached Thy truth in circuit of Thee; "Thine is the earth," which has received Thy truth in circuit of Thee; and what has resulted from that rain? "Thou hast laid the foundation of the round world, and all that therein is." "Thou hast created

the north and the seas" (ver. 12). For nothing has any power against Thee, against its Creator. The world indeed may rage through its own malice, and the perversity of its will; does it nevertheless pass over the bound laid down by the Creator, who made all things? Why then do I fear the north wind? Why do I fear the seas? In the north indeed is the devil, who said, "I will sit in the sides of the north; I will be like the Most High;" but Thou hast humbled, as one wounded, the proud one. Thus what Thou hast done in them has more force for Thy dominion, than their own will has for their wickedness. "Thou hast created the north and the seas."

13. "Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name." Those mountains are here understood, but they have a meaning. "Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name." Thabor, when interpreted, signifies an approaching light. But whence comes the light of which it is said, "Ye are the light of the world," unless from Him concerning whom it is written, "That was the true light, which lighteth every man coming into the world"? The light then which is the light of the world comes from that light which is not kindled from any other source, so that there is no fear lest it be extinguished. The light then comes from Him, who is that candle which is not set beneath the bushel, but on a candlestick, Thabor the coming light. Hermon means his curse. Justly the light comes and is made the curse of him. Of whom but the devil, the wounded one, the proud one? Our illumination then is given from Thee; that he is held accursed of us, who kept us in his own error and pride, is from Thee. "Thabor and Hermon, therefore, shall rejoice," not in their own merits, "but in Thy name." For they shall say, "Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give the praise," on account of the raging sea: lest "the heathen say, Where is now their God?"

14. "Thou hast a mighty arm" (ver. 13). Let no man arrogate anything to himself. "Thou hast a mighty arm:" by Thee we were created, by Thee we have been defended. "Thou hast a mighty arm: strong be Thy hand, and high be Thy right hand." 15. "Righteousness and judgment are the preparation of Thy seat" (ver. 14). Thy righteousness and judgment will appear in the end: they are now hidden. Of Thy righteousness it is treated in another Psalm, "on the hidden things of the Son." There will then be a manifestation of Thy righteousness and judgment: some will be set on the right, others on the left hand: and the unbelieving will tremble, when they see what now they mock at, and believe not: the righteous will rejoice, when they shall see what they

now see not, yet believe. "Righteousness and judgment are the preparation of Thy seat:" especially in the Day of Judgment. What then now? "mercy and truth go before Thy face." I should fear the preparation of Thy seat, Thy justice, and Thy coming judgment, did not mercy and truth go before Thee: why should I at the end fear Thy righteousness, when with Thy mercy going before Thee Thou blottest out my sins, and by showing forth Thy truth fulfillst Thy promises? "Mercy and truth go before Thy face." For "all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth."

16. In all these things shall we not rejoice? or shall we contain our joy? or shall words suffice for our gladness? or shall the tongue be able to express our rejoicing? If therefore no words suffice, "Blessed is the people, O Lord, that knoweth glad shouting" (ver. 15). O blessed people! dost thou conceive aright, dost thou understand, glad shouting? For except thou understand glad shouting, thou canst not be blessed. What do I mean by understanding glad shouting? Whether thou knowest the source of that rejoicing which is beyond words to express. For this joy is not of thyself, since "he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. Rejoice not then in thy own pride, but in God's grace. See that that grace is such, that the tongue fails to express its greatness, and then thou understandest glad shouting. ...O Lord, "they shall walk in the light of Thy countenance. "They shall rejoice in Thy name all the day" (ver. 16). That Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name: all day shall they rejoice, if they will, in Thy name; but if they will rejoice in their own name, they shall not rejoice all day: for they shall not continue in their joy, when they shall delight in themselves, and fall through pride. That they may rejoice all day, therefore, "they shall rejoice in Thy name, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. Not in their own, but in Thine: lest they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

For some are noted by the Apostle, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own," and not rejoicing in Thy light, and thus "not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God. And why? because "they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. But the people who knoweth glad shouting (for the former err from want of knowledge, but blessed is the people not that knoweth not, but that knoweth glad shouting), whence ought it to shout, whence to rejoice, but in Thy name, walking in the light of Thy countenance? And it shall deserve to be exalted, but in

Thy righteousness: let every man take away altogether his own righteousness, and be trembled: the righteousness of God shall come, and he shall be exalted, "and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted."

17. "For Thou art the glory of their strength: and in Thy good pleasure Thou shall lift up our horns" (ver. 17): because it has seemed good to Thee, not because we are worthy. 18. "For of the Lord is our taking up" (ver. 18). For I was moved like a heap of sand, that I might fall; and I should have fallen, had not the Lord taken me up. "For of the Lord is (our) taking up: and of the Holy One of Israel our King." Himself is thy taking up, Himself thy illumination: in His light thou art safe, in His light thou walkest, in His righteousness thou art exalted. He took thee up, He, guards thy weakness: He gives thee strength of Himself, not of thyself. 19. "Thou spakest sometime in vision unto Thy sons, and saidst" (ver. 19). Thou spakest in thy vision. Thou didst reveal this to Thy Prophets. For this reason Thou spakest in vision, that is, in revelation: whence Prophets were called seers. They saw something within, which they were to speak without: and secretly they heard what they preached openly. Then "Thou spakest in vision unto Thy sons, and saidst, I have laid help upon One that is mighty." Ye understand Who is meant by mighty? "I have exalted One chosen out of the people." And Who is meant by chosen? One who, ye rejoice, is already exalted.

20. "I have found David My servant:" that David from David's seed: "with My holy oil have I anointed Him" (ver. 20): for it is said of Him, "God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." 21. "My hand shall hold Him fast, and My arm shall strengthen Him" (ver. 21): because there was a taking up of man; because flesh was assumed in the Virgin's womb, because by Him who in the form of God is coequal with the Father, the form of a servant was taken, and He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. 22. "The enemy shall not be able to do him violence" (ver. 22). The enemy rages indeed but he shall not be able to do Him violence: he is wont to hurt, but he shall not hurt. How then shall he afflict Him? he will exercise Him, but he shall not hurt Him. There shall be profit in his raging; for those against whom he rages shall be crowned in their conquering. For how is he conquered, if he rages not against us? or where is God our helper, if we fight not? The enemy therefore shall do what is in his power; but "he shall not be able to do Him violence: the son of wickedness shall not come nigh to hurt Him."

23. "I will cut in pieces His enemies before His face" (ver. 23). They are cut in pieces from their conspiracy, and in that they believe they are cut in pieces; for they believe by degrees; as when the calf's head was ground small, they will come to be the drink of God's people. For Moses ground down the calf's head, and sprinkled it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink it. All the unbelieving are ground: they believe by degrees; and they are drunk by the people of God, and pass into Christ's body. "I will cut in pieces His foes before His face: and put to flight them that hate Him." 24. "My truth also and My mercy is with Him" (ver. 24). All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. Remember, as much as ye can, how often these two attributes are urged upon us, that we render them back to God. For as He showed us mercy that He might blot out our sins, and truth in fulfilling His promises; so also we, walking in His path, ought to give back to Him mercy and truth; mercy, in pitying the wretched; truth, in not judging unjustly. Let not truth rob you of mercy, nor mercy hinder truth: for if through mercy you shall have judged contrary to truth, or by rigorous truth shall have forgotten mercy, you will not be walking in the path of God, where "mercy and truth meet together." "And in My name shall His horn be exalted." Why should I say more? Ye are Christians, recognise Christ.

25. "I will set His hand also in the sea" (ver. 25): that is, He shall rule over the Gentiles; "and His right hand in the floods." Rivers run into the sea: avaricious men roll onwards into the bitterness of this world: yet all these kinds of men will be subject to Christ. 26. "He shall call me, Thou art My Father, and the lifter up of My salvation" (ver. 26). "And I will make Him my first-born; higher than the kings of the earth" (ver. 27). Our Martyrs, whose birthdays we are celebrating, shed their blood on account of these things, which were believed though not yet seen; how much more brave ought we to be, as we see what they believed? For they had not yet seen Christ raised on high among the kings of the earth: as yet princes were taking counsel together against the Lord and His Anointed: what follows in the same Psalm was not then fulfilled, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be learned, ye that are judges of the earth." Now indeed Christ has been exalted among the kings of the earth.

27. "My mercy will I keep for Him for ever: and my Testament faithful with Him" (ver. 28). On His account, the Testament is faithful: in Him the Testament is mediated: He is the Sealer, the Mediator of the Testament, the

Surety of the Testament, the Witness of the Testament, the Heritage of the Testament, the Coheir of the Testament. 28. "His seed will I make to endure world without end" (ver. 29). Not only for this world, but unto the world without end: whither His seed, which is His heritage, the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, will pass. But if ye are Christ's, ye are also Abraham's seed: and if ye are destined His heirs for ever, "He will establish His seed unto world without end: and His throne as the days of Heaven." The thrones of earthly kings are as the days of the earth: different are the days of Heaven from those of earth. The days of Heaven are those years of which it is said, "Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail." The days of the earth are soon overtaken by their successors: those which precede are shut out from us: nor do those which succeed remain: but they come that they may go, and are almost gone before they are come. Such are the days of earth. But the days of Heaven, which are also the "One day" of Heaven, and the never failing years, have neither beginning nor end: nor is any day there narrowed between yesterday and to-morrow: no one there expects the future, nor loses the past: but the days of Heaven are always present, where His throne shall be for ever and ever. ...

29. This is a strong pledge of the promise of God. The sons of this David are the children of the Bridegroom; all Christians therefore are called His sons. But it is much indeed that God promises, that if Christians, that is, "If his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments" (ver. 30); "if they profane My statutes, and keep not My commandments" (ver. 31); I will not spurn them, nor will I send them away from Me in perdition: but what will I do? "I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges" (ver. 32). It is not the mercy of one that calls them only; but also that chastises and scourges them. Let therefore thy Father's hand be upon thee, and if thou art a good son, repel not chastening; for "what son is there, to whom his father giveth not chastening?" Let Him chasten him, so long as He takes not from him His mercy: let Him beat him when obstinate, as long as He does not disinherit him. If thou hast well understood the promises of thy Father, fear not to be scourged, but to be disinherited: "for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth: and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Does the sinful son spurn chastening, when he sees the only Son without sin scourged? "I will visit their offences with the rod." Thus too the Apostle threatens: "What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod?" Let not pious

sons say, if Thou art coming with a rod, come not at all. For it is better to be taught with the Father's rod, than to perish in the caresses of the robber.

30. "Nevertheless, My mercy will I not utterly take from Him" (ver. 33). From whom? From that David to whom I gave these promises, whom "I anointed with my holy oil of gladness above His fellows. Do you recognise Him from whom God will not utterly take away His mercy? That no one may anxiously say, since He speaks of Christ as Him from whom He will not take away His mercy, What then will become of the sinner? Did He say anything like this, "I will not take My loving-kindness utterly from them"? "I will visit," He saith, "their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Thou didst expect for thy own security, "I will not utterly take my loving-kindness from" them. And indeed this is the reading of some books, but not of the most accurate: though, where they have it, it is a reading by no means inconsistent with the real meaning. For how can it be said that He will not utterly take His mercy from Christ? Has the Saviour of the body committed aught of sin either in Heaven or in earth, "who sitteth even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us"? Yet it is from Christ: but from His members, His body which is the Church. For in this sense He speaks of it as a great thing that He will not take away His mercies from Him, supposing us not to recognise the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father;

for there the Man is not counted for His Person, but the One Person is God and Man. He therefore does not utterly take His mercies from Him, when He takes not His mercy from His body, His members, in which, even while He was enthroned in Heaven, He was still suffering persecutions on earth; and when He cried from Heaven, "Saul, Saul," not why persecutest thou My servants, nor why persecutest thou My saints, nor My disciples, but, "why persecutest thou Me?" 13 As then, while no one persecuted Him when sitting in Heaven, He cried out, "Why persecutest thou Me? when the Head recognised its limbs, and His love allowed not the Head to separate Himself from the union of the body: so, when He taketh not away His mercies from Him, it is surely that He taketh it not from us, who are His limbs and body. Yet ought we not on that account to sin not without apprehension, and perversely to assure ourselves that we shall not perish, be our actions what they may. For there are certain sins and certain offences, to define and discourse of which it is either impossible for me, or if it were possible, it would be too tedious for the time we have at present. For no man can say that he is

without sin; for if he says so, he will lie; "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Each one therefore is needfully scourged for his own sins; but the mercy of God is not taken away from him, if he be a Christian. Certainly if thou committest such offences as to repel the hand of Him who chasteneth, the rod of Him who scourgeth thee, and art angry at the correction of God, and fliest from thy Father when He chasteneth thee, and wilt not suffer Him to be thy Father, because He spares thee not when thou dost sin; thou hast estranged thyself from thy heritage, He has not thrown thee off; for if thou wouldest abide being scourged, thou wouldest not abide disinherited. "Nor will I do hurt in My truth. For His mercy in setting free shall not be taken away, lest His truth in taking vengeance do harm. 31. "My covenant will I not profane, nor reject the thing that is gone out of my lips" (ver. 34). Because his sons sin, I will not on this account be found false: I have promised; I will do. Suppose they choose to sin even as past hope, and so fall into sins as to offend their Father's countenance, and deserve to be disinherited; is it not still God Himself, of whom it is said, "From these stones" He "will raise up sons to Abraham"? Therefore I tell you, brethren, many Christians sin venially, many are scourged and so corrected for their sin, chastened, and cured; many turn away altogether, striving with a stiff neck against the discipline of the Father, even wholly refusing God as their Father, though they have the mark of Christ, and so fall into such sins, that it can only be announced against them, "that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Nevertheless, Christ shall not be destitute of an inheritance on their account: not for the chaff's sake shall the wheat also perish: nor on account of bad fish shall nothing be cast into the vessels from that net. "The Lord knows them that are His." For He who predestined us before we were born, promised undoubtingly: "For whom He did predestinate, them. He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Let desperate sinners sin as far as they choose: let the members of Christ reply, "If God is with us, who shall be against us?" God will not therefore do hurt in His truth, nor will He "profane His Testament." His Testament remains immovable, because in His foreknowledge He predestined His heirs; and "He will not reject the thing that is gone out of His lips."

32. Listen for thy confirmation in hope, for thy security, if thou knowest thyself to be among the members of Christ. "I have sworn once by My holiness that I will not lie unto David" (ver. 35). Dost thou wait till God swear a second time? How often is He to swear, if in one oath He is false? One oath He made for our life, who sent His Only One to die for us. "I have sworn once by My holiness, that I will not lie unto David. "His seed shall endure for ever" (ver. 36). His seed endures for ever; because the Lord knows them that are His. "And His seat is like as the sun before me: "and as the moon perfect for evermore: and the faithful witness in heaven" (ver. 37). They are His seat, in whom He sits and reigns. But if His seat, His members also; because even our members are the seat of our head. See how all our other members sustain our head: but the head supports nothing above itself, but is itself supported by the rest of our limbs, as if the whole body of a man were the seat of his head. His seat, therefore, all in whom God reigns, "shall be like as the sun before Me," He saith: because the righteous in the kingdom of My Father "shall shine like the sun.

But the sun is meant in a spiritual, not a bodily sense, as that which shines from Heaven, which He maketh to rise upon the just and unjust. Finally, that sun is not before men's eyes only, but even those of cattle and the smallest insects; for which of the vilest animals sees not that sun? What does he say to distinguish the sun meant here? "Like as the sun before Me. Not before men, before the flesh, before mortal animals, but "before Me, and as the moon. But what moon? one "that is perfect for evermore. For although that moon which we know becomes perfect, the next day she begins to wane, after her orb is full. "He shall be as the moon perfect for evermore," He saith. His seat shall be made perfect as the moon, but that moon is one which will be perfect for evermore. If as the sun, why also as the moon? the Scriptures usually signify by the moon the mortality of this flesh, because of its increasings and decreasings, because of its transitory nature. The moon is also interpreted as Jericho: one who was descending from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers: for he was descending from immortality to mortality. Similar then is the flesh to that moon, which every month suffers increase and decrease: but that flesh of ours will be perfect in the resurrection: "and a faithful witness in heaven. Thus then, if it was our mind only that would be perfected, he would compare us only to the sun:

if our body only, to the moon; but as God will perfect us in both, in respect of the mind it is said, "like as the sun before Me," because God only seeth the mind: and "as the moon," so is the flesh: which "shall be made perfect for evermore," in the resurrection of the dead: "and a faithful witness in Heaven," because all that was asserted of the resurrection of the dead was true. I beseech you, hear this again more clearly, and remember it: for I know that some understated, while others are yet enquiring perhaps what I meant. There is no article of the Christian faith which has encountered such contradiction as that of the resurrection of the flesh. Finally, He who was born for a sign that should be spoken against, resumed His own flesh after death to meet the caviller; and He who could have so completely cured His wounds that their scars would have entirely vanished, retained those scars in His body, that He might cure the wounds of doubt in the heart. Indeed nothing has been attacked with the same pertinacious, contentious contradiction, in the Christian faith, as the resurrection of the flesh. On the immortality of the soul many Gentile philosophers have disputed at great length, and in many books they have left it written that the soul is immortal:

when they come to the resurrection of the flesh, they doubt not indeed, but they most openly deny it, declaring it to be absolutely impossible that this earthly flesh can ascend to Heaven. Thus that moon shall be perfect for evermore, and shall be the faithful witness in heaven against all gain-sayers. 33. These promises, so sure, so firm, so open, so unquestioned, were made concerning Christ. For although some are mysteriously veiled, yet some are so clear, that all that is obscure is easily revealed by them. Such being the case, see what follows: "But Thou hast approved and brought to nothing and forsaken Thine Anointed" (ver. 38). "Thou hast overthrown the testament of Thy servant, and profaned His holiness on the ground" (ver. 39). "Thou hast broken down all His hedges, and made His strongholds a terror" (ver. 40). ...How is this? Thou hast promised all those things: and Thou hast brought to pass their reverse. Where are now the promises which but a little before filled us with delight? which we so joyfully applauded, which we so fearlessly made our boast of? It is as if one promised, and another destroyed. And this is the mystery: for the words are not "another," but "Thou," Thou who didst promise, who didst even swear in condescension to human doubt, Thou hast promised this, and done thus! Whence shall I get Thy oath, where

shall I find Thy promise fulfilled? Would then God promise, or swear thus falsely? and yet why then these promises, and these acts? I answer, that He acted thus in fulfilment of those promises. But who am I, to say this? Let us see therefore whether it is the language of the Truth; what I say will not then be without foundation.

It was David to whom the fulfilment of these promises in his seed, that is, in Christ, was promised: and as they were addressed to David, men expected their completion in David. Further, lest when any Christian asserted these promises to have referred to Christ, another by applying them to David, because he described the fulfilment of all of them in David, might thus err; He cancelled them in David, thus obliging us when we see them unfulfilled in David, to look to another quarter for their fulfilment. Thus also in the case of Esau and Jacob, we find the elder worshipped by the younger, though it is written, "The elder shall serve the younger; so when you see it unfulfilled in those two brothers, you look for two peoples in whom to discover the completion of what God in His truth deigns to promise. "From the fruit of thy body," saith the Lord unto David, "shall I set upon thy sea. He promised from his seed something for evermore: and, Solomon, born to him, became master of such wisdom, that the promise of God respecting the fruit of David's body was believed to have been fulfilled in him; but Solomon fell, and gave room for hoping for Christ; that since God can neither be deceived nor deceive, He might not make His promise to rest in one who He knew would fall, but you might after the fall of Solomon look back to God, and demand His promise. Hast Thou, O Lord, deceived?

Hast Thou failed to fulfil Thy promise? Dost Thou not exhibit what Thou hast sworn? Perhaps God might reply, I swore and promised: but Solomon would not persevere. What then? Didst not Thou, Lord God, know beforehand that he would not persevere? Indeed Thou didst know. Why then didst Thou promise me what should be eternal in one who would not persevere? Hast Thou not answered; "But if his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; if they keep not My statutes, and profane My testament; yet My promise shall remain, and My oath shall be fulfilled: "I have sworn once in My Holiness," within, in a certain mystery, in the very spring whence the Prophets drank, whence they burst forth to us of these things, "I have sworn once" that I will not fail David. Show forth then what Thou hast sworn, give us what Thou hast promised. The fulfilment is taken from that David, that it

might not be looked for in that David: wait therefore for what I have promised.

34. Even David himself knew this. Consider his words; "Thou hast rejected and brought him down to nothing." Where then is Thy promise? "Thou hast put off Thine anointed." This expression cheers us, among much that is sorrowful: for the promise of God is still valid; for Thou hast put off Thine Anointed, not taken Him away. See then what was the fate of that David, in whom the ignorant hoped for the fulfilment of the promises of God, in order that those promises might be more firmly relied upon for their fulfilment in another. "Thou hast put off Thine Anointed: Thou hast overthrown the testament of Thy servant." For where is the Old Testament of the Jews? where that land of promise, in which they sinned while they dwelt in it, on the overthrow of which they wandered afar? Ask you for the kingdom of the Jews; it exists not: you ask for the altar of the Jews; it is not: you ask for the sacrifice of the Jews; it is not: you ask for the priesthood of the Jews; it is not. "Thou hast overthrown the testament of Thy servant, and profaned his holiness on the earth." Thou hast shown that what they thought holy, was earthly. "Thou hast broken down all his hedges," with which Thou hast entrenched him: for how could he have been spoiled unless his hedges had been broken down? "Thou hast made his strongholds a terror." Why terror? That it should be said to the sinners, "For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee."

"All they that go by the way have spoiled him: that is, all the heathen that go by the way, meaning, all who pass through this life, have spoiled Israel, have spoiled David. First of all, see his fragments in all nations: for it is of the Jews that it is said, "They shall be a portion for foxes. For the Scripture calls wicked, crafty, and cowardly kings, whom another's virtue terrifies, foxes. Thus when our Lord Himself was speaking of the threatening Herod, He said, "Go ye, and tell that fox. The king who fears no man, is not a fox: like that Lion of Judah, of whom it is said, "Stooping down Thou didst rise up, and didst sleep as a lion. At Thy will Thou didst stoop down, at Thy will didst rise; because Thou wouldest, Thou didst sleep. And thus in another Psalm he says, "16 slept. Was not the sentence complete, "I slept, and took rest, and rose up again, because the Lord shall uphold Me"? Why is the word ego added? and thus with a strong emphasis on the word I, they raged against Me, they troubled Me: but had I not willed, I had not slept. Those then concerning

whom it was declared that they should be a portion for foxes, are now spoken of as follows; "All they that go by have spoiled him: and he is become a reproach to his neighbours" (ver. 41).

"Thou hast set up the right hand of his enemies, and made all his adversaries to rejoice" (ver. 42). Look at the Jews, and see all things fulfilled that were predicted. "Thou hast turned away the help of his sword. How they were used to fight few in number, and to strike down many. "Thou hast turned away the help of his sword, and Thou givest him not victory in the battle" (ver. 43). Naturally then is he conquered, naturally taken prisoner, naturally made an outcast from his kingdom, naturally scattered abroad: for he lost that land, for which he slew the Lord. "Thou hast loosed him from cleansing" (ver. 44). What is this? Amongst all the evils, this is a matter for great fear; for howsoever God may beat, howsoever He may be wroth, howsoever He may flog and scourge, yet let Him scourge him bound, whom He is to cleanse, not "loose him from cleansing. For if He loose him from being purified, he becomes incapable of cleansing, and must be an outcast. From what cleansing then is the Jew loosed? From faith; for by faith we live: and it is said of faith, "purifying their hearts by faith: and as it is only the faith of Christ that cleanses; by disbelief in Christ, they are loosed from purification. "Thou hast loosed him from cleansing, and cast his throne down to the ground. And so Thou hast broken it. "The days of his seat hast Thou shortened" (ver. 45). They imagined that they should reign for ever.

"And covered him with confusion. All these things happened to the Jews, Christ yet not being taken away, but His advent deferred. 35. Let us therefore see whether God fulfils His promises. After these stern penalties which have been recorded as having been inflicted upon this people and kingdom, that God might not be supposed to have fulfilled His promises in it, and so not to grant another kingdom in Christ, of which kingdom there shall be no end; the Prophet addresses Him in these words, "Lord, how long wilt Thou hide Thyself unto the end?" (ver. 46). For possibly it was not from them and to the end; because "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved." But in the mean while "shall Thy wrath burn like fire." 36. "O remember what my substance is" (ver. 47). That David, who was placed among the Jews in the flesh, in Christ in hope, speaks "Remember what is my substance. For not because the Jews fell away, did my substance fail: for from that people came the Virgin Mary, and

from her the flesh of Christ; that Flesh sins not, but purifies sins; there, saith David, is my substance. "O remember what my substance is. For the root has not entirely perished; the seed shall come to whom the promise was made, ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator. "For Thou hast not made all the sons of men for nought" (ver. 47). Lo! all the sons of men have gone into vanity: yet Thou hast not made them for nought. If then all went into vanity, whom Thou hast not made for nought; hast Thou not reserved some instrument to purify them from vanity? This which Thou hast reserved to Thyself to cleanse men from vanity is Thy Holy One, in Him is my substance: for from Him are all, whom Thou hast not made for nought, purified from their own vanity. To them it is said, "O ye sons of men, how long are ye heavy in heart? Wherefore have ye such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing? Perhaps they might become anxious, and turn from their vanity, and when they found themselves polluted with it, might seek for purification from it: then help them, make them secure.

"Know this also, that the Lord hath made wonderful His Holy One. He has made His Holy One to be admired: thence He has purified all from their vanity: there, saith David, is my substance: O remember it! "For Thou hast not made all the sons of men for nought. Thou hast therefore reserved something to purify them: and who is He whom Thou hast reserved? "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? This man then who shall live and not see death, shall purify them from nothingness. For He made not all men for nought, nor can He who made them so despise His own creatures, as not to convert and purify them. 37. "What man is he that shall live, and shall not see death? (ver. 48). For being raised from the dead He dieth no more, and death hath no more dominion over Him. And as in another Psalm it is said, "Thou shalt not leave my soul in Hell, neither shalt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption," the Apostolic teaching takes up this testimony, and in the Acts of the Apostles thus argues against the unbelieving; Men and brethren, we know that the patriarch David is dead and buried, and his flesh hath seen corruption. Therefore it cannot be said of him, "neither shall Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. Of whom then is it said: "What man is he that shall live, and shall not see death? Perhaps there is no man such. Nay, but "who is it? is said to make thee inquire, not despair. But perhaps there may be some man "that shall live, and shall not see death," and yet perhaps he did not speak of Christ, who died? There is no man "that shall

live, and shall not see death," except Him who died for mortals. That thou mayest be assured that it is said of Him, consider the sequel; "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Did He never die then? He did. How then shall He live, and never see death? "He shall deliver His own soul from the hands of Hell.

He is spoken of alone indeed, in that He alone of all others "shall live, and shall not see death: He shall deliver His own soul from the hand of Hell," because although the rest of His faithful shall rise from the dead, and shall themselves live for evermore, without seeing death; yet they shall not themselves deliver their own souls from the hands of Hell. He who delivers His own soul from the hands of Hell, Himself delivers those of His believers: they cannot do so of themselves. Prove that He delivers His own soul. "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh 'it from Me;' for I Myself slept, but I lay it down of Myself, and take it again," because it is He Himself who delivers His own soul from the hands of Hell. 38. But in the very faith in Christ great difficulties occurred, and the heathen in their rage long said, "When shall he die, and his name perish?" On account of these then who have now long believed in Christ, but were destined to doubt for some time, these words follow, "Lord, where are Thy old loving-kindnesses?" (ver. 49). We have now acknowledged Christ our purifier, we now possess Him in whom Thy promises were to be fulfilled; show forth in Him what Thou hast promised. It is He Himself that shall live, and not see death: Himself who delivers His own soul from the hand of Hell: and yet we are still in suffering. Thus spoke the Martyrs, whose birthdays we are celebrating. He shall live, and not see death: He delivers His soul from the hands of Hell: yet "for Thy sake we are killed all the day long: and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain." "Lord, where are Thy old loving-kindnesses which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth?"

39. "Remember, Lord, the rebuke that Thy servants have" (ver. 50). Even while Christ was living, and while He was sitting on His Father's right hand, reproaches were cast against the Christians: they long were reproached with the name of Christ. That widowed one who brought forth, and whose children were more than those of the married wife, heard ill names, heard reproaches: but the Church, multiplied as she is, extending right and left, no longer remembers the reproach of her widowhood. "Remember, Lord," in the memory of whom there is abundant sweetness. "Remember," forget not.

Remember what? "the rebuke that Thy servants have: and how I do bear in my bosom the rebukes of many people." I went, saith he, to preach of Thee, and I heard reproaches, and bore them in my bosom, because I was fulfilling the prophecy. "Being defamed we entreat: we are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." Long the Christians bore reproaches in their bosom, in their heart: nor dared resist their revilers; before, when it was a crime to answer a heathen: it is now a crime to remain a heathen. Thanks be to the Lord! He remembered our rebukes: He raised the horn of His Anointed on high, He made Him the Wonderful among the kings of the earth. Now no one insults Christians, or if he does, it is not in public: he speaks as if he were still more fearful of being heard, than anxious to be believed. "I bear in my bosom the rebukes of many people."

40. "Wherewith Thine enemies have blasphemed Thee, O Lord" (ver. 51), both Jews and Pagans. "Wherewith they have blasphemed." Wherewith have they blasphemed Thee? "With the change of Thine Anointed." They objected that Christ died, and was crucified. Madmen, what is your reproach? Although there is now no one to use it: yet supposing some still remaining that so speak, what is your reproach? that Christ died? He was not destroyed, but changed. He is styled "dead" on account of the three days. Wherewith then have thine enemies blasphemed Thee? Not with the loss, not with the perdition of Thine Anointed, but with His "change." He was changed from temporal to eternal life: He was changed from the Jews to the Gentiles; He was changed from earth to heaven. Let then Thy vain enemies blaspheme Thee still for the change of Thine Anointed. Would that they may be changed: they will not in that case blaspheme the change of Christ, which displeases them since they themselves will not be changed. "For there is no change with them, and they fear not God."

41. They have blasphemed the change of Christ; but what dost thou answer? "The blessing of the Lord for evermore. Amen and Amen" (ver. 52). Thanks to His mercy, thanks to His grace. We express our thanks: we do not give them, nor return them, nor repay them: we express our thanks in words, while in fact we retain our sense of them. He saved us for no reward, He heeded not our impieties: He searched us out when we searched not for Him, He found, redeemed, emancipated us from the bondage of the devil and the power of his wicked angels: He drew us to Him to purify us by that faith, from which He releases those enemies only who believe not, and who for

that reason cannot be purified. Let those who still remain infidels say every day what they choose; day by day they shall be fewer and fewer that remain; let them revile, mock, accuse, not the death, but the change of Christ. Do they not see that, when they say these things, they fail in purpose either by believing or by dying? For their curse is temporal: but the blessing of the Lord "for evermore. To confirm that blessing is added, "Amen and Amen. This is the signature of the bond of God. Secure then of His promises, let us believe the past, recognise the present, hope for the future. Let not the enemy lead us astray from the way, that He, who gathers us like chickens under His wings, may foster us:

lest we stray from His wings, and the hawk of the air carry us off while yet unfledged. For the Christian ought not to hope in himself: if he hopes to be strong, let him be reared by his mother's warmth. This is the hen who gathers her young together; whence is the reproach of our Saviour against the unbelieving Jerusalem. "Behold, your house shall be left unto you desolate. Hence was it said, "Thou hast made his strongholds a terror. Since then they would not be gathered together under the wings of this hen, and have given as a warning to teach us to dread the unclean spirits that fly in the air, seeking daily what they may devour; let us gather ourselves under the wings of this hen, the divine Wisdom, since she is weakened even unto death of her chickens. Let us love our Lord God, let us love His Church: Him as a Father, Her as a Mother: Him as a Lord, Her as His Handmaid, as we are ourselves the Handmaid's sons. But this marriage is held together by a bond of great love: no man offends the one, and wins favour of the other. Let no man say, "I go indeed to the idols, I consult possessed ones and fortune-tellers: yet I abandon not God's Church; I am a Catholic. While thou holdest to thy Mother, thou hast offended thy Father. Another says, Far be it from me;

I consult no sorcerer, I seek out no possessed one, I never ask advice by sacrilegious divination, I go not to worship idols, I bow not before stones; though I am in the party of Donatus. What does it profit you not to have offended your Father, if he avenges your offended Mother? what does it serve you, if you acknowledge the Lord, honour God, preach His name, acknowledge His Son, confess that He sitteth by His right hand; while you blaspheme His Church? Does not the analogy of human marriages convince you? Suppose you have some patron, whom you court every day, whose threshold you wear with your visits, whom you daily not only salute, but even worship,

to whom you pay the most loyal courtesy; if you utter one calumny against his wife, could you re-enter his house? Hold then, most beloved, hold all with one mind to God the Father, and the Church our Mother. Celebrate with temperance the birthdays of the Saints, that we may imitate those who have gone before us, and that they who pray for you may rejoice over you; that "the blessing of the Lord may abide on you for evermore. Amen and Amen."

PSALM 90

1. This Psalm is entitled, "The prayer of Moses the man of God," through whom, His man, God gave the law to His people, through whom He freed them from the house of slavery, and led them forty years through the wilderness. Moses was therefore the Minister of the Old, and the Prophet of the New Testament. For "all these things," saith the Apostle, "happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the world come." In accordance therefore with this dispensation which was vouchsafed to Moses, this Psalm is to be examined, as it has received its title from his prayer. 2. "Lord," he saith, "Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another" (ver. 1): either in every generation, or in two generations, the old and new: because, as I said, he was the Minister of the Testament that related to the old generation, and the Prophet of the Testament which appertained to the new. Jesus Himself, the Surety of that covenant, and the Bridegroom in the marriage which He entered into in that generation, saith, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me." Now it is not to be believed that this Psalm was entirely the composition of that Moses, as it is not distinguished by any of those of his expressions which are used in his songs: but the name of the great servant of God is used for the sake of some intimation, which should direct the attention of the reader or listener. "Lord," he saith, "Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to the other."

3. He adds, how He became our refuge, since He began to be that, viz. a refuge, to us which He had not been before, not that He had not existed before He became our refuge: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made: and from age even unto age Thou art" (ver. 2). Thou therefore who art for ever, and before we were, and before the world was, hast become our refuge ever since we turned to Thee. But the expression, "before the mountains," etc., seems to me to contain a particular

meaning; for mountains are the higher parts of the earth, and if God was before even the earth were formed (or, as some books have it, from the same Greek word, "framed"), since it was by Him that it was formed, what is the need of saying that He was before the mountains, or any certain parts of it, since God was not only before the earth, but before heaven and earth, and even the whole bodily and spiritual creation? But it may certainly be that the whole rational creation is marked by this distinction; that while the loftiness of Angels is signified by the mountains, the lowliness of man is meant by the earth. And for this reason, although all the works of creation are not improperly said to be either made or formed; nevertheless, if there is any propriety in these words, the Angels are "made;

for as they are enumerated among His heavenly works, the enumeration itself is thus concluded: "He spake the word, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created; but the earth was "formed," that man might thence be created in the body. For the Scripture uses this word, where we read, God made, or "God formed man out of the dust of the ground. Before then the noblest parts of the creation (for what is higher than the rational part of the Heavenly creation) were made: before the earth was made, that Thou mightest have worshippers upon the earth; and even this is little, as all these had a beginning either in or with time; but "from age to age Thou art. It would have been better, from everlasting to everlasting: for God, who is before the ages, exists not from a certain age, nor to a certain age, which has an end, since He is without end. But it often happens in the Scripture, that the equivocal Greek word causes the Latin translator to put age for eternity and eternity for age. But he very rightly does not say, Thou wast from ages, and unto ages Thou shalt be: but puts the verb in the present, intimating that the substance of God is altogether immutable. It is not, He was, and Shall be, but only Is. Whence the expression, I Am that I Am; and, I Am "hath sent me unto you; and, "Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed:

but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Behold then the eternity that is our refuge, that we may fly thither from the mutability of time, there to remain for evermore. 4. But as our life here is exposed to numerous and great temptations, and it is to be feared lest we may be turned aside by them from that refuge, let us see what in consequence of this the prayer of the man of God seeks for. "Turn not Thou man to lowness" (ver. 3):

that is, let not man, turned aside from Thy eternal and sublime things, lust for things of time, savour of earthly things. This prayer is what God has Himself enjoined us, in the Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," He adds, "Again Thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men." As if he said, I ask of Thee what Thou hast commanded me to ask: giving glory to His grace, that "he that glorieth, in the Lord he may glory:" without whose help we cannot by an exertion of our own will overcome the temptations of this life. "Turn not Thou man to lowness: again thou sayest, Turn again, ye children of men." But grant what Thou has enjoined, by hearing the prayer of him who can at least pray, and aiding the faith of the willing soul.

5. "For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday, which is past by" (ver. 4): hence we ought to turn to Thy refuge, where Thou art without any change, from the fleeting scenes around us; since however long a time may be wished for for this life, "a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday:" not as to-morrow, which is to come: for all limited periods of time are reckoned as having already passed. Hence the Apostle's choice is rather to aim at what is before, that is, to desire things eternal, and to forget things behind, by which temporal matters should be understood. But that no one may imagine a thousand years are reckoned by God as one day, as if with God days were so long, when this is only said in contempt of the extent of time: he adds, "and as a watch in the night:" which only lasts three hours. Nevertheless men have ventured to assert their knowledge of times, to the pretenders to which our Lord said, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power:" and they allege that this period may be defined six thousand years, as of six days. Nor have they heeded the words, "are but as one day which is past by:" for, when this was uttered, not a thousand years only had passed, and the expression, "as a watch in the night," ought to have warned them that they might not be deceived by the uncertainty of the seasons: for even if the six first days in which God finished His works seemed to give some plausibility to their opinion, six watches, which amount to eighteen hours, will not consist with that opinion.

6. Next, the man of God, or rather the Prophetic spirit, seems to be reciting some law written in the secret wisdom of God, in which He has fixed a limit to the sinful life of mortals, and determined the troubles of mortality, in the following words: "Their years are as things which are nothing worth:

in the morning let it fade away like the grass" (ver. 5). The happiness therefore of the heirs of the old covenant, which they asked of the Lord their God as a great boon, attained to receive this Law in His mysterious Providence. Moses seems to be reciting it: "Their years shall be things which are esteemed as nothing." Such are those things which are not before they are come: and when come, shall soon not be: for they do not come to be here, but to be gone. "In the morning," that is, before they come, "as a heat let it pass by;" but "in the evening," it means after they come, "let it fall, and be dried up, and withered" (ver. 6). It is "to fall" in death, be "dried up" in the corpse, "withered" in the dust. What is this but flesh, wherein is the accursed lust of fleshly things? "For all flesh is grass, and all the goodness of man as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of the Lord abideth for ever."

7. Making no secret that this fate is a penalty inflicted for sin, he adds at once, "For we consume away in Thy displeasure, and are troubled at Thy wrathful indignation" (ver. 7): we consume away in our weakness, and are troubled from the fear of death; for we are become weak, and yet fearful to end that weakness. "Another," saith He, "shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not:" although not to be punished, but to be crowned, by martyrdom; and the soul of our Lord, transforming us into Himself, was sorrowful even unto death: for "the Lord's going out" is no other than in "death." 8. "Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee" (ver. 8): that is, Thou hast not dissembled Thine anger: "and our age in the light of Thy countenance." "The light of Thy countenance" answers to "before Thee," and to "our misdeeds," as above.

9. "For all our days are failed, and in Thine anger we have failed" (ver. 9). These words sufficiently prove that our subjection to death is a punishment. He speaks of our days failing, either because men fail in them from loving things that pass away, or because they are reduced to so small a number; which he asserts in the following lines: "our years are spent in thought like a spider." "The days of our age are threescore years and ten; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years, yet is more of them but labour and sorrow" (ver. 10). These words appear to express the shortness and misery of this life: since those who have reached their seventieth year are styled old men. Up to eighty, however, they appear to have some strength; but if they live beyond this, their existence is laborious through multiplied sorrows. Yet

many even below the age of seventy experience an old age the most infirm and wretched: and old men have often been found to be wonderfully vigorous even beyond eighty years. It is therefore better to search for some spiritual meaning in these numbers. For the anger of God is not greater on the sins of Adam (through whom alone "sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men"), because they live a much shorter time than the men of old; since even the length of their days is ridiculed in the comparison of a thousand years to yesterday that is past, and to three hours: especially since at the very time when they provoked the anger of God to send the deluge in which they perished, their life was at its longest span.

10. Moreover, seventy and eighty years equal a hundred and fifty; a number which the Psalms clearly insinuate to be a sacred one. One hundred and fifty have the same relative signification as fifteen, the latter number being composed of seven and eight together: the first of which points to the Old Testament through the observation of the Sabbath; the latter to the New, referring to the resurrection of our Lord. Hence the fifteen steps in the Temple. Hence in the Psalms, fifteen "songs of degrees. Hence the waters of the deluge overtopped the highest mountains by fifteen cubits: and many other instances of the same nature. "Our years are passed in thought like a spider. We were labouring in things corruptible, corruptible works were we weaving together: which, as the Prophet Isaiah saith, by no means covered us. "The days of our years are in themselves," etc. A distinction is here made between themselves and their strength: "in themselves," that is, in the years or days themselves, may mean in temporal things, which are promised in the Old Testament, signified by the number seventy; "but if" not in themselves, but "in their strength," refers not to temporal things, but to things eternal, "fourscore years," as the New Testament contains the hope of a new life and resurrection for evermore: and what is added, that if they pass this latter period, "their strength is labour and sorrow," intimates that such shall be the fate of him who goes beyond this faith, and seeks for more.

It may also be understood thus: because although we are established in the New Testament, which the number eighty signifies, yet still our life is one of labour and sorrow, while "we groan within ourselves, awaiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; for we are saved by hope; and if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. This relates to the mercy of God, of which he proceeds to say, "Since thy mercy cometh over us,

and we shall be chastened: for "the Lord chasteneth whom He loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," and to some mighty ones He giveth a thorn in the flesh, to buffet them, that they may not be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, so that strength be made perfect in weakness. Some copies read, we shall be "taught," instead of "chastened," which is equally expressive of the Divine Mercy; for no man can be taught without labour and sorrow; since strength is made perfect in weakness.

11. "For who knoweth the power of Thy wrath: and for the fear of Thee to number Thine anger?" (ver. 11). It belongs to very few men, he saith, to know the power of Thy wrath; for when Thou dost spare, Thy anger is so far heavier against most men; that we may know that labour and sorrow belong not to wrath, but rather to Thy mercy, when Thou chastenest and teachest those whom Thou lovest, to save them from the torments of eternal punishment: as it is said in another Psalm, "The sinner hath provoked the Lord: He will not require it of him according to the greatness of His wrath." With this also is understood, "Who knoweth?" Such is the difficulty of finding any one who knoweth how to number Thine anger by Thy fear, that he adds this, meaning that it is to the purpose that Thou appearest to spare some, with whom Thou art more angry, that the sinner may be prospered in his path, and receive a heavier doom at the last. For when the power of human wrath hath killed the body, it hath nothing more to do: but God hath power both to punish here, and after the death of the body to send into Hell, and by the few who are thus taught, the vain and seductive prosperity of the wicked is judged to be greater wrath of God. ...

12. "Make Thy right hand so well known" (ver. 12). This is the reading of most of the Greek copies: not of some in Latin, which is thus, "Make Thy right hand well known to me." What is, "Thy right hand," but Thy Christ, of whom it is said, And to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed? Make Him so well known, that Thy faithful may learn in Him to ask and to hope for those things rather of Thee as rewards of their faith, which do not appear in the Old Testament, but are revealed in the New: that they may not imagine that the happiness derived from earthly and temporal blessings is to be highly esteemed, desired, or loved, and thus their feet slip, when they see it in men who honour Thee not: that their steps may not give way, while they know not how to number Thine anger. Finally, in accordance with this prayer of

the Man that is His, He has made His Christ so well known as to show by His sufferings that not these rewards which seem so highly prized in the Old Testament, where they are shadows of things to come, but things eternal, are to be desired. The right hand of God may also be understood in this sense, as that by which He will separate His saints from the wicked: because that hand becomes well known, when it scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, and suffers him not, in greater anger, to prosper in his sins, but in His mercy scourgeth him with the left, that He may place him purified on His right hand. The reading of most copies, "make Thy right hand well known to me," may be referred either to Christ, or to eternal happiness: for God has not a right hand in bodily shape, as He has not that anger which is aroused into violent passion.

13. But what he addeth, "and those fettered in heart in wisdom;" other copies read, "instructed," not "lettered:" the Greek verb, expressing both senses, only differing by a single syllable. But since these also, as it is said, put their "feet in the fetters" of wisdom, are taught wisdom (he means the feet of the heart, not of the body), and bound by its golden chains depart not from the path of God, and become not runaways from him; whichever reading we adopt, the truth in the meaning is safe. Them thus lettered, or instructed in heart in wisdom, God makes so well known in the New Testament, that they despised all things for the Faith which the impiety of Jews and Gentiles abhorred; and allowed themselves to be deprived of those things which in the Old Testament are thought high promises by those who judge after the flesh.

14. And as when they became so well known, as to despise these things, and by setting their affections on things eternal, gave a testimony through their sufferings (whence they are called witnesses or martyrs in the Greek), they endured for a long while many bitter temporal afflictions. This man of God giveth heed to this, and the prophetic spirit under the name of Moses continues thus, "Return, O Lord, how long? and be softened concerning Thy servants" (ver. 13). These are the words of those, who, enduring many evils in that persecuting age, become known because their hearts are bound in the chain of wisdom so firmly, that not even such hardships can induce them to fly from their Lord to the good things of this world. "How long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me, O Lord? occurs in another Psalm, in unison with this sentence, "Return, O Lord, how long? And that they who, in a most carnal spirit, ascribe to God the form of a human body, may know that the

"turning away" and "turning again" of His countenance is not like those motions of our own frame, let them recollect these words from above in the same Psalm, "Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee, and our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. How then does he say in this passage, "Return," that God may be favourable, as if He had turned away His face in anger;

when as in the former he speaks of God's anger in such a manner, as to insinuate that He had not turned away His countenance from the misdeeds and the course of life of those He was angry with, but rather had set them before Him, and in the light of His countenance? The word, "How long," belongs to righteousness beseeching, not indignant impatience. "Be softened," some have rendered by a verb, "soften. But "be softened" avoids an ambiguity; since to soften is a common verb: for he may be said to soften who pours out prayers, and be to whom they are poured out: for we say, I soften thee, and I soften toward thee. 15. Next, in anticipation of future blessings, of which he speaks as already vouchsafed, he says, "We are satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning" (ver. 14). Prophecy has thus been kindled for us, in the midst of these toils and sorrows of the night, like a lamp in the darkness, until day dawn, and the Day-star arise in our hearts. For blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God: then shall the righteous be filled with that blessing for which they hunger and thirst now, while, walking in faith, they are absent from the Lord. Hence are the words, "In Thy presence is fulness of joy: and, "Early in the morning they shall stand by, and shall look up: and as other translators have said it, "We shall be satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning; then they shall be satisfied. As he says elsewhere, "I shall be satisfied, when Thy glory shall be revealed. So it is said, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us: and our Lord Himself answereth, "I will manifest Myself to Zion; and until this promise is fulfilled, no blessing satisfies us, or ought to do so, lest our longings should be arrested in their course, when they ought to be increased until they gain their objects. "And we rejoiced and were glad all the days of our life. Those days are days without end: they all exist together: it is thus they satisfy us: for they give not way to days succeeding:

since there is nothing there which exists not yet because it has not reached us, or ceases to exist because it has passed; all are together: because there is one day only, which remains and passes not away: this is eternity itself. These are the days respecting which it is written, "What man is he that

lusteth to live, and would fain see good days? These days in another passage are styled years: where unto God it is said, "But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail: for these are not years that are accounted for nothing, or days that perish like a shadow: but they are days which have a real existence, the number of which he who thus spoke, "Lord, let me know mine end" (that is, after reaching what term I shall remain unchanged, and have no further blessing to crave), "and the number of my days, what it is" (what is, not what is not): prayed to know. He distinguishes them from the days of this life, of which he speaks as follows, "Behold, Thou hast made my days as it were a span long," which are not, because they stand not, remain not, but change in quick succession: nor is there a single hour in them in which our being is not such, but that one part of it has already passed, another is about to come, and none remains as it is. But those years and days, in which we too shall never fail, but evermore be refreshed, will never fail.

Let our souls long earnestly for those days, let them thirst ardently for them, that there we may be filled, be satisfied, and say what we now say in anticipation, "We have been satisfied," etc. "We have been comforted again now, after the time that Thou hast brought us low, and for the years wherein we have seen evil" (ver. 15). 16. But now in days that are as yet evil, let us speak as follows. "Look upon Thy servants, and upon Thy works" (ver. 16). For Thy servants themselves are Thy works, not only inasmuch as they are men, but as Thy servants, that is, obedient to Thy commands. For we are His workmanship, created not merely in Adam, but in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them: "for it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure." "And direct their sons:" that they may be right in heart, for to such God is bountiful, for "God is bountiful to Israel, to those that are right in heart." ...

17. "And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us" (ver. 17); whence the words, "O Lord, the light of Thy countenance is marked upon us. And, "Make Thou straight the works of our hands upon us: that we may do them not for hope of earthly reward: for then they are not straight, but crooked. In many copies the Psalm goes thus far, but in some there is found an additional verse at the end, as follows, "And make straight the work of our hands. To these words the learned have prefixed a star, called an asterisk, to show that they are found in the Hebrew, or in some other Greek translations, but not in the Septuagint. The meaning of this verse, if we are to ex-

pound it, appears to me this, that all our good works are one work of love: for love is the fulfilling of the Law. For as in the former verse he had said, "And the works of our hands make Thou straight upon us," here he says "work," not works, as if anxious to show, in the last verse, that all our works are one, that is, are directed with a view to one work. For then are works righteous, when they are directed to this one end: "for the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. There is therefore one work, in which are all, "faith which worketh by love:

whence our Lord's words in the Gospel, "This is the work of God, that ye believe in Him whom He hath sent. Since, therefore, in this Psalm, both old and new life, life both mortal and everlasting, years that are counted for nought, and years that have the fulness of loving-kindness and of true joy, that is, the penalty of the first and the reign of the Second Man, are marked so very clearly; I imagine, that the name of Moses, the man of God, became the title of the Psalm, that pious and right-minded readers of the Scriptures might gain an intimation that the Mosaic laws, in which God appears to promise only, or nearly only, earthly rewards for good works, without doubt contains under a veil some such hopes as this Psalm displays. But when any one has passed over to Christ, the veil will be taken away: and his eyes will be unveiled, that he may consider the wonderful things in the law of God, by the gift of Him, to whom we pray, "Open Thou mine eyes, and I shall see the wondrous things of Thy law.

PSALM 91

1. This Psalm is that from which the Devil dared to tempt our Lord Jesus Christ: let us therefore attend to it, that thus armed, we may be enabled to resist the tempter, not presuming in ourselves, but in Him who before us was tempted, that we might not be overcome when tempted. Temptation to Him was not necessary: the temptation of Christ is our learning, but if we listen to His answers to the devil, in order that, when ourselves are tempted, we may answer in like manner, we are then entering through the gate, as ye have heard it read in the Gospel. For what is to enter by the gate? To enter by Christ, who Himself said, "I am the door:" and to enter through Christ, is to imitate His ways. ...He urges us to imitate Him in those works which He could not have done had He not been made Man; for how could He endure sufferings, unless He had become a Man? How could He otherwise have died,

been crucified, been humbled? Thus then do thou, when thou sufferest the troubles of this world, which the devil, openly by men, or secretly, as in Job's case, inflicts; be courageous, be of long suffering; "thou shall dwell under the defence of the Most High," as this Psalm expresses it: for if thou depart from the help of the Most High, without strength to aid thyself, thou wilt fall.

2. For many men are brave, when they are enduring persecution from men, and see them openly rage against themselves: imagining they are then imitating the sufferings of Christ, in case men openly persecute them; but if assailed by the hidden attack of the devil, they believe they are not being crowned by Christ. Never fear when thou dost imitate Christ. For when the devil tempted our Lord, there was no man in the wilderness; he tempted Him secretly; but he was conquered, and conquered too when openly attacking Him. This do thou, if thou wishest to enter by the door, when the enemy secretly assails thee, when he asks for a man that he may do him some hurt by bodily troubles, by fever, by sickness, or any other bodily sufferings, like those of Job. He saw not the devil, yet he acknowledged the power of God. He knew that the devil had no power against him, unless from the Almighty Ruler of all things he received that power: the whole glory he gave to God, power to the devil he gave not. ...

3. He then who so imitates Christ as to endure all the troubles of this world, with his hopes set upon God, that he falls into no snare, is broken down by no panic fears, he it is "who dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, who shall abide under the protection of God" (ver. 1), in the words with which the Psalm, which you have heard and sung, begins. You will recognise the words, so well known, in which the devil tempted our Lord, when we come to them. "He shall say unto the Lord, Thou art my taker up, and my refuge: my God" (ver. 2). Who speaks thus to the Lord? "He who dwelleth under the defence of the Most High:" not under his own defence. Who is this? He dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, who is not proud, like those who ate, that they might become as Gods, and lost the immortality in which they were made. For they chose to dwell under a defence of their own, not under that of the Most High: thus they listened to the suggestions of the serpent, and despised the precept of God: and discovered at last that what God threatened, not what the devil promised, had come to pass in them.

4. Thus then do thou say also, "In Him will I trust. For He Himself shall deliver me" (ver. 3), not I myself. Observe whether he teaches anything but this, that all our trust be in God, none in man. Whence shall he deliver thee? "From the snare of the hunter, and from a harsh word." Deliverance from the hunter's net is indeed a great blessing: but how is deliverance from a harsh word so? Many have fallen into the hunter's net through a harsh word. What is it that I say? The devil and his angels spread their snares, as hunters do: and those who walk in Christ tread afar from those snares: for he dares not spread his net in Christ: he sets it on the verge of the way, not in the way. Let then thy way be Christ, and thou shall not fall into the snares of the devil. ...

But what is, "from a harsh word"? The devil has entrapped many by a harsh word: for instance, those who profess Christianity among Pagans suffer insult from the heathen: they blush when they hear reproach, and shrinking out of their path in consequence, fall into the hunter's snares. And yet what will a harsh word do to you? Nothing. Can the snares with which the enemy entraps you by means of reproaches, do nothing to you? Nets are usually spread for birds at the end of a hedge, and stones are thrown into the hedge: those stones will not harm the birds. When did any one ever hit a bird by throwing a stone into a hedge? But the bird, frightened at the harmless noise, falls into the nets; and thus men who fear the vain reproaches of their calumniators, and who blush at unprovoked insults, fall into the snares of the hunters, and are taken captive by the devil ...Just as among the heathen, the Christian who fears their reproaches falls into the snare of the hunter: so among the Christians, those who endeavour to be more diligent and better than the rest, are doomed to bear insults from Christians themselves. What then doth it profit, my brother, if thou occasionally find a city in which there is no heathen? No one there insults a man because he is a Christian, for this reason, that there is no Pagan therein:

but there are many Christians who lead a bad life, among whom those who are resolved to live righteously, and to be sober among the drunken, and chaste among the unchaste, and amid the consulters of astrologers sincerely to worship God, and to ask after no such things, and among spectators of frivolous shows will go only to church, suffer from those very Christians reproaches, and harsh words, when they address such a one, "Thou art the mighty, the righteous, thou art Elias thou art Peter: thou hast come from

heaven. They insult him: whichever way he turns, he hears harsh sayings on each side: and if he fears, and abandons the way of Christ, he falls into the snares of the hunters. But what is it, when he hears such words, not to swerve from the way? On hearing them, what comfort has he, which prevents his heeding them, and enables him to enter by the door? Let him say; What words am I called, who am a servant and a sinner? To my Lord Jesus they said, "Thou hast a devil. You have just heard the harsh words spoken against our Lord: it was not necessary for our Lord to suffer this, but in doing so He has warned thee against harsh words, lest thou fall into the snares of the hunters.

5. "He shall defend thee between His shoulders, and thou shall hope under His wings" (ver. 4). He says this, that thy protection may not be to thee from thyself, that thou mayest not imagine that thou canst defend thyself; He will defend thee, to deliver thee from the hunter's snare, and from an harsh word. The expression, "between His shoulders," may be understood both in front and behind: for the shoulders are about the head; but in the words, "thou shalt hope under His wings," it is clear that the protection of the wings of God expanded places thee between His shoulders, so that God's wings on this side and that have thee in the midst, where thou shalt not fear lest any one hurt thee: only be thou careful never to leave that spot, where no foe dares approach. If the hen defends her chickens beneath her wings; how much more shalt thou be safe beneath the wings of God, even against the devil and his angels, the powers who fly about in mid air like hawks, to carry off the weak young one? For the comparison of the hen to the very Wisdom of God is not without ground; for Christ Himself, our Lord and Saviour, speaks of Himself as likened to a hen; "how often would I have gathered thy children," etc. That Jerusalem would not: let us be willing. ...If you consider other birds, brethren, you will find many that hatch their eggs, and keep their young warm:

but none that weakens herself in sympathy with her chickens, as the hen does. We see swallows, sparrows, and storks outside their nests, without being able to decide whether they have young or no: but we know the hen to be a mother by the weakness of her voice, and the loosening of her feathers: she changes altogether from love for her chickens: she weakens herself because they are weak. Thus since we were weak, the Wisdom of God made Itself weak, when the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us, that we might hope

under His wings. 6. "His truth shall surround thee with a shield" (ver. 5). What are "the wings," the same is "the shield:" since there are neither wings nor shield. If either were literally, how could the one be the same as the other? can wings be a shield or a shield wings? But all these expressions, indeed, are figuratively used through likenesses. If Christ were really a Stone, He could not be a Lion; if a Lion, He could not be a Lamb: but He is called both Lion, and Lamb, and Stone, and Calf, and anything else of the sort, metaphorically, because He is neither Stone, nor Lion, nor Lamb, nor Calf, but Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all of us, for these are likenesses, not literal names. "His truth shall be thy shield," it is said: a shield to assure us that He will not confound those whose trust is in themselves with those who hope in God. One is a sinner, and the other a sinner: but suppose one that presumes upon himself is a despiser, confesses not his sins, and he will say, if my sins displeased God, He would not suffer me to live. But another dared not even raise his eyes, but beat upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Both this was a sinner, and that: but the one mocked, the other mourned: the one was a despiser, the other a confessor, of his sins. But the truth of God, which respects not persons, discerns the penitent from him who denies his sin, the humble from the proud, him who presumes upon himself from him who presumes on God. "Thou shall not be afraid for any terror by night."

7. "Nor for the arrow that flieth by day, for the matter that walketh in darkness, nor for the ruin and the devil that is in the noonday" (ver. 6). These two clauses above correspond to the two below; "Thou shall not fear" for "the terror by night, from the arrow that flieth by day: both because of "the terror by night," from "the matter that walketh in darkness: and because of "the arrow that flieth by day," from "the ruin of the devil of the noon-day. What ought to be feared by night, and what by day? When any man sins in ignorance, he sins, as it were, by night: when he sins in full knowledge, by day. The two former sins then are the lighter: the second are much heavier; but this is obscure, and will repay your attention, if, by God's blessing, I can explain it so that you may understand it. He calls the light temptation, which the ignorant yield to, "terror by night: the light temptation, which assails men who well know, "the arrow that flieth by day. What are light temptations? Those which do not press upon us so urgently, as to overcome us, but may pass by quickly if declined. Suppose these, again, heavy ones. If

the persecutor threatens, and frightens the ignorant grievously, I mean those whose faith is as yet unstable, and know not that they are Christians that they may hope for a life to come;

as soon as they are alarmed with temporal ills, they imagine that Christ has forsaken them, and that they are Christians to no purpose; they are not aware that they are Christians for this reason, that they may conquer the present, and hope for the future: the matter that walketh in darkness has found and seized them. But some there are who know that they are called to a future hope; that what God has promised is not of this life, or this earth; that all these temptations must be endured, that we may receive what God hath promised us for evermore; all this they know: when however the persecutor urges them more strenuously, and plies them with threats, penalties, tortures, at length they yield, and although they are well aware of their sin, yet they fall as it were by day. 8. But why does he say, "at noon-day"? The persecution is very hot; and thus the noon signifies the excessive heat. ...The demon that is "in the noon-day," represents the heat of a furious persecution: for these are our Lord's words, "The sun was up; and because they had no root, they withered away: and when explaining it, He applies it to those who are offended when persecution ariseth, "Because they have not root in themselves. We are therefore right in understanding by the demon that destroyeth in the noon-day, a violent persecution. Listen, beloved, while I describe the persecution, from which the Lord hath rescued His Church. At first, when the emperors and kings of the world imagined that they could extirpate from the earth the Christian name by persecution, they proclaimed, that any one who confessed himself a Christian, should be smitten. He who did not choose to be smitten, denied that he was a Christian, knowing the sin he was committing: the arrow that flieth by day reached him. But whoever regarded not the present life, but had a sure trust in a future one, avoided the arrow, by confessing himself a Christian; smitten in the flesh, he was liberated in the spirit: resting with God, he began peacefully to await the redemption of his body in the resurrection of the dead: he escaped from that temptation, from the arrow that flieth by day. "Whoever professes himself a Christian, let him be beheaded; was as the arrow that flieth by day.

The "devil that is in the noon-day" was not yet abroad, burning with a terrible persecution, and afflicting with great heat even the strong. For hear what followed; when the enemy saw that many were hastening to martyr-

dom, and that the number of fresh converts increased in proportion to that of the sufferers, they said among themselves, We shall annihilate the human race, so many thousands are there who believe in His Name; if we kill all of them, there will hardly be a survivor on earth. The sun then began to blaze, and to glow with a terrible heat. Their first edict had been, Whoever shall confess himself a Christian, let him be smitten. Their second edict was, Whoever shall have confessed himself a Christian, let him be tortured, and tortured even until he deny himself a Christian. ...Many therefore who denied not, failed amid the tortures; for they were tortured until they denied. But to those who persevered in professing Christ, what could the sword do, by killing the body at one stroke, and sending the soul to God? This was the result of protracted tortures also: yet who could be found able to resist such cruel and continued torments? Many failed: those, I believe, who presumed upon themselves, who dwelt not under the defence of the Most High, and under the shadow of the God of Heaven; who said not to the Lord, "Thou art my lifter up: who trusted not beneath the shadow of His wings, but reposed much confidence in their own strength.

They are thrown down by God, to show them that it is He that protects them, He overrules their temptations, He allows so much only to befall them, as each person can sustain. 9. Many then fell before the demon of the noon-day. Would ye know how many? He goes on, and says, "A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee" (ver. 7). To whom, brethren, but to Christ Jesus, is this said? ...For the members, the body, and the head, are not separate from one another: the body and the head are the Church and her Saviour. How then is it said, "A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand by thy right hand"? Because they shall fall before the devil, that destroyeth at noon. It is a terrible thing, my brethren, to fall from beside Christ, from His right hand but how shall they fall from beside Him? Why the one beside Him, the other at His right hand? Why a thousand beside Him, ten thousand at His right hand? Why a thousand beside Him? Because a thousand are fewer than the ten thousand who shall fall at His right hand. Who these are will soon be clear in Christ's name; for to some He promised that they should judge with Him, namely, to the Apostles, who left all things, and followed Him. ...Those judges then are the heads of the Church, the perfect. To such He said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the

poor." What means the expression, "if thou wilt be perfect"? it means, if thou wilt judge with Me, and not be judged. ...Many such at that period, who had distributed their all to the poor, and already promised themselves a seat beside Christ in judgment of the nations, failed amid their torments under the blazing fire of persecution, as before the demon of the noon-day, and denied Christ. These are they who have fallen "beside" Him: when about to sit with Christ for the judgment of the world, they fell.

10. I will now explain who are they who fall on the right hand of Christ. ...And because many have fallen from that hope of being judges, but yet many, many more from that of being on His right hand, the Psalmist thus addresses Christ, "A thousand shall fall beside Thee, and ten thousand at Thy right hand. And since there shall be many, who regarded not all these things, with whom, as it were with His own limbs, Christ is one, he adds, "But it shall not come nigh Thee. Were these words addressed to the Head alone? Surely not; surely neither (doth it come nigh) to Paul, nor Peter, nor all the Apostles, nor all the Martyrs, who failed not in their torments. What then do the words, "it shall not come nigh," mean? Why were they thus tortured? The torture came nigh the flesh, but it did not reach the region of faith. Their faith then was far beyond the reach of the terrors threatened by their torturers. Let them torture, terror will not come nigh; let them torture, but they will mock the torture, putting their trust in Him who conquered before them, that the rest might conquer. And who conquer, except they who trust not in themselves? ...Who will not fear? He who trusts not in himself, but in Christ.

But those who trust in themselves, although they even hope to judge at the side of Christ, although they hoped they should be at His right hand, as if He said to them, "Come, ye blessed of My Father," etc.; yet the devil that is at noon overtook them, the raging heat of persecution, terrifying with violence; and many fell from the hope of the seat of judgment, of whom it is said, "A thousand shall fall beside thee; many too fell from the hope of reward for their duties, of whom it was said, "And ten thousand at thy right hand. But this downfall and devil that is at noon-day "shall not come nigh thee," that is, the Head and the body; for the Lord knows who are His. 11. "Nevertheless, with thine eyes shall thou behold, and see the reward of the ungodly" (ver. 8). What is this? Why "nevertheless"? Because the wicked were allowed to tyrannize over Thy servants, and to persecute them. Will they

then have been allowed to persecute Thy servants with impunity? Not with impunity, for although Thou hast permitted them, and Thine own have thence received a brighter crown, "nevertheless," etc. For the evil which they willed, not the good they unconsciously were the agents of, will be recompensed them. All that is wanting is the eye of faith, by which we may see that they are raised for a time only, while they shall mourn for evermore; and to those into whose hands is given temporal power over the servants of God, it shall be said, "Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." But if every man have but eyes in the sense in which it is said, "With thine eyes shalt thou behold," it is no unimportant thing to look upon the wicked flourishing in this life, and to have an eye to him, to consider what will become of him in the end, if he fail to reform his ways: for those who now would thunder upon others, will afterwards feel the thunderbolt themselves.

12. "For Thou, Lord, art my hope" (ver. 9). He has now come to the power Which rescues him from falling by the "downfall and the devil of the noon-day." "For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thy house of defence very high." What do the words "very high" mean? For many make their house of defence in God a mere refuge from temporal persecution; but the defence of God is on high, and very secret, whither thou mayest fly from the wrath to come. Within "Thou hast set thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil happen unto Thee: neither shall any plague come nigh Thy dwelling" (ver. 10). 13. The Holy City is not the Church of this country only, but of the whole world as well: not that of this age only, but from Abel himself down to those who shall to the end be born and believe in Christ, the whole assembly of the Saints, belonging to one city; which city is Christ's body, of which Christ is the Head. There, too, dwell the Angels, who are our fellow-citizens: we toil, because we are as yet pilgrims: while they within that city are awaiting our arrival. Letters have reached us too from that city, apart from which we are wandering: those letters are the Scriptures, which exhort us to live well. Why do I speak of letters only? The King himself descended, and became a path to us in our wanderings: that walking in Him, we may neither stray, nor faint nor fall among robbers, nor be caught in the snares that are set near our path. This character, then, we recognise in the whole Person of Christ, together with the Church. ...He Himself is our Head, He is God, co-equal with the Father, the Word of God, by whom all things were

made: but God to create, Man to renew; God to make, Man to restore. Looking upon Him, then, let us hear the Psalm. Listen, beloved. This is the teaching and doctrine of this school, which may enable you to understand, not this Psalm only, but many, if ye keep in mind this rule. Sometimes a Psalm, and all prophecy as well, in speaking of Christ, praises the Head alone, and sometimes from the Head goes to the Body, that is, the Church, and without apparently changing the Person spoken of: because the Head is not separate from the Body, and both are spoken of as one ...

14. What then, my brethren, what is said of our Head? "For Thou, Lord, art my hope," etc. Of this we have spoken, "for He hath given His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways" (ver. 11). You heard these words but now, when the Gospel was being read; attend therefore. Our Lord, after He was baptized, fasted. Why was He baptized? That we might not scorn to be baptized. For when John said to our Lord, "Comest Thou to me to be baptized? I ought to be baptized by Thee; and our Lord replied, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness; He wished to fulfil all humility, so that He should be washed, who had no defilement. ...Our Lord, then, was baptized, and after baptism He was tempted; He fasted forty days, a number which has, as I have often mentioned, a deep meaning. All things cannot be explained at once, lest needful time be too much taken up. After forty days He was an hungred. He could have fasted without ever feeling hunger; but then how could He be tempted? or had He not overcome the tempter, how couldest thou learn to struggle with him? He was hungry; and then the tempter said, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Was it a great thing for our Lord Jesus Christ to make bread out of stones, when He satisfied so many thousands with five loaves?

He made bread out of nothing. For whence came that quantity of food, which could satisfy so many thousands? The sources of that bread are in the Lord's hands. This is nothing wonderful; for He Himself made out of five loaves bread enough for so many thousands, who also every day out of a few seeds raises up on earth immense harvests. These are the miracles of our Lord: but from their constant operation they are disregarded. What then, my brethren, was it impossible for the Lord to create bread out of stones? He made men even out of stones, in the words of John the Baptist himself, "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Why then did He

not so? That he might teach thee how to answer the tempter, so that if thou wast reduced to any straits and the tempter suggested, if thou wast a Christian and belongedst to Christ, would He desert thee now? ...Listen to our Lord: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Dost thou think the word of God bread? If the Word of God, through which all things were made, was not bread, He would not say, "I am the bread which came down from heaven. Thou hast therefore learnt to answer the tempter, when pressed with hunger.

15. What if he tempt thee in these words: If thou wast a Christian, thou wouldest do miracles, as many Christians have done? Thou, deceived by a wicked suggestion, wouldest tempt the Lord thy God, so as to say to Him, If I am a Christian, and am before Thine eyes, and Thou dost account me at all in the number of Thine own, let me also do something like the many works which Thy Saints have done. Thou hast tempted God, as if thou wert not a Christian, unless thou didst this. Many who desired such things have fallen. For that Simon the sorcerer desired such gifts of the Apostles, when he wished to buy the Holy Spirit for money. He loved the power of working miracles, but loved not the imitation of humility. ...What then, if he tempt thee thus, "work miracles"? that thou mayest not tempt God, what shouldest thou answer? What our Lord answered. The devil said to Him, "Cast Thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His Angels charge concerning Thee," etc. If Thou shalt cast Thyself down, Angels shall receive Thee. And it might indeed, my brethren, happen, if our Lord had cast Himself down, the attending Angels would receive our Lord's flesh; but what does He say to him? "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Thou thinkest Me a man. For the devil came to Him with this view, that he might try whether He were the Son of God. He saw His Flesh; but His might appeared in His works: the Angels had borne witness. He saw that He was mortal, so that he might tempt Him, that by Christ's temptation the Christian might be taught. What then is written? "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Let us not then tempt the Lord, so as to say, If we belong to Thee, let us work a miracle.

16. Let us return to the words of the Psalm. "They shall bear Thee in their hands, lest at any time Thou hurt Thy foot against a stone" (ver. 12). Christ was raised up in the hands of Angels, when He was taken up into heaven: not that, if Angels had not sustained Him, He would have fallen: but because

they were attending on their King. Say not, Those who sustained Him are better than He who was sustained. Are then cattle better than men, because they sustain the weakness of men? And we ought not to speak thus either; for if the cattle withdraw their support, their riders fall. But how ought we to speak of it? For it is said even of God, "Heaven is My throne. Because then heaven supports Him, and God sits thereon, is therefore heaven the better? Thus also in this Psalm we may understand it of the service of the Angels: it does not pertain to any infirmity in our Lord, but to the honour they pay, and to their service. ...What the finger of God is, the Gospel explaineth to us; for the finger of God is the Holy Ghost. How do we prove this? Our Lord, when answering those who accused Him of casting out devils in the name of Beelzebub, saith, "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God; and another Evangelist, in relating the same saying, saith, "If I with the finger of God cast out devils.

What therefore is in one stated clearly, is darkly expressed in another. Thou didst not know what was the finger of God, but another Evangelist explains it by terming it the Spirit of God. The Law then written by the finger of God was given on the fiftieth day after the slaughter of the lamb, and the Holy Ghost descended on the fiftieth day after the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lamb was slain, the Passover was celebrated, the fifty days were completed, and the Law was given. But that Law was to cause fear, not love: but that fear might be changed into love, He who was truly righteous was slain: of whom that lamb whom the Jews were slaying was the type. He arose from the dead: and from the day of our Lord's Passover, as from that of the slaying of the Paschal lamb, fifty days are counted; and the Holy Ghost descended, now in the fulness of love, not in the punishment of fear. Why have I said this? For this then our Lord arose, and was glorified, that He might send His Holy Spirit. And I said long ago that this was so, because His head is in heaven, His feet on earth. If His head is in heaven, His feet on earth; what means our Lord's feet on earth? Our Lord's saints on earth. Who are our Lord's feet? The Apostles sent throughout the whole world. Who are our Lord's feet?

All the Evangelists, in whom our Lord travelleth over all nations. ...We need not therefore wonder that our Lord was raised up to heaven by the hands of Angels, that His foot might not dash against a stone: lest those who on earth toiled in His body, while they were travelling over the whole world

might become guilty of the Law, He took from them fear, and filled them with love. Through fear Peter thrice denied Him, for he had not yet received the Holy Ghost: afterwards, when he had received the Holy Spirit, he began to preach with confidence. ...Our Lord so dealt with him, as if He said, thrice thou hast denied Me through fear: thrice confess Me through love. With that love and that charity He filled His disciples. Why? Because He hath set His house of defence very high: because when glorified He sent the Holy Ghost, He released the faithful from the guilt of the Law, that His feet might not dash against a stone.

17. "Thou shall go upon the asp and the basilisk; the lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet" (ver. 13). Ye know who the serpent is, and how the Church treadeth upon him, as she is not conquered, because she is on her guard against his cunning. And after what manner he is a lion and a dragon, I believe you know also, beloved. The lion openly rages, the dragon lies secretly in covert: the devil hath each of these forces and powers. When the Martyrs were being slain, it was the raging lion: when heretics are plotting, it is the dragon creeping beneath us. Thou hast conquered the lion; conquer also the dragon: the lion hath not crushed thee, let not the dragon deceive thee. ...A few women in the Church have bodily virginity: but the virginity of the heart all the faithful have. In the very matter of faith he feared that the heart's virginity would be corrupted by the devil: and those who have lost it, are uselessly virgins in their bodies. What does a woman who is corrupt in heart preserve in her body? Thus a Catholic married woman is before a virgin heretic. For the first is not indeed a virgin in her body, but the second has become married in her heart; and married not unto God as her husband, but unto the dragon. But what shall the Church do? The basilisk is the king of serpents, as the devil is the king of wicked spirits.

18. These are the words of God to the Church. "Because he hath set his love in me, therefore will I deliver him" (ver. 14). Not only therefore the Head, which now sits in heaven, because He hath set His house of defence very high, to which no evil shall happen, neither shall any plague come nigh His dwelling; but we also who are toiling on earth, and are still living in temptations, whose steps are feared for, lest they fall into snares, may hear the voice of the Lord our God consoling us, and saying to us, "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him up, because he hath known my name." 19. "He shall call upon me, and I will hear

him: yea, I am with him in trouble" (ver. 15). Fear not when thou art in trouble, as if the Lord were not with thee. Let faith be with thee, and God is with thee in thy trouble. There are waves on the sea, and thou art tossed in thy bark, because Christ sleepeth. Christ slept in the ship, while the men were perishing. If thy, faith sleep in thy heart, Christ is as it were sleeping in thy ship: because Christ dwelleth in thee through faith, when thou beginnest to be tossed, awake Christ sleeping: rouse up thy faith, and thou shalt be assured that He deserts thee not. But thou thinkest thou art forsaken, because He rescueth thee not when thou thyself dost wish. He delivered the Three Children from the fire? Did He, who did this, desert the Maccabees? God forbid! He delivered both of these: the first bodily, that the faithless might be confounded; the last spiritually, that the faithful might imitate them. "I will deliver him, and bring him to honour."

20. "With length of days will I satisfy him" (ver. 16). What is length of days? Eternal life. Brethren, imagine not that length of days is spoken of in the same sense as days are said to be long in summer, short in winter. Hath he such days to give us? That length is one that hath no end, eternal life, that is promised us in long days. And truly, since this sufficeth, with reason he saith, "will I satisfy him. What is long in time, if it hath an end, satisfieth us not: for that reason it should not be even called long. And if we are covetous, we ought to be covetous of eternal life: long for such a life, as hath no end. Lo, a line in which our covetousness may be extended. Dost thou wish money without limit? Long for eternal life without limit. Dost thou wish that thy possession may have no end? Seek for eternal life. "I will show him my salvation. Nor is this, my brethren, to be briefly passed over. "I will show him my salvation: He means, I will show him Christ Himself. Why? Was He not seen on earth? What great thing hath He to show us? But He did not appear such as we shall see Him. He appeared in that shape in which those who saw Him crucified Him: behold, those who saw Him, crucified Him: we have not seen Him, yet we have believed. They had eyes, have not we?

yea, we too have the eyes of the heart: but, as yet we see through faith, not by sight. When will it be sight? When shall we, as the Apostle saith, see Him "face to face"? which God promiseth us as the high reward of all our toils. Whatever thou toilest in, thou toilest for this purpose, that thou mayest see Him. Some great thing it is we are to see, since all our reward is seeing; and our Lord Jesus Christ is that very great sight. He who appeared humble, will

Himself appear great, and will rejoice us, as He is even now seen of His Angels. ...Let us love and imitate Him: let us run after his ointments, as is said in the Song of Solomon: "Because of the savour of thy good ointments, we will run after thee. For He came, and gave forth a savour that filled the world. Whence was that fragrance? From heaven. Follow then towards heaven, if thou do not answer falsely when it is said, "Lift up your hearts," lift up your thoughts, your love, your hope: that it may not rot upon the earth. ..."For wherever thy treasure is, there will be thy heart also."

PSALM 92

1. ...We are not Christians, except on account of a future life: let no one hope for present blessings, let no one promise himself the happiness of the world, because he is a Christian: but let him use the happiness he hath, as he may, in what manner he may, when he may, as far as he may. When it is present, let him give thanks for the consolation of God: when it is wanting, let him give thanks to the Divine justice. Let him always be grateful, never ungrateful: let him be grateful to his Father, who soothes and caresses him: and grateful to his Father when He chasteneth him with the scourge, and teacheth him: for He ever loveth, whether He caress or threaten: and let him say what ye have heard in the Psalm: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord; and to sing praises unto Thy Name, Thou Most Highest" (ver. 1).

2. This Psalm is entitled, a Psalm to be sung on the Sabbath day. Lo, this day is the Sabbath, which the Jews at this period observe by a kind of bodily rest, languid and luxurious. They abstain from labours, and give themselves up to trifles; and though God ordained the Sabbath, they spend it in actions which God forbids. Our rest is from evil works, theirs from good; for it is better to plough than to dance. They abstain from good, but not from trifling, works. God proclaims to us a Sabbath. What sort of Sabbath? First consider, where it is. It is in the heart, within us; for many are idle with their limbs, while they are disturbed in conscience. ...That very joy in the tranquillity of our hope, is our Sabbath. This is the subject of praise and of song in this Psalm, how a Christian man is in the Sabbath of his own heart, that is, in the quiet, tranquillity, and serenity of his conscience, undisturbed; hence he tells us here, whence men are wont to be disturbed, and he teaches thee to keep Sabbath in thine own heart.

3. ...Accuse thyself, and thou receivest indulgence. Besides, many do not accuse Satan but their fate. My fate led me, saith one when you ask him, why

did you do it? why did you sin? he replies, by my evil fate. Lest he should say, I did it; he points to God as the source of his sin: with his tongue he blasphemes. He saith not this indeed openly as yet, but listen, and see that he saith this. You ask of him, what is fate: and he replies, evil stars. You ask, who made, who appointed the stars; he can only answer, God. It follows, then, that whether he doth so directly or indirectly, still he accuseth God, and when God punisheth sins, he maketh God the author of his own sins. It cannot be that God punishes what He hath wrought: He punisheth what thou doest, that He may set free what He hath wrought. But sometimes, setting aside everything else, they attack God directly: and when they sin, they say, God willed this; if God had not willed it, I should not have sinned. Does He warn thee for this, that not only He may not be listened to, to keep thee from sin, but even be accused because thou dost sin? What then doth this Psalm teach us? "It is a good thing to confess unto the Lord." What is to confess unto the Lord? In both cases: both in thy sins, because thou hast done them; and in thy good works, confess unto the Lord, because He hath done them. Then shalt thou "sing unto the Name of God, the Most Highest:" seeking the glory of God, not thine own; His Name, not thine. For if thou seekest the Name of God, He also seeketh thy name; but if thou hast neglected the Name of God, He also doth blot out thine. ...

4. "To tell of Thy mercy early in the morning, and of Thy truth in the night season" (ver. 2). What is the meaning of this; that the mercy of God is to be told us in the morning, and in the night the truth of God? The morning is, when it is well with us; the night, the sadness of tribulation. What then did he say in brief? When thou art prosperous, rejoice in God, for it is His mercy. Now, perhaps thou wouldest say, If I rejoice in God, when I am prosperous, because it is His mercy; what am I to do when I am in sorrow, in tribulation? It is His mercy, when I am prosperous; is it then His cruelty, when I am in adversity? If I praise His mercy when it is well with me, am I then to exclaim against His cruelty when it is ill? No. But when it is well, praise His mercy: when ill, praise His truth: because He scourgeth sins, He is not unjust. ...During the night Daniel confessed the truth of God: he said in his prayer, "We have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee: but unto us confusion of face." He told of the truth of God during the night-season. What is it to tell of the truth of God in the night-season? Not to accuse God, because thou

sufferest aught of evil: but to attribute it to thy sins, His correction: to tell of His loving-kindness early in the morning, and of His truth in the night-season. When thou doest this, thou dost always praise God, always confess to God, and sing unto His Name.

5. "Upon a psaltery of ten strings, with a song, and upon the harp" (ver. 3). Ye have not heard of the psaltery of ten strings for the first time: it signifies the ten commandments of the Law. But we must sing upon that psaltery, and not carry it only. For even the Jews have the Law: but they carry it: they sing not. ... "And upon the harp." This means, in word and deed; "with a song," in word; "upon the harp," in work. If thou speakest words alone, thou hast, as it were, the song only, and not the harp: if thou workest, and speakest not, thou hast the harp only. On this account both speak well and do well, if thou wouldest have the song together with the harp. 6. "For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy works; and I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of Thy hands" (ver. 4). Ye see what he saith. Thou hast made me living well, Thou hast formed me: if by chance I do aught of good, I will rejoice in the work of Thy hands: as the Apostle saith, "For we are His workmanship, created unto good works." For unless He formed thee to good works, thou wouldest not know any works but evil. ... Because thou canst not have truth from thy own self, it remains that thou drink it thence, whence it floweth: as if thou hast gone back from the light, thou art in darkness: as a stone glows not with its own heat, but either from the sun or fire, and if thou withdraw it from the heat, it cools: there it appears, that the heat was not its own; for it became heated either by the sun or by fire: thus thou also, if thou withdraw from God, wilt become cold; if thou approach God, thou wilt warm: as the Apostle saith "fervent in spirit." Also what saith he of the light? If thou approach Him, thou wilt be in light; therefore saith the Psalm, "Look upon Him, and be lightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed." Because therefore thou canst do no good, unless lightened by the light of God, and warmed by the spirit of God; when thou shalt see thyself working well, confess unto God, and say what the Apostle saith; say unto thyself, that thou be not puffed up, "For what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" ...

7. That wretched man who doeth good, and suffereth evils, seeth him, becometh disturbed, and saith, O God, the wicked, I imagine, please Thee, and Thou hatest the good, and lovest those who work iniquity. ... The Sabbath being now lost in the inner man, and the tranquillity of his heart being shut

out, and good thoughts repelled, he now beginneth to imitate him whom he seeth flourishing amid his evil deeds; and turneth himself also to evil works. But God is long-suffering, because He is eternal, and he knoweth the day of His own judgment, where He weigheth all things. 8. Teaching us this, what saith he: "O Lord, how glorious are Thy works: Thy thoughts are made very deep" (ver. 5). Verily, my brethren, there is no sea so deep as these thoughts of God, who maketh the wicked flourish, and the good suffer: nothing so profound, nothing so deep: therein every unbelieving soul is wrecked, in that depth, in that profundity. Dost thou wish to cross this depth? Remove not from the wood of Christ's Cross: thou shall not sink: hold thyself fast to Christ. What do I mean by this, hold fast to Christ? It was for this reason that He chose to suffer on earth Himself. Ye have heard, while the prophet was being read, how He "did not turn away His back from the smiters, and His face from the spittings of men," how "He turned not His cheek from their hands; wherefore chose He to stiffer all these things, but that He might console the suffering? He could have raised His flesh at the last day: but then thou wouldest not have had thy ground of hope, since thou hadst not seen Him. He deferred not His resurrection, that thou mightest not still be in doubt. Suffer then tribulation in the world with the same end as that which thou hast observed in Christ: and let not those who do evil, and flourish in this life, move thee. "Thy thoughts are very deep. Where is the thought of God? Rejoice not as the fish who is exulting in his bait:

the fisherman hath not drawn his hook: the fish hath as yet the hook in his jaws. And what seemeth to thee long, is short; all these things pass over quickly. What is the long life of man to the eternity of God? Dost thou wish to be of long-suffering? Consider the eternity of God. For thou regardest thy few days, and in thy few days thou dost wish all things to be fulfilled. What things? The condemnation of all the wicked: and the crowning of all the good: dost thou wish these things to be fulfilled in thy days? God fulfilleth them in His own time. Why dost thou suffer weariness? He is eternal: He waiteth: He is of long-suffering: but thou sayest, I am not of long-suffering, because I am mortal. But thou hast it in thy power to become so: join thy heart to the eternity of God, and with Him thou shalt be eternal. ...

9. For this reason, after saying, "Thy thoughts are very deep," he at once subjoins: "An unwise man doth not well consider this, and a fool doth not understand it" (ver. 6). What are the things which an unwise man cloth not

well consider, and which a fool doth not understand? "When the ungodly are green as the grass." What is, "as the grass"? They flourish when it is winter, but they will wither in the summer. Thou observest the flower of the grass? What more quickly passeth by? What is brighter? What is greener? Let not its verdure delight thee, but fear its withering. Thou hast heard of the ungodly being green as the grass: hear also of the righteous: "For lo." In the meanwhile, consider the ungodly; they flourish as the grass; but who are they who understand it not? The foolish and unwise. "When the ungodly are green as the grass, and all men look upon the workers of iniquity" (ver. 7). All who in their heart think not aright of God, look upon the ungodly when they are as green as grass, that is, when they flourish for a time. Why do they look upon them? "That they may be destroyed for ever." For they regard their momentary bloom, they imitate them, and wishing to flourish with them for a time, perish for evermore: this is, "That they may be destroyed for ever."

10. "But Thou, Lord, art the Most Highest for evermore" (ver. 8). Waiting above in Thy eternity until the season of the wicked be past, and that of the just come. "For lo. Listen, brethren. Already he who speaketh (for he speaketh in our person, in the person of Christ's body, for Christ speaketh in His own body, that is, in His Church), hath joined himself unto the eternity of God: as I a little before was saying unto you, God is long-suffering and patient, and alloweth all those evil deeds which He seeth to be done by wicked men. Wherefore? because He is eternal, and seeth what He keepeth for them. Dost thou also wish to be long-suffering and patient? Join thyself to the eternity of God: together with Him wait for those things which are beneath thee: for when thy heart shall have cleaved unto the Most Highest, all mortal things will be beneath thee: say then what follows, "For lo, thine enemies shall perish. Those who now flourish, shall afterwards perish. Who are the enemies of God? Brethren, perhaps ye think those only enemies of God who blaspheme? They indeed are so, and those wicked men who neither in tongue nor in thought cease to injure God. And what do they do to the eternal, most high God? If thou strike with thy fist upon a pillar, thou art hurt: and thinkest thou that where thou strikest God with thy blasphemy, thou art not thyself broken? for thou doest nothing to God.

But the enemies of God are openly blasphemers, and daily they are found hidden. Beware of such enmities of God. For the Scripture revealeth some such secret enemies of God: that because thou knowest them not in thy

heart, thou mayest know in God's Scriptures, and beware of being found with them. James saith openly in his Epistle, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Thou hast heard. Dost thou wish not to be an enemy of God? Be not a friend of this world: for if thou art a friend of this world, thou wilt be an enemy of God. For as a wife cannot be an adulteress, unless she be an enemy to her own husband: so a soul which is an adulteress through its love of worldly things, cannot but be an enemy to God. It feareth, but loveth not: it feareth punishment but is not delighted with righteousness. All lovers of the world, therefore, are enemies of God, all the curious after trifles, all consulters of diviners astrologers, and evil spirits. Let them enter, or not enter, Churches: they are enemies of God. They may flourish for a season like grass, but they will perish, when He beginneth to visit them, and pronounce His sentence upon all flesh. Join thyself to the Scripture of God, and say with this Psalm, "For lo, thine enemies shall perish" (ver. 9). Be not found there, where they shall perish. "And all the workers of iniquity shall be destroyed."

11. ..."But mine horn shall be exalted like the horn of an unicorn" (ver. 10). Why did He say, "like the horn of an unicorn"? Sometimes an unicorn signifies pride, sometimes it means the lifting up of unity; because unity is lifted up, all heresies shall perish with the enemies of God. And "mine horn shall be exalted like an unicorn." When will it be so? "And mine old age shall be in the fatness of mercy." Why did he say, "my old age"? He means, my last days; as our old age is the last season in our lives, so the whole of what the body of Christ at present suffereth in labours, in cares, in watchings, in hunger, in thirst, in stumbling-blocks, in wickednesses, in tribulations, is its youth: its old age, that is, its last days, will be in joy. And beware, beloved, that ye think not death meant also, in that he hath spoken of old age: for man groweth old in the flesh for this reason, that he may die. The old age of the Church will be white with good works, but it shall not decay through death. What the head of the old man is, that our works will be. Ye see how the head groweth old, and whiteneth, as fast as old age approacheth. Thou sometimes dost seek in the head of one who groweth old duly in his own course a black hair, yet thou findest it not: thus when our life shall have been such, that the blackness of sins may be sought, and none found, that old age is youthful, is green, and ever will be green. Ye have heard of the grass of sin-

ners, hear ye of the old age of the righteous: "My old age shall be in the fathers of mercy."

12. "And Mine eye hath beheld on mine enemies" (ver. 11). Whom doth he call his enemies? All the workers of iniquity. Do not observe whether thy friend be wicked: let an occasion come, and then thou provest him. Thou beginnest to go contrary to his iniquity, and then thou shalt see that when he was flattering thee, he was thy enemy; but thou hadst not yet knocked, not to raise in his heart what was not there, but that what was there might break out. "Mine eye also hath looked upon mine enemies: and mine ear shall hear his desire of the wicked that rise up against me." When? In my old age. What is, in old age? In the last times. And what shall our ear hear? Standing on the right hand, we shall hear what shall be said to them that are on the left. 13. The grass withereth, the flower of sinners dieth away: what of the righteous? "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree" (ver. 12). The ungodly are green as grass; "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree." By the palm tree he signifieth height. Possibly he had also this meaning in the palm, that in its extremities it is beautiful: so that thou mayest trace its beginning from the earth, its end in its topmost branches, wherein its whole beauty dwelleth. The rough root appeareth in the earth, the beautiful foliage toward the sky. Thy beauty too, then, shall be in the end. Thy root is fixed fast: but our root is upward. For our root is Christ, who hath ascended into heaven. Humbled, he shall be exalted; "he shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus." See what trees he spoke of: the righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree: and shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus. When the sun hath gone forth, doth the palm-tree wither? Doth the cedar die? But when the sun hath been glowing for some hours, the grass drieth up. The judgment, therefore, shall come, that sinners may wither, and the faithful flourish.

14. "Such as are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of the house of our God" (ver. 12). "They shall be yet more increased in fruitful old age, and shall be quiet, that they may show it forth" (ver. 13). Such is the Sabbath, which but a little while ago I commended unto you, whence the Psalm hath its title. "They shall be quiet, that they may show it forth. Wherefore are they quiet that show it forth? The grass of sinners moveth them not: the cedar and palm-tree not even in tempests are bent. They are therefore quiet, that they may show it forth: and with reason, since at present they must show it forth even unto men who mock at it. O

wretched men, who are lovers of the world! Those who are planted in the house of the Lord, show it to you: those who praise the Lord with song and lute, in word and deed, show it forth to you, and tell you. Be not seduced by the prosperity of the wicked, admire not the flower of grass: admire not those who are happy only for a season, but miserable unto eternity. ...If ye wish to flourish like a palm-tree, and to spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus, and not to wither like grass when the sun is hot; as those who appear to flourish when the sun is absent.

If then ye wish not to be as grass, but as the palm-tree and the cedar, what will ye show forth? "How true the Lord my strength is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him. How is it there is no unrighteousness? A man committeth so great crimes; he is well, he hath sons, a plentiful house, he is full of pride, is exalted by his honours, is revenged on his enemies, and doeth every evil deed; another man, innocent, attending to his own affairs, not robbing another's goods, doing nothing against any one, suffereth in chains, in prison, tosseth and sigheth in poverty. How is it that there is no unrighteousness in Him? Be quiet, and thou shall know: for thou art disturbed, and in thy chamber thou dost darken thy light. The eternal God doth wish to shine upon thee: do not then make thee cloudy weather from thy own disturbed mind. Be quiet within thyself, and see what I say unto thee. Because God is eternal, because for the present He spareth the bad, bringing them to repentance: He scourgeth the good, instructing them in the way unto the kingdom of heaven: "There is no unrighteousness in Him: fear not. ...What, if He leaveth this man unpunished now, because he is doomed to hear, "Depart into everlasting fire. But when? when thou shalt be placed at the right hand, then shall it be said to those placed on the left, "Depart into the everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels.

Let not therefore those things move thee: Be quiet, keep Sabbath, and show "how true the Lord my strength is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him."

PSALM 93

1. ...It is entitled, "The Song of praise of David himself, on the day before the Sabbath, when the earth was rounded. Remembering then what God did through all those days, when He made and ordained all things, from the first up to the sixth day (for the seventh He sanctified, because He rested on that day after all the works, which He made very good), we find that He created

on the sixth day (which day is here mentioned, in that he saith, "before the Sabbath") all animals on the earth; lastly, He on that very day created man in His own likeness and image. For these days were not without reason ordained in such order, but for that ages also were to run in a like course, before we rest in God. But then we rest if we do good works. As a type of this, it is written of God, "God r rested on the seventh day," when He had made all His works very good. For He was not wearied, so as to need rest, nor hath He now left off to work, for our Lord Christ saith openly, "My Father worketh hitherto. For He saith this unto the Jews, who thought carnally of God, and understood not that God worketh in quiet, and always worketh, and is always in quiet.

We also, then, whom God willed then to figure in Himself, shall have rest after all good works. ...And because these good works are doomed to pass away, that sixth day also, when those very good works are perfected, hath an evening; but in the Sabbath we find no evening, because our rest shall have no end: for evening is put for end. As therefore God made man in His own image on the sixth day: thus we find that our Lord Jesus Christ came into the sixth age, that man might be formed anew after the image of God. For the first period, as the first day, was from Adam until Noah: the second, as the second day, from Noah unto Abraham: the third, as the third day, from Abraham unto David: the fourth, as the fourth day, from David unto the removal to Babylon: the fifth period, as the fifth day, from the removal to Babylon unto the preaching of John. The sixth day beginneth from the preaching of John, and lasteth unto the end: and after the end of the sixth day, we reach our rest. The sixth day, therefore, is even now passing. And it is now the sixth day, see what the title hath; "On the day before the Sabbath, when the earth was founded. Let us now listen to the Psalm itself: let us enquire of it, how the earth was made, whether perhaps the earth was then made: and we do not read so in Genesis. When, therefore, was the earth founded?

when, unless when that which hath been but now read in the Apostle taketh place: "If," he saith, "ye are stedfast, immovable. When all who believe throughout all the earth are stedfast in faith, the earth is founded: then man is made in the image of God. That sixth day in Genesis signifieth this. ... 2. "The Lord reigneth, He is clothed with beauty; the Lord is clothed with strength, and is girded" (ver. 1). We see that He hath clothed Himself with

two things: beauty and strength. But why? That He might found the earth. So it followeth, "He hath made the round world so sure, that it cannot be moved." Whence hath He made it so sure? Because He hath clothed Himself in beauty. He would not make it so sure, if He put on beauty only, and not strength also. Why therefore beauty, why strength? For He hath said both. Ye know, brethren, that when our Lord had come in the flesh, of those to whom He preached the Gospel, He pleased some, and displeased others. For the tongues of the Jews were divided against one another: "Some said, He is a good Man; others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people." Some then spoke well, others detracted from Him, tore Him, bit and insulted Him. Towards those therefore whom He pleased, "He put on beauty;" towards those whom He displeased, "He put on strength." Imitate then thy Lord, that thou mayest become His garment: be with beauty towards those whom thy good works please: show thy strength against detractors. ...

3. Perhaps we should enquire respecting this word also, why he said, "He is girded. Girding signifieth work: for every man then girdeth himself, when he is about to work. But wherefore did he use the word *praecinctus*, instead of *cinctus*? For he saith in another Psalm, "Gird Thee with Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou most mighty: the people shall fall under Thee: using the word *accingere*, not *cingere*, nor *praecingere*: this word being applied to the act of attaching anything to the side by girding it. The sword of the Lord, wherewith He conquered the round world by killing iniquity, is the Spirit of God in the truth of the word of God. Wherefore is He said to bind His sword around His thigh? In another place, on another Psalm we have spoken in another manner of girding: but nevertheless, since it hath been mentioned, it ought not to be passed over. What is the girding on of the sword around the thigh? He meaneth the flesh by the thigh. For the Lord would not otherwise conquer the round world, unless the sword of truth came into the flesh. Why therefore is He here said to be girded in front (*praecinctus*)? He who girdeth himself before, placeth something before himself, wherewith he is girded; whence it is said, He girded Himself before with a towel, and began to wash the disciples' feet. Because He was humble when He girded Himself with a towel. He washed the feet of His own disciples. But all strength is in humility:

because all pride is fragile: therefore when He was speaking of strength, he added, "He is girded: that thou mayest remember how thy God was girded in humility, when He washed His disciples' feet. ...After He had washed their

feet, again He sat down; He said unto them, "Ye call me Lord and Master: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; how ought ye also to do to one another's feet? If therefore strength is in humility, fear not the proud. The humble are like a rock: the rock seems to lie downwards: but nevertheless it is firm. What are the proud? Like smoke: although they are lofty, they vanish. We ought therefore to ascribe our Lord's being girded to His humility, according to the mention of the Gospel, that He was girded, that He might wash His disciples' feet.

4. ..." For He hath made the round world sure, which cannot be moved." ...What then is the round world, "which cannot be moved"? This He would not mention specially, if there were not also a round world that can be moved. There is a round world that shall not be moved. There is a round world that shall be moved. For the good who are steadfast in the faith are the round world: that no man may say, they are only in part of it; while the wicked who abide not in faith, when they have felt any tribulation, are throughout the whole world. There is therefore a round world movable: there is a world immovable: of which the Apostle speaketh. Behold, the round world movable. I ask thee, of whom speaketh the Apostle in these words, "Of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already: and overthrow the faith of some?" Did these belong to the round world, that shall not be moved? But they were chaff: and as he saith, "they overthrow the faith of some." ..."Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure; having his seal,"-what seal hath it as its sure foundation?-" The Lord knoweth them that are His." This is the round world that shall not be moved; "The Lord knoweth them that are His." And what seal hath it? "And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness." Let him depart from unrighteousness: for he cannot depart from the unrighteous, for the chaff is mixed with the wheat until it is fanned. ...

5. "Thy throne is established from thence, O Lord" (ver. 2). What is, "from thence"? From that time. As if he said, What is the throne of God? Where doth God sit? In His Saints. Dost thou wish to be the throne of God? Prepare a place in thy heart where He may sit. What is the throne of God, except where God dwelleth? Where doth God dwell, except in His temple? What is His temple? Is it surrounded with walls? Far from it. Perhaps this world is His temple, because it is very great, and a thing worthy to contain

God. It contains not Him by whom it was made. And wherein is He contained? In the quiet soul, in the righteous soul: that is it that containeth Him. ...He who said, "Before Abraham was, I am:" not before Abraham only, but before Adam: not only before Adam, but before all the angels, before heaven and earth; since all things were made through Him: he added, lest thou, attending to the day of our Lord's nativity, mightest think He commenced from that time, "Thy throne is established, O God." But what God? "Thou art from everlasting:" for which he uses *ap' aiwnoj*, in the Greek version; that word being sometimes used for an age, sometimes for everlasting. Therefore, O Thou who seemest to be born "from thence," Thou art from everlasting! But let not human birth be thought of, but Divine eternity. He began then from the time of His birth; He grew: ye have heard the Gospel. He chose disciples, He replenished them, His disciples began to preach. Perhaps this is what he speaketh of in the following verse.

6. "The floods lift up their voices" (ver. 3). What are these floods, which have lift up their voices? We heard them not: neither when our Lord was born, did we hear rivers speak, nor when He was baptized, nor when He suffered; we heard not that rivers did speak. Read the Gospel, ye find not that rivers spoke. It is not enough that they spoke: "They have lift up their voice: they have not only spoken, but bravely, mightily, in a lofty voice. What are those rivers which have spoken? ...The Spirit itself was a mighty river, whence many rivers were filled. Of that river the Psalmist saith in another passage, "The rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the city of God. Rivers then were made to flow from the belly of the disciples, when they received the Holy Spirit: themselves were rivers, when they had received that Holy Spirit. Whence did those rivers lift their voices? wherefore did they lift them up? Because at first they feared. Peter was not yet a river, when at the question of the maid-servant he thrice denied Christ: "I do not know the man. Here he lieth through fear: he lifteth not his voice as yet: he is not yet the river.

But when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, the Jews sent for them, and enjoined them not to preach at all, nor to teach in the name of Jesus. ...For when the Apostles had been dismissed from the council of the Jews, they came to their own friends, and told them what the priests and elders said unto them: but they on hearing lifted up their voices with one accord unto the Lord, and said, "Lord, it is Thou who hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; and the rest which floods lifting up their

voices might say, "Wonderful are the hangings of the sea" (ver. 4). For when the disciples had lifted up their voices unto Him, many believed, and many received the Holy Spirit, and many rivers instead of few began to lift up their voice. Hence there followeth, "from the voices of many waters, wonderful are the hangings of the sea; that is, the waves of the world. When Christ had begun to be preached by so powerful voices, the sea became enraged, persecutions began to thicken. When therefore the rivers had lift up their voice, "from the voices of many waters, wonderful" were "the hangings of the sea. To be hung aloft is to be lifted up; when the sea rages, the waves are hung as from above. Let the waves hang over as they choose; let the sea roar as it chooseth; the hangings of the sea indeed are mighty, mighty are the threatenings, mighty the persecutions;

but see what followeth: "but yet the Lord, who dwelleth on high, is mightier. Let therefore the sea restrain itself, and sometime become calmed; let peace be granted by Christians. The sea was disturbed, the vessel was tossed; the vessel is the Church: the sea, the world. The Lord came, He walked over the sea, and calmed the waves. How did the Lord walk over the sea? Above the heads of those mighty foaming waves. Principalities and kings believed; they were subdued unto Christ. Let us not therefore be frightened; because "the Lord, who dwelleth on high, is mightier." 7. "Thy testimonies, O Lord, are very surely believed" (ver. 5). The Lord, who dwelleth on high, is mightier than the mighty overhangings of the sea. "Thy testimonies are very surely believed." "Thy testimonies," because He had said beforehand, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation." ...He added, "but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." If then He saith, "I have overcome the world," cling unto Him who overcame the world, who overcame the sea. Rejoice in Him, because the Lord, who dwelleth on high, is mightier, and, "Thy testimonies are very surely believed." And what is the end of all these? "Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord!" Thine house, the whole of Thine house, not here and there: but the whole of Thine house, throughout the whole world. Why throughout the whole of the round world? "Because He hath set aright the round world, which cannot be moved." The Lord's house will be strong: it will prevail throughout the whole world: many shall fall: but that house standeth; many shall be disturbed, but that house shall not be moved. Holiness be-

cometh Thine house, O Lord!" For a short time only? No. "Unto length of days."

PSALM 94

1. As we listened with much attention, while the Psalm was in reading, so let us listen attentively, while the Lord revealeth the mysteries which He hath deigned to obscure in this passage. For some mysteries in the Scriptures are shut up for this reason, not that they may be denied, but that they may be opened unto those who knock. If therefore ye knock with affection of piety, and sincere heartfelt love, He, who seeth from what motives ye knock, will open unto you. It is known unto all of us (and I wish we may not be among their number), that may murmur against God's long-suffering, and grieve either that impious and wicked men live in this world, or that they have great power; and what is more, that the bad generally have great power against the good, and that the bad often oppress the good; that the wicked exult, while the good suffer; the evil are proud, while the good are humbled. Observing such things in the human race (for they abound), impatient and weak minds are perverted, as if they were good in vain; since God averteth, or seemeth to avert, His eyes from the good works of the pious and faithful, and to promote the wicked in those pleasures which they love. Weak men, therefore, imagining that they live well in vain, are induced either to imitate the wickedness of those whom they see flourishing:

or if either through bodily or mental weakness they are deterred from doing wrong by a fear of the penal laws of the world; not because they love justice, but, to speak more openly, fearing the condemnation of men among men, they refrain indeed from wicked deeds, but refrain not from wicked thoughts. And among their wicked thoughts, the chief is the wickedness which leadeth them impiously to imagine that God is neglectful, and regardless of human affairs: and that He either holdeth in equal estimation the good and the wicked: or even, and this is a still more pernicious notion, that He persecuteth the good, and favoureth the wicked. He who thinketh thus, although he doth no harm to any man, doth the greatest to himself, and is impious against himself, and by his wickedness hurteth not God, but slayeth himself. ... 2. The Psalm hath this title, that is, this inscription: "A Psalm of David himself, on the fourth day of the week. This Psalm is about to teach patience in the sufferings of the righteous: it enjoineth patience against the prosperity of the wicked, and buildeth up patience. This is the drift of the

whole of it, from beginning to end. Wherefore then hath it such a title, "on the fourth of the week"? The first of the week is the Lord's day: the second, is the second week-day, which people of the world call the Moon's day: the third, is the third weekday, which they term Mars' day. The fourth of the Sabbaths therefore is the fourth week-day, which by Pagans is styled Mercury's day, and also by many Christians; but I would not call it so: and I wish they would change for the better, and cease to do so; for they have a phrase of their own, which they may use. For these terms are not of universal use: many nations have severally different names for them: so that the mode of speech used by the Church better beseemeth the mouth of a Christian. Yet if custom hath induced any person to utter that with his tongue which his heart doth disapprove, let him remember, that all those whose names the stars bear were men, and that the stars did not commence their existence in the sky, when those men began theirs, but were there long before;

but on account of some mortal services rendered unto mortals, those men in their own times, because they had great power, and were eminent in this life, since they were beloved by men, not on account of eternal life, but of temporal services, received divine honours. For then men of the old world, in being deceived and wishing to deceive, pointed to the stars in heaven, to flatter those who had done them any good service in their affection for this life, saying, that that was the star of such a man, this of another; while the man who had not beheld them before, so as to see that those stars were there before the birth of the man, were deceived into a belief: and thus this vain opinion was conceived. This erroneous opinion the devil strengthened, Christ overthrew. According to our mode of speech, then, the fourth of the week is taken for the fourth day from the Lord's day. Attend, therefore, beloved, to what this title meaneth. Here is a great mystery, and a truly hidden one. ...Let us therefore recall from the holy Scripture in Genesis, what was created on the first day; we find light: what was created on the second day; we find the firmament, which God called heaven: what was created on the third day; we find the form of earth and sea, and their separation, that all the gathering together of the waters was called sea, and all that was dry, the earth.

On the fourth day, the Lord made the lights in heaven: "The sun to rule the day: the moon and stars to govern the night: this was the work of the fourth day. What then is the reason that the Psalm hath taken its title from

the fourth day: the Psalm in which patience is enjoined against the prosperity of the wicked, and the sufferings of the good. Thou findest the Apostle Paul speaking. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." ... 3. Let us now attend to the Psalm. "The Lord is the God of vengeance; the God of vengeance hath dealt confidently" (ver. 1). Dost thou think that He doth not punish? "The God of vengeance" punisheth. What is, "The God of vengeance"? The God of punishments. Thou murmurest surely because the bad are not punished: yet do not murmur, lest thou be among those who are punished. That man hath committed a theft, and liveth: thou murmurest against God, because he who committed a theft on thee dieth not. ...Therefore, if thou wouldest have another correct his hand, do thou first correct thy tongue: thou wouldest have him correct his heart towards man, correct thy heart towards God; lest perchance, when thou desirest the vengeance of God, if it come, it find thee first. For He will come: He will come, and will judge those who continue in their wickedness, ungrateful for the prolongation of His mercy, for His long-suffering, treasuring up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds: because, "The Lord is the God of vengeance," therefore hath He "dealt confidently." ...Our safety is our Saviour: in Him He would place the hope of all the needy and poor. And what saith He? "I will deal confidently in Him. What meaneth this? He will not fear, will not spare the lusts and vices of men.

Truly, as a faithful physician, with the healing knife of preaching in His hand, He hath cut away all our wounded parts. Therefore such as He was prophesied and preached beforehand, such was He found. ...How great things then did He, of whom it is said, "He taught them as one having authority," say unto them? "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! What great things did He say unto them, before their face? He feared no one. Why? Because He is the God of vengeance. For this reason He spared them not in words, that they might remain for Him after to spare them in judgment; because if they were unwilling to accept the healing of His word, they would afterwards incur their Judge's doom. Wherefore? Because He hath said, "The Lord is the God of vengeance, the God of vengeance hath dealt confidently;

that is, He hath spared no man in word. He who spared not in word when about to suffer, will He spare in judgment when about to judge? He who in His humility feared no man, will He fear any man in His glory? From His dealing thus confidently in time past, imagine how He will deal at the end of time. Murmur not then against God, who seemeth to spare the wicked; but be thou good, and perhaps for a season He may not spare thee the rod, that He may in the end spare thee in judgment. ...

4. And what followed, because He dealt confidently? "Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world" (ver. 2). Because they imprisoned Him when humble, thinkest thou they will imprison Him when exalted? Because they judged Him when mortal, will they not be judged by Him when immortal? What then saith He? "Be exalted," Thou, who hast dealt confidently, the confidence of whose word the wicked bore not, but thought they did a glorious deed, when they seized and crucified Thee; they who ought to have seized on Thee with faith, seized Thee with persecution. Thou then who hast among the wicked dealt confidently, and hast feared no man, because Thou hast suffered, "be exalted; that is, arise again, depart into heaven. Let the Church also bear with long-suffering what the Church's Head hath borne with long-suffering. "Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world: and reward the proud after their deserving. He will reward them, brethren. For what is this, "Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world: and reward the proud after their deserving"? This is the prophecy of one who doth predict, not the boldness of one who commandeth. Not because the Prophet said, "Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world," did Christ obey the Prophet, in arising from the dead, and ascending into heaven; but because Christ was to do this, the Prophet predicted it. He seeth Christ abased in the spirit, abased he seeth Him: fearing no man, in speech sparing no man, and he saith, "He hath dealt confidently.

He seeth how confidently He hath dealt, he seeth Him arrested, crucified, humbled, he seeth Him rising from the dead, and ascending into heaven, and from thence to come in judgment of those, among whose hands He had suffered every evil: "Be exalted," he saith, "Thou Judge of the world, and reward the proud after their deserving. The proud He will thus reward, not the humble. Who are the proud? Those to whom it is little to do evil: but they even defend their own sins. For on some of those who crucified Christ, miracles were afterwards performed, when out of the number of the Jews themselves there were found believers, and the blood of Christ was given unto

them. Their hands were impious, and red with the blood of Christ. He whose blood they had shed, Himself washed them. They who had persecuted His mortal body which they had seen, became part of His very body, that is, the Church. They shed their own ransom, that they might drink their own ransom. For afterwards more were converted. ...

5. "Lord, how long shall the ungodly, how long shall the ungodly triumph? (ver. 3). "They answer, and will speak wickedness, they all will speak that work unrighteousness" (ver. 4). What is their saying, but against God, when they say: What profiteth it us that we live thus? What wilt thou reply? Doth God truly regard our deeds? For because they live, they imagine that God knoweth not their actions. Behold, what evil happeneth unto them! If the officers knew where they were, they would arrest them; and they therefore avoid the officer's eyes, that they may escape instant apprehension; but no one can escape the eye of God, since He not only seeth within the closet, but within the recesses of the heart. Even they themselves believe that nothing can escape God: and because they do evil, and are conscious of what they have done, and see that they live while God knoweth, though they would not live if the officer discovered them; they say unto themselves, These things please God: and, in truth, if they displeased Him, as they displease kings, as they displease judges, as they displease governors, as they displease recorders yet could we escape the eye of God, as we do escape the eyes of those authorities? Therefore these things please God. ...Some righteous man cometh, and saith, Do not commit iniquity. Wherefore? That thou mayest not die. Behold, iniquity I have committed: why do I not die? That man wrought righteousness: and he is dead: why is he dead? I have wrought iniquity:

why hath not God carried me off? Behold, that man did righteously: and why hath He thus visited him? why suffereth He thus? They answer; this is the meaning of the word "answer: for they have a reply to make; because they are spared, from the long-suffering of God, they discover an argument for their reply. He spareth them for one reason, they answer for another, because they still live. For the Apostle telleth us wherefore He spareth, he expoundeth the grounds of the long-suffering of God:"And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the long-suffering of

God leadeth thee to repentance? "But thou," that is, he who answereth and saith, If I displeased God, He would not spare me, hear what he worketh for himself; hear the Apostle; "but after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up into thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds. He therefore increaseth His long-suffering, thou increasest thine iniquity. His treasure will consist in eternal mercy towards those who have not despised His mercy; but thy treasure will be discovered in wrath, and what thou daily layest up by little and little, thou wilt find in the accumulated mass; thou layest up by the grain, but thou wilt find the whole heap.

Omit not to watch thy slightest daily sins: rivers are filled from the smallest drops. 6. ..."They have humbled Thy people, O Lord; and have troubled Thine heritage" (ver. 5). "They have murdered the widow, and the fatherless: and slain the proselyte" (ver. 6); that is, the traveller, the pilgrim: the comer from far, as the Psalmist calleth himself. Each of these expressions is too clear in meaning to make it worth while to dwell upon them. 7. "And they have said, The Lord shall not see" (ver. 7): He observeth not, regardeth not these things: He careth for other matters, He understandeth not. These are rite two assertions of the wicked: one which I have just quoted, "These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest unrighteousness, that I will be like thyself." What meaneth, "that I will be like thyself"? Thou thinkest that I see thy deeds, and that they are pleasing unto Me, because I do not punish them. There is another assertion of the wicked: because God neither regardeth these things, nor observeth that He may know how I live, God heedeth me not. Doth then God make any reckoning of me? or doth He even take account of me? or of men in general? Unhappy man! He cared for thee, that thou mightest exist: doth He not care that thou live well? Such then are the words of these last; "and yet they have said, The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it."

8. "Take heed now, ye that are unwise among the people: O ye fools, some time understand! (ver. 8). He teacheth His people whose feet might slip: any one among them seeth the prosperity of the wicked, himself living well among the Saints of God, that is, among the number of the sons of the Church: he seeth that the wicked flourish, and work iniquity, he envieth, and is led to follow them in their actions; because he seeth that apparently it profiteth him nothing that he liveth well in humility, hoping for his reward

here. For if he hopeth for it in future, he loseth it not; because the time is not yet come for him to receive it. Thou art working in a vineyard: execute thy task, and thou shall receive thy pay. Thou wouldest not exact it from thy employer, before thy work was finished, and yet dost thou exact it from God before thou dost work? This patience is part of thy work, and thy pay dependeth upon thy work: thou who dost not choose to be patient, chooseth to work less upon the vineyard: since this act of patience belongeth to thy labouring itself, which is to gain thy pay. But if thou art treacherous, take care, lest thou shouldest not only not receive thy pay, but also suffer punishment, because thou hast chosen to be a treacherous labourer.

When such a labourer beginneth to do ill, he watcheth his employer's eyes, who hired him for his vineyard, that he may loiter when his eye is turned away; but the moment his eyes are turned towards him, he worketh diligently. But God, who hired thee, averteth not His eyes: thou canst not work treacherously: the eyes of thy Master are ever upon thee: seek an opportunity to deceive Him, and loiter if thou canst. If then any of you had any such ideas, when ye saw the wicked flourishing, and if such thoughts caused your feet to slip in the path of God; to you this Psalm speaketh: but if perchance none of you be such, through you it doth address others, in these words, "Take heed now; since they had said, "The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. "Take heed," it saith, "now, ye that are unwise among the people: and ye fools, some time understand!"

9. "He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? or He that made the eye, doth He not consider?" (ver. 9) "or He that instructeth the nations, shall He not reprove?" (ver. 10). This is what God is at present doing: He is instructing the nations: for this reason he sent His word to man throughout the world: He sent it by Angels, by Patriarchs, by Prophets, by servants, through so many heralds going before the Judge. He sent also His own Word Himself, He sent His own Son in Person: He sent the servants of His Son, and in these very servants His own Son. Throughout the world is everywhere preached the word of God. Where is it not said unto men, Abandon your former wickedness, and turn yourselves to right paths? He spareth, that ye may correct yourselves: He punished not yesterday, in order that to-day ye may live well. He teacheth the heathen, shall He not therefore reprove? will He not hear those whom He teacheth? will He not judge those to whom He hath beforehand sent and sown lessons of warning? If thou wast in a school, wouldest

thou receive a task, and not repeat it? When therefore thou receivest it from thy master, thou art being taught: the Master giveth thy task into thy hands, and shall He not exact it from thee when thou comest to repeat it? or when thou hast begun to repeat it, shalt thou not be in fear of stripes? At present then we are receiving our work: afterwards we are placed before the Master, that we may give up to Him all our past tasks, that is, that we may give an account of all those things which are now being bestowed upon us. Hear the Apostle's words: "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ," etc. "It is He that teacheth man knowledge." Doth He not know, who maketh thee to know?

10. "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain" (ver. 11). For although thou knowest not the thoughts of God, that they are righteous; "He knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain." Even men have known the thoughts of God: but those to whom He hath become a friend, it is to them He showeth His counsel. Do not, brethren, despise yourselves: if ye approach the Lord with faith, ye hear the thoughts of God; these ye are now learning, this is told you, and for this reason ye are taught, why God spareth the wicked in this life, that ye may not murmur against God, who teacheth man knowledge. "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain." Abandon therefore the thoughts of man, which are vain: that ye may take hold on the thoughts of God, which are wise. But who is he who taketh hold on the thoughts of God? He who is placed in the firmament of heaven. We have already chanted that Psalm, and have expounded this expression therein.

11. "Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord: and teachest him from Thy law" (ver. 12). Behold, thou hast the counsel of God, wherefore He spareth the wicked: the pit is being digged for the sinner. Thou wishest to bury him at once: the pit is as yet being dug for him: do not be in haste to bury him. What mean the words, "until the pit be digged up for the sinner"? or whom doth He mean by sinner? One man? No. Whom then? The whole race of such that are sinners? No; them that are proud; for he had said before, "Reward the proud after their deserving. For that publican, who would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but "smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner," was a sinner; but since he was not proud, and since God will render a recompense to the proud; the pit is being dug not for him, but for them that are such, until He render a recompense to the proud. In

the words then, "until the pit be digged up for the ungodly," understand the proud. Who is the proud? He who doth not by confession of his sins do penance, that he may be healed through his humility. Who is the proud? He who chooseth to arrogate to himself those few good things which he seemeth to possess, and who doth detract from the mercy of God. Who is the proud?

He who although he doth ascribe unto God his good works, yet insulteth those who do not those good works, and raiseth himself above them. ...This then is the Christian doctrine: no man doeth anything well except by His grace. A man's bad acts are his own: his good he doth of God's bounty. When he hath begun to do well, let not him ascribe it unto himself: when he hath not attributed it to himself, let him give thanks to Him from whom he hath received it. But when he doeth well, let him not insult him who doth not as he doth nor exalt himself above him: for the grace of, God is not stayed at him, so that it cannot reach another. 12. "That Thou mayest give him patience in days of malice: until the pit be digged up for the ungodly" (ver. 13). Have patience therefore every one, if thou art a Christian, in time of malice. Days of malice are those in which the ungodly appear to flourish, and the righteous to suffer; but the suffering of the righteous is the rod of the Father, and the prosperity of the ungodly is their own snare. For because God giveth you patience in time of adversity, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly, do not think that the Angels are standing in some place with mattocks, and are digging that great pit which shall be able to contain the whole race of the ungodly; and because ye see that the wicked are many, and say unto yourselves carnally: Truly what pit can contain so great a multitude of the wicked, such a crowd of sinners? where is a pit of such dimensions, as to contain all, dug? when finished? therefore God spareth them. This is not so: their very prosperity is the pit of the wicked: for into that shall they fall, as it were into a pitfall. Attend, brethren, for it is a great thing to know that prosperity is called a pitfall: "until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. For God spareth him whom He knoweth to be ungodly and impious, in His own hidden justice:

and this very sparing of God, causeth him to be puffed up through his impunity. ...The proud man raiseth himself up against God: God sinketh him: and he sinketh by the very act of raising himself up against God. For in another Psalm he thus saith, "Thou hast cast them down, while they were being

exalted. He said not, Thou hast cast them down, because they were exalted; or, Thou hast cast them down, after they were exalted; so that the period of their exaltation be one, of their casting down another: but in the very act of their exaltation were they cast down. For in proportion as the heart of man is proud, so doth it recede from God; and if it recede from God, it sinketh down into the deep. On the other hand, the humble heart bringeth God unto it from heaven, so that He becometh very near unto it. Surely God is lofty, God is above all the heavens, He surpasseth all the Angels: how high must these be raised, to reach that exalted One? Do not burst thyself by enlarging thyself; I give thee other advice, lest perchance in enlarging thyself thou burst, through pride: surely God is lofty: do thou humble thyself, and He will descend unto thee.

13. ...Do thou rejoice beneath the scourge: because the heritage is kept for thee, "for the Lord will not cast off His people" (ver. 14). He chasteneth for a season, He condemneth not for ever: the others He spareth for a season, and will condemn them for evermore. Make thy choice: dost thou wish temporary suffering, or eternal punishment? temporal happiness, or eternal life? What doth God threaten? Eternal punishment. What doth He promise? Eternal rest. His scourging the good, is temporary: His sparing the wicked, is also temporary. "Neither will He forsake His inheritance." 14. "Until righteousness," he saith, "turn again unto judgment, and all they that have it are right in heart" (ver. 15). Listen now, and gain righteousness: for judgment thou canst not yet have. Thou shouldest gain righteousness first; but that very righteousness of thine shall turn unto judgment. The Apostles had righteousness here on earth, and bore with the wicked. But what is said unto them? "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Their righteousness therefore shall turn unto judgment. For whoever is righteous in this life, is so for this reason, that he may endure evils with patience: let him suffer patiently the period of suffering, and the day of judging cometh. But why do I speak of the servants of God? The Lord Himself, who is the Judge of all living and dead, first chose to be judged, and then to judge. Those who have righteousness at present, are not yet judges. For the first thing is to have righteousness, and afterwards to judge: He first endureth the wicked, and afterwards judgeth them. Let there be righteousness now: afterwards it shall turn again unto judgment. And so long He endureth wicked men, as God doth will, as long as God's Church shall endure them, that she

may be taught through their wickedness. Nevertheless, God will not cast off His people, "all such as have it are right in heart. Who are those who are right in heart? Those whose will is the will of God. He spareth sinners:

thou dost wish Him at once to destroy sinners. Thy heart is crooked and thy will perverted, when thy will is one way and the will of God another. God wisheth to spare sinners: thou dost not wish sinners spared. God is of long-suffering to sinners: thou dost not wish to endure sinners. ...Wish not to bend the will of God to thy will, but rather correct thy will to His. The will of God is like a rule: behold, suppose, thou hast twisted the rule: whence canst thou be set straight? But the rule itself continueth straight: for it is immutable. As long as the rule is straight, thou hast whither to turn thyself, and straighten thy perversity; thou hast a means of correcting what is crooked in thee. But what do men will? It is not enough that their own will is crooked; they even wish to make the will of God crooked according to their own heart, that God may do what they themselves will, when they ought to do that which God willeth. ...

15. "Who will rise up for me against the wicked? or who will take my part against the evil doers? (ver. 16). Many persuade us to divers evils: the serpent ceaseth not to whisper to thee to work iniquity: whichever way thou shalt turn, if perchance thou hast done well, thou seekest to live well with some one, and thou hardly findest any one; many wicked men surround thee, for there are few grains of wheat, and much chaff. This floor hath its grains of corn, but as yet they suffer. Therefore the whole mass of the wheat, when separated from the chaff, will be great: the grains are few, but when compared with the chaff, still many in themselves. When therefore the wicked cry out on every side, and say, Why livest thou thus? Art thou the only Christian? Why dost thou not do what others also do? Why dost thou not frequent the theatres, as others do? Why dost thou not use charms and amulets? Why dost thou not consult astrologers and soothsayers, even as others do? And thou crossest thyself, and sayest, I am Christian, that thou mayest repel them, whosoever they are; but the enemy presses on, urges his attacks; what is worse, by the example of Christians he choketh Christians. They toil on, in the midst of heat: the Christian soul suffereth tribulation: yet it hath power to conquer: hath it such power of itself? For this reason remark what he saith.

For he answereth, What doth it profit me that I now find charms for myself, and gain a few days? I depart hence from this life, and repair unto my Lord, who shall send me into the flames; because I have preferred a few days to life eternal, He shall send me into hell. What hell? That of the eternal judgment of God. Is it really so (the enemy answereth), unless indeed thou really believest that God careth how men live? And perhaps it is not an acquaintance who speaketh thus to thee in the street, but thy wife at home, or possibly the husband to the faithful and holy wife, her deceiver. If it be the woman to her husband, she is as Eve unto him; if as the husband unto the wife, he is as the devil unto her: either she is herself as Eve unto thee, or thou art a serpent unto her. Sometimes the father would incline his thoughts to his son, and findeth him wicked, utterly depraved: he is in a fever of misery, he wavers, he seeketh how to subdue him, he is almost drawn in, and consenteth: but may God be near him. ...

16. "If the Lord," he saith, "had not helped me: within a little my soul had dwelt in hell" (ver. 17). I had almost plunged into that pit which is preparing for sinners: that is, my soul had dwelt in hell. Because he already began to waver, and nearly to consent, he looked back unto the Lord. Suppose, for example's sake, he was insulted to tempt him to iniquity. For sometimes the wicked flock together, and insult the good; especially if they are more in number, and if they have taken him alone, as there is often much chaff about one grain of wheat (though there will not be when the heap hath been fanned); he is then taken among many wicked ones, is insulted, and surrounded; they wish to place themselves over him, they torment him and insult him for his very righteousness. A great Apostle! say they; Thou hast flown] into heaven, as Elias did! Men do these things, so that sometime, when he listeneth to the tongue of men, he is ashamed to be good among the wicked. Let him therefore resist the evil; but not of his own strength, lest he become proud, and when he wishes to escape the proud, himself increase their number. ...

17. "If I said, My foot hath slipt; Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up" (ver. 18). See how God loveth confession. Thy foot hath slipt, and thou sayest not, my foot hath slipt; but thou sayest thou art firm, when thou art slipping. The moment thou beginnest to slip or waver, confess thou that slip, that thou mayest not bewail thy total fall; that He may help, so that thy soul be not in hell. God loveth confession, loveth humility. Thou hast slipped, as a man;

God helpeth thee, nevertheless: yet say, "My foot hath slipt. Why dost thou slip, and yet sayest, I am firm?" When I said, My foot hath slipt, Thy mercy, O Lord, hath held me up. Just as Peter presumed, but not in strength of his own. The Lord was seen to walk upon the sea, trampling on the heads of all the proud in this life. In walking upon the foaming waves, He figured His own course when He trampleth on the heads of the proud. The Church too doth trample upon them: for Peter is the Church Herself. Nevertheless, Peter dared not by himself walk upon the waters; but what said he? "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. He in His own power, Peter by His order; "bid me," he saith, "come unto Thee. He answered, "Come. For the Church also trampleth on the heads of the proud;

but since it is the Church, and hath human weakness, that these words might be fulfilled, "If I said, My foot hath slipt," Peter tottered on the sea, and cried out, "Lord, save me! and so what is here put, "If I said, My foot hath slipt," is put there, "Lord, I perish. And what is here, "Thy mercy, O Lord, hath held me up," is there put, "And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, saying, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? It is wonderful how God proveth men: our very dangers render Him who rescueth us sweeter unto us. For see what followeth: because he said, "If I said, My foot hath slipt, Thy mercy, O Lord, hath held me up. The Lord hath become especially sweet unto him, in rescuing him from danger; and thus speaking of this very sweetness of the Lord, he exclaimeth and saith, "O Lord, in the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, Thy comforts have refreshed my soul" (ver. 19). Many sorrows, but many consolations: bitter wounds, and sweet remedies.

18. "Wilt Thou have anything to do with the stool of iniquity, who makest sorrow in learning? (ver. 20). He hath said this, No wicked man sitteth with Thee, nor shall Thou have anything to do with the stool of iniquity. And he giveth an account whereof he understandeth this, "For Thou makest sorrow in learning. For from this, because Thou hast not spared us, do I understand that Thou hast nothing to do with the stool of iniquity. Thou hast this in the Epistle of the Apostle Peter, and for this reason he hath adduced a testimony from the Scripture: "for the time is come," he saith, "that judgment must begin at the house of God; that is, the time is come for the judgment of those who belong to the house of God. If sons are scourged, what must the most wicked slaves expect? For which reason he ad-

ded: "And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? To which he added this testimony: "For if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? How then shall the wicked be with Thee, if Thou dost not even spare Thy faithful, in order that Thou mayest exercise and teach them? But as He spareth them not, for this reason, that He may teach them: he saith, "For Thou makest sorrow in learning. "Makest," that is, formest: from whence comes the word *figulus* (from *fin*go), and a potter's vessel is called *fictile*:

not in the meaning of fiction, a falsehood, but of forming so as to give anything being and some sort of form; as before he said, "He that fabricated (*finxit*) the eye, shall He not see? Is that, "fabricated the eye" a falsehood? Nay, it is understood He fashioned the eye, made the eye. And is He not a potter when He makes men frail, weak, earthly? Hear the Apostle: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." ...Behold our Lord Himself, how He showeth Himself a potter. Because He had made man of clay, He anointed him with clay, for whom He had not made eyes in the womb. And so when he saith, "Hast Thou anything to do," etc., he saith, out of grief makest learning for us, so that grief itself becomes our instruction. How is sorrow our learning? When He scourgeth thee who died for thee, and who doth not promise bliss in this life, and who cannot deceive, and when He giveth not here what thou seekest. What will He give? when will He give? how much will He give, who giveth not here, who here teacheth, who maketh sorrow in learning? Thy labour is here, and rest is promised thee. Thou takest thought that thou hast toil here: but take thought what sort of rest He promiseth. Canst thou conceive it? If thou couldest, thou wouldest see that thy toil here is nothing toward an equivalent. ...

19. Attend, brethren; it is for sale. What I have is for sale, saith God unto thee, buy it. What hath He for sale? I have rest for sale; buy it by thy toil. Attend, that we may be in Christ's name brave Christians: the remainder of the Psalm is but a little, let us not be weary. For how can he be strong in doing, who faileth in hearing? The Lord will help us to expound unto you the remainder. Attend then: God hath, as it were, proclaimed the kingdom of heaven for sale. Thou sayest unto Him, What is its value? The price is toil: if He were to say, its price is gold, it would not suffice to say this only, but thou wouldest seek to know how much gold; for there is a mass of gold, and half an ounce, and a pound, and the like. He said "price," that thou mightest not

be at pains to inquire, how long thou shouldest find it. The price of the commodity is toil: how much toil is it? Now seek how much thou shouldest toil for it. Thou art not as yet told how great that toil is doomed to be, or how much toil is required of thee: God saith this unto thee, I show thee how great that rest will be; do thou judge with what measure of toil it should be bought.

20. ...He promised rest: suffer trouble. He threateneth eternal fire; despise temporal pains: and while Christ doth watch, let thy heart be calmed, that thou also mayest reach the harbour For He would not fail to prepare a harbour, who provided a vessel. "Hast Thou anything to do with the stool of iniquity, Thou who makest sorrow in learning?" He trieth us with the wicked, and by their persecution He teacheth us. By means of the malice of the wicked the good is scourged, through the slave the son is chastened: thus is learning taught by sorrow. What God alloweth them power to do, that do wicked men, whom He spareth for a season, do. 21. For what followeth? "They will be captious against the soul of the righteous" (ver. 21). Why will they be captious? Because they can find no true ground of accusation. For how were they captious against our Lord? They made up false accusations, because they could not find true ones. "And will condemn the innocent blood." Why all this taketh place, he will show in the sequel.

22. "And the Lord is become my refuge" (ver. 22), he saith. Thou wouldest not seek such a refuge, if thou wert not in danger: but thou hast therefore been in danger, that thou mightest seek for it: for He teacheth us by sorrow. He causeth me tribulation from the malice of the wicked: pricked with that tribulation, I begin to seek a refuge which I had ceased to seek for in that worldly prosperity. For who, that is always prosperous, and rejoiceth in present hopes, findeth it easy to remember God? Let the hope of this life give way, and the hope of God advance; that thou mayest say, "And the Lord is become my refuge: may I sorrow for this end that the Lord may become my refuge! "And my God the help of my hope. For as yet the Lord is our hope, since as long as we are here, we are in hope, and not in possession. But lest we fail in hope, there is near us a provision to encourage us, and to mitigate those very evils which we suffer. For it is not said in vain, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be [tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it: who

will so put us into that furnace of tribulation, that the vessel may be hardened, but not broken. "And the Lord is become my refuge:

and my God the help of my hope. Why then did He seem to thee to be as it were unjust, in that He spareth the evil? See then how the Psalm is now set right, and be thou set right together with the Psalm: for, for this reason the Psalm contained thy words. What words? "Lord, how long shall the ungodly, how long shall the ungodly triumph? The Psalm just now used thy words: use therefore thyself the Psalm's words in thy turn. 23. "And the Lord shall recompense them according to their works, and after their own malice; the Lord our God shall destroy them" (ver. 23). The words, "after their own malice," are not said without meaning. I am benefited through them: and yet it is said to be their malice, and not their benefits. For assuredly He trieth us, scourgeth us, by means of the wicked. To prepare us for what doth He scourge us? Confessedly for the kingdom of heaven. "For He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" and when God doth this, He is teaching us in order to an eternal heritage: and this learning He often giveth us by means of wicked men, through whom He trieth and perfecteth our love, which He doth will to be extended even to our enemies. ...Thus also they who persecuted the Martyrs, by persecuting them on earth, sent them into heaven: knowingly they caused them the loss of the present life, while unconsciously they were bestowing upon them the gain of a future life: but, nevertheless, unto all who persevered in their wicked hatred of the righteous, will God recompense after their own iniquities, and in their own malice will He destroy them. For as the goodness of the righteous is hurtful unto the wicked, so is the iniquity of the wicked beneficial unto the righteous. ...

24. Let therefore the righteous bear with the ungodly; let the temporal suffering of the righteous bear with the temporal impunity of the wicked; for "the just shall live by faith." For there is no righteousness of man in this life except to live by faith, "which worketh by love." But if he liveth by faith, let him believe both that he will himself inherit rest after his present toil, and that they will suffer eternal torments after their present exultation. And if faith worketh by love, let him love his enemies also, and, as far as in him lies, have the will to profit them; for thus he will prevent their injuring him when they have the will. And whenever perchance they have received power to hurt and tyrannize; let him lift his heart above, where no man hurteth

him, well taught and chastened in the law of God, that he may "have patience given him in the days of adversity, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly." ...

25. This I say, brethren, that ye may profit from what ye have heard, and ruminate within yourselves: permit not yourselves to forget, not only by thinking over again upon these subjects, and discoursing upon them, but also by so living. For a good life which is led after God's commands, is like a pen, because it is heard writing in our hearts. If it were written on wax, it would easily be blotted out: write it in your hearts, in your character, and it shall never be blotted out.

PSALM 95

1. I could wish, brethren, that we were rather listening to our father: but even this is a good thing, to obey our father. Since therefore he who deigneth to pray for us, hath ordered us, I will speak unto you, beloved, what from the present Psalm Jesus Christ our common Lord shall deign to give us. Now the title of the Psalm is "David's Song of praise." The "Song of praise" signifieth both cheerfulness, in that it is a song; and devotion, for it is praise. For what ought a man to praise more than that which pleaseth him so, that it is impossible that it can displease him? In the praising of God therefore we praise with security. There he who praiseth is safe, where he feareth not lest he be ashamed for the object of his praise. Let us therefore troth praise and sing; that is, let us praise with cheerfulness and joy. But what we are about to praise, this Psalm in the following verses sheweth us.

2. "O come, let us sing unto the Lord" (ver. 1). He calleth us to a great banquet of joy, not one of this world, but in the Lord. For if there were not in this life a wicked joy which is to be distinguished from a righteous joy, it would be enough to say, "Come, let us rejoice;" but he has briefly distinguished it. What is it to rejoice aright? To rejoice in the Lord. Thou shouldst piously joy in the Lord, if thou dost wish safely to trample upon the world. But what is the word, "Come"? Whence doth He call them to come, with whom he wisheth to rejoice in the Lord; except that, while they are afar, they may by coming draw nearer, by drawing nearer they may approach, and by approaching rejoice? But whence are they afar? Can a man be locally distant from Him who is everywhere? ...It is not by place, but by being unlike Him, that a man is afar from God. What is to be unlike Him? it meaneth, a bad life, bad habits; for if by good habits we approach God, by

bad habits we recede from God. ...If therefore by unlikeness we recede from God, by likeness we approach unto God. What likeness? That after which we were created, which by sinning we had corrupted in ourselves, which we have received again through the remission of sins, which is renewed in us in the mind within, that it may be engraved a second time as if on coin, that is, the image of our God upon our soul, and that we may return to His treasures. ...

3. "Let us make a joyful noise unto God, our salvation." ...Consider, beloved, those who make a joyful noise in any ordinary songs, as in a sort of competition of worldly joy; and ye see them while reciting the written lines bursting forth with a joy, that the tongue sufficeth not to express the measure of; how they shout, indicating by that utterance the feeling of the mind, which cannot in words express what is conceived in the heart. If they then in earthly joy make a joyful noise; might we not do so from heavenly joy, which truly we cannot express in words? 4. "Let us prevent His face by confession" (ver. 2). Confession hath a double meaning in Scripture. There is a confession of him who praiseth, there is that of him who groaneth. The confession of praise pertaineth to the honour of Him who is praised: the confession of groaning to the repentance of him who confesseth. For men confess when they praise God: they confess when they accuse themselves; and the tongue hath no more worthy use. Truly, I believe these to be the very vows, of which he speaketh in another Psalm: "I will pay Thee my vows, which I distinguished with my lips." Nothing is more elevated than that distinguishing, nothing is so necessary both to understand and to do. How then dost thou distinguish the vows which thou payest unto God? By praising Him, by accusing thyself; because it is His mercy, to forgive us our sins. For if He chose to deal with us after our deserts, He would find cause only to condemn. "O come," he said therefore, that we may at last go back from our sins, and that He may not cast up with us our accounts for the past; but that as it were a new account may be commenced, all the bonds of our debts having been burnt. ...The more therefore thou despairedst of thyself on account of thy iniquities, do thou confess thy sins; for so much greater is the praise of Him who forgiveth, as is the fulness of the penitent's confession more abundant. Let us not therefore imagine that we have receded from the song of praise, in understanding here that confession by which we acknowledge our transgressions: this is even a part of the song of praise; for when we confess our sins, we praise the glory of God.

5. "And make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms. We have already said what it is "to make a joyful noise: the word is repeated, that it may be confirmed by the act: the very repetition is an exhortation. For we have not forgotten, so as to wish to be again admonished what was said above, that we should make a joyful noise: but usually in passages of strong feeling a well-known word is repeated, not to make it more familiar, but that the very repetition may strengthen the impression made: for it is repeated that we may understand the feeling of the speaker. ...Hear now: "For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods" (ver. 3) "For the Lord will not cast off His people. Praise be unto Him, and shouts of joy be unto Him! What people shall He not cast off? we have no right to make our own explanation here: for the Apostle hath prescribed this unto us, he hath explained whereof it is said. For this was the Jewish people, the people where were the prophets, the people where were the patriarchs, the people begotten according to the flesh from the seed of Abraham; the people in which all the mysteries which promised our Saviour preceded us; the people among whom was instituted the temple, the anointing, the Priest for a figure, that when all these shadows were past, the Light itself might come; this therefore was the people of God;

to it were the prophets sent, in it those who were sent were born; to it were delivered and entrusted the revelations of God. What then? is the whole of that people condemned? far be it. It is called. the good olive-tree by the Apostle, for it commenced with the patriarchs. ...This then is the tree itself: though some of its boughs have been broken, yet all have not. For if all the boughs were broken, whence is Peter? whence John? whence Thomas? whence Matthew? whence Andrew? whence are all those Apostles? whence that very Apostle Paul who was speaking to us but now, and by his own fruit bearing witness to the good olive? Were not all these of that people? Whence also those five hundred brethren to whom our Lord appeared after His resurrection? Whence were so many thousands at the words of Peter (when the Apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke with the tongues of all nations) converted with such zeal for the honour of God and their own accusation, that they who first shed the Lord's blood in their rage, learnt how to drink it now that they believed? And all these five thousand were so converted that they sold their own property, and laid the price of it at the Apostles' feet. That which one rich man did not do, when he heard from the Lord's

mouth, and sorrowfully departed from Him, this so many thousands of those men by whose hands Christ had been crucified, did on a sudden.

In proportion as the wound was deeper in their own hearts, with the greater eagerness did they seek for a physician. Since therefore all these were from thence, the Psalm saith of them, "For the Lord will not cast off His people." ... 6. What doth the Psalm add? "In His hand are all the corners of the earth" (ver. 4): we recognise the corner stone: the corner stone is Christ. There cannot be a corner, unless it hath united in itself two walls: they come from different sides to one corner, but they are not opposed to each other in the corner. The circumcision cometh from one side. the uncircumcision from the other; in Christ both peoples have met together: because He hath become the stone, of which it is written, "The stone which the builders rejected, hath become the head of the corner." 7. "For the sea is His and He made it" (ver. 5). For the sea is this world, but God made also the sea: nor can the waves rage save only so far as to the shore, where He hath marked their bounds. There is therefore no temptation, that hath not received its measure. ... "And His hands prepared the dry land." Be thou the dry land: thirst for the grace of God: that as a sweet shower it may come upon thee, may find in thee fruit. He alloweth not the waves to cover what He hath sown. "And His hands prepared the dry land." Hence also therefore let us shout unto the Lord.

8. "O come, let us worship, and fall down to Him; and mourn before the Lord our Maker" (ver. 6). ... Perhaps thou art burning with the consciousness of a fault; blot out with tears the flame of thy sin: mourn before the Lord: fearlessly mourn before the Lord, who made thee; for He despiseth not the work of His own hands in thee. Think not thou canst be restored by thyself. By thyself thou mayest fall off, thou canst not restore thyself: He who made thee restoreth thee. "Let us mourn before the Lord our Maker:" weep before Him, confess unto Him, prevent His face in confession. For who art thou who mournest before Him, and confessest unto Him, but one whom He created? The tiring created hath no slight confidence in Him who created it, and that in no indifferent fashion, but according to His own image and likeness.

9. "For He is the Lord our God" (ver. 7). But that we may without fear fall down and kneel before Him, what are we? "We are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand." See how elegantly he hath transposed the order

of the words, and as it were not given its own attribute to each word; that we may understand these very same to be the sheep, who are also the people. He said not, the sheep of His pasture, and the people of His hand; which might be thought more congruous, since the sheep belong to the pasture; but He said, "the people of His pasture." The people are therefore sheep, since he saith, "the people of His pasture:" the people themselves are sheep. ...He praiseth these sheep also in the Song of Solomon, speaking of some perfect ones as the teeth of His Spouse the Holy Church: "Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which come up from the washing; whereof every one beareth twins, and there is none barren." What meaneth, "Thy teeth"? These by whom thou speakest: for the teeth of the Church are those through whom she speaketh. Of what sort are thy teeth? "Like a flock of sheep that are shorn." Why, "that are shorn"? Because they have laid aside the burdens of the world. Were not those sheep, of which I was a little before speaking, shorn, whom the bidding of God had shorn, when He saith, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt find treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me"? They performed this bidding: shorn they came. And because those who believe in Christ are baptized, what is there said? "which come up from the washing;" that is, come up from the cleansing. "Whereof every one beareth twins." What twins? Those two commandments, wherefrom hang all the Law and the Prophets.

10. Therefore, "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (ver. 8). O my people, the people of God! God addresses His people: not only the people of His which He shall not cast off, but also all His people. For He speaketh in the corner stone to each wall: that is, prophecy speaketh in Christ, both to the people of the Jews, and the people of the Gentiles. For some time ye heard His voice through Moses, and hardened your hearts. He then, when you hardened your hearts, spoke through a herald; He now speaketh by Himself, let your hearts soften. He who used to send heralds before Him, hath now deigned to come Himself; He here speaketh by His own mouth, He who used to speak by the mouths of the Prophets. 11. "As in the provocation, and in the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers proved Me" (ver. 9). Let such be no more your fathers: imitate them not. They were your fathers, but if ye do not imitate them, they shall not be your fathers: yet as ye were born of them, they were your fathers. And if the heathen who came from the ends of the earth, in the words of Jeremias,

"The Gentiles shall come unto Thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our forefathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit:" if the heathen forsook their idols, to come to the God of Israel; ought Israel whom their own God led from Egypt through the Red Sea, wherein He overwhelmed their pursuing foes; whom He led out into the wilderness, fed with manna, never took His rod from correcting them, never deprived them of the blessings of His mercy; ought they to desert their own God, when the heathen have come unto Him? "When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works. ...

12. "Forty years long was I very near unto this generation, and said, It is a people that do always err in their hearts; for they have not known My ways" (ver. 10). The forty years have the same meaning as the word "always." For that number forty indicates the fulness of ages, as if the ages were perfected in this number. Hence our Lord fasted forty days, forty days He was tempted in the desert, and forty days He was with His disciples after His resurrection. On the first forty days He showed us temptation, on the latter forty days consolation: since beyond doubt when we are tempted we are consoled. For His body, that is, the Church, must needs suffer temptations in this world: but that Comforter, who said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," is not wanting. For this was I with them forty years, to show such a race of men, which alway provoketh Me, even unto the end of the world: because by those forty years He meant to signify the whole of this world's duration.

13. ...We began with exulting joy: but this Psalm hath ended with great fear: "Unto whom I swear in My wrath, that they should not enter into My rest" (ver. 11). It is a great thing for God to speak: how much greater for Him to swear? Thou shouldest fear a man when he sweareth, lest he do somewhat on account of his oath against his will: how much more shouldest thou fear God, when He sweareth, seeing He can swear nought rashly? He chose the act of swearing for a confirmation. And by whom doth God swear? By Himself: for He hath no greater by whom to swear. By Himself He confirmeth His promises: by Himself He confirmeth His threats. Let no man say in his heart, His promise is true; His threat is false: as His promise is true, so is His threat sure. Thou oughtest to be equally assured of rest, of happiness, of eternity, of immortality, if thou hast executed His commandments; as of destruction, of

the burning of eternal fire, of damnation with the devil, if thou hast despised His commandments. ...

PSALM 96

1. My lord and brother Severus still defers the pleasure we shall feel in his discourse, which he oweth us; for he acknowledgeth, that he is held a debtor. For all the Churches through which he hath passed, by his tongue the lord hath gladdened: much more therefore ought that Church to be rejoiced, out of which the Lord hath propagated his preaching among the rest. But what shall we do, but obey his will? I said, however, brethren, that he deferred, not that he defrauded us. Therefore let us keep him as a debtor bound, and release him not until he hath paid. Attend therefore, beloved: as far as the Lord alloweth, let us say somewhat of this Psalm, which indeed you already know; for the fresh mention of truth is sweet. Possibly when its title was pronounced, some heard it with wonder. For the Psalm is inscribed: "When the house was being built after the Captivity." This title having been prefixed, ye were perhaps expecting in the text of the Psalm to hear what stones were hewn from the mountains, what masses were drawn to the spot, what foundations were laid, what beams were placed on high, what columns raised. Its song is of nothing of this kind. ...It is no such house that is in building; for behold where it is built, not in one spot, not in any particular region. For thus he beginneth:-

2. "O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth" (ver. 1). If all the earth singeth a new song, it is thus building while it singeth: the very act of singing is building: but only, if it singeth not the old song. The lust of the flesh singeth the old song: the love of God singeth the new. ...Hear why it is a new song: the Lord saith, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. The whole earth then singeth a new song: there the house of God is built. All the earth is the house of God. If all the earth is the house of God, he who clingeth not to all the earth, is a ruin, not a house; that old ruin whose shadow that ancient temple represented. For there what was old was destroyed, that what was new might be built up. ...The Apostle bindeth us together into this very structure, and fasteneth us when bound together in that unity, saying, "Forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Where there is this unity of Spirit, there is one stone; but one stone formed

out of many. How one formed out of many? By forbearing one another in love. Therefore the house of the Lord our God is in building;

it is this that is being wrought, for this are these words, for this these readings, for this the preaching of the Gospel over the whole world; as yet it is in building. This house hath increased greatly, and filled many nations: nevertheless, it hath not yet prevailed through all nations: by its increase it hath held many, and will prevail over all: and it is gainsaid by those who boast of their being of its household, and who say, it hath already lost ground. It still increaseth, still all those nations which have not yet believed are destined to believe; that no man may say, will that tongue believe? will the barbarians believe? what is the meaning of the Holy Spirit having appeared in the fiery tongues, except that there is no tongue so hard that it cannot be softened by that fire? For we know that many barbarous nations have already believed in Christ: Christ already possesseth regions where the Roman empire hath never yet reached; what is as yet closed to those who fight with the sword, is not closed to Him who fighteth with wood. For "the Lord hath reigned from the wood. Who is it who fighteth with wood? Christ. With His cross He hath vanquished kings, and fixed upon their forehead, when vanquished, that very cross; and they glory in it, for in it is their salvation. This is the work which is being wrought, thus the house increaseth, thus it is building:

and that ye may know, hear the following verses of the Psalm: see them labouring upon, and constructing the house. "O sing unto the Lord all the earth." 3. "Sing unto the Lord, bless His Name: be telling good tidings of His salvation from day to day" (ver. 2). How doth the building increase? "Be telling," he saith, "good tidings of His salvation from day to day. Let it be preached from day to day; from day to day, he saith, let it be built; let My house, saith God, increase. And as if it were said by the workmen, Where dost Thou command it to be built? Where dost Thou will Thy house to increase? Choose for us some level, spacious spot, if Thou wish an ample house built Thee. Where dost Thou bid us be telling good tidings from day to day? He showeth the place: "Declare His honour unto the heathen: His honour, not yours. O ye builders, "Declare His honour unto the heathen. Should ye choose to declare your own honour, ye shall fall: if His, ye shall be built up, while ye are building. Therefore they who choose to declare their own honour, have refused to dwell in that house; and therefore they sing not a new

song with all the earth. For they do not share it with the whole round world; and hence they are not building in the house, but have erected a whited wall. How sternly doth God threaten the whited wall? There are innumerable testimonies of the Prophets, whence He curseth the whited wall. What is the whited wall, save hypocrisy, that is, pretence?

Without it is bright, within it is dirt. ...A certain person, speaking of this whited wall, said thus: "as, if in a wall which standeth alone, and is not connected with any other walls, you make a door, whoever enters, is out of doors; so in that part which hath refused to sing the new song together with the house, but hath chosen to build a wall, and that a whited one, and not solid, what availeth it that it hath a door? If thou enterest, thou art found to be without. For because they themselves did not enter by the door, their door also doth not admit them within. For the Lord saith, "I am the door: by Me they enter in." ... "Declare His honour unto the heathen. What is, unto the heathen? Perhaps by nations but a few are meant: and that part which hath raised the whited wall hath still somewhat to say: why are not Getulia, Numidia, Mauritania, Byzacium, nations? Provinces are nations. Let the word of God take the word from hypocrisy, from the whited wall, building up the house over the whole world. It is not enough to say, "Declare His honour unto the heathen; that thou mayest not think any nations excepted, he addeth, "and His wonders unto all people."

4. "For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised" (ver. 4). What Lord, except Jesus Christ, "is great, and cannot worthily be praised"? Ye know surely that He appeared as a Man: ye know surely that He was conceived in a woman's womb, ye know that He was born from the womb, that He was suckled, that He was carried in arms, circumcised, that a victim was offered for Him, that He grew; lastly, ye know that He was buffeted, spit upon, crowned with thorns, was crucified, died, was pierced with a spear; ye know that He suffered all these things: "He is great, and cannot worthily be praised." Despise not what is little, understand what is great. He became little, because ye were such: let Him be acknowledged great, and in Him ye shall be great. ...For what can a small tongue say towards the praise of the Great One? By saying, Beyond praise, he hath spoken, and hath given to imagination what it may conceive: as if saying, What I cannot utter, do thou reflect on; and when thou shalt have reflected, it will not be enough. What no man's thought uttereth, doth any man's tongue utter? "The Lord is great,

and cannot worthily be praised." Let Him be praised, and preached: His honour declared, and His house built.

5. ...For the spot where he wished to build the house, is itself woody, where it was said yesterday, "we found it in the wood. For he was seeking that very house, when he said, "in the wood. And why is that spot woody? Men used to worship images: it is not wonderful that they fed hogs. For that son who left his father, and spent his all on harlots, living as a prodigal, used to feed hogs, that is, to worship devils; and by this very superstition of the heathen, all the earth became a wood. But he who buildeth a house, rooteth up the wood; and for this reason it was said, "While the house was being built, after the captivity. For men were held captive under the devil, and served devils; but they were redeemed from captivity. They could sell, but they could not redeem themselves. The Redeemer came, and gave a price; He poured forth His Blood, and bought the whole world. Ye ask what He bought? Ye see what He hath given; find out then what He bought. The Blood of Christ was the price. What is equal to this? What, but the whole world? What, but all nations? They are very ungrateful for their price, or very proud, who say that the price is so small that it bought the Africans only; or that they are so great, as that it was given for them alone. Let them not then exult, let them not be proud:

He gave what He gave for the whole world. He knew what He bought, because He knew at what price He bought it. Thus because we are redeemed, the house is built after the captivity. And who are they who held us in captivity? Because they to whom it is said, "Declare His honour," are the clearers of the wood: that they may root out the wood, free the earth from captivity, and build, and raise up, by declaring the greatness of the Lord's house. How is the wood of devils cleared away, unless He who is above them all be preached? All nations then had devils for their gods: those whom they called gods, were devils, as the Apostle more openly saith, "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God. Since therefore they were in captivity, because they sacrificed to devils, and on that account the whole earth had remained woody; He is declared to be great, and above all worldly praise.

6. ...For when he had said, "He is more to be feared than all gods:" he added, "As for all the gods of the heathen, they are devils."... Because "all the gods of the heathen are devils." And is this all the praise of Him who cannot

worthily be praised, that He is above all the gods of the heathen, which are devils? Wait, and hear what followeth: "It is the Lord that made the heavens." Not above all gods only therefore, but above all the heavens which He made, is the Lord. If he were to say, "above all gods, for the gods of the heathen are devils," and if the praise of our Lord stopped here, he had said less than we are accustomed to think of Christ; but when he said, "But it is the Lord that made the heavens;" see what difference there is between the heavens and devils: and what between the heavens and Him who made the heavens; behold how exalted is the Lord. He said not, But the Lord sitteth above the heavens; for perhaps some one else might be imagined to have made them, upon which He was enthroned: but, "It is the Lord that made the heavens." If He made the heavens, He made the Angels also: Himself made the Angels, Himself made the Apostles. The devils yielded to the Apostles: but the Apostles themselves were heavens, who bore the Lord. ...O heavens, which He made, declare His honour unto the heathen! Let His house be built throughout the earth, let all the earth sing a new song.

7. "Confession and beauty are before Him" (ver. 6). Dost thou love beauty? Wishest thou to be beautiful? Confess! He said not, beauty and confession, but confession and beauty. Thou wast foul; confess, that thou mayest be fair: thou wast a sinner; confess, that thou mayest be righteous. Thou couldst deform thyself: thou canst not make thyself beautiful. But of what sort is our Betrothed, who hath loved one deformed, that he might make her fair? How, saith some one, loved He one deformed? "I came not," said He, "to call the righteous, but sinners. Whom callest Thou? sinners, that they may remain sinners? No, saith He. And by what means will they cease to be sinners? "Confession and beauty are before Him. They honour Him by confession of their sins, they vomit the evils which they had greedily devoured; they return not to their vomit, like the unclean dog; and there will then be confession and beauty: we love beauty; let us first choose confession, that beauty may follow. Again, there is one who loveth power and greatness: he wisheth to be great as the Angels are. There is a certain greatness in the Angels; and such power, that if the Angels exert it to the full, it cannot be withstood. And every man desireth the power of the Angels, but their righteousness every man loveth not. First love righteousness, and power shall follow thee. For what followeth here? "Holiness and greatness are in His sanctification. Thou wast before seeking for greatness: first love righteousness:

when thou art righteous, thou shall also be great. For if thou preposterously dost wish first to be great, thou fallest before thou canst rise: for thou dost not rise, thou art raised up. Thou risest better, if He raise thee who falleth not. For He who falleth not descendeth unto thee: thou hadst fallen: He descendeth, He hath stretched forth His hand unto thee; thou canst not rise by thy own strength, embrace the hand of Him who descendeth, that thou mayest be raised up by the Strong One. 8. What then? If "confession and beauty are before Him: holiness and greatness in His sanctification" (ver. 7). This we declare, when we are building the house; behold, it is already declared unto the heathen; what ought the heathen to do, to whom those who have cleared away the wood have declared the Lord's honour? He now saith to the heathen themselves, "Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people: ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour." Ascribe them not unto yourselves: because they also who have declared it unto you, have not declared their own, but His honour. Do ye then "ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour;" and say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us: but unto Thy Name give the praise." Put not your trust in man. If each of you is baptized, let him say: He baptizeth me, of whom the friend of the Bridegroom said, "He baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." For when ye say this, ye ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour: "Ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour."

9. "Ascribe unto the Lord glory unto His Name" (ver. 8). Not unto the name of man, not unto your own name, but unto His ascribe worship. ...Confession is a present unto God. O heathen, if ye will enter into His courts, enter not empty. "Bring presents." What presents shall we bring with us? The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, "O God, shalt not Thou despise." Enter with an humble heart into the house of God, and thou hast entered with a present. But if thou art proud, thou enterest empty. For whence wouldest thou be proud, if thou wert not empty? For if thou wast full, thou wouldest not be puffed up. How couldest thou be full? If thou weft to bring a present, which thou shouldest carry to the courts of the Lord. Let us not retain you much longer: let us run over what remaineth. Behold the house increasing: behold the edifice pervade the whole world. Rejoice, because ye have entered into the courts; rejoice, because ye are being built into the temple of God. For those who enter are themselves built up, they themselves are the house of God: He is the inhabitator, for whom the

house is built over the whole world, and this "after the captivity." "Bring presents, and come into His courts."

10. "O worship the Lord in His holy court" (ver. 9): in the Catholic Church; this is His holy court. Let no man say, "Lo, here is Christ, or there. For there shall arise false prophets." Say this unto them, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Ye are calling me to the whited wall; I adore my God in His holy court. "Let the whole earth be moved before His face." 11. "Tell it out among the nations, that the Lord reigneth from the wood: and that it is He who hath made the round world so fast that it cannot be moved" (ver. 10). What testimonies of the building of the house of God! The clouds of heaven thunder out throughout the world that God's house is being built; and the frogs cry from the marsh, We alone are Christians. What testimonies do I bring forward? That of the Psalter. I bring forward what thou singest as one deaf: open thine ears; thou singest this; thou singest with me, and thou agreest not with me; thy tongue soundeth what mine doth, and yet thine heart disagreeeth with mine. Dost thou not sing this? Behold the testimonies of the whole world: "Let the whole earth be moved before His face: and dost thou say, that thou art not moved?" Tell it out among the heathen, that the Lord hath reigned from the wood. Shall men perchance prevail here, and say they reign by wood, because they reign by means of the clubs of their bandits? Reign by the Cross of Christ, if thou art to reign by wood. For this wood of thine maketh thee wooden: the wood of Christ passeth thee across the sea. Thou hearest the Psalm saying, "He hath set aright the round world, that it cannot be moved; and thou sayest it hath not only been moved since it was made fast, but hath also decreased. Dost thou speak the truth, and the Psalmist falsehood?"

Do the false prophets, when they cry out, "Lo, here is Christ, and there," speak truth; and doth this Prophet lie? Brethren, against these most open words ye hear in the corners rumours like these; "such an one was a traditor," and, "such an one was a traditor. What dost thou say? Are thy words, or the words of God, to be heard? For, "it is He who hath set aright the round world, that it cannot be moved. I show unto thee the round world built: bring thy present, and come into the courts of the Lord. Thou hast no presents: and on that account thou art not willing to enter. What is this? If God were to appoint unto thee a bull, goat, or ram, for a present, thou wouldest find one to bring: He hath appointed a humble heart, and thou wilt

not enter; for thou findest not this in thyself, because thou art swollen with pride. "He hath set aright the round world, that it cannot be moved: and He shall judge the people righteously. Then shall they mourn, who now refuse to love righteousness.

12. "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad" (ver. 11). Let the heavens, which declare the glory of God, rejoice; let the heavens rejoice, which the Lord made; let the earth be glad, which the heavens rain upon. For the heavens are the preachers, the earth the listeners. "Let the sea be stirred up, and the fulness thereof." What sea? The world. The sea hath been stirred up, and the fulness thereof: the whole world was roused up against the Church, while it was being extended and built over all the earth. Concerning this stirring up, ye have heard in the Gospel, "They shall deliver you up to councils." "The sea was stirred up: but how should the sea ever conquer Him who made it? 13. "The plains shall be joyful, and all things that are in them" (ver. 12). All the meek, all the gentle, all the righteous, are the "plains" of God. "Then shall all the trees of the woods rejoice." The trees of the woods are the heathen. Why do they rejoice? Because they were cut off from the wild olive, and engrafted into the good olive. "Then shall all the trees of the woods rejoice:" because huge cedars and cypresses have been cut down, and undecaying timbers have been bought for the building of the house. They were trees of the woods; but before they were sent to the building: they were trees of the woods, but before they produced the olive.

14. "Before the face of the Lord. For He cometh, for He cometh to judge the world" (ver. 13). He came at first, and will come again. He first came in His Church in clouds. What are the clouds which bore Him? The Apostles who preached, respecting whom ye have heard, when the Epistle was being read: "We are ambassadors," he saith, "for Christ: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. These are the clouds in whom He cometh, excepting His last Advent, when He will come to judge the quick and the dead. He came first in the clouds. This was His first voice which sounded forth in the Gospel: "From this time shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds. What is, "from this time"? Will not the Lord come in later times, when all the tribes of the earth shall mourn? He first came in His own preachers, and filled the whole round world. Let us not resist His first coming, that we may not tremble at His second. "But woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days! Ye have heard but now in the Gospel:

"Take ye heed, for ye know not at what hour He cometh. This is said figuratively. Who are those with child, and who give suck? Those who are with child, are the souls whose hope is in the world: but those who have gained what they hoped for, are meant by "they who give suck. For example:

one wisheth to buy a country seat; he is with child, for his object is not gained as yet, the womb swelleth in hope: he buyeth it; he hath brought forth, he now giveth suck to what he hath bought. "Woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days! Woe to those who put their hope in the world; woe to them that cling to those things which they brought forth through hope in the world. What then should the Christian do? He should use, not serve, the world. What is this? Those that have as those that have not. ...He who is without carefulness, waiteth without fear for his Lord's coming. For what sort of love is it of Christ, to fear lest He come? Brethren, are we not ashamed? We love Him, and yet we fear lest He come. Are we sure that we love Him? or do we love our sins more? Therefore let us hate our sins for their own sake, and love Him who will come to punish our sins. He will come, whether we like or not: for because He cometh not just now, it is no reason that He will not come at all. He will come, and when thou knowest not; and if He shall find thee ready, thy ignorance is no hurt to thee. "Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for He cometh: at His first coming. And what afterwards? "For He cometh to judge the earth.

And all the trees of the woods shall rejoice. He came first: and later to judge the earth: He shall find those rejoicing who believed in His first coming, "for He cometh." 15. "For with righteousness shall He judge the world:" not a part of it, for He bought not a part: He will judge the whole, for it was the whole of which He paid the price. Ye have heard the Gospel, where it saith, that when He cometh, "He shall gather together His elect from the four winds." He gathereth all His elect from the four winds: therefore from the whole world. For Adam himself (this I had said before) signifieth in Greek the whole world; for there are four letters, A, D, A, and M. But as the Greeks speak, the four quarters of the world have these initial letters, 'Anatolh, they call the East; Dusij the West; !Arktoj, the North; Meshmbria, the South: thou hast the word Adam. Adam therefore hath been scattered over the whole world. He was in one place, and fell, and as in a manner broken small, he filled the whole world: but the mercy of God gathered together the fragments from every side, and forged them by the fire of love,

and made one what was broken. That Artist knew how to do this; let no one despair: it is indeed a great thing, but reflect who that Artist was. He who made, restored: He who formed, reformed. What are righteousness and truth? He will gather together His elect with Him to the judgment, but the rest He will separate one from another; for He will place some on the right, others on the left hand. But what is more just, what more true, than that they shall not expect mercy from their Judge, who have refused to act mercifully, before their Judge come? But those who chose to act with mercy, with mercy shall be judged. ...

PSALM 97

1. ...This Psalm is entitled, "A Psalm of David's, when his land was restored." Let us refer the whole to Christ, if we wish to keep the road of a right understanding: let us not depart from the corner stone, lest our understanding suffer a fall: in Him let that become fixed, which wavered with unstable motion; let that rest upon Him, which before was waving to and fro in uncertainty. Whatever doubt a man hath in his mind when he heareth the Scriptures of God, let him not depart from Christ; when Christ hath been revealed to him in the words, let him then be assured that he hath understood; but before he arriveth at the understanding of Christ, let him not presume that he hath understood. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." What doth this mean, and how are these words understood in Christ, "When his land was restored"? ...

2. The earth restored is the resurrection of the flesh; for after His resurrection, all those things which are sung of in the Psalm were done. Let us then hear a Psalm full of joy on the restoration of the Earth. Let the Lord our God excite in us a hope and a pleasure worthy of so great a thing; may He rule our discourse, that it be fit for your hearts, that whatever joy our heart doth feel in such sights, He may bring on to our tongue, and thence conduct it into your ears, then to your heart, thence to your actions. 3. ..."The Lord is King, let the earth be glad: yea, let the multitude of the isles be joyous" (ver. 1). It is so indeed, because the word of God hath been preached not in the continent alone, but also in those isles which lie in mid sea: even these are full of Christians, full of the servants of God. For the sea doth not retard Him who made it. Where ships can approach, cannot the words of God? The isles are filled. But figuratively the isles may be taken for all the Churches. Why isles? Because the waves of all temptations roar around them. But as an

isle may be beaten by the waves which on every side dash around it, yet cannot be broken, and rather itself doth break the advancing waves, than by them is broken: so also the Churches of God, springing up throughout the world, have suffered the persecutions of the ungodly, who roar around them on every side; and behold the isles stand fixed, and at last the sea is calmed.

4. "Clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the direction of His seat" (ver. 2). ...The Lord Himself saith: "For judgment I am come into this world; that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind." They who seem unto themselves to see, who think themselves wise, who think healing not needful for them, that they may be made blind, may not understand. And that "they which see not may see;" that they who confess their blindness may obtain to be enlightened. Let there be therefore "clouds and darkness round about Him," for those who have not understood Him: for those who confess and humble themselves, "righteousness and judgment are the direction of His seat." He called those who believe in Him His seat: for from them hath He made Himself a seat, since in them Wisdom sitteth; for the Son of God is the Wisdom of God. But we have heard from another passage of Scripture a strong confirmation of this interpretation. "The soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom." Because then they who have believed in Him have been made righteous: justified by faith, they have become His own seat: He sitteth in them, judging from them, and guiding them. ...

5. "There shall go a fire before Him, and burn up His enemies on every side" (ver. 3). We remember having read in the Gospel, He shall say, "Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. I do not think it is said of that fire. Why do I not? Because he speaketh of some fire, which shall go before Him, before He cometh to judgment. For it is said, that the fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies on every side, that is, throughout the whole world. That fire will burn after His advent: this, on the contrary, will go before Him. What fire then is this? ...Behold, we have understood the fire that goeth before Him, that is to be understood of a kind of temporal punishment of the unbelieving and ungodly: let us understand the fire, if possible, of the salvation of the redeemed also; for thus we had proposed. The Lord Himself saith: "I am come to send fire on the earth: "fire" in the same way as a "sword; as in another passage He saith, that He was not come to send peace, but a sword, upon earth. The sword to divide, the fire to

burn: but each salutary: for the sword of His own word hath in salutary wise separated us from evil habits. For He brought a sword, and separated every believer either from his father who believed not in Christ, or from his mother in like manner unbelieving:

or at least, if we were born of Christian parents, from his ancestors. For no man among us had not either a grandsire, or great grandsire, or some ancestry among the heathen, and in that unbelief which is accursed before God. We are separated from that which we were before; but the sword which separateth, but slayeth not, hath cut between us. In the same way the fire also: "I am come to send fire upon the earth. Believers in Him were set on fire, they received the flame of love: and for this reason when the Holy Spirit itself had been sent to the Apostles, It thus appeared: "cloven tongues, like as of fire. Burning with this fire they set out on their march through the world, to burn and set on fire His enemies on every side. What enemies of His? They who forsaking the God who made them, adored the idols they had made. ...

6. "His lightnings gave shine unto the world" (ver. 4). This is great joy. Do we not see? is it not clear? His lightnings have shined unto the whole world: His enemies have been set on fire, and burnt. All that gainsaid hath been burnt, and "His lightnings have given shine unto the world." How have they shone? That the world might at length believe. Whence were the lightnings? From the clouds. What are the clouds of God? The preachers of the truth. But thou seest a cloud, misty and dark in the sky, and it hath I know not what hidden within it. If there be lightning from the cloud, a brightness shineth forth: from that which thou didst despise, hath burst forth that which thou mayest dread. Our Lord Jesus Christ therefore sent His Apostles, as His preachers, like clouds: they were seen as men, and were despised; as clouds appear, and are despised, until what thou wonderest at gleameth from them. For they were in the first place men encumbered with flesh, weak; then, men of low station, unlearned, ignoble: but there was within what could lighten forth; there was in them what could flash abroad. Peter a fisherman approached, prayed, and the dead arose. His human form was a cloud, the splendour of the miracle was the lightning. So in their words, so in their deeds, when they do things to be wondered at, and utter words to be wondered at, "His lightnings gave shine unto the world; the earth saw it, and was afraid." Is it not true? Doth not the whole Christian world at length exclaim, Amen, afraid at the lightnings which burst forth from those clouds?

7. "The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord" (ver. 5). Who are the hills? The proud. Every high thing raising itself against God, at the deeds of Christ and of the Christians, trembled, yielded, and when I say, what hath been already said, "melted," a better word cannot be found. "The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord." Where is the elevation of powers? where the hardness of the unbelieving? The Lord was a fire unto them, they melted at His presence like wax; so long hard, until that fire was applied. Every height hath been levelled; it dareth not now blaspheme Christ: and though the Pagan believeth not in Him, he blasphemeth Him not; though not as yet become a living stone, yet the hard hill hath been subdued. "At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth:" not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, as the Apostle saith; for He is not the God of the Jews alone, but of the Gentiles also. He is therefore the Lord of the whole earth, the Lord Jesus Christ born in Judaea, but not born for Judaea alone, because before He was born He created all men; and He who created, also new created, all men.

8. "The heavens have declared His righteousness: and all the people have seen His glory" (ver. 6). What heavens have declared? "The heavens declare the glory of God. Who are the heavens? Those who have become His seat; for as God sitteth in the heavens, so doth He sit in the Apostles, so doth He sit in the preachers of the Gospel. Even thou, if thou wilt, shalt be a heaven. Dost thou wish to be so? Purge from thy heart the earth. If thou hast not earthly lusts, and hast not in vain uttered the response, that thou hast "lifted up thy heart," thou shalt be a heaven. "If ye be risen with Christ," saith the Apostle to believers, "set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. Thou hast begun to set thine affection upon things above, not on things upon earth; hast thou not become a heaven? Thou carriest flesh, and in thy heart thou art already a heaven; for thy conversation will be in heaven. Being such, thou also declarest I Christ; for who of the faithful declareth not Christ? ...Therefore the whole Church preacheth Christ, and the heavens declare His righteousness; for all the faithful, whose care it is to gain unto God those who have not yet believed, and who do this from love, are heavens. From them God thundereth forth the terror of His judgment; and he who was unbelieving trembleth, and is alarmed, and believeth.

He shows unto men what power Christ had throughout the world, by pleading with them, and leading them to love Christ. For how many this

day have led their friends either to some pantomimist, or flute-player? Why, except from their liking him? And do ye love Christ. For He who conquered the world hath exhibited such spectacles, as that no man can say that he findeth in them cause for blame. For each person's favourite in the theatre is often vanquished there. But no man is vanquished in Christ: there is no reason for shame. Seize, lead, draw, whom ye may: be without fear, ye are leading unto Him, who displeaseth not those who see Him; and ask ye Him to enlighten them, that they may behold to good account. 9. "Confounded be all they that worship carved images" (ver. 7). Hath not this come to pass? Have they not been confounded? Are they not daily confounded? For carved images are images wrought by the hand. Why are all who worship carved images confounded? Because all people have seen His glory. All nations now confess the glory of Christ: let those who worship stones be ashamed. Because those stones were dead, we have found a living Stone; indeed those stones never lived, so that they cannot be called even dead; but our Stone is living, and hath ever lived with the Father, and though He died for us, He revived, and liveth now, and death shall no more have dominion over Him. This glory of His the nations have acknowledged; they leave the temples, they run to the Churches. Do they still seek to worship carved images? Have they not chosen to forsake their idols? They have been forsaken by their idols. "Who glory in their idols. But there is a certain disputer who seemeth unto himself learned, and saith, I do not worship that stone, nor that image which is without sense; ...I worship not this image but I adore what I see, and serve him whom see not. Who is that? Some invisible deity, he replieth, who presideth over that image. By giving this account of their images, they seem to themselves able disputants, because they do not worship idols, and yet do worship devils.

"The things," brethren, saith the Apostle, "which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God; we know that an idol is nothing: and that what the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Let them not therefore excuse themselves on this ground, that they are not devoted to insensate idols; they are rather devoted to devils, which is more dangerous. For if they were only worshipping idols, as they would not help them, so they would not hurt them; but if thou worship and serve devils, they themselves will be thy masters. ... 10. But observe holy men, who are like the Angels.

When thou hast found some holy man who serveth God, if thou wish to worship him instead of God, he forbiddeth thee: he will not arrogate to himself the honour due to God, he will not be unto thee as God, but be with thee under God. Thus did the holy Apostles Paul and Barnabas. They preached the word of God in Lycaonia. When they had performed wonderful works in Lycaonia, the people of that country brought victims, and wished to sacrifice to them, calling Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury: they were not pleased. Did they perchance refuse to be sacrificed to, because they abhorred to be compared to devils? No, but because they shuddered at divine honour being paid to men. Their own words show this: it is no guess of ours; for the text of the book goeth on to say how they were moved. ...Just then, as good men forbade those who had wished to worship them as gods, and wish rather that God alone be worshipped, God alone be adored, to God alone sacrifice be offered, not to themselves; so also all the holy Angels seek His glory whom they love; endeavour to impel and to excite to the contemplation of Him all whom they love: Him they declare to them, not themselves, since they are angels; and because they are soldiers, they study only how to seek the glory of their Captain; but if they have sought their own glory, they are condemned as usurpers.

Such were the devil and his angels; he claimed for himself divine honour, and for all his demons; he filled the Pagan temples, and persuaded them to offer images and sacrifices to himself. Was it not better to worship holy Angels than devils? They answer: we do not worship devils; we worship angels, as ye call them, the powers and the ministers of the great God. I wish ye would worship them: ye would easily learn from themselves not to worship them. Hear an Angel teaching. He was teaching a disciple of Christ, and showing him many wonders in the Revelation of John: and when some wonderful vision had been shown him, he trembled, and fell down at the Angel's feet; but that Angel, who sought not but the glory of God, said, "See thou do it not; for I am a fellow-servant of thee, and of thy brethren the prophets. What then, my brethren? Let no man say, I fear lest the Angel may be angry with me, if I worship him not as my God. He is then angry with thee, when thou hast chosen to worship him: for he is righteous, and loveth God. As devils are angry if they are not worshipped, so are Angels angry if they are worshipped instead of God. But lest the weak and trembling heart perchance say unto itself: If then the demons are incensed because they are not wor-

shipped, I fear to offend them; what can even their chief the devil do unto thee?

If he had any power over us no one of us would remain. Are not daily so many things said against him by the mouth of Christians, and yet the harvest of Christians increaseth. When thou art angry with the most depraved of thy slaves, thou givest him the name, "Satan," Devil. Perhaps in this thou dost err, since thou sayest it to a man, and thy immoderate anger hurrieth thee to revile the image of God: and yet thou choosest a term thou deeply hatest, to apply to him. If he could, would he not revenge himself? But it is not allowed: and he doth so much only as is allowed him. For when he wished to tempt Job, he had to ask power to do so: and he could do nothing had he not received power. Why then dost thou not fearlessly worship God, without whose will no one hurteth thee, and by whose permission thou art: chastened, not overcome? For if it shall have pleased the Lord thy God to permit some man to hurt thee, or some spirit: He will chasten thee, that thou mayest cry unto Him: "Confounded," therefore, "be all they that delight in vain gods: worship Him, all ye His angels. Let Pagans learn to worship God: they wish to worship Angels: let them imitate Angels, and worship Him who is worshipped by Angels." "Worship Him, all ye His angels. Let that Angel worship who was sent to Cornelius (for worshipping Him he sent Cornelius to Peter), himself Peter's fellow-servant;

let him worship Christ, Peter's Lord. "Worship Him, all ye gods!" 11. "Sion heard of it, and rejoiced" (ver. 8). What did Sion hear? That all His Angels worship Him. ...For the Church was not as yet among the Gentiles; in Judaea the Jews had some of them believed, and the very Jews who believed thought that they only belonged to Christ: the Apostles were sent to the Gentiles, Cornelius was preached to; Cornelius believed, was baptized, and they who were with Cornelius were also baptized. But ye know what happened, that they might be baptized: the reader indeed hath not reached this point, but, nevertheless, some recollect; and let those who do not recollect, hear briefly from me. The Angel was sent to Cornelius: the Angel sent Cornelius to Peter; Peter came to Cornelius. And because Cornelius and his household were Gentiles, and uncircumcised: lest they might hesitate to give the Gospel to the uncircumcised: before Cornelius and his household were baptized, the Holy Spirit came, and filled them, and they began to speak with tongues. Now the Holy Spirit had not fallen upon any one who had not been baptized:

but upon these It fell before baptism. For Peter might hesitate whether he might baptize the uncircumcised: the Holy Spirit came, they began to speak with tongues; the invisible gift was given, and took away all doubt about the visible Sacrament; they were all baptized. ...What did Sion hear, and rejoice at? That the Gentiles also had received the word of God. One wall had come, but the corner existed not as yet.

The name Sion is here peculiarly given to the Church which was in Judaea. "Sion heard of it, and rejoiced: and the daughters of Judah were glad. Thus it is written, "The apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard. See if the daughters of Judaea rejoiced not. What did they hear? "That the Gentiles had also received the word of God." ...Therefore, "The daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O Lord. What is, because of Thy judgments? Because in any nation, and in any people, he that serveth Him is accepted of Him: for He is not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. 12. See if this be not the reason for the joy of the daughters of Judah. "For Thou, Lord, art most high over all the earth" (ver. 9). Not in Judaea alone, but over Jerusalem; not over Sion only, but over all the earth. To this whole earth the judgments of God prevailed, so that it assembled its nations from every quarter: judgments with which they who have cut themselves off have no communion: they neither hear the prophecy, nor see its completion; "For Thou, Lord, art most high over all the earth: Thou art exalted far above all gods." What is "far"? For it is said of Christ. What then meaneth "far," except that Thou mayest be acknowledged coequal with the Father? What meaneth, "above all gods"? Who are they? Idols have not life, have not sense: devils have life and sense; but they are evil. What great thing is it that Christ is exalted above devils? He is exalted above devils: but neither is this very great; the heathen gods indeed are devils, but "He is far above all gods." Even men are styled gods: "I have said, Ye are gods: and ye are all the children of the Most Highest:" again it is written, "God standeth in the congregation of princes: He is a Judge among gods." Jesus Christ our Lord is exalted above all: not only above idols, not only above devils; but above all righteous men. Even this is not enough; above all Angels also: for whence otherwise is this, "Worship Him, all ye gods"? "Thou art far exalted above all gods."

13. What then do we all, who have assembled before Him, before Him who is exalted far above all gods? He hath given us a brief commandment, "O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil!" (ver. 10).

Christ doth not deserve that with Him thou shouldest love avarice. Thou lovest Him: thou shouldest hate what He hateth. There is a man who is thine enemy, he is what thou art; ye are the work of one Creator, with the same nature: and yet if thy son were to speak unto thine enemy, and come to his house, and constantly converse with him, thou wouldest be inclined to disinherit him; because he speaketh with thine enemy. And how so? Because thou seemest to say Justly, Thou art my enemy's friend, and seekest thou aught of my property? Attend then. Thou lovest Christ: avarice is Christ's foe; why speak with her? I say not, speak with her; why dost thou serve her? For Christ commandeth thee to do many things, and thou dost them not; she commandeth thee, and thou dost them. Christ commandeth thee to clothe the poor man: and thou dost it not; avarice biddeth thee defraud, and this thou dost in preference. If such be the case, if such thou art, do not very confidently promise thyself Christ's heritage. But thou sayest, I love Christ. Hence it appeareth that thou lovest what is good, if thou shalt be found to hate what is evil. ...

14. Because then he had said above, "see that ye hate the thing which is evil," lest ye should fear to hate evil, lest he should kill thee, he addeth instantly, "The Lord preserveth the souls of His servants. Hear Him preserving the souls of His servants, and saying, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. He who hath most power against thee, slayeth the body. What hath he done unto thee? What he also did to the Lord thy God. Why lovest thou to have what Christ hath, if thou fearest to suffer what Christ did? He came to bear thy life, temporal, weak, subject unto death. Surely fear to die, if thou canst avoid dying. What thou canst not avoid through thy nature, why dost thou not undergo by faith? Let the adversary who threateneth take away from thee that life, God giveth thee another life: for He gave thee this life also, and without His will even this shall not be taken from thee; but if it be His will that it be taken from thee, He hath a life to give thee in exchange; fear not to be robbed for His sake. Art thou unwilling to put off a patched garment? He will give thee a robe of glory. What robe dost thou tell me of? "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. This very flesh of thine shall not perish. Thine enemy can rage as far as to thy death:

he hath not power beyond, either over thy soul, or even over thy flesh; for although he scatter thy flesh about, he hindereth not the resurrection. Men

were fearful for their life: and what said the Lord unto them? "The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Dost thou, who lovest not a single hair, fear the loss of thy life? All things are numbered with God. He who created all things, will restore all things. They were not, and they were created: they were, and shall they not be restored? ..."He shall deliver them from the hand of the ungodly." 15. But perhaps thou wilt say, I lose this light. "There is sprung up a light for the righteous" (ver. 11). What light fearest thou thou mayest lose? fearest thou thou mayest be in darkness? Fear not thou mayest lose light; nay, fear lest while thou art guarding against the loss of this light, thou mayest lose that true light. For we see to whom that light is given which thou fearest losing, and with whom it is shared. Do the righteous only see this sun, when He maketh it rise over the just and unjust, and raineth upon the just and unjust? Wicked men, robbers, the unchaste, beasts, flies, worms, see that light together with thee. What sort of light doth He keep for the righteous, who giveth this even to such as these? Deservedly the Martyrs beheld this light in faith; for they who despised this light of the sun, had some light in their eyes, which they longed for, who rejected this. Do you imagine that they were really in misery, when they walked in chains? Spacious was the prison to the faithful, light were the chains to the confessors. They who preached Christ amid their torments, had joy in the iron-chair. What light hath sprung up for the righteous? Not that which springeth up for the unrighteous; not that which He causeth to rise over the good and bad. There is a different light which springeth up to the righteous;

of which light, that never rose upon themselves, the unrighteous shall in the end say, "Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined upon us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us. Behold, by loving this sun they have lain in the darkness of the heart. What did it profit them to have seen with their eyes this sun, and not in mind to have seen that light? Tobit was blind, but he used to teach his son the way of God. Ye know this, that Tobit warned his son, and said to him, "Son, give alms of thy substance; because that alms suffer not to come into darkness. Even he who was in darkness spoke thus. ...Dost thou wish to know that light? Be true-hearted. What is, be true-hearted? Be not of a crooked heart before God, withstanding His will, and wishing to bend Him unto thee, and not to rule thyself to please Him; and thou wilt feel the joyful gladness which all the true-hearted know.

16. "Be glad, ye righteous" (ver. 12). Perhaps already the faithful hearing the word, "Be glad," are thinking of banquets, preparing cups, waiting for the season of roses; because it is said, "Be glad, ye righteous!" See what followeth, "Be glad in the Lord." Thou art waiting for the season of spring, that thou mayest be glad: thou hast the Lord for joyful gladness, the Lord is always with thee, He hath no special season; thou hast Him by night, thou hast Him by day. Be true-hearted; and thou hast ever joy from Him. For that joy which is after the fashion of the world, is not true joy. Hear the prophet Isaiah: "There is no joy, saith my God, to the wicked." What the wicked call joy is not joy, such as he knew who made no account of their joy: let us believe him, brethren. He was a man, but he knew both kinds of joy. He certainly knew the joys of the cup, for he was a man, he knew the joy of the table, he knew the joys of marriage, he knew those joys worldly and luxurious. He who knew them saith with confidence, "There is no joy to the wicked, saith the Lord." But it is not man who speaks, it is the Lord. ...But thou sayest, I see not that light which Isaiah saw. Believe, and thou shalt see it. For perhaps thou hast not the eye to see it; for it is an eye by which that beauty is discerned. For as there is an eye of the flesh, by means of which this light is seen: so there is an eye of the heart, by which that joy is perceived: perhaps that eye is wounded, dimmed, disturbed by passion, by avarice, by indulgence, by senseless lust; thine eye is disturbed: thou canst not see that light. Believe, before thou seest: thou shalt be healed, and shalt see.

17. "And confess to the remembrance of His holiness." Now made glad, now rejoicing in the Lord, confess unto Him; for unless it were His will, ye would not rejoice in Him. For the Lord Himself saith: "These things I have spoken to you: that in Me ye might have peace. But in the world ye shall have tribulation." If ye are Christians, look for tribulations in this world; look not for more peaceful and better times. Brethren, ye deceive yourselves; what the Gospel doth not promise you, promise not to yourselves. Ye know what the Gospel saith; we are speaking to Christians; we ought not to disobey the faith. The Gospel saith this, that in the last times many evils, many stumbling-blocks, many tribulations, much iniquity, shall abound; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. "The love," it saith, "of many shall wax cold." Whosoever then hath been stedfastly fervent in spirit, as the Apostle saith, "fervent in spirit," his love shall not wax cold: because "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is

given unto us." Let no man therefore promise himself what the Gospel doth not promise. Behold, happier times will come, and I am doing this, and purchasing this. It is good for thee to listen to Him who is not deceived, nor hath deceived any man, who promised thee joy not here, but in Himself; and when all here hath passed away, to hope that with Him thou wilt for ever reign; lest when thou dost wish to reign here, thou mayest neither enjoy gladness here, nor find it there.

PSALM 98

1. "O sing unto the Lord a new song" (ver. 1). The new man knoweth this, the old man knoweth it not. The old man is the old life, and the new man the new life: the old life is derived from Adam, the new life is formed in Christ. But in this Psalm, the whole world is enjoined to sing a new song. More openly elsewhere the words are these: "O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth; that they who cut themselves off from the communion of the whole earth, may understand that they cannot sing the new song, because it is sung in the whole, and not in a part of it. Attend here also, and see that this is said. And when the whole earth is enjoined to sing a new song, it is meant, that peace singeth a new song. "For He hath done marvelous things. What marvelous things? Behold, the Gospel was just now being read, and we heard the marvellous things of the Lord. The only son of his mother, who was a widow, was being carried out dead: the Lord, in compassion, made them stand still; they laid him down, and the Lord said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." ... "The Lord hath done marvellous things. What marvellous things? Hear: "His own right hand, and His holy arm, hath healed for Him. What is the Lord's holy Arm? Our Lord Jesus Christ. Hear Isaiah:

"Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? His holy arm then, and His own right hand, is Himself. Our Lord Jesus Christ is therefore the arm of God, and the right hand of God for this reason is it said, "hath He healed for Him. It is not said only, "His right hand hath healed the world," but "hath healed for Him. For many are healed for themselves, not for Him. Behold how many long for that bodily health, and receive it from Him: they are healed by Him, but not for Him. How are they healed by Him, and not for Him? When they have received health, they become wanton: they who when sick were chaste, when cured become adulterers: they who when in illness injured no man, on the recovery of their

strength attack and crush the innocent: they are healed, but not unto Him. Who is he who is healed unto Him? He who is healed inwardly. Who is he that is healed inwardly? He who trusteth in Him, that when he shall have been healed inwardly, reformed into a new man, afterwards this mortal flesh too, which doth languish for a time, may in the end itself even recover its most perfect health. Let us therefore be healed for Him. But that we may be healed for Him, let us believe in His right hand.

2. "The Lord hath made known His salvation" (ver. 2). This very right hand, this very arm, this very salvation, is our Lord Jesus Christ of whom it is said, "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God;" of whom also that Simeon who embraced the Infant in his arms, spoke, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." "The Lord hath made known His salvation." To whom did He make it known? To a part, or to the whole? Not to any part specially. Let no man betray, no man deceive, no man say, "Lo, here is Christ, or there:" the man who saith, Lo, He is here, or there, pointeth to some particular spots. To whom "hath the Lord declared His salvation"? Hear what followeth: "His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight of the heathen." Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the right hand of God, the arm of God, the salvation of God, and the righteousness of God.

3. "He hath remembered His mercy to Jacob, and His truth unto the house of Israel" (ver. 3). What meaneth this, "He hath remembered His mercy and truth"? He hath pitied, so that He promised; because He promised and showed His mercy, truth hath followed: mercy hath gone before promise, promise hath been fulfilled in truth. ... "And His truth unto the house of Israel." Who is this Israel? That ye may not perchance think of one nation of the Jews, hear what followeth: "All the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God." It is not said, all the earth: but, "all the ends of the world:" as it is said, from one end to the other. Let no man cut this down, let no man scatter it abroad; strong is the unity of Christ. He who gave so great a price, hath bought the whole: "All the ends of the world."

4. Because they have seen, then, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands" (ver. 4). Ye already know what it is to make a joyful noise. Rejoice, and speak. If ye cannot express your joy, shout ye; let the shout manifest your joy, if your speech cannot: yet let not joy be mute; let not your heart be silent respecting its God, let it not be mute concerning His gifts. If thou speakest to

thyself, unto thyself art thou healed; if His right hand hath healed thee for Him, speak thou unto Him for whom thou hast been healed. "Sing, rejoice, and make melody." 5. "Make melody unto the Lord upon the harp: on the harp and with the voice of a Psalm" (ver. 5). Praise Him not with the voice only; take up works, that ye may not only sing, but work also. He who singeth and worketh, maketh melody with psaltery and upon the harp. Now see what sort of instruments are next spoken of, in figure: "With ductile trumpets also, and the sound of the pipe of horn" (ver. 6). What are ductile trumpets, and pipes of horn? Ductile trumpets are of brass: they are drawn out by hammering; if by hammering, by being beaten, ye shall be ductile trumpets, drawn out unto the praise of God, if ye improve when in tribulation: tribulation is hammering, improvement is the being drawn out. Job was a ductile trumpet, when suddenly assailed by the heaviest losses, and the death of his sons, become like a ductile trumpet by the beating of so heavy tribulation, he sounded thus: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. How did he sound? How pleasantly doth his voice sound? This ductile trumpet is still under the hammer. ...We have heard how he was hammered; let us hear how he soundeth: let us, if it please you, hear the sweet sound of this ductile trumpet: "What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? O courageous, O sweet sound! whom will not that sound awake from sleep?

whom will not confidence in God awake, to march to battle fearlessly against the devil; not to struggle with his own strength, but His who proveth him. For He it is who hammereth: for the hammer could not do so of itself. ...See how (I dare so speak, my brethren) even the Apostle was beaten with this very hammer: he saith, "there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. Behold he is under the hammer: let us hear how he speaketh of it: "For this thing," he saith, "I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. I, saith His Maker, wish to make this trumpet perfect; I cannot do so unless I hammer it; in weakness is strength made perfect. Hear now the ductile trumpet itself sounding as it should: "When I am weak, then am I strong." ...

6. The voice of the pipe of horn, what is it? The horn riseth above the flesh: in rising above the flesh it needs must be solid so as to last, and able to speak. And whence this? Because it hath surpassed the flesh. He who wisheth

to be a horn trumpet, let him overcome the flesh. What meaneth this, let him overcome the flesh? Let him surpass the desires, let him conquer the lusts of the flesh. Hear the horn trumpets. ...What meaneth this, "Set your affection on things above"? It meaneth, Rise above the flesh, think not of carnal things. They were not yet horn trumpets, to whom he now spoke thus: "I could not speak unto you, brethren, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it: neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal." They were not therefore horn trumpets, because they had not risen above the flesh. Horn both adhereth to the flesh, and riseth above the flesh; and although it springeth from the flesh, yet it surpasseth it. If therefore thou art spiritual, when before thou wast carnal; as yet thou art treading the earth in the flesh, but in spirit thou art rising into heaven; for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. ...Brethren, do not reproach brethren whom the mercy of God hath not yet converted; know that as long as ye do this, ye savour of the flesh. That is not a trumpet which pleaseth the ears of God: the trumpet of boastfulness maketh the war fruitless. Let the horn trumpet raise thy courage against the devil; let not the fleshly trumpet raise thy pride against thy brother. "Make a joyful noise in the sight of the Lord the King."

7. While ye are rejoicing, and delighted with the ductile trumpets, and the voice of the horn, what followeth? "Let the sea be stirred up, and the fulness thereof" (ver. 7). Brethren, when the Apostles, like ductile trumpets and horns, were preaching the truth, the sea was stirred up, its waves arose, tempests increased, persecutions of the Church took place. Whence hath the sea been stirred up? When a joyful noise was made, when Psalms of thanksgiving were being sung before God: the ears of God were pleased, the waves of the sea were raised. "Let the sea be stirred up, and the fulness thereof: the round world, and all that dwell therein." Let the sea be stirred up in its persecutions. "Let the floods clap their hands together" (ver. 8). Let the sea be aroused, and the floods clap their hands together; persecutions arise, and the saints rejoice in God. Whence shall the floods clap their hands? What is to clap their hands? To rejoice in works. To clap hands, is to rejoice; hands, mean works. What floods? Those whom God hath made floods, by giving them that Water, the Holy Spirit. "If any man thirst," saith He, "let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his bosom shall flow rivers of liv-

ing water." These rivers clapped their hands, these rivers rejoiced in works, and blessed God. "The bills shall be joyful together."

8. "Before the Lord, for He is come; for He is come to judge the earth" (ver. 9). "The hills" signify the great. The Lord cometh to judge the earth, and they rejoice. But there are hills, who, when the Lord is coming to judge the earth, shall tremble. There are therefore good and evil hills; the good hills, are spiritual greatness; the bad hills, are the swelling of pride. "Let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, for He is come; for He is come to judge the earth. Wherefore shall He come, and how shall He come? "With righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity" (ver. 10). Let the hills therefore rejoice; for He shall not judge unrighteously. When some man is coming as a judge, to whom the conscience cannot lie open, even innocent men may tremble, if from him they expect a reward for virtue, or fear the penalty of condemnation; when He shall come who cannot be deceived, let the hills rejoice, let them rejoice fearlessly; they shall be enlightened by Him, not condemned; let them rejoice, because the Lord will come to judge the world with equity; and if the righteous hills rejoice, let the unrighteous tremble. But behold, He hath not yet come: what need is there they should tremble? Let them mend their ways, and rejoice. It is in thy power in what way thou wilt to await the coming of Christ.

For this reason He delayeth to come, that when He cometh He may not condemn thee. Lo, He hath not yet come: He is in heaven, thou on earth: He delayeth His coming, do not thou delay wisdom. His coming is hard to the hard of heart, soft to the pious. See therefore even now what thou art: if hard of heart, thou canst soften; if thou art soft, even now rejoice that He will come. For thou art a Christian. Yea, thou sayest. I believe that thou prayest, and sayest, "Thy kingdom come. Thou desirest Him to come, whose coming thou fearest. Reform thyself, that thou mayest not pray against thyself.

PSALM 99

1. Beloved brethren, it ought already to be known to you, as sons of the Church, and well instructed in the school of Christ through all the books of our ancient fathers, who wrote the words of God and the great things of God, that their wish was to consult for our good, who were to live at this period, believers in Christ; who, at a seasonable time came unto us, the first time, in humility; at the second, destined to come in exaltation. ...For thus it is said in the Psalms: "Truth shall flourish out of the earth: and righteousness

hath looked down from heaven." Now, therefore, our whole design is, when we hear a Psalm, a Prophet, or the Law, all of which was written before our Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, to see Christ there, to understand Christ there. Attend therefore, beloved, to this Psalm, with me, and let us herein seek Christ; certainly He will appear to those who seek Him, who at first appeared to those who sought Him not; and He will not desert those who long for Him, who redeemed those who neglected Him. Behold, the Psalm beginneth concerning Him: of Him it is said:-

2. "The Lord is King, be the people angry" (ver. 1). For our Lord Jesus Christ began to reign, began to be preached, after He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, after He had filled His disciples with the confidence of the Holy Spirit, that they should not fear death, which He had already killed in Himself. Our Lord Christ began then to be preached, that they who wished for salvation might believe in Him; and the peoples who worshipped idols were angry. They who worshipped what they had made were angry, because He by whom they were made was declared. He announced, in fact, through His disciples, Himself, who wished them to be converted unto Him by whom they were made, and to be turned away from those things which they had made themselves. They were angry with their Lord in behalf of their idols, they who even if they were angry with their slave on their idol's account, were to be condemned. For their slave was better than their idol: for God made their slave, the carpenter made their idol. They were so angry in their idol's behalf, that they feared not to be angry with their Lord. But the words, "be they angry," are a prediction, not a command; for in a prophecy it is that this is said, "The Lord is King, be the people angry. Some good resulteth even from the enraged people:

let them be angry, and in their anger let the Martyrs be crowned. ...Ye heard when Jeremiah was being read before the reading of the Apostle, if ye listened; ye saw therein the times in which we now live. He said, "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, let them perish from the earth, and from under the heaven. He said not, The gods that have not made the heavens and earth, let them perish from the heaven and from the earth; because they never were in heaven: but what did he say? "Let them perish from the earth, and from under the heaven. As if, while the word earth was repeated, the repetition of the word heaven were wanting (because they never were in heaven): he repeateth the earth twice, since it is under heaven. "Let

them perish from the earth, and from under the heaven," from their temples. Consider if this be not now taking place; if in a great measure it hath not already happened: for what, or how much, hath remained? The idols remained rather in the hearts of the pagans, than in the niches of the temples.

3. "He who sitteth between the cherubims: thou dost understand, "He is King: let the earth be stirred up." ...The Cherubim is the seat of God, as the Scripture showeth us, a certain exalted heavenly throne, which we see not; but the Word of God knoweth it, knoweth it as His own seat: and the Word of God and the Spirit of God hath Itself revealed to the servants of God where God sitteth. Not that God doth sit, as doth man; but thou, if thou dost wish that God sit in thee, if thou wilt be good, shalt be the seat of God; for thus is it written, "The soul of the righteous is the seat of wisdom. For a throne is in our language called a seat. For some, conversant with the Hebrew tongue, have interpreted cherubim in the Latin language (for it is a Hebrew term) by the words, fulness of knowledge. Therefore, because God surpasseth all knowledge, He is said to sit above the fulness of knowledge. Let there be therefore in thee fulness of knowledge, and even thou shalt be the throne of God. ...He knoweth all things: for our hairs are numbered before God. But the fulness of knowledge which He willed man to know is different from this; the knowledge which He willed thee to have, pertaineth to the law of God.

And who can, thou mayest perhaps say unto me, perfectly know the Law, so that he may have within himself the fulness of the knowledge of the Law, and be able to be the seat of God? Be not disturbed; it is briefly told thee what thou hast, if thou dost wish to have the fulness of knowledge, and to become the throne of God: for the Apostle saith, "Love is the fulfilling of the Law. What followeth then? Thou hast lost the whole of thine excuse. Ask thine heart; see whether it hath love. If there be love there, there is the fulfilment of the Law there also; already God dwelleth in thee, thou hast become the throne of God. "Be the people angry; what can the angry people do against him who hath become the throne of God? Thou givest heed unto them who rage against thee: Who is it that sitteth within thee, thou givest not heed. Thou art become a heaven, and leavest thou the earth? For the Scripture saith in another passage, that the Lord our God doth declare, "The heaven is My throne. If therefore even thou by having the fulness of know-

ledge, and by having love, hast been made the throne of God, thou hast become a heaven. For this heaven which we look up to with these eyes of ours, is not very precious before God. Holy souls are the heaven of God; the minds of the Angels, and all the minds of His servants, are the heaven of God.

4. "The Lord is great in Sion, and high above all people" (ver. 2). ...He whom I spoke to thee of as above the Cherubims, is great in Sion. Ask thou now, what is Sion? We know Sion to be the city of God. The city of Jerusalem is called Sion; and is so called according to a certain interpretation, for that Sion signifieth watching, that is, sight and contemplation; for to watch is to look forward to, or gaze upon, or strain the eyes to see. Now every soul is a Sion, if it trieth to see that light which is to be seen. For if it shall have gazed upon a light of its own, it is darkened; if upon His, it is enlightened. But, now that it is clear that Sion is the city of God; what is the city of God, but the Holy Church? For men who love one another, and who love their God who dwelleth in them, constitute a city unto God. Because a city is held together by some law; their very law is Love; and that very Love is God: for openly it is written, "God is Love." He therefore who is full of Love, is full of God; and many, full of love, constitute a city full of God. That city of God is called Sion; the Church therefore is Sion. In it God is great. ...

5. Do ye imagine, brethren, that they whose instruments re-echoed yesterday, are not angry with our fastings? But let us not be angry with them, but let us fast for them. For the Lord our God who sitteth in us hath said, He hath Himself commanded us to pray for our enemies, to pray for them that persecute us: and as the Church doth this, the persecutors are almost extinct. ...The drunken man doth not offend himself, but he offendeth the sober man. Show me a man who is at last happy in God, liveth gravely, sigheth for that everlasting peace which God hath promised him; and see that when he hath seen a man dancing to an instrument, he is more grieved for his madness, than for a man who is in a frenzy from a fever. If then we know their evils, considering that we also have been freed from those very evils, let us grieve for them; and if we grieve for them, let us pray for them; and that we may be heard, let us fast for them. For we do not keep our own fasts in their holidays. Different are the fasts which we celebrate through the days of the approaching Passover, through different seasons which are fixed for us in Christ: but through their holidays we fast for this reason, that when

they are rejoicing, we may groan for them. For by their joy they excite our grief, and cause us to remember how wretched they are as yet.

But since we see many freed thence, where we also have been, we ought not to despair even of them. And if they are still enraged, let us pray; and if still a particle of earth that hath remained behind be stirred up against us, let us continue in lamentation for them, that to them also God may grant understanding, and that with us they may hear those words, in which we are at this moment rejoicing. 6. All these very people, over whom Thou art great in Sion, "Let them confess unto Thy Name, which is great" (ver. 3). Thy Name was little when they were enraged: it hath become great; let them now confess. In what sense do we say, that the Name of Christ was little, before it was spread abroad to so great an extent? Because His report is meant by His Name. His Name was small; already it hath become great. What nation is there that hath not heard of the Name of Christ? Therefore let now the people confess unto Thy Name, which is great, who before were enraged with Thy little Name. Wherefore shall they confess? Because it is "wonderful and holy. Thy very Name is wonderful and holy. He is so preached as crucified, so preached as humbled, so preached as judged, that He may come exalted, that He may come living, that He may come to judge in power. He spareth at present the people who blaspheme Him, because "the long-suffering of God leadeth to repentance. For He who now spareth, will not always spare: nor will He, who is now being preached that He may be feared, fail to come to judge. He will come, my brethren, He will come: let us fear Him, and let us live so that we may be found on His right hand. For He will come, and will judge, so as to place some on the left hand, some on the right.

And He doth not act in an uncertain manner, so as to err perchance betwixt men, so that he who should be set on the right hand, be set on the left; or that he who ought to stand on the left, by a mistake of God should stand on the right: He cannot err, so as to place the evil where He ought to set the good; nor to place the good, where He should have set the evil. If He cannot err, we err, if we fear not; but if we have feared in this life, we shall not then have what to fear for. "For the King's honour loveth judgment." ... 7. "Thou hast prepared equity; Thou hast wrought judgment and righteousness in Jacob." For we too ought to have judgment, we ought to have righteousness; but He worketh in us judgment and righteousness, who created us in whom He might work them. How ought we too to have judgment and

righteousness? Thou hast judgment, when thou dost distinguish evil from good: and righteousness when thou followest the good, and turnest aside from the evil. By distinguishing them, thou hast judgment; by doing, thou hast righteousness. "Eschew evil," he saith, "and do good; seek peace, and ensue it." Thou shouldest first have judgment, then righteousness. What judgment? That thou mayest first judge what is evil, and what is good. And what righteousness? That thou mayest shun evil, and do good. But this thou wilt not gain from thyself; see what he hath said, "Thou hast wrought judgment and righteousness in Jacob."

8. "O magnify the Lord our God" (ver. 5). Magnify Him truly, magnify Him well. Let us praise Him, let us magnify Him who hath wrought the very righteousness which we have; who wrought it in us, Himself. For who but He who justified us, wrought righteousness in us? For of Christ it is said, "who justifieth the ungodly." ..."And fall down before His footstool: for He is holy. What are we to fall down before? His footstool. What is under the feet is called a footstool, in Greek upopodion, in Latin Scabellum or Suppedaneum. But consider, brethren, what he commandeth us to fall down before. In another passage of the Scriptures it is said, "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Doth he then bid us worship the earth, since in another passage it is said, that it is God's footstool? How then shall we worship the earth, when the Scripture saith openly, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God"? Yet here it saith, "fall down before His footstool: and, explaining to us what His footstool is, it saith, "The earth is My footstool. I am in doubt; I fear to worship the earth, lest He who made the heaven and the earth condemn me; again, I fear not to worship the footstool of my Lord, because the Psalm biddeth me, "fall down before His footstool. I ask, what is His footstool? and the Scripture telleth me, "the earth is My footstool. In hesitation I turn unto Christ, since I am herein seeking Himself:

and I discover how the earth may be worshipped without impiety, how His footstool may be worshipped without impiety. For He took upon Him earth from earth; because flesh is from earth, and He received flesh from the flesh of Mary. And because He walked here in very flesh, and gave that very flesh to us to eat for our salvation; and no one eateth that flesh, unless he hath first worshipped: we have found out in what sense such a footstool of our Lord's may be worshipped, and not only that we sin not in worshipping it, but that we sin in not worshipping. But doth the flesh give life? Our Lord

Himself, when He was speaking in praise of this same earth, said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." ...But when our Lord praised it, He was speaking of His own flesh, and He had said, "Except a man eat My flesh, he shall have no life in him. Some disciples of His, about seventy, were offended, and said, "This is an hard saying, who can hear it? And they went back, and walked no more with Him. It seemed unto them hard that He said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you: they received it foolishly, they thought of it carnally, and imagined that the Lord would cut off parts from His body, and give unto them; and they said, "This is a hard saying. It was they who were hard, not the saying;

for unless they had been hard, and not meek, they would have said unto themselves, He saith not this without reason, but there must be some latent mystery herein. They would have remained with Him, softened, not hard: and would have learnt that from Him which they who remained, when the others departed, learnt. For when twelve disciples had remained with Him, on their departure, these remaining followers suggested to Him, as if in grief for the death of the former, that they were offended by His words, and turned back. But He instructed them, and saith unto them, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, but the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. Understand spiritually what I have said; ye are not to eat this body which ye see; nor to drink that blood which they who will crucify Me shall pour forth. I have commended unto you a certain mystery; spiritually understood, it will quicken. Although it is needful that this be visibly celebrated, yet it must be spiritually understood.

9. "Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among such as call upon His Name: these called upon the Lord, and He heard them" (ver. 6). "He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar" (ver. 7). ...Of Moses it is not there stated that he was a priest. But if he was not this, what was he? Could he be anything greater than a priest? This Psalm declareth that he also was himself a priest: "Moses and Aaron among His priests. They therefore were the Lord's priests. Samuel is read of later in the Book of Kings: this Samuel is in David's times; for he anointed the holy David. Samuel from his infancy grew up in the temple. ...He mentioneth these: and by these desireth us to understand all the saints. Yet why hath he here named those? Because we said that we ought here to understand Christ. Attend, holy brethren. He said above, "O magnify

the Lord our God: and fall down before His footstool, for He is holy: praising some one, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ; whose footstool is to be worshipped, because He assumed flesh, in which He was to appear before the human race; and wishing to show unto us that the ancient fathers also had preached of Him, because our Lord Jesus Christ is Himself the True Priest, he mentioned these, because God spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar. What meaneth, "out of the cloudy pillar"? He was speaking figuratively.

For if He spoke in some cloud, those obscure words predicted some one unknown, yet to be manifest. This unknown one is no longer unknown; for He is known by us, our Lord Jesus Christ. ...He who first spoke out of the cloudy pillar, hath in Person spoken unto us in His footstool; that is, on earth, when He had assumed the flesh, for which reason we worship His footstool, for He is holy. He Himself used to speak out of the cloud, which was not then understood: He hath spoken in His own footstool, and the words of His cloud have been understood. "They kept His testimonies, and the law that He gave them." ... "Thou heardest them," he saith, "O Lord our God: Thou wast forgiving to them, O God" (ver. 8). God is not said to be forgiving toward anything but sins: when He pardoneth sins, then He forgiveth. And what had He in them to punish, so that He was forgiving in pardoning them? He was forgiving in pardoning their sins, He was also forgiving in punishing them. For what followeth? "And punishedst all their own affections. Even in punishing them Thou wast forgiving toward them: for not in remitting, but also in punishing their sins, hast Thou been forgiving. Consider, my brethren, what be hath taught us here: attend. God is angry with him whom, when he sinneth, He scourgeth not: for unto him to whom He is truly forgiving, He not only remitteth sins, that they may not injure him in a future life;

but also chasteneth him, that he delight not in continual sin. 10. Come, my brethren; if we ask how these were punished, the Lord will aid me to tell you. Let us consider these three persons, Moses, Aaron, and Samuel: and how they were punished, since he said, "Thou hast punished all their own affections: meaning those affections of theirs, which the Lord knew in their hearts, which men knew not. For they were living in the midst of the people of God, without complaint from man. But what do we say? That perhaps the early life of Moses was sinful; for he fled from Egypt, after slaying a man. The early life of Aaron also was such as would displease God; for he allowed a

maddened and infatuated people to make an idol to worship; and an idol was made for God's people to worship. What sin did Samuel, who was given up when an infant to the temple? He passed all his life amid the holy sacraments of God: from childhood the servant of God. Nothing was ever said of Samuel, nothing by men. Perhaps God knew of somewhat there to chasten; since even what seemeth perfect unto men, unto that Perfection is still imperfect. Artists show many of their works to the unskilful; and when the unskilful have pronounced them perfect, the artists polish them still further, as they know what is still wanting to them, so that men wonder at things they had imagined already perfect having received so much additional polish.

This happeneth in buildings, and in paintings, and in embroidery, and almost in every species of art. At first they judge it to be already in a manner perfect, so that their eyes desire nothing further: but the judgment of the inexperienced eye is one, and that of the rule of art another. Thus also these Saints were living before the eyes of God, as if faultless, as if perfect, as if Angels: but He who punished all their own affections, knew what was wanting in them. But He punished them not in anger, but in mercy: He punished them that He might perfect what He had begun, not to condemn what He had cast away. God therefore punished all their affections. How did He punish Samuel? where is this punishment? ...What was said unto Moses was a type, not a punishment. What punishment is death to an old man? What punishment was it, not to enter into that land, into which unworthy men entered? But what is said of Aaron? He also died an old man: his sons succeeded him in the priesthood: his son afterwards ruled in the priesthood: how did He punish Aaron also? Samuel also died a holy old man, leaving his sons as his successors. I seek for the punishment inflicted upon them, and according to men I find it not: but according to what I know the servants of God suffer every day, they were day by day punished. Read ye, and see the punishments, and ye also who are advanced bear the punishments.

Every day they suffered from the obstinate people, every day they suffered from the ungodly livers; and were compelled to live among those whose lives they daily censured. This was their punishment. He unto whom it is small hath not advanced far; for the ungodliness of others tormenteth thee in proportion as thou hast departed far from thine own. ... 11. "O magnify the Lord our God! (ver. 9). Again we magnify Him. He who is merciful even when He striketh, how is He to be praised, how is He to be magnified? Canst thou

show this unto thy son, and cannot God? For thou art not good when thou dost caress thy son, and evil when thou strikest him. Both when thou dost caress him thou art a father, and when thou strikest him, thou art his father: thou dost caress him, that he may not faint; thou: strikest him, that he may not perish. "O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him upon, His holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy. As he said above, "O magnify the Lord our God and fall down before His footstool: now we have understood what it is to worship His footstool: thus also but now after he had magnified the Lord our God, that no man might magnify Him apart from His hill, he hath also praised His hill. What is His hill? We read elsewhere concerning this hill, that a stone was cut from the hill without hands, and shattered all the kingdoms of the earth, and the stone itself increased. This is the vision of Daniel which I am relating. This stone which was cut from the hill without hands increased, and "became," he saith, "a great mountain, and filled the whole face of the earth. Let us worship on that great mountain, if we desire to be heard.

Heretics do not worship on that mountain, because it hath filled the whole earth; they have stuck fast on part of it, and have lost the whole. If they acknowledge the Catholic Church, they will worship on this hill with us. For we already see how that stone that was cut from the mountain without hands hath increased, and how great tracts of earth it hath prevailed over, and unto what nations it hath extended. What is the mountain whence the stone was hewn without hands? The Jewish kingdom, in the first place; since they worshipped one God. Thence was hewn the stone, our Lord Jesus Christ. ...That stone then was born of the mountain without hands: it increased, and by its increase broke all the kingdoms of the earth. It hath become a great mountain, and hath filled the whole face of the earth. This is the Catholic Church, in whose communion rejoice that ye are. But they who are not in her communion, since they worship and praise God apart from this same mountain, are not heard unto eternal life; although they may be heard unto certain temporal things. Let them not flatter themselves, because God heareth them in some things: for He heareth Pagans also in some things. Do not the Pagans cry unto God, and it raineth? Wherefore? Because He maketh His sun to rise over the good and the bad, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust.

Boast not therefore, Pagan, that when thou criest unto God, God sendeth rain, for He sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust. He hath heard thee in temporal things: He heareth thee not in things eternal, unless thou hast worshipped in His holy hill. "Worship Him upon His holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy." ...

PSALM 100

1. Ye heard the Psalm, brethren, while it was being chanted: it is short, and not obscure: as if I had given you an assurance, that ye should not fear fatigue. ... 2. The title of this Psalm is, "A Psalm of confession." The verses are few, but big with great subjects; may the seed bring forth within your hearts, the barn be prepared for the Lord's harvest. 3. "Jubilate," therefore, "unto the Lord, all ye lands" (ver. 1). This Psalm giveth this exhortation to us, that we jubilate unto the Lord. Nor doth it, as it were, exhort one particular corner of the earth, or one habitation or congregation of men; but since it is aware that it hath sown blessings on every side, on every side it doth exact jubilation. Doth all the earth at this moment hear my voice? And yet the whole earth hath heard this voice. All the earth is already jubilant in the Lord; and what is not as yet jubilant, will be so. For blessing, extending on every side, when the Church was commencing to spread from Jerusalem throughout all nations, everywhere overturneth ungodliness, and everywhere buildeth up piety: the good are mingled with the wicked throughout all lands. Every land is full of the discontented murmurs of the wicked, and of the jubilation of the good. What then is it, "to jubilate"? For the title of the present Psalm especially maketh us give good heed to this word, for it is entitled, "A Psalm of confession." What meaneth, to jubilate with confession? It is the sentiment thus expressed in another Psalm: "Blessed is the people that understandeth jubilation." Surely that which being understood maketh blessed is something great. May therefore the Lord our God, who maketh men blessed, grant me to understand what to say, and grant you to understand what ye hear: "Blessed is the people that understandeth jubilation." Let us therefore run unto this blessing, let us understand jubilation, let us not pour it forth without understanding. Of what use is it to be jubilant and obey this Psalm, when it saith, "Jubilate unto the Lord, all ye lands," and not to understand what jubilation is, so that our voice only may be jubilant, our heart not so? For the understanding is the utterance of the heart.

4. I am about to say what ye know. One who jubilates, uttereth not words, but it is a certain sound of joy without words: for it is the expression of a mind poured forth in joy, expressing, as far as it is able, the affection, but not compassing the feeling. A man rejoicing in his own exultation, after certain words which cannot be uttered or understood, bursteth forth into sounds of exultation without words, so that it seemeth that he indeed doth rejoice with his voice itself, but as if filled with excessive joy cannot express in words the subject of that joy. ...Those who are engaged at work in the fields are most given to jubilate; reapers, or vintagers, or those who gather any of the fruits of the earth, delighted with the abundant produce, and rejoicing in the very richness and exuberance of the soil, sing in exultation; and among the songs which they utter in words, they put in certain cries without words in the exultation of a rejoicing mind; and this is what is meant by jubilating. ...

5. When then are we jubilant? When we praise that which cannot be uttered. For we observe the whole creation, the earth and the sea, and all things that therein are: we observe that each have their sources and causes, the power of production, the order of birth, the limit of duration, the end in decease, that successive ages run on without any confusion, that the stars roll, as it seemeth, from the East to the West, and complete the courses of the years: we see how the months are measured, how the hours extend; and in all these things a certain invisible element, I know not what, but some principle of unity, which is termed spirit or soul, present in all living things, urging them to the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, and the preservation of their own safety; that man also hath somewhat in common with the Angels of God; not with cattle, such as life, hearing, sight, and so forth; but somewhat which can understand God, which peculiarly doth belong to the mind, which can distinguish justice and injustice, as the eye discerneth white from black. In all this consideration of creation, which I have run over as I could, let the soul ask itself: Who created all these things? Who made them? Who made among them thyself? ...I have observed the whole creation, as far as I could.

I have observed the bodily creation in heaven and on earth, and the spiritual in myself who am speaking, who animate my limbs, who exert voice, who move the tongue, who pronounce words, and distinguish sensations. And when can I comprehend myself in myself? How then can I comprehend what is above myself? Yet the sight of God is promised to the human heart,

and a certain operation of purifying the heart is enjoined; this is the counsel of Scripture. Provide the means of seeing what thou lovest, before thou try to see it. For unto whom is it not sweet to hear of God and His Name, except to the ungodly, who is far removed, separated from Him? ... 6. Be therefore like Him in piety, and earnest in meditation: for "the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made;" look upon the things that are made, admire them, seek their author. If thou art unlike, thou wilt turn back; if like, thou wilt rejoice. And when, being like Him, thou shalt have begun to approach Him, and to feel God, the more love increaseth in thee, since God is love, thou wilt perceive somewhat which thou wast trying to say, and yet couldest not say. Before thou didst feel God, thou didst think that thou couldest express God; thou beginnest to feel Him, and then feelest that what thou dost feel thou canst not express. But when thou hast herein found that what thou dost feel cannot be expressed, wilt thou be mute, wilt thou not praise God? Wilt thou then be silent in the praises of God, and wilt thou not offer up thanksgivings unto Him who hath willed to make Himself known unto thee? Thou didst praise Him when thou wast seeking, wilt thou be silent when thou hast found Him? By no means; thou wilt not be ungrateful. Honour is due to Him, reverence is due to Him, great praise is due to Him. Consider thyself, see what thou art: earth and ashes; look who it is hath deserved to see, and What; consider who thou art, What to see, a man to see God! I recognise not the man's deserving, but the mercy of God. Praise therefore Him who hath mercy. ...

7. "Serve the Lord with gladness." All servitude is full of bitterness: all who are bound to a lot of servitude both are slaves, and discontented. Fear not the servitude of that Lord: there will be no groaning there, no discontent, no indignation; no one seeketh to be sold to another master, since it is a sweet service, because we are all redeemed. Great happiness, brethren, it is, to be a slave in that great house, although in bonds. Fear not, bound slave, confess unto the Lord: ascribe thy bonds to thine own deservings; confess in thy chains, if thou art desirous they be changed into ornaments. ...At the same time thou art slave, and free; slave, because thou art created such; free, because thou art loved by God, by whom thou wast created: yea, free indeed, because thou lovest Him by whom thou wast made. Serve not with discontent; for thy murmurs do not tend to release thee from serving, but to make thee a wicked servant. Thou art a slave of the Lord, thou art a freedman of

the Lord: seek not so to be emancipated as to depart from the house of Him who frees thee. ...

8. I will, therefore, saith he, live separate with a few good men: why should I live in common with crowds? Well: those very few good men, from what crowds have they been strained out? If however these few are all good: it is, nevertheless, a good and praiseworthy design in man, to be with such as have chosen a quiet life; distant from the bustle of the people, from noisy crowds, from the great waves of life, they are as if in harbour. Is there therefore here that joy? that jubilant gladness which is promised? Not as yet; but still groans, still the anxiety of temptations. For even the harbour hath an entrance somewhere or other; if it had not, no ship could enter it; it must therefore be open on some side: but at times on this open side the wind rusheth in; and where there are no rocks, ships dashed together shatter one another. Where then is security, if not even in harbour? And yet it must be confessed, it is true, that persons in harbour are in their degree much better off than when afloat on the main. Let them love one another, as ships in harbour, let them be bound together happily; let them not dash against one another: let absolute equality be preserved there constancy in love; and when perchance the wind rusheth in from the open side, let there be careful piloting there.

Now what will one who perchance presideth over such places, nay, who serveth his brethren, in what are called monasteries, tell me? I will be cautious: I will admit no wicked man. How wilt thou admit no evil one? ...Those who are about to enter, do not know themselves; how much less dost thou know them? For many have promised themselves that they were about to fulfil that holy life, which has all things in common, where no man calleth anything his own, who have one soul and one heart in God: they have been put into the furnace, and have cracked. How then knowest thou him who is unknown even to himself? ...Where then is security? Here nowhere; in this life nowhere, except solely in the hope of the promise of God. But there, when we shall reach thereunto, is complete security, when the gates are shut, and the bars of the gates of Jerusalem made fast; there is truly full jubilation, and great delight. Only do not thou feel secure in praising any sort of life: "judge no man blessed before his death."

9. By this means men are deceived, so that they either do not undertake, or rashly attempt, a better life; because, when they choose to praise, they

praise without mention of the evil that is mixed with the good: and those who choose to blame, do so with so envious and perverse a mind, as to shut their eyes to the good, and exaggerate only the evils which either actually exist there, or are imagined. Thus it happeneth, that when any profession hath been ill, that is, incautiously, praised, if it hath invited men by its own reputation, they who betake themselves thither discover some such as they did not believe to be there; and offended by the wicked recoil from the good. Brethren, apply this teaching to your life, and hear in such a manner that ye may live. The Church of God, to speak generally, is magnified: Christians, and Christians alone, are called great, the Catholic (Church) is magnified; all love each other; each and all do all they can for one another; they give themselves up to prayers, fastings, hymns; throughout the whole world, with peaceful unanimity God is praised. Some one perhaps heareth this, who is ignorant that nothing is said of the wicked who are mingled with them; he cometh, invited by these praises, findeth bad men mixed with them, who were not mentioned to him before he came; he is offended by false Christians, he flieth from true Christians. Again, men who hate and slander them, precipitately blame them:

asking, what sort of men are Christians? Who are Christians? Covetous men, usurers. Are not the very persons who fill the Churches on holidays the same who during the games and other spectacles fill the theatres and amphitheatres? They are drunken, gluttonous, envious, slanderers of each other. There are such, but not such only. And this slanderer in his blindness saith nothing of the good: and that praiser in his want of caution is silent about the bad. ...Thus also in that common life of brethren, which exists in a monastery: great and holy men live therein, with daily hymns, prayers, praises of God; their occupation is reading; they labour with their own hands, and by this means support themselves; they seek nothing covetously; whatever is brought in for them by pious brethren, they use with contentedness and charity; no one claimeth as his own what another hath not; all love, all forbear one another mutually. Thou hast praised them; thou hast praised; he who knoweth not what is going on within, who knoweth not how, when the wind entereth, ships even in harbour dash against one another, entereth as if in hope of security, expecting to find no man to forbear; he findeth there evil brethren, who could not have been found evil, if they had not been admitted (and they must be at first tolerated, lest they should perchance re-

form; nor can they easily be excluded, unless they have first been endured): and becometh himself impatient beyond endurance. Who asked me here? I thought that love was here.

And irritated by the perversity of some few men, since he hath not persevered in fulfilling his vow, he becometh a deserter of so holy a design, and guilty of a vow he hath never discharged. And then, when he hath gone forth himself too, he also becometh a reproacher, and a slanderer; and records those things only (sometimes real), which he asserts that he could not have endured. But the real troubles of the wicked ought to be endured for the society of the good. The Scripture saith unto him: "Woe unto those that have lost patience. And what is more, he belcheth abroad the evil savour of his indignation, as a means to deter them who are about to enter; because, when he had entered himself, he could not persevere. Of what sort are they? Envious, quarrelsome, men who forbear no man, covetous; saying, He did this there, and he did that there. Wicked one, why art thou silent about the good! Thou sayest enough of those whom thou couldst not endure: thou sayest nothing of those who endured thy wickedness. ...

10. "O serve the Lord with gladness" (ver. 2): he addresseth you, whoever ye are who endure all things in love, and rejoice in hope. "Serve the Lord," not in the bitterness of murmuring, but in the "gladness of love." "Come before His presence with rejoicing." It is easy to rejoice outwardly: rejoice before the presence of God. Let not the tongue be too joyful: let the conscience be joyful. "Come before His presence with a song." 11. "Be ye sure that the Lord He is God" (ver. 3). Who knoweth not that the Lord, He is God? But He speaketh of the Lord, whom men thought not God: "Be ye sure that the Lord He is God." Let not that Lord become vile in your sight: ye have crucified Him, scourged Him, spit upon Him, crowned Him with thorns, clothed Him in a dress of infamy, hung Him upon the Cross, pierced Him with nails, wounded Him with a spear, placed guards at His tomb; He is God. "It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." It is He that hath made us: "and without Him was not anything made that was made." What reason have ye for exultation, what reason have ye for pride? Another made you; the Same who made you, suffereth from you. But ye extol yourselves, and glory in yourselves, as if ye were created by yourselves. It is good for you that He who made you, make you perfect. ... "We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture." Sheep and one sheep. These sheep are one sheep: and how loving a

Shepherd we have! He left the ninety and nine, and descended to seek the one, He bringeth it back on His own shoulders ransomed by His own blood. That Shepherd dieth without fear for the sheep, who on His resurrection regaineth His sheep.

12. "Enter into His gates with confession" (ver. 3). At the gates is the beginning: begin with confession. Thence is the Psalm entitled, "A Psalm of Confession: there be joyful. Confess that ye were not made by yourselves, praise Him by whom ye were made. Let thy good come from Him, in departing from whom thou hast caused thine evil. "Enter into His gates with confession. Let the flock enter into the gates: let it not remain outside, a prey for wolves. And how is it to enter? "With confession. Let the gate, that is, the commencement for thee, be confession. Whence it is said in another Psalm, "Begin unto the Lord with confession. What he there calleth "Begin," here he calleth "Gates. "Enter into His gates in confession. What? And when we have entered, shall we not still confess? Always confess Him: thou hast always what to confess for. It is hard in this life for a man to be so far changed, that no cause for censure be discoverable in him: thou must needs blame thyself, lest He who shall condemn blame thee. Therefore even when thou hast entered His courts, then also confess. When will there be no longer confession of sins? In that rest, in that likeness to the Angels. But consider what I have said: there will there be no confession of sins. I said not, there will be no confession: for there will be confession of praise. Thou wilt ever confess, that He is God, thou a creature;

that He is thy Protector, thyself protected. In Him thou shalt be as it were hid. "Go into His courts with hymns; and confess unto Him. Confess in the gates; and when ye have entered the courts, confess with hymns. Hymn are praises. Blame thyself, when thou art entering; when thou hast entered, praise Him. "Open me the gates of righteousness," he saith in another Psalm, "that I may go into them, and confess unto the Lord. Did he say, when I have entered, I will no longer confess? Even after his entrance, he will confess. For what sins did our Lord Jesus Christ confess, when He said, "I confess unto Thee, O Father"? He confessed in praising Him, not in accusing Himself. "Speak good of His Name." 13. "For the Lord is pleasant" (ver. 4). Think not that ye faint in praising Him. Your praise of Him is like food: the more ye praise Him, the more ye acquire strength, and He whom ye praise becometh the more sweet. "His mercy is everlasting." For He will not cease to

be merciful, after He hath freed thee: it belongeth to His mercy to protect thee even unto eternal life. "His mercy," therefore, "is to everlasting: and His truth from generation to generation" (ver. 5). Understand by "from generation to generation," either every generation, or in two generations, the one earthly, the other heavenly. Here there is one generation which produceth mortals; another which maketh such as are everlasting. His Truth is both here, and there. Imagine not that His truth is not here, if His truth were not here, he would not say in another Psalm: "Truth is risen out of the earth;" nor would Truth Itself say, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

PSALM 101

1. In this Psalm, we ought to seek in the whole body of it what we find in the first verse: "Mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord" (ver. 1). Let no man flatter himself that he will never be punished through God's mercy; for there is judgment also; and let no man who hath been changed for the better dread the Lord's judgment, seeing that mercy goeth before it. For when men judge, sometimes overcome by mercy, they act against justice; and mercy, but not justice, seemeth to be in them: while sometimes, when they wish to enforce a rigid judgment, they lose mercy. But God neither loseth the severity of judgment in the bounty of mercy, nor in judging with severity loseth the bounty of mercy. Suppose we distinguish these two, mercy and judgment, by time; for possibly, they are not placed in this order without a meaning, so that he said not "judgment and mercy," but "mercy and judgment: so that if we distinguish them by succession in time, perhaps we find that the present is the season for mercy, the future for judgment. How is it that the season of mercy cometh first? Consider first how it is with God, that thou also mayest imitate the Father, in so far as He shall permit thee. ..."He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Behold mercy.

When thou seest the just and the unjust behold the same sun, enjoy the same light, drink from the same founts, satisfied with the same rain, blessed with the same fruits of the earth, inhale this air in the same way, possess equally the world's goods; think not that God is unjust, who giveth these things equally to the just and the unjust. It is the season of mercy, not as yet of judgment. For unless God spared at first through mercy, He would not find those whom He could crown through judgment. There is therefore a

season for mercy, when the long-suffering of God calleth sinners to repentance. 2. Hear the Apostle distinguishing each season, and do thou also distinguish it. ..."Thinkest thou," he saith, "O man, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, that thou shall escape the judgment of God? And as if we were to reply, Why do I commit such sins daily, and no evil occurreth unto me? he goeth on to show to him the season of mercy: "Despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering? And he did indeed despise them; but the Apostle hath made him anxious. "Not knowing," he saith, "that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? Behold the season of mercy. But that he might not think this would last for ever, how did he in the next verse raise his fears? Now hear the season of judgment; thou hast heard the season of mercy, on which account, "mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord: "But thou," saith the Apostle, "after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds. Lo, "mercy and judgment. But he hath threatened concerning judgment: is therefore the judgment of God to be feared only, and not to be loved? To be feared by the wicked on account of punishment, to be loved by the good on account of the crown.

Because then the Apostle hath alarmed the wicked in the testimony which I have quoted, hear where he giveth hope concerning judgment to the good. He puts forth himself, and shows in himself too the season of mercy. For unless he found a period of mercy, in what condition would judgment find him? A blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurer of others. For he thus speaketh, and praiseth the season of mercy, in which season we are now living: "I who was before," he saith, "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy. But perhaps he only hath obtained mercy? Hear how he cheereth us: "That in me," he saith, "first, Christ Jesus might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting. What meaneth, "that He might show forth all long-suffering"? That every sinner and wicked man might see that Paul received pardon, and might not despair of himself? Lo, he hath instanced himself, and thereby cheered others also. ...But did Paul alone deserve this? For I had asserted, that as he raised our fears by the former testimony, so did he encourage us by the latter. When he said, "The Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render

to me at that day: he addeth, "and not to the only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" and His kingdom. Since therefore, brethren, we have a season of mercy, let us not on that account flatter, or indulge ourselves, saying, God spareth ever. ...

3. "I will sing to the harp, and will have understanding, in the spotless way. When Thou shall come unto me" (ver. 2). Except in the spotless way, thou canst neither sing to the harp, nor understand. If thou dost wish to understand, sing in the spotless way, that is, work with cheerfulness before thy God. What is the spotless way? Hear what followeth: "I walked in innocence, in the midst of my house. This spotless way beginneth from innocence, and it endeth also in innocence. Why seek many words? Be innocent: and thou hast perfected righteousness. ...But who is innocent? He who white he hurteth not another, injureth not himself. For he who hurteth himself, is not innocent. Some one saith: Lo, I have not robbed any one, I have not oppressed any one: I will live happily on my own substance, the fruits of my virtuous toil; I wish to have fine banquets, I wish to spend as much as pleaseth me, to drink with those whom I like as much as I please; whom have I robbed, whom have I oppressed, who hath complained of me? He seemeth innocent. But if he corrupt himself, if he overthrow the temple of God within himself, why hope that he will act with mercy toward others, and spare the wretched? Can that man be merciful to others, who unto himself is cruel? The whole of righteousness, therefore, is reduced to the one word, innocence. But the lover of iniquity, hateth his own soul.

When he loved iniquity, he fancied he was injuring others. But consider whether he was injuring others: "He who loveth iniquity," he saith, "hateth his own soul. He therefore who wishes to injure another, first injureth himself; nor doth he walk, since there is no room. For all wickedness suffereth from narrowness: innocence alone is broad enough to walk in. "I walked in the innocence of my heart, in the midst of my house. By the middle of his house, he either signifieth the Church herself; for Christ walketh in her: or his own heart; for our inner house is our heart: as he hath explained in the above words, "in the innocence of my heart. What is the innocence of the heart? The middle of his house? Whoever hath a bad house in this, is driven out of doors. For whoever is oppressed within his heart by a bad conscience, just as any man in consequence of the overflow of a waterspout or of smoke goeth out of his house, suffereth not himself to dwell therein; so he who

hath not a quiet heart, cannot happily dwell in his heart. Such men go out of themselves in the bent of their mind, and delight themselves with things without, that affect the body; they seek repose in trifles, in spectacles, in luxuries, in all evils. Wherefore do they wish themselves well without? Because it is not well with them within, so that they may rejoice in a good conscience. ...

4. "I set no wicked thing before my eyes" (ver. 3). ...I did love no wicked thing. And he explaineth this same wicked thing: "I hated them that do unfaithfulness." Attend, my brethren. If ye walk with Christ in the midst of His house, that is, if either in your heart ye have a good repose, or in the Church herself proceed on a good journey in the way of godliness; ye ought not to hate those unfaithful only who are without, but whomsoever also ye may have found within. Who are the unfaithful? They who hate the law of God; who hear, and do it not, are called unfaithful. Hate the doers of unfaithfulness, repel them from thee. But thou shouldest hate the unfaithful, not men: one man who is unfaithful, hath, ye see, two names, man, and unfaithful: God made him man, he made himself unfaithful; love in him what God made, persecute in him what he made himself. For when thou shalt have persecuted his unfaithfulness, thou killest the work of man, and freest the work of God. "I hated the doers of unfaithfulness."

5. "The wicked heart hath not cleaved unto me." ...The heart of a man, who wisheth not anything contrary to any that God wisheth, is called straight. ...If therefore the righteous heart followeth God, the crooked heart resisteth God. Suppose something untoward happeneth to him, he crieth out, "God, what have I done unto Thee? What sin have I committed?" He wisheth himself to appear just, God unjust. What is so crooked as this? It is not enough that thou art crooked thyself: thou must think thy rule crooked also. Reform thyself, and thou findest Him straight, in departing from whom thou hast made thyself crooked. He doth justly, thou unjustly; and for this reason thou art perverse, since thou callest man just, and God unjust. What man dost thou call just? Thyself. For when thou sayest, "What have I done unto Thee?" thou thinkest thyself just. But let God answer thee: "Thou speakest truth: thou hast done nothing to Me: thou hast done all things unto thyself; for if thou hadst done anything for Me, thou wouldest have done good. For whatever is done well, is done unto Me; because it is done according to My commandment; but whatever of evil is done, is done unto thee,

not unto Me; for the wicked man doth nothing except for his own sake, since it is not what I command." When ye see such men, brethren, reprove them, convince and correct them: and if ye cannot reprove or correct them, consent not to them.

6. "When the wicked man departed from me, I knew him not" (ver. 4). I approved him not, I praised him not, he pleased me not. For we find the word "to know" occasionally used in Scripture, in the sense of "to be pleased." For what is hidden from God, brethren? Doth He know the just, and doth He not know the unjust? What dost thou think of, that He doth not know? I say not, what thinkest thou; but what wilt thou ever think, that He will not have seen beforehand? God knoweth all things, then; and yet in the end, that is in judgment after mercy, He saith of some persons: "I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity." Was there any one He did not know? But what meaneth, "I never knew you"? I acknowledge you not in My rule. For I know the rule of My righteousness: ye agree not with it, ye have turned aside from it, ye are crooked. Therefore He said here also: "When the wicked man departed from Me, I knew him not." ...Therefore, "when the wicked man departed from me," that is, when the wicked man was unlike me, and was unwilling to imitate my paths, was unwilling in his wickedness to live as I had proposed myself for his imitation; "I knew him not." What meaneth, "I knew him not"? Not that I was ignorant of him, but that I did not approve him.

7. "Whose privily slandered his neighbour, him I persecuted" (ver. 5). Behold the righteous persecutor, not of the man, but of the sin. "With the proud eye, and the insatiable heart, I did not feed. What meaneth, "I did not feed with"? I did not eat in common with such. Attend, beloved; since ye are about to hear something wonderful. If he did not feed with this man, he did not eat with him; for to feed is to eat; how is it then that we find our Lord Himself eating with the proud? It was not only with those publicans and sinners, for they were humble: for they acknowledged their weakness, and asked for the physician. We find that He ate with the proud Pharisees themselves. A certain proud man had invited Him: it was the same who was displeased because a sinning woman, one of ill repute in the city, approached the feet of our Lord. ...That Pharisee was proud: the Lord ate with him; what is it therefore that he saith? "With such an one I did not eat. How doth He enjoy unto us what He hath not done Himself? He exhorteth us to imitate Himself: we

see that He ate with the proud; how cloth He forbid us to eat with the proud? We indeed, brethren, for the sake of reproof, abstain from communion with our brethren, and do not eat with them, that they may be reformed?

We rather eat with strangers, with Pagans, than with those who hold with us, if we have seen that they live wickedly, that they may be ashamed, and amend; as the Apostle saith, "And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. For the sake of healing others we usually do this; but nevertheless we often eat with many strangers and ungodly men. 8. The pious heart hath its banquets, the proud heart hath its banquets: for it was on account of the food of the proud heart, that he said, "with an insatiable heart." How is the proud heart fed? If a man is proud, he is envious: otherwise it cannot be. Pride is the mother of enviousness: it cannot but generate it, and ever coexist with it. Every proud man is, therefore, envious: if envious, he feedeth on the misfortunes of others. Whence the Apostle saith, "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed of one another." Ye see them, then, eating: eat not with these: fly such banquets: for they cannot satisfy themselves with rejoicing in others' evils, because their hearts are insatiable. Beware thou art not caught in their feasts by the devil's noose. ...Just as birds feed at the trap, or fishes at the hook, they were taken, when they fed. The ungodly therefore have their own feasts, the godly also have theirs. Hear the feasts of the godly: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." If therefore the godly eateth the meat of righteousness, and the ungodly of pride; it is no wonder if he is insatiable in heart. He eateth the meat of iniquity: do not eat the meat of iniquity, and the proud in eye, and the insatiable in heart, eateth not with thee.

9. And whence wast thou fed? And what pleased thee, when he did not eat with thee? "Mine eyes," he saith, "were upon such as are faithful in the land, that they might sit with me" (ver. 6). That is, that with Me they might be seated. In what sense are they "to sit"? "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The faithful of the earth judge, for to them it is said, "Know ye not, that we shall judge angels?" "Whoso walketh in a spotless way, he ministered unto me." To "Me," he saith, not to himself. For many minister the Gospel, but unto themselves; because they seek their own things, not the things of Jesus Christ. ... 10. "The proud man hath not dwelt

in the midst of my house" (ver. 7). Understand this of the heart. The proud did not dwell in my heart: no such dwelt in my heart: for he hurried away from me. None but the meek and peaceful dwelt in my heart; the proud dwelt not there, for the unrighteous one dwelleth not in the heart of the righteous. Let the righteous be distant from thee, I know not how many miles and stations: ye dwell together, if ye have one heart. "The proud doer hath not dwelt in the midst of my house: he that speaketh unjust things hath not directed in the sight of my eyes." This is the spotless way, where we understand when the Lord cometh unto us.

11. "In the morning I destroyed all the ungodly that were in the land. That I may root out all wicked doers from the city of the Lord" (ver. 8). This is obscure. There are then wicked doers in the city of the Lord, and they at present, seemingly, spared. Why so? Because it is the season of mercy: but that of judgment will come; for the Psalm thus began, "Of mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord." ... 12. He at present spareth, He will then judge. But when will He judge? When night shall have passed away. For this reason He hath said: "In the morning." When the day shall at last have arrived, night having passed by. Why doth He spare them until the dawn? Because it was night. What meaneth, it was night? Because it was the season for mercy: He was merciful, while the hearts of men were hidden. Thou seest some one living ill; thou endurest him: for thou knowest not of what sort he will prove to be; since it is night; whether he who to-day liveth ill, to-morrow may live well; and whether he who to-day liveth well, to-morrow may be wicked. For it is night, and God endureth all men, since He is of long-suffering: He endureth them, that sinners may be converted unto Him. But they who shall not have reformed themselves in that season of mercy, shall be slain. And wherefore? That they may be scattered abroad a from the city of the Lord, from the fellowship of Jerusalem, from the fellowship of the Saints, from the fellowship of the Church. But when shall they be slain? "At dawn." What meaneth, "at dawn"? When night shall have passed away. Wherefore now doth he spare? Because it is the season of mercy. Why doth He not always spare? Because, "Mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord." Brethren, let no man flatter himself: all the doers of iniquity shall be slain; Christ shall slay them at the dawn, and shall destroy them from His city. But now while it is the time of mercy, let them hear Him. Everywhere He crieth out by the Law, by the Prophets, by the Psalms, by the Epistles, by

the Gospels: see that He is not silent; that He spareth; that He granteth mercy; but beware, for the judgment will come.

PSALM 102

1. Behold, one poor man prayeth, and prayeth not in silence. We may therefore hear him, and see who he is: whether it be not perchance He, of whom the Apostle saith, "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." If it is He, then, how is He poor? For in what sense He is rich, who seeth not? What then is richer than He, by whom riches were made, even those which are not true riches? For through Him we have even these riches, ability, memory, character, health of body, the senses, and the conformation of our limbs: for when these are safe, even the poor are rich. Through Him also are those greater riches, faith, piety, justice, charity, chastity, good conduct: for no man hath these, except through Him who justifieth the ungodly. ...Behold, how rich! In one so rich, how are we to recognise these words? "I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping." Have these so great riches come to this? The former state is a very high one, this is a very lowly one. ...Yet still examine whether this poor man be He; since, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Reflect also upon these words: "I am Thy servant, and the Son of Thine handmaid." Observe, this handmaid, chaste, a virgin, and a mother: for there He received our poverty, when He was clothed in the form of a servant, emptying Himself; lest thou shouldest dread His riches, and in thy beggarly state shouldest not dare approach Him. There, I say, He put on the form of a servant, there He was clothed with our poverty; there He made Himself poor, and us rich. We are now drawing near to understand these things of Him: nevertheless we may not as yet rashly pronounce. ...

2. Let him add poverty then to poverty: let Him transfigure unto Himself our humble body: let Him be our Head, we His limbs, let there be two in one flesh. ...For He hath deigned to hold even us as His limbs. The penitent also are among His limbs. For they are not shut out, nor separated from His Church: nor would He make the Church His spouse, unless by words like these: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Let us then hear what the head and the body prayeth, the bridegroom and bride, Christ and the Church, both one Person; but the Word and the flesh are not both one thing; the Father and the Word are both one thing; Christ and the Church are both one Person, one perfect man in the form of His own fulness. ...Let

us hear therefore Christ, poor within us and with us, and for our sakes. For the title itself indicates the poor one. Lastly, remember that I conjectured who that poor one was: let us hear His prayer, and recognise His Person; and mistake not, when thou shall have heard anything that cannot apply to His Head; it was for this reason that I have prefaced as I have, that whatever thou shall hear of this description, thou mayest understand as sounding from the weakness of the body, and recognise the voice of the members in the head.

The title is, "A Prayer of the afflicted, when he was tormented, and poured out his prayer before the Lord. It is the same poor one who elsewhere saith: "From the ends of the earth will I call upon Thee, when my heart is in heaviness. He is afflicted because He is also Christ; who in the Prophet's words calleth Himself both Bridegroom and Bride: "He hath bound on me the diadem as on a bridegroom, and as a bride hath adorned me with an ornament. He called Himself Bridegroom, He called Himself Bride; wherefore this, unless Bridegroom applieth to the Head, Bride to the body? They are one voice then, because they are one flesh. Let us hear, and recognise ourselves in these words; and if we see that we are without, let us labour to be there. 3. "Hear my prayer, O Lord: and let my crying come unto Thee" (ver. 1). "Hear my prayer, O Lord," is the same as, "Let my crying come unto Thee:" the feeling of the suppliant is shown by the repetition. "Turn not Thy face away from me." When did God turn away His Face from His Son? when did the Father turn away His Face from Christ? But for the sake of the poverty of my members, "Turn not away Thy face from me: whatsoever day I am troubled, incline Thine ear unto me" (ver. 2). ...Thou art in trouble this day, I am in trouble; another is in trouble to-morrow, I am in trouble; after this generation other descendants, who succeed your descendants, are in trouble, I am in trouble; down to the end of the world, whoever are in trouble in My body, I am in trouble. ...Peter prayed, Paul prayed, the rest of the Apostles prayed; the faithful prayed in those times, the faithful prayed in the following times, the faithful prayed in the times of the Martyrs, the faithful pray in our times, the faithful will pray in the times of our descendants. "Right soon:" for I now ask that which Thou art willing to grant. I ask not earthly things, as an earthly man; but redeemed at last from my former captivity, I long for the kingdom of heaven; "Hear me right soon:" for it is only to such a longing that Thou hast said, "Even while Thou art speaking, I will say, Here I am." Wherefore dost thou call? in what tribulation? in what

want? O poor one, before the gate of God all-rich, in what longing dost thou beg? from what destitution dost thou ask relief? from what want dost thou knock, that it may be opened unto thee?

4. "For my days are consumed away like smoke" (ver. 3). O days! if days: for where day is heard of, light is understood. "My days," my times; wherefore, "like smoke," unless from the puffing up of pride? ...See smoke, like pride, ascending, swelling, vanishing: deservedly therefore failing, and not steadfast. "And my bones are scorched up as it were in an oven." Both my bones, and my strength, not without tribulation, not without burning. The bones of the body of Christ, the strength of His body, is it anywhere greater than in the Holy Apostles? And yet see that the bones are scorched. "Who is offended, and I burn not?" They are brave, faithful, able interpreters and preachers of the word, living as they speak, speaking as they hear; they are clearly brave, yet all who suffer offences, are an oven to them. For there is love there, and more so in the bones. The bones are within all the flesh, and support all the flesh. But if any man suffer any offence, and endanger his soul; the bone is scorched in proportion as it loveth. ...

5. Look back to Adam, whence the human race sprung. For how but from him was misery propagated? whence but from him is this hereditary poverty? Let him then, who in his own body was at one time in despair, now that he is set in Christ's body, say with hope, "My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass" (ver. 4). Deservedly, since all flesh is grass. But how did this happen unto thee? "Since I have forgotten to eat my bread." For God had given His commandment for bread. For what is the bread of the soul? The serpent suggesting, and the woman transgressing, he touched the forbidden fruit, he forgot the commandment: his heart was smitten as it deserved, and withered like grass, since he forgot to eat his bread. Having forgotten to eat bread, he drinketh poison: his heart is smitten, and withered like grass. ...Now eat that bread which thou hadst forgotten. But this very Bread hath come, in whose body thou mayest remember the voice of thy forgetfulness, and cry out in thy poverty, so that thou mayest receive riches. Now eat: for thou art in His body, who saith, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven." Thou hadst forgotten to eat thy bread; but after His crucifixion, "all the ends of the earth shall be reminded, and be converted unto the Lord." After forgetfulness, let remembrance come, let bread be eaten from

heaven, that we may live; not manna, as they did eat, and died; that bread, of which it is said, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness."

6. "For the voice of my groaning, the bones cleave unto my flesh" (ver. 5). For many groan, and I also groan; even for this I groan, because they groan for a wrong cause. That man hath lost a piece of money, he groaneth: he hath lost faith, he groaneth not: I weigh the money and the faith, and I find more cause for groaning for him who groaneth not as he ought, or doth not groan at all. He committeth fraud, and rejoiceth. With what gain, with what loss? He hath gained money, he hath lost righteousness. For the latter reason, he who knoweth how to groan, groaneth; he who is near the head, who righteously clingeth to Christ's body, groaneth for this reason. But the carnal do not groan for this reason, and they cause themselves to be groaned for, because they do not groan for this reason; nor can we despise them, whether they groan not at all, or groan for the wrong cause. For we wish to correct them, we wish to amend them, we wish to reform them, and when we cannot, we groan; and when we groan, we are not separated from them. ...

7. "I am become like a pelican in the wilderness, and like an owl among ruined walls" (ver. 6). Behold three birds and three places: the pelican, the owl, and the sparrow; and the three places are severally, the wilderness, the ruined walls, and the house-top. The pelican in the wilderness, the owl in the ruined walls, and the sparrow in the house-top. In the first place we must explain, what the pelican signifieth: since it is born in a region which maketh it unknown to us. It is born in lonely spots, especially those of the river Nile in Egypt. Whatever kind of bird it is, let us consider what the Psalm intended to say of it. "It dwelleth," it saith, "in the wilderness. Why enquire of its form, its limbs, its voice, its habits? As far as the Psalm telleth thee, it is a bird that dwelleth in solitude. The owl is a bird that loveth night. *Parietinae*, or ruins, as we call them, are walls standing without roof, without inhabitants, these are the habitation of the owl. And then as to the house-top and the sparrows, ye are familiar with them. I find, therefore, some one of Christ's body, a preacher of the word, sympathizing with the weak, seeking the gains of Christ, mindful of his Lord to come. Let us see these three things from the office of His steward. Hath such a man come among those who are not Christians? He is a pelican in the wilderness.

Hath he come among those who were Christians, and have relapsed? He is an owl in the ruined walls; for he forsaketh not even the darkness of those

who dwell in night, he wisheth to gain even these. Hath he come among such as are Christians dwelling in a house, not as if they believed not, or as if they had let go what they had believed, but walking lukewarmly in what they believe? The sparrow crieth unto them, not in the wilderness, because they are Christians; nor in the ruined walls, because they have not relapsed; but because they are within the roof; under the roof rather, because they are under the flesh. The sparrow above the flesh crieth out, husheth not up the commandments of God, nor becometh carnal, so that he be subject to the roof. "What ye hear in the ear, that preach ye on the housetops. There are three birds and three places; and one man may represent the three birds, and three men may represent severally the three birds; and the three sorts of places, are three classes of men: yet the wilderness, the ruined walls, and the house-top, are but three classes of men.

8. ...Let us not pass over what is said, or even read, of this bird, that is, the pelican; not rashly asserting anything, but yet not passing over what has been left to be read and uttered by those who have written it. Do ye so hear, that if it be true, it may agree; if false, it may not hold. These birds are said to slay their young with blows of their beaks, and for three days to mourn them when slain by themselves in the nest: after which they say the mother wounds herself deeply, and pours forth her blood over her young, bathed in which they recover life. This may be true, it may be false: yet if it be true, see how it agreeth with Him, who gave us life by His blood. It agreeth with Him in that the mother's flesh recalleth to life her young with her blood; it agreeth well. For He calleth Himself a hen brooding over her young. ...If, then, it be so truly, this bird doth closely resemble the flesh of Christ, by whose blood we have been called to life. But how may it agree with Christ, that the bird herself slays her own young? Doth not this agree with it? "I will slay, and I will make alive: I will wound, and I will heal. Would the persecutor Saul have died, unless he were wounded from heaven; or would the preacher be raised up, unless by life given him from His blood?

But let those who have written on the subject see to this; we ought not to allow our understanding of it to rest upon doubtful ground. Let us rather recognise this bird in the wilderness; as the Psalm expresseth it, "A pelican in the solitude. I suppose that Christ born of a Virgin is here meant. He was born in loneliness, because He alone was thus born. After the nativity, we come to His Passion. ...Born in the wilderness, because alone so born; suffer-

ing in the darkness of the Jews as it were in night, in their sin, as it were in ruins: what next? "I have watched: and "am become even as it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the house-top" (ver. 7). Thou hadst then slept amid the ruins, and hadst said, "I laid me down, and slept. What meaneth, "I slept"? Because I chose, I slept: I slept for love of night: but, "I rose again," followeth. Therefore "I watched," is here said. But after He watched, what did He? He ascended into heaven, He became as a sparrow by flying; that is, by ascending; "alone on the house-top; that is, in heaven. He is therefore as the pelican by birth, as the owl by dying, as the sparrow by ascending again: there in the wilderness, as one alone; here in the ruined walls, as one slain by those who could not stand in the building; and here again watching and flying for our sakes alone on the house-top, He there intercedeth in our behalf.

For our Head is as the sparrow, His body as the turtle-dove. "For the sparrow hath found her an house. What house? In heaven, where He doth mediate for us. "And the turtle-dove a nest," the Church of God hath found a nest from the wood of His Cross, where "she may lay her young," her children. 9. "Mine enemies revile me all day, and they that praised me are sworn together against me" (ver. 8). With their mouth they praised, in their heart they were laying snares for me. Hear their praise: "Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" And whence this evil repute, except because I came to make sinners my members, that by repentance they may be in my body? Thence is all the calumny, thence the persecution. "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick." Would that ye were aware of your sickness, that ye might seek a physician; ye would not slay Him, and through your infatuated pride perish in a false health.

10. "I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping" (ver. 9). Because He chose to have among His members these kinds of men, that they should be healed and set free, thence is the evil repute. Now at this day what is the character of Pagan calumny against us? what, brethren, do ye conceive they tell us? Ye corrupt discipline, and pervert the morality of the human race. Why dost thou attack us; say why? what have we done? By giving, he replieth, to men room for repentance, by promising impunity for all sins: for this reason men do evil deeds, careless of consequences, because everything is pardoned them, when they are converted. ...And what is to be-

come of thee, miserable man, if there shall be no harbour of impunity? If there is only licence for sinning, and no pardon for sins, where wilt thou be, whither wilt thou go? Surely even for thee did it happen, that that afflicted one ate ashes as it were bread, and mingled His drink with weeping. Doth not such a feast now please thee? But nevertheless, he replieth, men add to their sins under the hope of pardon. Nay, but they would add to them if they despaired of pardon. Dost thou not observe in what licentious cruelty gladiators live? whence this, except because, as destined for the sword and sacrifice, they choose to sate their lust, before they pour forth their blood? Wouldest not thou also thus address thyself?

I am already a sinner, already an unjust man, one already doomed to damnation, hope of pardon there is none: why should I not do whatever pleaseth me, although it be not lawful? why not fulfil, as far as I can, any longings I may have, if, after these, nothing but torments only be in store? Wouldest thou not thus speak unto thyself, and from this very despair become still worse? Rather than this, then, He who promiseth forgiveness, doth correct thee, saying, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." ...For in order that men might not live the worse from despair, He promised a harbour of forgiveness; again, that they might not live the worse from hope of pardon, He made the day of death uncertain: fixing both with the utmost providence, both as a refuge for the returning, and a terror to the loitering. Eat ashes as bread, and mingle thy drink with weeping; by means of this banquet thou shalt reach the table of God. Despair not; pardon hath been promised thee. Thanks be to God, he saith, because it is promised; I hold fast the promise of God. Now therefore live well. To-morrow, he replieth, I will live well. God hath promised the pardon; no one promised thee to-morrow. ...

11. "And that because of thine indignation and wrath: because thou hast taken me up, thou hast cast me down" (ver. 10). This is thy wrath, O Lord, in Adam: that wrath in which we were all born, which cleaveth unto us by our birth; the wrath from the stock of iniquity, the wrath from the mass of sin: according to what the Apostle saith, "We also were once the children of wrath, even as others." For He saith not, the wrath of God shall come upon him: but, "abideth upon him:" because that wrath in which he was born is not taken away. ...Man set in honour, is made in the image of God: raised up

to this honour, lifted up from the dust, from the earth, he hath received a reasonable soul; by the vivacity of that very reason, he is placed before all beasts, cattle, birds that fly, and fishes. For which of these hath reason to understand? Because none of them is created in the image of God. ...Therefore, "Because Thou has't taken me up, Thou hast cast me down:" punishment followeth me, because Thou hast given me a free choice. For if Thou hadst not given me a free choice, and for this reason didst not make me better than cattle, just condemnation would not follow me when I sinned. Thus Thou hast taken me up in giving me freedom of choice, and by Thy judgment Thou hast cast me down.

12. "My days have declined like a shadow" (ver. 11). ...He had said above, "My days are consumed away like smoke;" and he now saith, "My days have declined like a shadow." In this shadow, day must be recognised; in this shadow, light must be discerned; lest afterward it be said in late and fruitless repentance, "What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow." Say at this season, all things will pass away like a shadow, and thou mayest not pass away like a shadow. "My days have declined like a shadow, and I am withered like grass." For he had said above, "my heart is smitten down, and I am withered like grass." But the grass bedewed with the Saviour's blood will flourish afresh. "I have withered like grass;" I, that is, man, after that disobedience; this I have suffered from Thy just judgment: but what art Thou?

13. For not because I have fallen, hast Thou grown old: for Thou art strong to set me free, who hast been strong to humble me. "But Thou, O Lord, endurest for ever: and Thy remembrance throughout all generations" (ver. 12). "Thy remembrance," because Thou dost not forget: "throughout all generations," forasmuch as we know the promise of life, both present and future. 14. "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for it is time that Thou have mercy upon her" (ver. 13). What time? "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law." And where is Sion? "To redeem them that were under the Law." First then were the Jews: for thence were the Apostles, thence those more than five hundred brethren, thence that later multitude, who had but one heart and one soul toward God. Therefore, "the time is come." What time? "Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation." Who

saith this? That Servant of God, that Builder, who said, "Ye are God's building."

15. Here therefore what saith he? "For thy servants take pleasure in her stones" (ver. 14). In whose stones? In the stones of Sion? But there are those there that are not stones. Not stones of what? What then followeth? "and pity the dust thereof. I understand by the stones of Sion all the Prophets: there was the voice of preaching sent before, thence the ministry of the Gospel assumed, through their preaching Christ became known. Therefore thy servants have taken pleasure in the stones of Sion. But those faithless apostates from God, who offended their Creator by their evil deeds, have returned to the earth, whence they were taken. They have become dust, they have become ungodly. But wait, Lord; bear with us, Lord; be long-suffering, O Lord: let not the wind rush in, and sweep away this dust from the face of the earth. Let thy servants come, let them come, let them acknowledge in the stones thy voice, let them pity the dust of Sion, let them be formed in thy image: let the dust say, lest it perish, "Remember that we are but dust. This of Sion: was not that which crucified the Lord, dust? What is worse, it was dust from the ruined walls; altogether dust it was, but nevertheless it was not in vain said of this dust, "Father, forgive them. From this very dust there came a wall of so many thousands who believed, and who laid the price of their possessions at the Apostles' feet.

From that dust then there arose a human nature formed and beautiful. Who among the heathen acted thus? How few are there whom we admire for having done thus, compared with the many thousands of these converts? At first suddenly three, afterwards five thousand; all living in unity, all laying the price of their possessions, when they had sold them, at the Apostles' feet, that it might be distributed to each, as each had need, who had one soul and one heart toward God. Who made this even of that very dust, but He who created Adam himself out of dust? This then is concerning Sion, but not in Sion only. 16. "The heathen shall fear Thy Name, O Lord; and all the kings of the earth Thy Majesty" (ver. 15). Now that Thou hast pitied Sion, now that Thy servants have taken pleasure in her stones, by acknowledging the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; now that they have pitied her dust; so that man is formed, or rather re-formed, in life out of dust; hence preaching hath increased among the heathen: let the heathen fear Thy Name, let another wall approach also from the heathen, let the Corner Stone be recog-

nised, let the two who come from different regions, but who no longer differ in belief, meet in close union. 17. "For the Lord shall build up Sion" (ver. 16). This work is going on now. O ye living stones, run to the work of building, not to ruin. Sion is in building, beware of the ruined walls: the tower is building, the ark is in building; remember the deluge. This work is in progress now; but when Sion is built, what will happen? "And He will appear in His glory." That He might build up Sion, that He might be a foundation in Sion, He was seen by Sion, but not in His glory: "we have seen Him, and He had no form nor comeliness." But truly when He shall have come with His angels to judge, shall they not look then upon Him whom they have pierced? and they shall be put to confusion when too late, who refused confusion in early and healthful repentance.

18. "He hath turned Him unto the prayer of the poor destitute, and despised not their desire" (ver. 17). This is going on now in the building of Sion: the builders of Sion pray, they groan: He is the one poor, because the poor are many; because the thousands among so many nations are one in Him, because He is the unity of the peace of the Church, He is one, He is many: one, through love: many, on account of His extension. Therefore we now pray, we now run: now, if any man hath used to be otherwise, and lived differently, let him eat ashes as it were bread, and mingle his drink with weeping. Now is the time, when Sion is in building: now the stones are entering into the structure: when the building is finished, and the house dedicated, why dost thou run, to ask when too late, to beg in vain, to knock to no purpose, doomed to abide without with the five foolish virgins? Therefore now run.

19. "Let these things be written for those that come after" (ver. 18). When these words were written, they profited not so much those among whom they were written for they were written to prophesy the New Testament, among men who lived according to the Old Testament. But God had both given that Old Testament, and had settled in that land of promise His own people. But since "Thy remembrance is from generation to generation," belongeth not to the ungodly, but to the righteous; "in our generation" belongeth to the Old Testament; while "in the other generation" belongeth to the New Testament; and since the New Testament announceth this that was prophesied, "Let these things be written for those that come after: and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord." Not the people which is created, but "the people which shall be created." What is clearer, my

brethren? Here is prophesied that creation of which the Apostle saith: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." "For he hath looked down from His lofty sanctuary." He hath looked down from on high, that He might come unto the humble: from on high He hath become humble, that He might exalt the humble. ...

20. "Out of the heaven did the Lord look down upon the earth" (ver. 19): "that He might hear the mournings of such as are in fetters, and deliver the children of such as are put to death" (ver. 20). We have found it said in another Psalm, "O let the sorrowful sighs of the fettered come before Thee; and in a passage where the voice of the martyrs was meant. Whence are the martyrs in fetters? ...But God had bound them with these fetters, hard indeed and painful for a season, but endurable on account of His promises, unto whom it is said, "On account of the words of Thy lips, I have kept hard ways. We must indeed groan in these fetters in order to gain the mercy of God. These fetters must not be shunned, in order to gain a destructive freedom and the temporal and brief pleasure of this life, to be followed by perpetual bitterness. Accordingly Scripture, that we may not refuse the fetters of wisdom, thus addresseth us: "... Then shall her fetters be a strong defence for thee, and her chains a robe of glory. Let the fettered therefore cry out, as long as they are in the chains of the discipline of God, in which the martyrs have been tried: the fetters shall be loosed, and they shall fly away, and these very fetters shall afterwards be turned into an ornament. This hath happened with the martyrs.

For what have the persecutors effected by killing them, except that their fetters were thereby loosed, and turned into crowns? ...The remission of sins, is the loosing. For what would it have profited Lazarus, that he came forth from the tomb, unless it were said to him, "loose him, and let him go"? Himself indeed with His voice aroused him from the tomb, Himself restored his life by crying unto him, Himself overcame the mass of earth that was heaped upon the tomb, and he came forth bound hand and foot: not therefore with his own feet, but by the power of Him who drew him forth. This taketh place in the heart of the penitent: when thou hearest a man is sorry for his sins, he hath already come again to life; when thou hearest him by confessing lay bare his conscience, he is already drawn forth from the tomb, but he is not as yet loosed. When is he loosed, and by whom is he loosed?

"Whatsoever thou shall loose on earth," He saith, "shall be loosed in Heaven. Forgiveness of sins may justly be granted by the Church: but the dead man himself cannot be aroused except by the Lord crying within him; for God doth this within him. We speak to your ears: how do we know what may be going on in your hearts? But what is going on within, is not our doing, but His.

21. "That the name of the Lord may be declared in Sion" (ver. 21). For at first, when the fettered were appointed unto death, the Church was oppressed: since these tribulations the Name of the Lord has been declared in Sion, with great freedom, in the Church herself. For she is Sion: not that one spot, at first proud, afterwards taken captive; but the Sion whose shadow was that Sion, which signifieth a watch-tower; because when placed in the flesh, we see into the things before us, extending ourselves not to the present which is now, but to the future. Thus it is a watch-tower: for every watcher gazes far. Places where guards are set, are termed watch-towers: these are set on rocks, on mountains, in trees, that a wider prospect may be commanded from a higher eminence. Sion therefore is a watch-tower, the Church is a watch-tower. ...If therefore the Church be a watch-tower, the Name of the Lord is already declared there. Not the Lord's Name only is declared in that Sion, but "His praise," He saith, "in Jerusalem."

22. And how is it declared? "In the nations gathering together in one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord" (ver. 22). How is this accomplished, unless by the blood of the slain? How accomplished, but by the groans of the fettered? Those therefore who were in tribulation and humility have been heard; that in our times the Church might be in the great glory which we see her in, so that the very kingdoms which then persecuted her, now serve the Lord. 23. "She answered Him in the way of His strength" (ver. 23). ...The preceding words show, that either "His praise," or "Jerusalem," answered: for it was said, "And His praise in Jerusalem; in the nations gathering together in one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. Respondit ei." We cannot say, "the kingdoms answered," for he would have said responderunt. Respondit ei. We cannot say, "the nations answered," for he would have said, responderunt (in the plural). Since then it is Respondit ei, in the singular, we look for the singular number above, and find that the words, "His praise," and "Jerusalem," are the only words in which we find it. But since it is doubtful, whether it be "His praise," or "Jerusalem," let us ex-

pound it each way. How did "His praise" answer Him? When they who are called by Him thank Him. For He calleth, we answer; not by our voice, but by our faith; not by our tongue, but by our life. ...From His elect and holy men, Jerusalem also answereth Him. For Jerusalem also was called: and the first Jerusalem refused to hear, and it was said unto her, "Behold, thy house shall be left unto the desolate." ...But that Jerusalem, of whom it was written, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear," "She hath answered Him." What meaneth, "She hath answered Him"? She despiseth Him not when He called. He sent rain, She gave fruit.

24. "She answered Him:" but where? "in the path of His strength." ...The Church therefore answered Him not in the way of weakness; because after His resurrection He called the Church from the whole world, no longer weak upon the cross, but strong in heaven. For it is not the praise of the Christian faith that they believe that Christ died, but that they believe that He arose from the dead. Even the Pagan believeth that He died; and maketh this a charge against thee, that thou hast believed in one dead. What then is thy praise? It is that thou believest that Christ arose from the dead, and that thou dost hope that thou shalt rise from the dead through Christ: this is the praise of faith. "For if thou shalt confess with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." ...This is the faith of Christians. In this faith then, in which the Church is gathered, "She hath answered Him," She gave Him worship according to His commandments: "in the path of His strength," not in the path of His weakness.

25. How she answered Him, ye have already heard above. "In the gathering of the nations into one." Herein she answered Him, in unity: he who is not in unity, answereth Him not. For He is One, the Church is unity: none but unity answereth to Him who is One. ...Since some were destined to say against her, She hath existed, and no longer doth exist; "Show me," He saith, "the shortness of my days," what is it, that I know not what apostates from me murmur against me? why is it that lost men contend that I have perished? For they surely say this, that I have been, and no longer am: "Show me the shortness of my days." I do not ask from Thee about those everlasting days: they are without end, where I shall be; it is not those I ask of: I ask of temporal days; show unto me my temporal days; "show me the shortness," not the eternity, "of my days." Declare unto me, how long I shall be in this

world: on account of those who say, "She hath been," and is no more: on account of those who say, The Scriptures are fulfilled, all nations have believed, but the Church hath become apostate, and hath perished from among all nations. ...

26. Seest thou not that there are still nations among whom the Gospel hath not been preached? Since then it is needful that what the Lord spoke shall be fulfilled, declaring unto the Church the shortness of my days, that this Gospel be preached in all nations, and then that the end may come, why is it that thou sayest that the Church hath already perished from among all nations, when the Gospel is being preached for this purpose, that it may be in all nations? Therefore the Church remaineth even unto the end of the world, in all nations; and this is the shortness of Her days, because all that is limited is short; so that She may pass into eternity from this brief existence. May heretics be lost, may that which they are be lost, and may they be found, that they may be what they are not. Shortness of days will be unto the end of the world: shortness for this reason, because the whole of this season, I say not from this day unto the end of the world, but from Adam down to the end of the world, is a mere drop compared with eternity.

27. Let not therefore heretics flatter themselves against me, because I said, "the shortness of my days," as if they would not last down to the end of the world. For what hath he added? "O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days" (ver. 24). Deal Thou not with me according as heretics speak. Lead me on unto the end of the world, not only to the middle of my days; and finish my short days, that Thou mayest afterwards grant unto me eternal days. Wherefore then hast thou asked concerning the shortness of thy days? Wherefore? Dost thou wish to hear? "Thy years are in the generation of generations. This is why I asked concerning those short days, because although my days should endure unto the end of the world, yet they are short in comparison of Thy days. For "Thy years are in the generation of generations. Wherefore doth he not say, Thy years are unto worlds of worlds; for thus rather is eternity usually signified in the holy Scriptures; but he saith, "Thy years are in the generation of generations"? But what are thy years? what, but those which do not come, and then pass away? what, but they which come not, so as to cease again? For every day in this season so-cometh as to cease again; every hour, every month, every year; nothing of

these is stationary; before it hath come, it is to be; after it hath come, it will not be.

Those everlasting years of thine, therefore, those years that are not changed, "are in the generation of generations. There is a "generation of generations; in that shall thy years be. There is one such, and if we acknowledge it aright, we shall be in it, and the years of God shall be in us. How shall they be in us? Just as God Himself shall be in us: whence it is said, "That God may be all in all. For the years of God, and God Himself, are not different: but the years of God are the eternity of God: eternity is the very substance of God, which hath nothing changeable; there nothing is past, as if it were no longer: nothing is future, as if it existed not as yet. There is nothing there but, Is: there is not there, Was, and Will be; because what was, is now no longer: and what will be, is not as yet: but whatever is there, simply Is. ...Behold this great I Am! What is man's being to this? To this great I Am, what is man, whatever he be? Who can understand that To Be? who can share it? who can pant, aspire, presume that he may be there? Despair not, human frailty! "I am," He saith, "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Thou hast heard what I am in Myself: now hear what I am on thy account. This eternity then hath called us, and the Word burst forth from eternity.

It is now eternity, it is now the Word, and no longer time. 28. ...From so many generations thou wilt gather together all the holy offspring of all generations, and wilt form one generation thence: "In" this "generation of generations are Thy years," that is, that eternity will be in that generation, which is collected from all generations, and reduced into one; this shall share in Thy eternity. Other generations are born for fulfilling their times, out of which this one is regenerated for ever; though changed it shall be endowed with life, it shall be fitted to bear Thee, receiving strength from Thee. 29. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the Heavens are the work of Thy hands" (ver. 25). ...God laid the foundation of the earth, we know: the heavens are the works of His hands. For do not imagine that God doth one thing with His hand, another by His word. What He doth by His word, He doth by His hand: for He hath not distinct bodily members, who said, "I Am That I Am." And perhaps His Word is His hand, assuredly His hand is His power. For inasmuch as it is said, "Let there be a firmament," and there was a firmament; He is understood to have cre-

ated it by His Word; but when He said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness;" He seemeth to have created him by His hand. Hear therefore: "The heavens are the work of Thy hands." Lo, what He created by His word, He created also by His hands; because He created them through His excellence, through His power. Observe rather what He created, and seek not to know in what manner He created them. It is much to thee to understand how He created them, since He created thyself so, that thou mayest first be a servant obeying, and afterwards perhaps a friend understanding.

30. "They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure" (ver. 26). The Apostle Peter saith this openly: "By the word of God the heavens were of old," etc. He hath said then that the heavens have already perished by the flood: and we know that the heavens perished as far as the extent of this atmosphere of ours. For the water increased, and filled the whole of that space in which birds fly; thus perished the heavens that are near the earth; those heavens which are meant when we speak of the birds of heaven. But there are heavens of heavens higher than these in the firmament: but whether these also shall perish by fire, or those only which perished also by the flood, is a much harder question among the learned, nor can it easily, especially in a limited space of time, be explained. Let us therefore dismiss or put it off; nevertheless, let us know that these things perish, and that God endureth. ...

31. Perhaps by the heavens we here may understand, without being far-fetched, the righteous themselves, the saints of God, abiding in whom God hath thundered in His commandments, lightened in His miracles, watered the earth with the wisdom of truth, for "The heavens have declared the glory of God. But shall they perish? Shall they in any sense perish? In what sense? As a garment. What is, as a garment? As to the body. For the body is the garment of the soul; since our Lord called it a garment, when He said, "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? How then doth the garment perish? "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. They then shall perish: but as to the body: "But Thou shalt endure." ...Such heavens therefore shall perish; not, however, for ever; they shall perish, that they may be changed. Doth not the Psalm say this? Read the following: "They shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shall Thou change them, and they shall be changed. Thou hearest of the garment, of the vesture, and dost thou understand anything but the body? We may therefore hope for the change of our bodies also, but from Him who

was before us, and abideth after us. ..."But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail" (ver. 27). But what are we to those years with these beggarly years? and what are they? Yet we ought not to despair.

He had already said in His great and exceeding Wisdom, "I Am That I Am; and yet He saith to console us, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: and we are Abraham's seed: even we, although object, although dust and ashes, trust in Him. We are servants: but for our sakes our Lord took the garb of a servant: for us who are mortal the Immortal One deigned to die, for our sakes He showed His example of resurrection. Let us therefore hope that we may reach these lasting years, in which days are not spent in a revolution of the Sun, but what is abideth even as it is, because it alone truly is. 32. "The children of Thy servants shall dwell there: and their seed shall stand fast for ages" (ver. 28): for the age of ages, the age of eternity, the age that abideth. But, "the children," he saith, "of Thy servants: is it to be feared lest we be the servants of God, and our children, and not ourselves, dwell there? Or if we are the children of the servants, inasmuch as we are the Apostles' children, what are we to say? Can those children rising after have so unhappy a presumption, as to boast in their late succession, and so to venture to say, We shall be there; the Apostles will not be there? May this be far from their piety as children, from their faith as little ones, from their understanding when of age! The Apostles also will be there: rams go before, lambs follow. Wherefore then, "the children of Thy servants; and not in brief, "Thy servants"? Both they are Thy servants, and their children are Thy servants; and the children of these, their grandsons, what are they but Thy servants? Thou wouldest include them all briefly, if Thou shouldest say, Thy servants shall dwell therein. ..."The children of Thy servants," are the works of Thy servants; no one shall dwell there, but through his own works. What therefore meaneth, Their children shall dwell? Let no man boast that he shall dwell there, if he calleth himself God's servant, and hath not works; for none but children shall dwell there.

What meaneth therefore, "The children of Thy servants shall dwell there"? Thy servants shall dwell there by their own works, Thy servants shall dwell there through their own children. Be not therefore barren, if thou dost wish to dwell there; send before the children whom thou mayest follow, by sending them before thee, not by burying them. Let thy children lead thee to the land of promise, the land of the living, not of the dying: whilst thou

art living here in this pilgrimage, let them go before thee, let them receive thee. ...

PSALM 103

1. ..."Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me, His holy Name" (ver. 1). I suppose that he speaketh not of what is within the body; I do not suppose him to mean this, that our lungs and liver, and so forth, are to burst forth into the voice of blessing of the Lord. There are lungs in our breast indeed, like a kind of bellows, which send forth successive breathings, which breathing forth of the air inhaled is pressed out into voice and sound, when the words are articulated; nor can any utterance sound forth from our mouth, but what the pressed lungs have given vent to; but this is not the meaning here; all this relateth to the ears of men. God hath ears: the heart also hath a voice. A man speaketh to the things within him, that they may bless God, and saith unto them, "all that is within me bless His holy Name! Dost thou ask the meaning of what is within thee? Thy soul itself. In saying then, "all that is within me, bless His holy Name," it only repeateth the above, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: for the word "Bless," is understood. Cry out with thy voice, if there be a man to hear; hush thy voice, when there is no man to hear thee; there is never wanting one to hear all that is within thee. Blessing therefore hath already been uttered from our mouth, when we were chanting these very words.

We sung as much as sufficed for the time, and were then silent: ought our hearts within us to be silent to the blessing of the Lord? Let the sound of our voices bless Him at intervals, alternately, let the voice of our hearts be perpetual. When thou comest to church to recite a hymn, thy voice soundeth forth the praises of God: thou hast sung as far as thou couldest, thou hast left the church; let thy soul sound the praises of God. Thou art engaged in thy daily work: let thy soul praise God. Thou art taking food; see what the Apostle saith: "Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God. I venture to say; when thou sleepest, let thy soul praise the Lord. Let not thoughts of crime arouse thee, let not the contrivances of thieving arouse thee, let not arranged plans of corrupt dealing arouse thee. Thy innocence even when thou art sleeping is the voice of thy soul.

2. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His rewards" (ver. 2). But the rewards of the Lord cannot be before thine eyes unless thy sins are before thine eyes. Let not delight in past sin be before thine eyes, but let the con-

demnation of sin be before thine eyes: condemnation from thee, forgiveness from God. For thus God rewardeth thee, so that thou mayest say, "How shall I reward the Lord for all His rewards unto me? This it was that the martyrs considering (whose memory we are this day celebrating), and all the saints who have despised this life, and as ye have heard in the Epistle of St. John, laid down their lives for the brethren, which is the perfection of love, even as our Lord saith: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends: this the holy martyrs, then, considering, despised their lives here, that they might find them there, following our Lord's words when He said, "He that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake, shall keep it unto life eternal." ..."Forget not," he saith, "all His rewards: not awards, but "rewards. For something else was due, and what was not due hath been paid. Whence also these words: "What," he asketh, "shall I reward the Lord for all His rewards unto me? Thou hast rewarded good with evil; He rewardeth evil with good.

How hast thou, O man, rewarded thy God with evil for good? Thou who hast once been a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, hast rewarded blasphemies. For what good things? First, because thou art: but a stone also is. Next, because thou livest: but a brute also liveth. What reward wilt thou give the Lord, for His having created thee above all the cattle; and above all the fowls of the air, in His image and likeness? Seek not how to reward Him: give back unto Him His own image: He requireth no more; He demandeth His own coin. ... 3. Think thou, soul, of all the rewards of God, in thinking over all thy wicked deeds: for as many as are thy sins, so many are His rewards of good. And what present, what offering, what sacrifice, canst thou ever tender unto Him? ...What wilt thou reward the Lord with? For thou wast reflecting, and couldest not find: "I will receive the cup of salvation." What? hath not the Lord Himself given the cup of salvation? Reward Him from thine own, if thou canst. I would say, No, do it not; reward Him not from thine own; God doth not will to be rewarded from thine own. If thou rewardest Him from thine own, thou rewardest sin. For all that thou hast thou hast from Him: sins only thou hast of thine own. He doth not wish to be rewarded from thine, He doth will from His own. Just as, if thou shouldst bring to a husbandman, from the land which he hath sown, an ear of wheat, thou hast rewarded him from the husbandman's own produce; if thorns, that hast offered him of thine own. Reward truth, in truth praise the Lord: if thou

shalt choose to reward Him from thine own, thou wilt lie. He who speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own. If he who speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own: so he who speaketh truth, speaketh of the Lord's. But what is to receive the cup of salvation, but to imitate the Passion of our Lord? ...I will receive the cup of Christ, I will drink of our Lord's Passion. Beware that thou fail not. But, "I will call upon the Name of the Lord." They then who failed, called not upon the Lord; they presumed in their own strength. Do thou so return, as remembering that thou art returning what thou hast received. So then let thy soul bless the Lord, as not to forget all His rewards.

4. Hear ye all His rewards. "Who forgiveth all thy sin: who healeth all thine infirmities" (ver. 3). Behold His rewards. What, save punishment, was due unto the sinner? What was due to the blasphemer, but the hell of burning fire? He gave not these rewards: that thou mayest not shudder with dread: and without love fear Him. ...But thou art a sinner. Turn again, and receive these His rewards: He "forgiveth all thy sin." ...Yet even after remission of sins the soul herself is shaken by certain passions; still is she amid the dangers of temptation, still is she pleased with certain suggestions; with some she is not pleased, and sometimes she consenteth unto some of those with which she is pleased: she is taken. This is infirmity: but He "healeth all thine infirmities." All thine infirmities shall be healed: fear not. They are great, thou wilt say: but the Physician is greater. No infirmity cometh before the Almighty Physician as incurable: only suffer thou thyself to be healed: repel not His hands; He knoweth how to deal with thee. Be not only pleased when He cherisheth thee, but also bear with Him when He useth the knife: bear the pain of the remedy, reflecting on thy future health. ...Thou dost not endure in uncertainty: He who promised thee health, cannot be deceived. The physician is often deceived: and promiseth health in the human body. Why is he deceived? Because he is not healing his own creature. God made thy body, God made thy soul. He knoweth how to restore what He hath made, He knoweth how to fashion again what He hath already fashioned: do thou only be patient beneath the Physician's hands: for He hateth one who rejects His hands. This doth not happen with the hands of a human physician. ...

5. "Who redeemeth thy life from corruption" (ver. 4). Behold, "the body which is corrupted, weigheth down the soul. The soul then hath life in a corruptible body. What sort of life? It suffereth burdens, it beareth weights. How great obstacles are there to thinking of God Himself, as it is right that men

should think of God, as if interrupting us from the necessity of human corruption? how many influences recall us, how many interrupt, how many withdraw the mind when fixed on high? what a crowd of illusions, what tribes of suggestions? All this in the human heart, as it were, teemeth with the worms of human corruption. We have set forth the greatness of the disease, let us also praise the Physician. Shall not He then heal thee, who made thee such as to be in health, hadst thou chosen to keep the law of health which thou hadst received? ...First think of thine own health. Sometimes a man is stricken in his own house, on his bed, with a more than usually manifest disorder; although this disorder too, which men dislike to contemplate, be plain; yet each man may be attacked with that sickness for which human physicians are sought, and may gasp with fever in his bed; perhaps he may wish to consider of his domestic affairs, to make some order or disposition relating to his estate or his house;

at once he is recalled from such cares by the anxiety of his friends, plainly expressed around him, and he is advised to dismiss these subjects, and first to take thought for his health. This then is addressed unto thee, and to all men: if thou art not sick, think of other things: if thy very infirmity prove thee sick, first take heed of thy health. Christ is thy health: think therefore of Christ. Receive the cup of His saving Health, "who healeth all thine infirmities; if thou shall choose, thou shall gain this Health. ...For thy life hath been redeemed from corruption: rest secure now: the contract of good faith hath been entered upon; no man deceives, no man circumvents, no man oppresses, thy Redeemer. He hath here made a barter, He hath already paid the price, He hath poured forth His blood. The only Son of God, I say, hath shed His blood for us: O soul, raise thyself, thou art of so great price. ..."He redeemeth thy life from corruption."

6. "Who crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness." Thou hadst perhaps begun to be in a manner proud, when thou didst hear the words, "He crowneth thee." I am then great, I have then wrestled. By whose strength? By thine, but supplied by Him. ...He crowneth thee, because He is crowning His own gifts, not thy deservings. "I laboured more abundantly than they all," said the Apostle; but see what he addeth: "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." ...It is then by His mercy that thou art crowned; in nothing be proud; ever praise the Lord; forget not all His rewards. It is a reward when thou, a sinner and an ungodly man, hast been called, that thou

mayest be justified. It is a reward, when thou art raised up and guided, that thou mayest not fall. It is a reward, when strength is given thee, that thou mayest persevere unto the end. It is a reward, that even that flesh of thine by which thou wast oppressed riseth again and that not even a hair of thy head perisheth. It is a reward, that after thy resurrection thou art crowned. It is a reward, that thou mayest praise God Himself for evermore without ceasing. ...

7. After the battle, then, I shall be crowned; after the crown, what shall I do? "He who satisfieth thy longing with good things" (ver. 5). ...Seek thy own good, O soul. For one thing is good to one creature, another to another, and all creatures have a certain good of their own, to the completeness and perfection of their nature. There is a difference as to what is essential to each imperfect thing, in order that it may be made perfect; seek for thy own good. "There is none good but One, that is, God." The highest good is thy good. What then is wanting unto him to whom the highest good is good? For there are inferior goods, which are good to different creatures respectively. What, brethren, is good unto the cattle, save to fill the belly, to prevent want, to sleep, to indulge themselves, to exist, to be in health, to propagate? This is good to them: and within certain bounds it hath an allotted measure of good, granted by God, the Creator of all things. Dost thou seek such a good as this? God giveth also this: but do not pursue it alone. Canst thou, a coheir of Christ, rejoice in fellowship with cattle? Raise thy hope to the good of all goods. He will be thy good, by whom thou in thy kind hast been made good, and by whom all things in their kind were made good. For God made all things very good. ...

8. When shall my longing be satisfied with good things? when, dost thou ask? "Thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle's. Dost thou then ask when thy soul is to be satisfied with good things? When thy youth shall be restored. And he addeth, as an eagle's. Something here lieth hidden; what however is said of the eagle, we will not pass over silently, since it is not foreign to our purpose to understand it. Let this only be impressed upon our hearts, that it is not said without cause by the Holy Spirit. For it hath intimated unto us a sort of resurrection. And indeed the youth of the eagle is restored, but not into immortality, for a similitude hath been given, as far as it could be drawn from a thing mortal to signify a thing immortal, not to demonstrate it. The eagle is said, after it becometh overpowered with bodily age, to be in-

capable of taking food from the immoderate length of its beak, which is always increasing. For after the upper part of its beak, which forms a crook above the lower part, hath increased from old age to an immoderate length, the length of this increase will not allow of its opening its mouth, so as to form any interval between the lower beak and the crook above. For unless there be such an opening, it hath no power of biting like a forceps, by which to shear off what it may put within its jaws.

The upper part therefore increasing, and being too far hooked over, it cannot open its mouth, and take any food. This old age doth to it, it is weighed down with the infirmity of age, and becometh too weak from want of power to eat; two causes of infirmity assaulting it, old age, and want. By a natural device, therefore, in order in some measure to restore its youth, the eagle is said to dash and strike against a rock the upper lip of its beak, by the too great increase of which the opening for eating is closed: and by thus rubbing it against the rock, it breaketh off the weight of its old beak, which impeded its taking food. It cometh to its food, and everything is restored: it will be after its old age like a young eagle; the vigour of all its limbs returneth, the lustre of its plumage, the guidance of its wings, it flieth aloft as before, a sort of resurrection taketh place in it. For this is the object of the similitude, like that of the Moon, which after waning and being apparently intercepted, again is renewed, and becometh full; and signifieth to us the resurrection; but when it is full it doth not remain so; again it waneth, that the signification may never cease. Thus also what hath here been said of the eagle: the eagle is not restored unto immortality, but we are unto eternal life;

but the similitude is derived from hence, that the rock taketh away from us what hindereth us. Presume not therefore on thy strength: the firmness of the rock rubbeth off thy old age: for that Rock was Christ. In Christ our youth shall be restored like that of the eagle. ... 9. "The Lord executeth mercy and judgment for all them that are oppressed with wrong" (ver. 6). ...An adulterous woman is brought forward to be stoned according to the Law, but she is brought before the Lawgiver Himself. ...Our Lord, at the time she was brought before Him, bending His Head, began writing on the earth. When He bent Himself down upon the earth, He then wrote on the earth: before He bent upon the earth, He wrote not on the earth, but on stone. The earth was now something fertile, ready to bring forth from the Lord's letters. On the stone He had written the Law, intimating the hardness of the Jews: He

wrote on the earth, signifying the productiveness of Christians. Then they who were leading the adulteress came, like raging waves against a rock: but they were dashed to pieces by His answer. For He said to them, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And again bending His head, He began writing on the ground. And now each man, when he asked his own conscience, came not forward. It was not a weak adulterous woman, but their own adulterate conscience, that drove them back. They wished to punish, to judge; they came to the Rock, their judges were overthrown by the Rock. ...

10. Execute mercy to the wicked, not as being wicked. Do not receive the wicked, in so far forth as he is wicked: that is, do not receive him as if from inclination towards and love for his iniquity. For it is forbidden to give unto a sinner, and to receive sinners. Yet how is this, "Give unto every man that asketh of thee"? and this, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him"? This is seemingly contradictory: but it is opened to those who knock in the name of Christ, and will be clear unto those who seek. "Help not a sinner: and, "give not to the ungodly; and yet, "give unto every man that asketh of thee. But it is a sinner who asketh of me. Give, not as unto a sinner. When dost thou give as unto a sinner? When that which maketh him a sinner, pleaseth thee so that thou givest. ...Let those who give to a man who fights with wild beasts, tell me why they give? Why doth he give to this man? He loveth that in him, in which consists his greatest sin; this he feedeth, this he clotheth in him, wickedness itself, made public by all witnessing it. Why doth the man give, who giveth to actors, or to charioteers, or to courtesans? Do not these very persons give to human beings? But it is not the nature of God's work that they attend to, but the iniquity of the human work. ...When therefore thou givest, thou givest to infamy, not to bravery.

As then he who giveth to the fighter of beasts, giveth not to the man, but to a most infamous profession; for if he were only a man, and not a fighter of beasts, thou wouldest not give; thou honourest him in vice, not nature: so on the other hand, if thou give to the righteous, if thou give to the prophet, if thou give to the disciple of Christ anything of which he is in want, without thinking that he is Christ's disciple, that he is God's minister that he is God's steward; but art thinking in that case of some temporal advantage, for instance, that when perchance he shall be needful to thy cause, he may be bought for thee, because thou hast given him something; thou hast no more

given to the righteous, if thou hast thus given, than he gave to the man, when he gave to the beast-fighter. The matter, then, most beloved, is quite open to us, and I conceive, that although it was obscure, it is now clear. It was to this that the Lord bound thee, when He said, "He who hath received the righteous man. That were enough. But as the righteous may be received with another intention, ...He saith, "He who receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man: that is, receiving him in consideration of his righteousness: ...that is, because he is Christ's disciple, because he is a steward of the Mystery: "Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

So understand, he who receiveth a sinner in the name of a sinner shall lose his reward. 11. ...On this account therefore be merciful without fear, extend love even unto thine enemies: punish those who chance to belong to thy government, restrain them with affection, with charity, in regard to their eternal salvation; lest while thou sparest the flesh, the soul perish. Do this: and though thou have to endure many, over whom thou canst not exercise discipline, because thou hast no lawful authority over them; bear their injuries; be without apprehension. He will show mercy unto thee if thou shalt have been merciful: thou shalt be merciful, without the injuries thou sufferest losing their punishment; "To Me belongeth vengeance, I will repay," saith the Lord. 12. "He made His ways known unto Moses" (ver. 7). ...For the Law was given with this view, that the sick might be convinced of his infirmity, and pray for the physician. This is the hidden way of God. Thou hadst long ago heard, "Who healeth all thine infirmities." Their infirmities were as yet hidden in the sick; the five books were given to Moses: the pool was surrounded by five porches; he brought forth the sick, that they might lie there, that they might be made known, not that they might be healed. The five porches discovered, but healed not, the sick; the pool healed when one descended, and this when it was disturbed: the disturbance of the pool was in our Lord's Passion. ...Since therefore this is a mystery there, he teacheth that the Law was given that sinners might be convinced of their sin, and call upon the Physician in order to receive grace. ...Therefore, as I had begun to say, because this is a great mystery in the Law, that it was given with this view, that by the increase of sin, the proud might be humbled, the humbled might confess, the confessing might be healed; these are the hidden ways, which He made known to Moses, through whom He gave the Law, by which sin should abound, that grace might more abound. ..."He hath

made known His good pleasure unto the children of Israel." To all the children of Israel? To the true children of Israel; yea, to all the children of Israel. For the treacherous, the insidious, the hypocrites, are not children of Israel. And who are the children of Israel? "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

13. "The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: long-suffering, and of great mercy" (ver. 8). Why so long-suffering? Why so great in mercy? Men sin and live; sins are added on, life continueth: men blaspheme daily, and "He maketh His sun to rise over the good and the wicked." On all sides He calleth to amendment, on all sides He calleth to repentance, He calleth by the blessings of creation, He calleth by giving time for life, He calleth through the reader, He calleth through the preacher, He calleth through the innermost thought by the rod of correction, He calleth by the mercy of consolation: "He is long-suffering, and of great mercy." But take heed lest by ill using the length of God's mercy, thou treasure up for thyself, as the Apostle saith, wrath in the day of wrath. ...For some there are who prepare to turn, and yet put it off, and in them crieth out the raven's voice, "Cras! Cras!" The raven which was sent from the ark, never returned. God seeketh not procrastination in the raven's voice, but confession in the wailing of the dove. The dove, when sent forth, returned. How long, To-morrow! To-morrow!? Look to thy last morrow: since thou knowest not what is thy last morrow, let it suffice that thou hast lived up to this day a sinner. Thou hast heard, often thou art wont to hear, thou hast heard to-day also; daily thou hearest, and daily thou amendest not. ...

14. "He will not alway be chiding: neither keepeth He His anger for ever" (ver. 9). Since it is in consequence of His anger that we live in the scourges and corruption of mortality: we have this in punishment for the first sin. ...Is it not through His anger, my brethren, that "in the sweat of thy face and in toil thou shalt eat bread, and the earth shall bear thorns and thistles unto thee"? This was said to our forefathers. Or if our life is different from this; if thou canst, turn unto some pleasure, where thou mayest not feel thorns. Choose what thou hast wished, whether thou art covetous or luxurious; to name these two alone; add a third passion, that of ambition; how great thorns are there in the desire of honours? in the luxury of lusts how great thorns? in the ardour of covetousness how great thorns? What troubles are there in base loves? What terrible anxieties here in this life? I omit hell.

Beware lest thou even now become a hell unto thyself. The whole of this, my brethren, is the result of His anger: and when thou hast turned thyself unto works of righteousness, thou canst not but toil upon earth; and toil endeth not before life endeth. We must toil on the way, that we may rejoice in our country. He therefore consoleth by His promises thy toil, thy labours, thy troubles, saying to thee, "He will not alway be chiding."

15. "He hath not dealt with us according to our sins" (ver. 10). Thanks unto God, because He hath vouchsafed this. We have not received what we were deserving of: "He hath not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses." "For as the height of heaven above the earth, so hath the Lord confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him" (ver. 11). Observe the heaven: everywhere on every side it covereth the earth, nor is there any part of the earth not covered by the heaven. Men sin beneath heaven: they do all evil deeds beneath the heaven; yet they are covered by the heaven. Thence is light for the eyes, thence air, thence breath, thence rain upon the earth for the sake of its fruits, thence all mercy from heaven. Take away the aid of heaven from the earth: it will fail at once. As then the protection of heaven abideth upon the earth, so doth the Lord's protection abide upon them that fear Him. Thou fearest God, His protection is above thee. But perhaps thou art scourged, and conceivest that God hath forsaken thee. God hath forsaken thee, if the protection of heaven hath forsaken the earth.

16. "Look, how wide the east is from the west; so far hath He set our sins from us" (ver. 12). They who know the Sacraments know this; nevertheless, I only say what all may hear. When sin is remitted, thy sins fall, thy grace riseth; thy sins are as it were on the decline, thy grace which freeth thee on the rise. "Truth springeth from the earth." What meaneth this? Thy grace is born, thy sins fall, thou art in a certain manner made new. Thou shouldest look to the rising, and turn away from the setting. Turn away from thy sins, turn unto the grace of God; when thy sins fall, thou riseth and profitest. ...One region of the heaven falleth, another riseth: but the region which is now rising will set after twelve hours. Not like this is the grace which riseth unto us: both our sins fall for ever, and grace abideth for ever.

17. "Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so hath the Lord had mercy on them that fear Him" (ver. 13). Let Him be as angry as He shall will, He is our Father. But He hath scourged us, and afflicted us, and bruised

us: He is our Father. Son, if thou bewailest, wail beneath thy Father; do not so with indignation, do not so with the puffing up of pride. What thou sufferest, whence thou mournest, it is medicine, not punishment; it is thy chastening, not thy condemnation. Do not refuse the scourge, if thou dost not wish to be refused thy heritage: do not think of what punishment thou sufferest in the scourge, but what place thou hast in the Testament. 18. "For He knoweth our forming" (ver. 14): that is, our infirmity. He knoweth what He hath created, how it hath fallen, how it may be repaired, how it may be adopted, how it may be enriched. Behold, we are made of clay: "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." He sent even His own Son, Him who was made the second man, Him who was God before all things. For He was second in His coming, first in His returning: He died after many, He arose before all. "He knoweth our forming." What forming? Ourselves. Why sayest thou that He knoweth? Because He hath pitied. "Remember that we are but dust." Addressing God Himself, he saith, "Remember," as if God could forget: He perceiveth, He knoweth in such a manner that He cannot forget. But what meaneth, "Remember"? Let thy mercy continue towards us. Thou knowest our forming; forget not our forming, lest we forget thy grace.

19. "Man, his days are but as grass" (ver. 15). Let man consider what he is; let not man be proud. "His days are but as grass." Why is the grass proud, that is now flourishing, and in a very short space dried up? Why is the grass proud that flourisheth only for a brief season, until the sun be hot? It is then good for us that His mercy be upon us, and from grass make gold. "For he flourisheth as a flower of the field." The whole splendour of the human race; honour, powers, riches, pride, threats, is the flower of the grass. That house flourisheth, and that family it great, that family flourisheth; and how many flourish, and how many years do they live! Many years to thee, are but a short season unto God. God doth not count, as thou dost. Compared with the length and long life of ages, all the flower of any house is as the flower of the field. All the beauty of the year hardly lasteth for the year. Whatever there flourisheth, whatever there is warmed with heat, whatever there is beautiful, lasteth not; nay, it cannot exist for one whole year. In how brief a season do flowers pass away, and these are the beauty of the herbs! This which is so very beautiful, this quickly falleth. Inasmuch then as He knoweth as a father our forming, that we are but grass, and can only flourish for a time; He sent unto us His

Word, and His Word, which abideth for evermore, He hath made a brother unto the grass which abideth not. Wonder not that thou shalt be a sharer of His Eternity; He became Himself first a sharer of thy grass. Will He who assumed from thee what was lowly, deny unto thee what is exalted in respect of thee?

20. "The wind shall go over on it, it shall not be; and the place thereof shall know it no more" (ver. 16). For he is not speaking of grass, but of that for whose sake even the Word became grass. For thou art man, and on thy account the Word became man. "All flesh is grass:" "and the Word was made flesh." How great then is the hope of the grass, since the Word hath been made flesh? That which abideth for evermore, hath not disdained to assume grass, that the grass might not despair of itself. 21. In thy reflections therefore on thyself, think of thy low estate, think of thy dust: be not lifted up: if thou art anything better, thou wilt be so by His Grace, thou wilt be so by His mercy. For hear what followeth: "but the mercy of the Lord endureth for ever and ever upon them that fear Him" (ver. 17). Ye who fear not Him, will be grass, and in grass, and in torment with the grass: for the flesh shall arise unto the torment. Let those who fear Him rejoice, because His mercy is upon them.

22. "And His righteousness upon children's children" (ver. 18). He speaketh of reward, "upon children's children." How many servants of God are there who have not children, how much less children's children? But He calleth our works our children; the reward of works, our "children's children." "Even upon such as keep His covenant." Let men beware that all may not conceive what is here said to belong to themselves: let them choose, while they have the choice. "And keep in memory His commandments to do them." Thou wast already disposed to flatter thyself, and perhaps to recite to me the Psalter, which I have not by heart, or from memory to say over the whole Law. Clearly thou art better in point of memory than I, better than any righteous man who doth not know the Law word for word: but see that thou keep the commandments. But how shouldest thou keep them? Not by memory, but by life. "Such as keep in memory His commandments:" not, to recite them; but, "to do them." And now perhaps each man's soul is disturbed. Who remembereth all the commandments of God? who remembereth all the writings of God? Lo, I wish not only to hold them in my memory, but also to do them in my works: but who remembereth them all?

Fear not: He burdeneth thee not: "on two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." ...

23. "The Lord hath prepared His throne in heaven" (ver. 19). Who but Christ hath prepared His throne in heaven? He who descended and ascended, He who died, and rose from the dead, He who lifted up to heaven the manhood He had assumed, hath Himself prepared His throne in heaven. The throne is the seat of the Judge: observe therefore ye who hear, that "He hath prepared His throne in heaven." ...The kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall be the Governor among the people. "And His kingdom shall rule over all."

24. "Bless ye the Lord, ye Angels of His, ye that are mighty in strength: ye that fulfil His word" (ver. 20). By the word of God, then, thou art not righteous, nor faithful, unless when thou dost it. "Ye that are mighty in strength, ye that fulfil His commandment, and hearken unto the voice of His words."

25. "Bless ye the Lord, all ye His hosts: ye servants of His that do His pleasure" (ver. 21). All ye angels, all ye that are mighty in strength: ye that do His word: all ye His hosts, ye servants of His that do His pleasure, do ye, ye bless the Lord. For all they who live wickedly, though their tongues be silent, by their lips do curse the Lord. What doth it profit if thy tongue singeth a hymn, while thy life breatheth sacrilege? By living ill thou hast set many tongues to blasphemy. Thy tongue is given to the hymn, the tongues of those who behold thee, to blasphemy. If then thou dost wish to bless the Lord, do His word, do His will. ... 26. "Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of His, in all places of His dominion" (ver. 22). Therefore in every place. Let Him not be blessed where He ruleth not: "in all places of His dominion." Let no man perchance say: I cannot praise the Lord in the East, because He hath departed unto the West; or, I cannot praise Him in the West, because He is in the East. "For neither from the east, nor from the west, nor yet from the desert hills. And why? God is the Judge." He is everywhere, in such wise that everywhere He may be praised: He is in such wise on every side, that we may be joyful in Him on every side: He is in such wise blessed on every side, that on every side we may live well. ... "In every place of His dominion: bless thou the Lord, O my soul!" The last verse is the same as the first: blessing is at the head of the Psalm, blessing at the end; from blessing we set out, to blessing let us return, in blessing let us reign.

PSALM 104

1. ...*"Bless the Lord, O my soul."* Let the soul of us all, made one in Christ, say this. *"O Lord my God, Thou art magnified exceedingly!"* (ver. 1). Where art Thou magnified? *"Confession and beauty Thou hast put on."* Confess ye, that ye may be beautified, that He may put you on. *"Clothed with light as a garment"* (ver. 2). Clothed with His Church, because she is made *"light"* in Him, who before was darkness in herself, as the apostle saith: *"Ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord."* *"Stretching out the heaven like a skin:"* either as easily as thou dost a skin, if it be *"as easily,"* so that thou mayest take it after the letter; or let us understand the authority of the Scriptures, spread out over the whole world, under the name of a skin; because mortality is signified in a skin, but all the authority of the Divine Scriptures was dispensed unto us through mortal men, whose fame is still spreading abroad now they are dead.

2. *"Who covereth with waters the upper parts thereof"* (ver. 3). The upper parts of what? Of Heaven. What is Heaven? Figuratively only we said, the Divine Scripture. What are the upper parts of the Divine Scripture? The commandment of love, than which there is none more exalted. But wherefore is love compared to waters? Because *"the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us."* Whence is the Spirit Himself water? because *"Jesus stood and cried, He that believeth on Me, out of his bosom shall flow rivers of living water."* Whence do we prove that it was said of the Spirit? Let the Evangelist himself declare, who followeth it up, and saith, *"But this spake He of the Spirit, which they were to receive, who should believe on Him."* *"Who walketh above the wings of the winds;"* that is, above the virtues of souls. What is the virtue of a soul? Love itself. But how doth He walk above it? Because the love of God toward us is greater than ours toward God.

3. *"Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire His ministers"* (ver. 4): that is, those who are already spirits, who are spiritual, not carnal, He maketh His Angels, by sending them to preach His gospel. *"And flaming fire His ministers."* For unless the minister that preacheth be on fire, he enflameth not him to whom he preacheth. 4. *"He hath founded the earth upon its firmness"* (ver. 5). He hath founded the Church upon the firmness of the Church. What is the firmness of the Church, but the foundation of the Church. What is the foundation of the Church, but that of which the

Apostle saith, "Other foundation can no man lay but that is laid, which is Christ Jesus." And therefore, grounded on such a foundation, what hath she deserved to hear? "It shall not be bowed forever and ever." "He founded the earth on its firmness." That is, He hath founded the Church upon Christ the foundation. The Church will totter if the foundation totter; but when shall Christ totter, before whose coming unto us, and taking flesh on Him, "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made;" who holdeth all things by His Majesty, and us by His goodness? Since Christ faileth not, "she shall not be bowed for ever and ever." Where are they who say that the Church hath perished from the world, when she cannot even be bowed. ...

5. "The deep, like a garment, is its clothing" (ver. 6). Whose? Is it perchance God's? But he had already said of His clothing, "Clothed with light as with a garment." I hear of God clothed in light, and that light, if we will, are we. What is, if we will? if we are no longer darkness. Therefore if God is clothed with light, whose clothing, again, is the deep? For an immense mass of waters is called the deep. All water, all the moist nature, and the substance everywhere shed abroad through the seas, and rivers, and hidden caves, is all together called by one name, the Deep. Therefore we understand the earth, of which he said, "He hath founded the earth." Of it I believe he said, "The deep, like a garment is its clothing." For the water is as it were the clothing of the earth, surrounding it and covering it. ...

6. "Above the mountains the waters shall stand:" that is, the clothing of the earth, which is the deep, so increased, that the waters stood even above the mountains. We read of this taking place in the deluge. ...The Prophet minding to foretell future things, not to relate the past, therefore said it, because he would have it understood that the Church should be in a deluge of persecutions. For there was a time when the floods of persecutors had covered God's earth, God's Church, and had so covered it, that not even those great ones appeared, who are the mountains. For when they fled everywhere, how did they but cease to appear? And perchance of those waters is that saying, "Save me, O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul." Especially the waters which make the sea, stormy, unfruitful. For whatsoever earth the sea-water may have covered, it will not rather make it fruitful than bring it to barrenness. For there were also mountains beneath the waters, because above the mountains waters stood. ...Why were the Apostles hidden by flight?

Because "above the mountains the waters stood." The power of the waters was great, but how long? Hear what followeth.

7. "From Thy rebuke they shall fly" (ver. 7). And this was done, brethren; from God's rebuke the waters did fly; that is, they went back from pressing on the mountains. Now the mountains themselves stand forth, Peter and Paul: how do they tower! They who before were pressed down by persecutors, now are venerated by emperors. For the waters are fled from the rebuke of God; because "the heart of kings is in the hand of God, He hath bent it whither He would;" He commanded peace to be given by them to the Christians; the authority of the Apostles sprang up and towered high. ...The waters fled from the rebuke of God. "From the voice of Thy thunder they shall be afraid." Now who is there that would not be afraid, from the voice of God through the Apostles, the voice of God through the Scriptures, through His clouds? The sea is quieted, the waters have been made afraid, the mountains have been laid bare, the emperor hath given the order. But who would have given the order, unless God had thundered? Because God willed, they commanded, and it was done. Therefore let no one of men arrogate anything to himself.

8. "The mountains ascend, and the plains go down, into the place which Thou hast rounded for them" (ver. 8). He is still speaking of waters. Let us not here understand mountains as of earth; nor plains, as of earth: but waves so great that they may be compared to mountains. The sea did sometime toss, and its waves were as mountains, which could cover those mountains the Apostles. But how long do the mountains ascend and the plains go down? They raged, and they are appeased. When they raged they were mountains: now they are appeased they are become plains: for He hath founded a place for them. There is a certain channel, as it were a deep place, into which all those lately raging hearts of mortals have retired. ...They were mountains formerly, now they are plains: yet, my brethren, even a dead calm is sea. For wherefore are they not now violent? wherefore do they not rage? Wherefore do they not try, if they cannot overthrow our earth, at least to cover it? Wherefore not?

9. Hear. "Thou hast set a bound which they shall not pass over, neither shall they turn again to cover the earth" (ver. 9). What then, because now the bitterest waves have received a measure, that we must be allowed to preach such things even with freedom; because they have had their due limit as-

signed, because they cannot pass over the bound that is set, nor shall they return to cover the earth; what is doing in the earth itself? What workings take place therein, now that the sea hath left it bare? Although at its beach slight waves do make their noise, although Pagans still murmur round; the sound of the shores I hear, a deluge I dread not. What then; what is doing in the earth? "Who sendeth out springs in the little valleys" (ver. 10). "Thou sendest out," he saith, "springs in the little valleys." Ye know what little valleys are, lower places among the lands. For to hills and mountains, valleys and little valleys are opposed in contrary shape. Hills and mountains are swellings of the land: but valleys and little valleys, lownesses of the lands. Do not despise low places, thence flow springs. "Thou sendest out springs in the little valleys." Hear a mountain. The Apostle saith, "I laboured more than they all." A certain greatness is brought before us: yet immediately, that the waters may flow, he hath made himself a valley: "Yet not I, but the grace of God with me." It is no contradiction that they who are mountains be also valleys: for as they are called mountains because of their spiritual greatness, so also valleys because of the humility of their spirit. "Not I," he saith, "but the grace of God with me." ...

10. What is, "In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through"? We have heard who are the "mountains," the great Preachers of the word, the exalted Angels of God, though still in mortal flesh; lofty not by their own power, but by His grace; but as far as relates to themselves, they are valleys, in their humility they send forth springs. "In the midst," he saith, "between the mountains, the waters shall pass through." Let us suppose this said thus, "In the midst between the Apostles shall pass through the preachings of the Word of Truth." What is, in the midst between the Apostles? What is called in the midst, is common. A common property, from which all alike live, is in the midst, and belongs not to me, but neither belongs it to thee, nor yet to me. ...For if they are not in the midst, they are as it were private, they flow not for public use, and I have mine, and he has his own, it is not in the midst for both me and him to have it; but such is not the preaching of peace. ...Therefore, brethren, let what we have said to your Love serve to this purpose, because of the springs: that they may flow from you, be ye valleys, and communicate with all that which ye have from God. Let the waters flow in the midst, envy ye no one, drink, be filled, flow forth when ye

are filled. Everywhere let the common water of God have the glory, not the private falsehoods of men. ...

11. For it follows, "All the beasts of the wood shall drink" (ver. 11). We do indeed see this also in the visible creation, that the beasts of the wood drink of springs, and of streams that run between the mountains: but now since it hath pleased God to hide His own wisdom in the figures of such things, not to take it away from earnest seekers, but to close it to them that care not, and open it to them that knock; it hath also pleased our Lord God Himself to exhort you by us to this, that in all these things which are said as if of the bodily and visible creation, we may seek something spiritually hidden, in which when found we may rejoice. The beasts of the wood, we understand the Gentiles, and Holy Scripture witnesses this in many places. ... 12. These beasts, then, drink those waters, but passing; not staying, but passing; for all that teaching which in all this time is dispensed passeth. ... Unless perchance your love thinketh that in that city to which it is said, "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Sion; for He hath made strong the bars of thy gates;" when the bars are now strengthened and the city closed, whence, as we said some time since, no friend goeth out, no enemy entereth; that there we shall have a book to read, or speech to be explained as it is now explained to you. Therefore is it now treated, that there it may be held fast: therefore is it now divided by syllables, that there it may be contemplated whole and entire. The Word of God will not be wanting there: but yet not by letters, not by sounds, not by books, not by a reader, not by an expositor. How then? As, "In the beginning was the Word," etc. For He did not so come to us as to depart from thence; because He was in this world, and the world was made by Him. Such a Word are we to contemplate. For "the God of gods shall appear in Zion." But this when? After our pilgrimage, when the journey is done: if however after our journey is done we be not delivered to the Judge, that the Judge may send us to prison. But if when our journey is ended, as we hope, and wish, and endeavour, we shall have reached our Country, there shall we contemplate What we shall ever praise; nor shall That fail which is present to us, nor we, who enjoy: nor shall he be cloyed that eateth, nor shall that fail which he eateth. Great and wonderful shall be that contemplation. ...

13. "The onagers shall take for their thirst." By onagers he meaneth some great beasts. For who knoweth not that wild asses are called onagers? He meaneth, therefore, some great untrained ones. For the Gentiles had no

yoke of the Law: many nations lived after their own customs, ranging in proud boastfulness as in a wilderness. And so indeed did all the beasts, but the wild asses are put to signify the greater sort. They too shall drink for their thirst, for for them too the waters flow. Thence drinks the hare, thence the wild ass: the hare little, the wild ass great; the hare timid, the wild ass fierce: either sort drinks thence, but each for his thirst. ...So faithfully and gently doth it flow, as at once to satisfy the wild ass, and not to alarm the hare. The sound of Tully's voice rings out, Cicero is read, it is some book, it is a dialogue of his, whether his own, or Plato's, or by whatever such writer: some hear that are unlearned, weak ones of less mind; who dareth to aspire to such a thing? It is a sound of water, and that perchance turbid, but certainly flowing so violently, that a timid animal dare not draw near and drink. To whom soundeth a Psalm, and he saith, It is too much for me? Behold now what the Psalm soundeth; certainly they are hidden mysteries, yet so it soundeth, that even children are delighted to hear, and the unlearned come to drink, and when filled burst forth in singing. ...

14. Then the Psalm goes on in its text, "Upon them the fowls of the heaven shall inhabit"(ver. 12). ...Upon the mountains, then, the fowls of the air shall have their habitation. We see these birds dwell upon the mountains, but many of them dwell in plains, many in valleys, many in groves, many in gardens, not all upon mountains. There are some fowls that dwell not save on the mountains. Some spiritual souls doth this name denote. Fowls are spiritual hearts, which enjoy the free air. In the clearness of heaven these birds delight, yet their feeding is on the mountains, there will they dwell. Ye know the mountains, they have been already treated of. Mountains are Prophets, mountains are Apostles, mountains are all preachers of the truth. ...

15. But think not that those "fowls of heaven" follow their own authority; see what the Psalm saith: "From the midst of the rocks they shall give their voice." Now, if I shall say to you, Believe, for this said Cicero, this said Plato, this said Pythagoras: which of you will not laugh at me? For I shall be a bird that shall send forth my voice not from the rock. What ought each one of you to say to me? what ought he who is thus instructed to say? "If any one shall have preached unto you a gospel other than that ye have received, let him be anathema." What dost thou tell me of Plato, and of Cicero, and of Virgil? Thou hast before thee the rocks of the mountains, from the midst of the rocks give me thy voice. Let them be heard, who hear from the rock: let

them be heard, because also in those many rocks the One Rock is heard: for "the Rock was Christ." Let them therefore be willingly heard, giving their voice from the midst of the rocks. Nothing is sweeter than such a voice of birds. They sound, and the rocks resound: they sound; spiritual men discuss: the rocks resound, testimonies of Scripture give answer. Lo! thence the fowls give their voice from the midst of the rocks, for they dwell on the mountains.

16. "Watering the mountains from the higher places" (ver. 13). Now if a Gentile uncircumcised man comes to us, about to believe in Christ, we give him baptism, and do not call him back to those works of the Law. And if a Jew asks us why we do that, we sound from the rock, we say, This Peter did, this Paul did: from the midst of the rocks we give our voice. But that rock, Peter himself, that great mountain, when he prayed and saw that vision, was watered from above. ... 17. "From the fruit of Thy works shall the earth be satisfied." What is, "From the fruit of Thy works"? Let no man glory in his own works: but "he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." With Thy grace he is satisfied, when he is satisfied: let him not say that grace was given for his own merits. If it is called grace, "it is gratuitously given;" if it is returned for works, wages are paid. Freely therefore receive, because ungodly thou art justified.

18. "Bringing forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men" (ver. 14). This is true, I perceive; I recognise the creation: the earth doth bring forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. But I perceive the words, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn: Doth God take care for oxen? For our sakes therefore the Scripture saith it. How then doth the earth bring forth grass for the cattle? Because "the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. He sent preachers, saying unto them, "Eat such things as are set before you of them: for the labourer is worthy of his hire." ...They give spiritual, they receive carnal things; they give gold, they receive grass. ..."If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things? This the Apostle said, a preacher so laborious, so indefatigable, so well tried, that he giveth this very grass to the earth. "Nevertheless," he saith, "we have not used this power. He showeth that it is due to him, yet he received it not; nor hath he condemned those who have received what was due. For those were to be condemned who exact what is

not due, not they who accept their recompense: yet he gave up even his own recompense.

Thou dost not cease to owe to another, because one hath given up his dues, otherwise thou wilt not be the watered earth which bringeth forth grass for the cattle. ...Thou receivest spiritual things, give carnal things in return: to the soldier they are due, to the soldier thou returnest them; thou art the paymaster of Christ. "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? I speak not thus, that it should be so done unto me. There has been such a soldier as gave up his rations of food even to the paymaster: yet let the paymaster pay the rations. ... 19. "That it may bring forth bread out of the earth." What bread? Christ. Out of what earth? From Peter, from Paul, from the other stewards of the truth. Hear that it is from the earth: "We have," saith St. Paul, "this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." He is the bread who descended from heaven, that He might be brought forth out of the earth, when He is preached through the flesh of His servants. The earth bringeth forth grass, that it may bring forth bread from the earth. What earth bringeth forth grass? Pious, holy nations. That bread may be brought forth out of what earth? The word of God out of the Apostles, out of the stewards of God's Sacraments, who still walk upon the earth, who still carry an earthly body.

20. "And wine maketh glad the heart of man" (ver. 15). Let no man prepare himself for intoxication; nay, let every man prepare him for intoxication. "How excellent is Thy cup which maketh inebriate!" We choose not to say, Let no man be drunk. Be inebriated; yet beware, from what source. If the excellent cup of the Lord doth saturate you, your ebriety shall be seen in your works, it shall be seen in the holy love of righteousness, it shall, lastly, be seen in the estrangement of your mind, but from things earthly to heavenly. "To make him a cheerful countenance with oil." ...What is the making the countenance cheerful with oil? The grace of God; a sort of shining for manifestation; as the Apostle saith, "The Spirit is given to every man for manifestation." A certain grace which men can clearly see in men, to conciliate holy love, is termed oil, for its divine splendour; and since it appeared most excellent in Christ, the whole world loveth Him; who though while here He was scorned, is now worshipped by every nation: "For the kingdom is the Lord's,

and He shall be Governor among the people." For such is His grace, that many, who do not believe on Him, praise Him, and declare that they are unwilling to believe on Him, because no man can fulfil what He doth command. They who with reproaches once raged against Him, are hindered by His very praises. Yet by all is He loved, by all is He preached; because He is excellently anointed, therefore He is Christ: for He is called Christ from the Chrism or anointing which He had. Messiah in the Hebrew, Christ in the Greek, Unctus in the Latin: but He anointeth over His whole Body. All therefore who come, receive grace, that their countenances may be made glad with oil.

21. "And bread strengtheneth man's heart." What is this, brethren? As it were, he hath forced us to understand what bread he was speaking of. For while that visible bread strengtheneth the stomach, feedeth the body, there is another bread which strengtheneth the heart, in that it is the bread of the heart. ...There is therefore a wine that truly maketh glad the heart, and knoweth not to do aught else than to gladden the heart. But that thou mayest not imagine that this indeed should be taken of the spiritual wine, but not of that spiritual bread; He hath shown this very point, that it is also spiritual: "and bread," he saith, "strengtheneth man's heart." So understand it therefore of the bread as thou dost understand it of the wine; hunger inwardly, thirst inwardly: "Blessed are they," saith our Lord, "who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." That bread is righteousness, that wine is righteousness: it is truth, Christ is truth. "I am," He said, "the living bread, who came down from heaven;" and, "I am the Vine, and ye are the branches."

22. "The trees of the plain shall be satisfied" (ver. 16): but with this grace, brought forth out of the earth. "The trees of the plain," are the lower orders of the nations. "And the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted." The cedars of Libanus, the powerful in the world, shall themselves be filled. The bread, and wine, and oil of Christ hath reached senators, nobles, kings; the trees of the plain are filled. First the humble are filled; next also the cedars of Libanus, yet those which He hath planted; pious cedars, religious faithful; for such hath He planted. For the ungodly also are cedars of Libanus; for, "The Lord shall break the cedars of Libanus." For Libanus is a mountain: there are those trees, even according to the letter most long-lived and most excellent. But Libanus is interpreted, as we read in those who have written of these

things, a brightness: and this brightness seemeth to belong to this world, which at present shineth and is refulgent with its pomps. There are the cedars of Libanus, which the Lord hath planted; those which the Lord hath planted shall be filled. ...

23. "There shall the sparrows build their nests: their leader is the house of the coot" (ver. 17). Where shall the sparrows build? In the cedars of Libanus. ...Who are the sparrows? Sparrows are birds indeed, and fowls of the air, but small fowls are wont to be called sparrows. There are therefore some spiritual ones that build in the cedars of Libanus: that is, there are certain servants of God who hear in the Gospel, "Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow Me." ...Let him who hath resigned many things, not be proud. We know that Peter was a fisherman: what then could he give up, to follow our Lord? Or his brother Andrew, or John and James the sons of Zebedee, themselves also fishermen; and yet what did they say? "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee." Our Lord said not to him, Thou hast forgotten thy poverty; what hast thou resigned, that thou shouldest receive the whole world? He, my brethren, who resigned not only what he had, but also what he longed to have, resigned much. ...

24. But although the sparrows will build in the cedars of Libanus, "the house of the coot is their leader." What is the house of the coot? The coot, as we all know, is a water bird, dwelling either among the marshes, or on the sea. It hath rarely or never a home on the shore; but in places in the midst of the waters, and thus usually in rocky islets, surrounded by the waves. We therefore understand that the rock is the fit home of the coot, it never dwelleth more securely than on the rock. On what sort of rock? One placed in the sea. And if it is beaten by the waves, yet it breaketh the waves, is not broken by them: this is the excellency of the rock in the sea. How great waves beat on our Lord Jesus Christ? The Jews dashed against Him; they were broken, He remained whole. And let every one who doth imitate Christ, so dwell in this world, that is, in this sea, where he cannot but feel storms and tempests, that he may yield to no wind, to no wave, but remain whole, while he meets them all. The home of the coot, therefore, is both strong and weak. The coot hath not a home on lofty spots; nothing is more firm and nothing more humble than that home. Sparrows build indeed in cedars, on account of ac-

tual need: but they hold that rock as their leader, which is beaten by the waves, and yet not broken; for they imitate the sufferings of Christ. ...

25. What then followeth: "The loftiest hills are for the stags" (ver. 18). The stags are mighty, spiritual, passing in their course over all the thorny places of the thickets and woods. "He maketh my feet like harts' feet, and setteth me up on high." Let them hold to the lofty hills, the lofty commandments of God; let them think on sublime subjects, let them hold those which stand forth most in the Scriptures, let them be justified in the highest: for those loftiest hills are for the stags. What of the humble beasts? what of the hare? what of the hedgehog? The hare is a small and weak animal: the hedgehog is also prickly: the one is a timid animal, the other is covered with prickles. What do the prickles signify, except sinners? He who sinneth daily, although not great sins, is covered over with the smallest prickles. In his timidity he is a hare: in his being covered with the minutest sins, he is a hedgehog: and he cannot hold those lofty and perfect commandments. For "the loftiest hills are for the stags." What then? do these perish? No. For so "is the rock the refuge for the hedgehogs and the hares." For the Lord is a refuge for the poor. Place that rock upon the land, it is a refuge for hedgehogs, and for hares: place it on the sea, it is the home of the coot. Everywhere the rock is useful. Even in the hills it is useful: for the hills without the rock's foundation would fall into the deep. ...

26. "He appointed the Moon for certain seasons" (ver. 19). We understand spiritually the Church increasing from the smallest size, and growing old as it were from the mortality of this life; yet so, that it draweth nearer unto the Sun. I speak not of this moon visible to the eye, but of that which is signified by this name. While the Church was in the dark, while she as yet appeared not, shone not forth as yet, men were led astray, and it was said, This is the Church, here is Christ; so that "while the Moon was dark, they shot their arrows at the righteous in heart." How blind is he who now, when the Moon is full, wandereth astray? "He appointed the Moon for certain seasons." For here the Church temporarily is passing away: for this subjection to death will not remain for ever: there will some time be an end of waxing and waning; it is appointed for certain seasons. "And the sun knoweth his going down." And what sun is this, but that Sun of righteousness, whom the ungodly will lament on the day of judgment never having risen for them; they who will say on that day, "Therefore we wandered from the way of truth, and the light

of righteousness shone not on us, and the sun did not arise upon us." That sun riseth for him who understandeth Christ. ...

27. Nor think, brethren, that the sun ought to be worshipped by some men, because the sun doth sometimes in the Scriptures signify Christ. For such is the madness of men; as if we said that a creature should be worshipped, when it is said, the sun is an emblem of Christ. Then worship the rock also, for it also is a type of Christ. "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter:" worship the lamb also, since it is a type of Christ. "The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed;" worship the lion also, since it signifieth Christ. Observe how numerous are the types of Christ: all these are Christ in similitude, not in essence. ... 28. What then, when the sun went down, when our Lord suffered? There was a sort of darkness with the Apostles, hope failed, in those to whom He at first seemed great, and the Redeemer of all men. How so? "Thou didst make darkness, and it became night; wherein all the beasts of the forest shall move" (ver. 20). ...Here the beasts of the forest are used in different ways: for these things are always understood in varying senses; as our Lord Himself is at one time termed a lion, at another a lamb. What is so different as a lion and a lamb? But what sort of lamb? One that could overcome the wolf, overcome the lion. He is the Rock, He the Shepherd, He the Gate. The Shepherd entereth by the gate: and He saith, "I am the good Shepherd:" and, "I am the Door of the Sheep." ...Learn thus to understand, when these things are spoken figuratively; lest perchance when ye have read that the Rock signifieth Christ, ye may understand it to mean Him in every passage. In one place it meaneth one thing, another in another, just as we can only understand the meaning of a letter by seeing its position. "The lion's whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God" (ver. 21). Justly then our Lord, when nigh unto His going down, the very Sun of Righteousness recognising His going down, said to His disciples, as if darkness being about to come, the lion would roam about to seek whom he might devour, that that lion could devour no man, unless with leave: "Simon," said He, "this night Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." When Peter thrice denied, was he not already between the lion's teeth? ...

29. "The Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together, and lay them down in their dens" (ver. 22). More and more as the Sun riseth, so that Christ is recognised by the round world, and glorified therein, do the lion's whelps

get them away together; those devils recede from the persecution of the Church, who instigated men to persecute the house of God, by working in the sons of unbelief. Now that none of them dareth persecute the Church, "the Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together." And where are they? "And they lay them down in their dens." Their dens are the hearts of the unbelieving. How many carry lions crouching in their hearts? They burst not forth thence, they make no assault upon the pilgrim Jerusalem. Wherefore do they not so? Because the Sun is already risen, and is shining over the whole world.

30. What art thou doing, O man of God? thou, O Church of God? what art thou, O body of Christ, whose Head is in Heaven? what art thou doing, O man, His unity? "Man," he saith, "shall go forth to his work" (ver. 23). Let therefore this man work good works in the security of the peace of the Church, let him work unto the end. For sometime there will be a sort of general darkening, and a sort of assault will be made, but in the evening, that is, in the end of the world: but now the Church doth work in peace and tranquillity; for "man shall go forth to his work, and to his labour, unto the evening." 31. "O Lord, how great are made Thy works! (ver. 24). Justly great, justly sublime! where were those works made, that are so great? what was that station where God stood, or that seat whereupon He sat, when He did those works? O what was the place where He worked thus? whence did those so beautiful works proceed at the first? To take it word for word, every ordained creation, running by ordinance, beautiful by ordinance, rising by ordinance, setting by ordinance, going through all seasons by ordinance, whence hath it proceeded? whence hath the Church herself received her rise, her growth, her perfection? In what manner is she destined to a consummation in immortality? with what heralding is she preached? by what mysteries is she recommended? by what types is she concealed? by what preaching is she revealed? where hath God done these things? I see great works. "How great are made Thy works, O Lord! I ask where He hath made them: I find not the place: but I see what followeth: "In Wisdom hast Thou made them all. All therefore Thou hast made in Christ. ..." "The earth is full of Thy creation. The earth is full of the creation of Christ. And how so? We discern how: for what was not made by the Father through the Son? Whatever walketh and doth crawl on earth, whatever doth swim in the waters, whatever flieth in the air,

whatever doth revolve in heaven, how much more then the earth, the whole universe, is the work of God.

But he seems to me to speak here of some new creation, of which the Apostle saith, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God. All who believe in Christ, who put off the old man, and put on the new, are a new creature. "The earth is full of Thy works. On one spot of the earth He was crucified, in one small spot that seed fell into the earth, and died; but brought forth great fruit. ... 32. "The earth is full of Thy creation." Of what creation of Thine is the earth full? Of all trees and shrubs, of all animals and flocks, and of the whole of the human race; the earth is full of the creation of God. We see, know, read, recognise, praise, and in these we preach of Him; yet we are not able to praise respecting these things, as fully as our heart doth abound with praise after the beautiful contemplation of them. But we ought rather to heed that creation, of which the Apostle saith, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." What "old things have passed away"? In the Gentiles, all idolatry; in the Jews themselves, all that servitude unto the Law, all those sacrifices that were harbingers of the present Sacrifice. The oldness of man was then abundant; One came to renovate His own work, to melt His silver, to form His coin, and we now see the earth full of Christians believing in God, turning themselves away from their former uncleanness and idolatry, from a past hope to the hope of a new age: and behold it is not yet realized, but is already possessed in hope, and through that very hope we now sing, and say, "The earth is full of Thy creation." We do not as yet sing this in our country, nor yet in that rest which is promised, the bars of the gates of Jerusalem not being as yet made fast; but still in our pilgrimage gazing upon the whole of this world, upon men who on every side are running unto the faith, fearing hell, despising death, loving eternal life, scorning the present, and filled with joy at such a spectacle, we say, "The earth is full of Thy creation."

33. ..."So is the great and wide sea also; wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts" (ver. 25). He speaketh of the sea as terrible. Snares creep in this world, and surprise the careless suddenly; for who numbereth the temptations that creep? They creep, but beware, lest they snatch us away. Let us keep watch on the Wood; even in the water, even on the waves, we are safe: let not Christ sleep, let not faith sleep; if He hath slept,

let Him be awakened; He will command the winds; He will calm the sea; the voyage will be ended, and we shall rejoice in our country. For I see in this terrible sea unbelievers still; for they dwell in barren and bitter waters: but they are both small and great. We know this: many little men of this world are still unbelievers, many great men of this world are so: there are living creatures, both small and great, in this sea. They hate the Church: the name of Christ is a burden to them: they rage not, because they are not permitted; the cruelty which cannot burst forth in deeds, is shut up within the heart. For all, whether small or great, "creeping things, both small and great," who at present grieve at the temples being shut, the altars overthrown, the images broken, the laws which make it a capital crime to sacrifice to idols; all who mourn on this account, are still in the sea. What then of us? And by what road then are we to journey unto our country? Through this very sea, but on the Wood. Fear not the danger; that wood which holdeth together the world doth bear thee up.

34. "There shall go the ships" (ver. 26). Lo, ships float upon that which alarmed you, and sink not. By ships we understand churches; they go among the storms, among the tempests of temptations, among the waves of the world, among the beasts, both small and great. Christ on the wood of His cross is the Pilot. "There shall go the ships." Let not the ships fear, let them not much mind where they float, but by Whom they are steered. "There shall go the ships." What voyage do they find tedious, when they feel that Christ is their Pilot? They will sail safely, let them sail diligently, they will reach their promised haven, they will be led to the land of rest. 35. There is also in that sea somewhat which transcends all creatures, great and small. What is this? Let us hear the Psalm: "There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to make sport of him." There are creeping things innumerable, both small and great beasts; there shall the ships go, and shall not fear, not only the creeping things innumerable, and beasts both small and great, but not even the serpent which is there; "whom Thou," he speaketh unto God, "hast made to make sport of him." This is a great mystery; and yet I am about to utter what ye already know. Ye know that a certain serpent is the enemy of the Church: ye have not seen him with the eyes of the flesh, but ye see him with the eyes of faith. ...

36. This serpent then, our ancient enemy, glowing with rage, cunning in his wiles, is in the mighty sea. "Here is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast

formed to make sport of him." Do thou now make sport of the serpent: for for this end was this serpent made. He falling by his own sin from the sublime realms of the heavens, and made devil instead of angel, received a certain region of his own in this mighty and spacious sea. What thou thinkest his kingdom, is his prison. For many say: wherefore hath the devil received so great power, that he may rule in this world, and prevaieth so much, can do so much? How much prevaieth he? How much can he do? Unless by permission, he can do nothing. Do thou so act, that he may not be allowed to attack thee; or if he be allowed to tempt thee, he may depart vanquished, and may not gain thee. For he hath been allowed to tempt some holy men, servants of God: they overcame him, because they departed not from the way, they whose heel he watched, fell not. ...

37. He then, my brethren, who doth wish to watch the serpent's head, and safely to pass this sea; for it must be that this serpent dwelleth here, and, as I had commenced saying, the devil when he fell from heaven received this region; let him watch his head, on the part of the fear of the world, and of the lusts of the world. For it is hence that he suggesteth some object of fear or of desire; he trieth thy love, or thy fear. If thou learest hell, and lovest the kingdom of God, thou wilt watch his head. ..."There is no power but of God." What then learest thou? Let the dragon be in the waters, let the dragon be in the sea: thou art to pass through it. He is made so as to be made sport of, he is ordained to inhabit this place, this region is given him. Thou thinkest that this habitation is a great thing for him, because thou knowest not the dwellings of the angels whence he fell: what seemeth to thee his glory, is his damnation.

38. ...What then fearest thou? Perhaps he is about to try thy flesh: it is the scourge of thy Lord, not the power of thy tempter. His wish is to injure that salvation which is promised: but he is not allowed: but that he may not be allowed, have Christ for thy Head: repel the serpent's head: consent not unto his suggestion, slip not from thy path. "There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to make sport of him." 39. Dost thou wish to see how incapable he is of hurting thee, unless permitted? "These," he saith, "wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season" (ver. 27). And this serpent wisheth to devour, but he devoureth not whom he wisheth. ...Thou hast heard what the serpent's meat is. Thou dost not wish that God give thee to be devoured by the serpent; because not the serpent's food: i.e. forsake not the

Word of God. For where it is said to the serpent, "Dust thou shalt eat," it is said to the transgressor, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shall return." Thou dost not wish to be the serpent's food? be not dust. How, thou repliest, shall I not be dust? If thou hast not a taste for earthly things. Hear the Apostle, that thou mayest not be dust. For the body which thou wearest is earth: but do thou refuse to be earth. What meaneth this? "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." If thou dost not set thy affections on earthly things, thou art not earth: if thou art not earth, thou art not devoured by the serpent, whose appointed food is earth. The Lord giveth the serpent his food when He will, what He will: but He judgeth rightly, he cannot be deceived, He giveth him not gold for earth. "When Thou hast given it them, they gather it." ...

40. "When thou openest Thy hand, they shall all be filled with good" (ver. 28). What is it, O Lord, that Thou openest Thy hand? Christ is Thy hand. "To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" To whom it is revealed, unto him it is opened: for revelation is opening. "When Thou openest Thy hand, they shall all be filled with good." When Thou revealest Thy Christ, "they shall all be filled with good." But they have not good from themselves; this is oftentimes proved unto them. "When Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled" (ver. 29). Many filled with good have attributed to themselves what they had, and have wished to boast as in their own righteousnesses, and have said to themselves, I am righteous; I am great: and have become self-complacent. Unto these the Apostle speaketh: "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive?" But God, wishing to prove unto man that whatever he hath he hath from Him, so that with good he may gain humility also, sometimes troubleth him; He turneth away His face from him, and he falleth into temptation; and He sheweth him that his righteousness, and his walking aright, was only under His government. ...

41. But wherefore dost Thou do this? wherefore dost Thou hide Thy face, that they may be troubled? "Thou shalt take away their breath, and they shall fail." Their breath was their pride; they boast, they attribute things to themselves, they justify themselves. Hide, therefore, Thy face, that they may be troubled: take away their breath, and let them fail; let them cry unto Thee, "Hear me, O Lord, and that soon, for my spirit waxeth faint: hide not Thy face from me." "Thou shalt take away their breath, and they shall fail, and shall be turned to their dust." The man who repenteth of his sin discovereth

himself, that he had not strength of himself; and doth confess unto God, saying, that he is earth and ashes. O proud one, thou art turned to thine own dust, thy breath hath been taken away; no longer dost thou boast thyself, no longer extol thyself, no longer justify thyself; thou seest that thou art made of dust, and when the Lord turneth away His face, thou hast fallen back into thine own dust. Pray, therefore, confess thy dust and thy weakness.

42. And see what followeth: "Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made" (ver. 30). Thou shalt take away their spirit, and send forth Thine own: Thou shalt take away their spirit: they shall have no spirit of their own. Are they then forsaken? "Blessed are the poor in spirit:" but they are not forsaken. They refused to have a spirit of their own: they shall have the Spirit of God. Such were our Lord's words to the future martyrs: "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Attribute not your courage to yourselves. If it is yours, He saith, and not Mine, it is obstinacy, not courage. "For we are His workmanship," saith the Apostle, "created unto good works." From His Spirit we have received grace, that we may live unto righteousness: for it is He that justifieth the ungodly. "Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall fail; Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made: and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth:" that is, with new men, confessing themselves to have been justified, not righteous of their own power, so that the grace of God is in them. What then? When He hath taken away our spirit, we shall be turned again to our dust, beholding to our edification our weakness, that when we receive His Spirit we may be refreshed. See what followeth: "Be the glory of the Lord for ever" (ver. 31). Not thine, not mine, not his, or his; not for a season, but "for ever." "The Lord shall rejoice in His works." Not in thine, as if they were thine: because if thy works are evil, it is through thy iniquity; if good, it is through the grace of God. "The Lord shall rejoice in His works."

43. "Who looketh on the earth, and maketh it tremble; who toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke" (ver. 32). O earth, thou wast exulting in thy good, to thyself thou didst ascribe thy fulness and opulence; behold, the Lord looketh on thee, and causeth thee to tremble. May He look on thee, and make thee tremble: for the trembling of humility is better than the confidence of pride. ...For it is God, he saith, which worketh in you. For this reason then with trembling, because God worketh in you. Because He gave, because what thou hast cometh not from thee, thou shall work with fear and trem-

bling, for if thou fearest not Him, He will take away what He gave. Work, therefore, with trembling. Hear another Psalm: "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling." If we must rejoice with trembling, God beholdeth us, there cometh an earthquake; when God looketh upon us, let our hearts tremble; then will God rest there. Hear Him in another passage: "Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Even on him that is lowly and quiet, and who trembleth at My Word."

"Who looketh on the earth, and maketh it tremble; who toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke" (ver. 32). The hills were proud, and boastful of themselves, God had not touched them: He toucheth them, and they shall smoke. What meaneth the smoking of the hills? That they pray unto the Lord. Behold great hills, proud hills, vast hills, prayed not to God: they wished themselves to be entreated, and entreated not Him who was above them. For what powerful, arrogant, proud man is there upon the earth, who deigneth humbly to entreat God? I speak of the ungodly, not of the "cedars of Libanus, which the Lord hath planted." Every ungodly man, unhappy soul, knoweth not how to entreat God, while he wisheth himself to be entreated by men. He is a hill; it is needful that God touch him, that he may smoke: when he hath begun to smoke, he will offer prayers unto God, as it were the sacrifice of his heart. He smoketh unto God, he then beateth his breast: he beginneth to weep, for smoke doth elicit tears.

44. "I will sing unto the Lord in my life" (ver. 33). What will sing? Everything that is willing. Let us sing unto the Lord in our life. Our life at present is only hope; our life will be eternity hereafter: the life of mortal life, is the hope of an everlasting life. "I will praise my God while I have my being." Since I am in Him for ever and ever, while I have my being, I will praise my God. Let us not imagine that, when we have commenced praising God in that state, we shall have any other work: our whole life will be for the praises of God. If we become weary of Him whom we praise, we may also become weary of praising. If He is ever loved, He is ever praised by us. 45. "Let my discourse be pleasing to Him: my joy shall be in the Lord" (ver. 34). What is the discourse of man unto God, save the confession of sins? Confess unto God what thou art, and thou hast discoursed with Him. Discourse unto Him, do good works, and discourse. "Wash you, make you clean," saith Isaiah. What is it to discourse unto God? Unfold thyself to him who knoweth thee, that He may unfold Himself to thee who knowest not Him. Behold, it is thy

discourse that pleaseth the Lord; the offering of thy humility, the tribulation of thy heart, the holocaust of thy life, this pleaseth God. But what is pleasing to thyself? "My joy shall be in the Lord." This is that discoursing which I meant between God and thyself: show thyself to Him who knoweth thee, and He showeth Himself unto thee who knowest not him. Pleasing unto Him is thy confession: sweet unto thee is His grace. He hath Spoken Himself unto thee. How? By the Word. What Word? Christ. ...

46. "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth" (ver. 35). He seemeth angry! O holy soul, which here doth sing and groan! Would that our soul were with that very soul! Would that it were coupled with it, associated, conjoined with it! It shall behold also His loving-kindness when he is angry. For who but he who is filled with charity, understandeth this? Thou tremblest, because he curseth. And who doth curse? A saint. Without doubt he is listened to. But it is said unto the saints, "Bless, and curse not." What is then the sense of the words, "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth"? Let them utterly be consumed; let their spirit be taken away, that He may send forth His own Spirit, and they may be restored. "And the ungodly, so that they be no more." In what that they be no more, save as wicked men? Let them therefore be justified, that they may no longer be ungodly. The Psalmist saw this, and was filled with joy, and repeateth the first verse of the Psalm: "Bless thou the Lord, O my soul]." Let our soul bless the Lord, brethren, since He hath deigned to give unto us both understanding and the power of language, and unto you attention and earnestness in hearing. Let each, as he can recall to mind what he hath heard, by mutual conversation stir up the food ye have received, ruminate on what ye have heard, let it not descend in you into the bowels of forgetfulness. Let the treasure to be desired rest upon your lips. These matters have been sought out and discovered with great labour, with great labour have they been announced and discoursed of; may our toil be fruitful unto you, and may our soul bless the Lord.

PSALM 105

1. This Psalm is the first of those to which is prefixed the word Allelujah; the meaning of which word, or rather two words, is, Praise the Lord. For this reason he beginneth with praises: "O confess unto the Lord, and call upon His Name" (ver. 1); for this confession is to be understood as praise, just as these words of our Lord, "I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth." For after commencing with praise, calling upon God is wont to fol-

low, whereunto he that prayeth doth next add his longings: whence the Lord's Prayer itself hath at the commencement a very brief praise, in these words, "Our Father which art in Heaven." The things prayed for, then follow. ...This also followeth, "Tell the people what things He hath done;" or rather, to translate literally from the Greek, as other Latin copies too have it, "Preach the Gospel of His works among the Gentiles." Unto whom is this addressed, save unto the Evangelists in prophecy?

2. "O sing unto Him, and play on instruments unto Him" (ver. 2). Praise Him both by word and deed; for we sing with the voice, while we play with an instrument, that is, with our hands. "Let your talking be of all His wondrous works. Be ye praise in His holy Name" (ver. 3). These two verses may without any absurdity seem paraphrases of the two words above; so that, "Let your talking be of all His wondrous works," may express the words, "O sing unto Him;" and what followeth, "be ye praised in His holy Name," may be referred to the words, "and play on instruments unto Him;" the former relating to the "good word" wherewith we sing unto Him, in which His wondrous works are told; the latter to the good work, in which sweet music is played unto Him, so that no man may wish to be praised for a good work on the score of his own power to do it. For this reason, after saying, "be ye praised," which assuredly they who work well deservedly may, he added, "in His holy Name," since "he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." ...This is to be praised in His holy Name. Whence we read also in another Psalm: "My soul shall be praised in the Lord: let the meek hear thereof, and be glad;" which here in a sense followeth, "Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord:" for thus the meek are glad, who do not rival with a bitter jealousy those whom they imitate as already workers of good.

3. "Seek the Lord, and be strengthened" (ver. 4). This is very literally construed from the Greek, though it may seem not a Latin word: whence other copies have, "be ye confirmed;" others, "be ye corroborated." ...While these words, then, "Come unto Him, and be enlightened," apply to seeing; those in the text relate to doing: "Seek the Lord, and be strengthened." ...But what meaneth, "Seek His face evermore"? I know indeed that to cling unto God is good for me; but if He is always being sought, when is He found? Did he mean by "evermore," the whole of the life we live here, whence we become conscious that we ought thus to seek, since even when found He is still to be sought? To wit, faith hath already found Him, but hope still seeketh Him.

But love hath both found Him through faith, and seeketh to have Him by sight, where He will then be found so as to satisfy us, and no longer to need our search. For unless faith discovered Him in this life, it would not be said, "Seek the Lord." Also, if when discovered by faith, He were not still to be diligently sought, it would not be said, "For if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." ...And truly this is the sense of the words, "Seek His face evermore;" meaning that discovery should not terminate that seeking, by which love is testified, but with the increase of love the seeking of the discovered One should increase.

4. "Remember," he saith, "His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth" (ver. 5). This passage seemeth like that, "Thou shall say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you:" an expression which, in ever so small part, scarce a mind taketh in. Then mentioning His own Name, He mercifully mingled in His grace towards men, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; this is My Name for ever." By which He would have it to be understood, that they whose God He declared Himself lived with Him for ever, and He said this, which might be understood even by children, that they who by the great powers of love knew how to seek His face for evermore, might according to their capacity comprehend, I Am that I Am. 5. Unto whom is it said, "O ye seed of Abraham His servant, ye children of Jacob, His chosen"? (ver. 6). ...He next addeth, "He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the world" (ver. 7). Is He the God of the Jews only? God forbid! "He is the Lord our God:" because the Church, where His judgments are preached, is in all the world. ...

6. "He hath been alway mindful of His covenant" (ver. 8). Other copies read, "for evermore; and this arises from the ambiguity of the Greek. But if we are to understand "alway" of this world and not of eternity, why, when he explaineth what covenant He was mindful of, doth he add, "The word that He made to a thousand generations"? Now this may be understood with a certain limitation; but he afterwards saith, "Even the covenant that He made with Abraham" (ver. 9): "and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting, testament" (ver. 10). But if in this passage the Old Testament is to be understood, on account of the land of Canaan; for thus the language of the Psalm runneth, "saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan: the lot of your in-

heritance" (ver. 11): how is it to be understood as everlasting, since that earthly inheritance could not be everlasting? And for this reason it is called the Old Testament, because it is abolished by the New. But a thousand generations do not seem to signify anything eternal, since they involve an end; and yet are also too numerous for this very temporal state. For by howsoever few years a generation is limited, such as in Greek is called genea, whereof the shortest period some have fixed is at fifteen years, after which period man hath the power of generation;

what then are those "thousand generations," not only from the time of Abraham, when that promise was made him, unto the New Testament, but from Adam himself down to the end of the world? For who would dare to say that this world should last for 15000 years? Hence it seemeth to me that we ought not to understand here the Old Testament, which it said through the prophet was to be cancelled by the New: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant." ...After saying, "He hath been mindful of His covenant unto an age; which we ought to understand as lasting for evermore, the covenant, namely, of justification and an eternal inheritance, which God hath promised to faith; he addeth, "and the Word that He commanded unto a thousand generations. What meaneth "commanded"? ...The command then was faith, that the righteous should live by faith; and an eternal inheritance is set before this faith. "A thousand generations," then, are, on account of the perfect number, to be understood for all; that is, as long as generation succeedeth generation, so long is it commanded to us to live by faith. This the people of God doth observe, the sons of promise who succeed by birth, and depart by death, until every generation be finished; and this is signified by the number thousand; because the solid square of the number ten, ten times ten, and this taken ten times amounts to a thousand. "Even the covenant," he saith, "which He made with Abraham:

and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob," that is, Jacob himself, "for a law. These are the very three patriarchs, whose God He calleth Himself in a special sense, whom the Lord also doth name in the New Testament, where He saith, "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. This is everlasting inheritance. ... 7. He next followeth out the history well known in the truth of the holy Scriptures. "When they were in small numbers, very few, and they strangers in the land" (ver.

12); that is, in the land of Canaan. ...But some copies have the words "very few, and they strangers," in the accusative case, the translator having turned the Greek phrase too literally into Latin. If we were to render the whole clause in this way, we must say, "that they were very few, and they strangers;" but the phrase, "while they were," is the meaning of the Greek; and the verb, "to be," takes not an accusative, but a nominative after it.

8. "What time as they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people" (ver. 13). This is a repetition of what he had said, "from one nation to another." "He suffered no man to do them harm: but reprov'd even kings for their sakes" (ver. 14). "Touch not," He said, "Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm" (ver. 15). He declareth the words of God chiding or reproving kings, that they might not harm the holy fathers, while they were small in number, very few, and they strangers in the land of Canaan. Although these words be not read in the books of that history, yet they are to be understood as either secretly spoken, as God speaketh in the hearts of men by unseen and true visions, or even as announced through an Angel. For both the king of Gerar and the king of the Egyptians were warned from Heaven not to harm Abraham, and another king not to harm Isaac, and others not to harm Jacob; while they were very few, and strangers, before he went over into Egypt to sojourn with his sons: which is understood to be herein mentioned. But since it occurred to ask, before they passed over and multiplied in Egypt, how so few in number, and those strangers in a foreign land, could maintain themselves: he next addeth, "He suffered no man to do them wrong," etc.

9. But it may well excite a question, in what sense they were styled (Christs, or) anointed, before there was any unction, from which this title was given to the kings? ...Whence then were those patriarchs at that title called "anointed"? For that they were prophets, we read concerning Abraham; and certainly, what is manifestly said of him, should be understood of them also. Are they styled "christs," because, even though secretly, yet they were already Christians? For although the flesh of Christ came from them, nevertheless Christ came before them; for He thus answered the Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am." But how could they not know Him, or not believe in Him; since they are called prophets for this very reason, because, though somewhat darkly, they announced the Lord beforehand? Whence He saith Himself openly, "Your father Abraham desired to see My day, and he saw it,

and was glad." For no man was ever reconciled unto God outside of that faith which is in Christ Jesus, either before His Incarnation, or after: as it is most truly defined by the Apostle: "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."

10. He then beginneth to relate how it happened that they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. "He calleth," he saith, "for a famine upon the land: and brake all the staff of bread" (ver. 16). Thus it happened that they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. But the expressions of the holy Scriptures are not to be negligently passed by. "He called," he saith, "for a famine upon the land;" as if famine were some person, or some animated body, or some spirit that would obey Him who called. ...Under this impression the old Romans consecrated some such deities, as the goddess Fever, and the god Paleness. Or meaneth it, as is more credible, He said there should be famine; so that calling be the same thing as mentioning by name; mentioning by name, as speaking; speaking, as commanding? Nor doth the Apostle say, "He calleth those things which be not, that they may be;" but, "as though they were." For with God that hath already happened which, according to His disposition, is fixed for the future: for of Him it is elsewhere said, "He who made things to come." And here when famine happened, then it is said to have been called, that is, that that which had been determined in His secret government, might be realized. Lastly, he at once expounds, how He called for the famine, saying, "He brake all the staff of bread."

11. "But He had sent a man before them" (ver. 17). What man? "Even Joseph." How did He send him? "Joseph was sold to be a bond-servant." When this happened, it was the sin of his brethren, and, nevertheless, God sent Joseph into Egypt. We should therefore meditate on this important and necessary subject, how God useth well the evil works of men, as they on the other hand use ill the good works of God. 12. Next he doth relate the story, mentioning what Joseph suffered in his low estate, and how he was raised on high. "His feet they hurt in the stocks: the iron entered into his soul, until his word came" (ver. 18). That Joseph was put in irons, we do not indeed read; but we ought no ways to doubt that it was so. For some things might be passed over in that history, which nevertheless would not escape the Holy Spirit, who speaketh in these Psalms. We understand by the iron which entered into his soul, the tribulation of stern necessity; for he did not say

body, but "soul." There is a somewhat similar expression in the Gospel, where Simeon saith unto Mary, "A sword shall pierce through thy own soul also." That is, the Passion of the Lord, which was a fall unto many, and in which the secrets of many hearts were revealed, since their sentiments respecting the Lord were extorted from them, without doubt made His own Mother exceeding sorrowful, heavily struck with human bereavement. Now Joseph was in this tribulation, "until his word came," with which he truly interpreted dreams: whence he was introduced to the king, that unto him also he might foretell what would happen in respect to his dreams. But since he said, "Until his words were heard," that we might not altogether so understand "his," that any one might think so great an event was to be ascribed unto man; he at once added, "The word of the Lord inflamed him" (ver. 19); or, as other copies have it more closely from the Greek, "The word of the Lord fired him," that he also might be reputed amongst those to whom it is said, "Receive ye praise in His holy Name."

13. "The king sent and loosed him, the prince of the peoples, and let him go free" (ver. 20). The "king" is the same as "the prince of the peoples:" he "loosed" him from his bonds "and let him go free" from his prison. "He made him lord also of his house: and ruler of all his substance" (ver. 21). "That he might inform his princes like unto himself, and teach his old men wisdom" (ver. 22). The Greek hath, "and teach his elders wisdom." Which might altogether be rendered to the letter thus; "Might inform his princes like unto himself, and make his elders wise." The word translated old men being presbyters or elders, not gerontas, old men: and to teach wisdom being from the Greek to sophize, which cannot be rendered by a single word in Latin, and is from the word sophia, wisdom, different from prudence, which is in Greek phronesis. Yet we do not read this in the high elevation of Joseph, as we read not of fetters in his low estate. But how could it happen that so great a man, the worshipper of the One True God, whilst in Egypt, should have been intent upon the nourishing of bodies, and the government of carnal matters only, and have felt no anxiety for souls, and how he could render them better? But those things are written in that history, which, according to the intention of the writer, in whom was the Holy Spirit, were judged sufficient for signifying future events in that narration.

14. "Joseph also came into Egypt, and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham" (ver. 23). Israel is the same with Jacob, as is Egypt with the land of

Ham. Here it is very plainly shown, that the Egyptian race sprang from the seed of Chain, the son of Noah, whose first-born was Canaan. So that in those copies wherein in this passage Canaan is read, we must alter the reading. It is better construed, "was a stranger," than "dwelt," as other copies have it: which would be the same as "was an inhabitant," for it meaneth nothing different; the very same word is used in the Greek passage above, where it is said, "Very few, and they strangers in the land." Moreover, the state of an incola or accola doth not signify a native, but a stranger. Behold how "they went from one nation to another." What had been briefly proposed, hath been briefly explained in the narration. But from what kingdom they passed over to another people may well be asked. For they were not yet reigning in the land of Canaan, because the kingdom of the people of Israel had not yet been established there. How then can it be understood, except by anticipation, because the kingdom of their seed was destined there to exist?

15. Next is related what happened in Egypt. "And He increased," he saith, "His people exceedingly, and made them stronger than their enemies" (ver. 24). Even the whole of this is briefly set forth, in order that the manner in which it took place may be afterwards related. For the people of God was not made stronger than their enemies the Egyptians, at the time when their male offspring were slain, or when they were worn out with making bricks; but when by His powerful hand, by the signs and portents of the Lord their God, they became objects of fear and of honour, until the opposition of the hardened king was overcome, and the Red Sea overwhelmed the persecutor with his army. 16. "And He turned their heart so, that they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants" (ver. 25). Is it to be in any wise understood or believed, that God turneth man's heart to do sin? ...For they were not good before they hated His people; but being malignant and ungodly, they were such as would readily envy their prosperous sojourners. And so, in that He multiplied His own people, this bountiful act turned the wicked to envy. For envy is the hatred of another's prosperity. In this sense, therefore, He turned their heart, so that through envy they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants. It was not then by making their hearts evil, but by doing good to His people, that He turned their hearts, that were evil of their own accord, to hatred. For He did not pervert a righteous heart, but turned one perverted of its own accord to the hatred of His people, while He was to

make a good use of that evil; not by making them evil, but by lavishing blessings upon those, which the wicked might most readily envy.

17. The following verses, which are sung in praise of Him when Allelujah is chanted, show how He used this hatred of theirs, both for the trial of His own people, and for the glory of His Name, which is profitable for us. "He sent Moses His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen him" (ver. 26). "Whom He had chosen," would be sufficient; but there is no difficulty in the addition of "him." It is a phrase of Scripture, as, "The land in which they shall dwell in it:" a phrase which the divine pages are full of. 18. "He set forth in them the words of His tokens, and of His wonders in the land of Ham" (ver. 27). We ought not to understand by "the words of His tokens," words literally, words with which the tokens and wonders were worked, that is, which they uttered, that these tokens and wonders might take place. For many were performed without words, either with a rod, or with outstretched hand, or by ashes sent towards heaven. ...

19. "He sent darkness, and made it dark" (ver. 28). This is also written among the plagues with which the Egyptians were smitten. But what followeth, is variously read in different copies. For some have, "and they provoked His words;" while others read, "and they provoked not His words;" but the reading first mentioned we have found in most; while, where the negative particle is added, we could hardly discover two copies. But perhaps the false reading has abounded owing to the easy sense; for what is easier understood than this, "They provoked His words," that is, by their contumacious rebellions? We have endeavoured to explain the other reading also according to some true sense: and this for the present occurs "They provoked not His words," that is, in Moses and Aaron; because they most patiently bore with a very stiffnecked people, until all things which God had determined to work by them, were fulfilled in order.

20. "He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish" (ver. 29). "He made their land frogs, yea, even in the king's chambers" (ver. 30): as if he were to say, He turned their land into frogs. For there was so great a multitude of frogs, that this might well be said by hyperbole. 21. "He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies, and lice in all their quarters" (ver. 31). If it be asked when He spake, it was in His Word before it took place; and there it was, without time, at what time it should take place: although even then He commanded it to be done, when it was to be done, through Angels,

and through his servants Moses and Aaron. 22. "He made their rains hail" (ver. 32). It is a similar expression to the former, "He made their land frogs;" except that the whole land was not actually turned into frogs, though the whole of the rain may have been turned into hail. "A burning fire in their land:" understand, "He sent."

23. "He smote their vines also and fig-trees; and brake every tree of their coasts" (ver. 33). This was done by the violence of the hail, and by lightnings; whence he spoke of the fire as "burning." 24. "He spake the word, and the locust came, and the caterpillar, of which there was no number" (ver. 34). The locusts and the caterpillars are one plague: of which the one is the parent, the other the offspring. 25. "And did eat up all the grass in their land, and devoured the fruit of the ground" (ver. 35). Even grass is fruit, as Scripture is wont to speak, which calleth even the ripe corn grass; but it wished these two things to harmonize in number with the two which it had spoken of before, that is, the locust and the caterpillar. But the whole of this doth belong to the variety of speech, which is a remedy for weariness, not to any difference of senses.

26. "He smote every first-born in their land: even the first-fruits of all their strength" (ver. 36). This is the last plague, excepting the death in the Red Sea. "The first-fruits of all their strength," I imagine to be an expression derived from the first-born of cattle. These plagues are ten in number, but they are not all mentioned, nor in the same order in which they are there read to have happened. For praise-giving is free from the law which bindeth one who is relating or composing a history. And since the Holy Spirit is the Author and Dictator, through the Prophet, of this praise; by the very same authority with which He guided him who wrote that history, he doth both mention something to have taken place which is not there read, and passeth over what is there read. 27. Now he addeth this also to the praises of God, that He led the Israelites out of Egypt enriched with silver and gold; because even they were then in such a condition, that they could not as yet despise the just and due, though temporal, reward of their toils. ..."He brought them forth also in silver and gold" (ver. 37): this too is a Scripture idiom; for "in silver and gold" is said for the same as if it had been said "with silver and gold: there was not one feeble person among their tribes:" in body, not in mind. This also was a great blessing of God, that in this necessity of removal there was no infirm person.

28. "Egypt was glad at their departing: for their fear fell upon them" (ver. 38); that is, the fear of the Hebrews upon the Egyptians. For "their fear" is not that with which the Hebrews feared, but that with which they were feared. Some one will say, how then were the Egyptians unwilling to dismiss them? why did they let them go as if they expected them to return? why did they lend them gold and silver, as to men who were to return, and to repay them, if "Egypt was glad at their departing"? But we must understand, after that final destruction of the Egyptians, and the terrible overthrow of the mighty pursuing army in the Red Sea, that the rest of the Egyptians feared lest the Hebrews should return, and with great ease crush the relics of them: illustrating what he had stated, that He made His people stronger than their enemies.

29. He now proceedeth to the divine blessings which were conferred upon them as they wandered in the desert. "He spread out a cloud to be their covering: and fire to give them light in the night season" (ver. 39). This is as clear as it is well known. 30. "They asked, and the quail came" (ver. 40). They did not desire quails, but flesh. But since the quail is flesh, and in this Psalm he speaketh not of the provocation of those who did not please God, but of the faith of the elect, the true seed of Abraham; they are to be understood to have desired that that might come which might crush the murmurs of those who provoked. Then in the next line, "And He filled them with the bread of heaven," he has not indeed named manna, but it is obscure to none who hath read those records.

31. "He opened the rock of stone, and the waters flowed out: so that rivers ran in the dry places" (ver. 41). This fact too is understood as soon as read. 32. But in all these blessings of His, God doth commend in Abraham the merit of faith. For the Psalmist goeth on to say, "For why? He remembered His holy promise, which He made to Abraham His servant" (ver. 42). "And He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness" (ver. 43). What he said, "His people," he has repeated in, "His chosen." So also what he said, "with joy," he has repeated in, "with gladness." "And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they took the labours of the people in possession" (ver. 44). "The lands of the heathen," and "the labours of the people," are the same; and the words, "He gave," are repeated in these, "they took in possession."

33. ... "That they may keep His statutes, and seek out His law" (ver. 45). Lastly, since by the seed of Abraham he wished those to be understood here, who were truly the seed of Abraham, such as were not wanting even in that people; as the Apostle Paul clearly sheweth, when he saith, "But not in all of them was God well pleased;" for if He was not pleased with all, surely there were some in whom He was well pleased: since then this Psalm praiseth such men as this, he hath said nothing here of the iniquities and provocations and bitterness of those with whom God was not well pleased. But since not only the justice but also the mercy of Almighty God, the merciful, was shown even unto the wicked; concerning these attributes the rest of the Psalm pursueth the praises of God. And yet both sorts were in one people: nor did the latter pollute the good with the contagion of their iniquities. For "the Lord knoweth who are His;" and if he cannot separate in this world from wicked men, yet, "let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." ...

PSALM 106

1. This Psalm also hath the title Allelujah prefixed to it: and this twice. But some say, that one Allelujah belongeth to the end of the former Psalm, the other to the beginning of this. And they assert, that all the Psalms bearing this title have Allelujah at the end, but not all at the beginning; so that they will not allow any Psalm which hath not Allelujah at the end, to have it at the beginning; supposing that what seemeth to belong to the commencement, really belongeth to the end of the former Psalm. But until they persuade us by some sure proofs that this is true, we will follow the general custom, which, whenever it findeth Allelujah, attributes it to the same Psalm, at the head of which it is found. For there are very few copies (and I have found this in none of the Greek copies, which I have been able to inspect) which have Allelujah at the end of the CL Psalm; after which there is no other which belongeth to the same canon. But not even this could outweigh custom, although all the copies had it so. For it might be that, with some reference to the praise of God, the whole book of Psalms, which is said to consist of five books (for they say that the books severally end where it is written Amen, Amen), might be closed with this last Allelujah, after all that hath been sung;

nor, on account of the end of the CL Psalm, do I see that it is necessary that all the Psalms entitled Allelujah, should have Allelujah at the end. But

when there is a double Allelujah at the head of a Psalm, why as our Lord sometimes once, sometimes twice over, saith Amen, in the same way Allelujah may not sometimes be used once, sometimes twice, I know not: especially, since as in this CV, both the Allelujahs are placed after the mark by which the number of the Psalm is described, whereas the one, if it belonged to the end of the former Psalm, ought to have been placed before the number; and the Allelujah which belonged to the Psalm of this number, should have been written after the number. But perhaps even in this an ignorant habit hath prevailed, and some reason may be assigned of which we are as yet uninformed, so that the judgment of truth ought rather to be our guide than the prejudice of custom. In the mean time, before we are fully instructed in this matter, whenever we find Allelujah written, whether once or twice, after the number of the Psalm, according to the most usual custom of the Church, we will ascribe it to that Psalm to which the same number is prefixed; confessing that we both believe the mysteries of all the titles in the Psalms, and of the order of the same Psalms, to be important, and that we have not yet been able, as we wish to penetrate them.

2. But I find these two Psalms, the CV and CVI so connected, that in one of them, the first, the people of God is praised in the person of the elect, of whom there is no complaint, whom I imagine to have been there in those with whom God was well pleased; but in the following Psalm those are mentioned among the same people who have provoked God; though the mercy of God was not wanting even to these. ...This Psalm therefore beginneth like the former; "Confess ye unto the Lord? But in that Psalm these words follow: "And call upon His Name: whereas here, it is as follows "For He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever" (ver. 1). Wherefore in this passage a confession of sins may be understood; for after a few verses we read, "We have sinned with our fathers, we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly; but in the words, "For He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever," there is chiefly the praise of God, and in His praise confession. Although when any one confesses his sins, he ought to do so with praise of God; nor is a confession of sins a pious one, unless it be without despair, and with calling upon the mercy of God. It therefore doth contain His praise, whether in words, when it calleth Him gracious and merciful, or in the feeling only, when he believeth this. ...If that mercy be here understood, in respect of which no man can be happy without God;

we may render it better, "for ever: but if it be that mercy which is shown to the wretched, that they may either be consoled in misery, or even freed from it; it is better construed, "to the end of the world," in which there will never be wanting wretched persons to whom that mercy may be shown. Unless indeed any man ventured to say, that some mercy of God will not be wanting even to those who shall be condemned with the devil and his angels; not a mercy by which they may be freed from that condemnation, but that it may be in some degree softened for them: and that thus the mercy of God may be styled eternal, as exercised over their eternal misery. . . . 3. "Who can express the mighty acts of the Lord?" (ver. 2). Full of the consideration of the Divine works, while he entreateth His mercy, "Who," he saith, "can express the mighty acts of the Lord, or make all His praises heard?" We must supply what was said above, to make the sense complete here, thus, "Who shall make all His praises heard?" that is, who is sufficient to make all His praises heard? "Shall make" then "heard," he saith; that is, cause that they be heard; showing, that the mighty acts of the Lord and His praises are so to be spoken of, that they may be preached to those who hear them. But who can make "all," heard? Is it that as the next words are, "Blessed are they that always keep judgment, and do righteousness in every time" (ver. 3); he perhaps meant those praises of His, which are understood as His works in His commandments: "For it is God," saith the Apostle, "who worketh in you," ...since He worketh in these things in a manner that cannot be spoken. "Who will do all His praises heard?" that is, who, when he hath heard them, doth all His praises? which are the works of His commandments. As far as they are done, although all which are heard are not performed, He is to be praised, who "worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure." For this reason, while he might have said, all His commandments, or, all the works of His commandments; he preferred saying, "His praises." ...

4. But unless there were some difference between judgment and righteousness, we should not read in another Psalm, "Until righteousness turn again unto judgment." The Scripture, indeed, loveth to place these two words together; as, "Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His seat;" and this, "He shall make thy righteousness as clear as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day;" where there is apparently a repetition of the same sentiment. And perhaps on account of the resemblance of signification one may be put for the other, either judgment for righteousness, or righteousness

for judgment: yet, if they be spoken of in their proper sense, I doubt not that there is some difference; viz. that he is said to keep judgment who judgeth rightly, but he to do righteousness who acts righteously. And I think that the verse, "Until righteousness turn again unto judgment," may not absurdly be understood in this sense: that here also those are called blessed, who keep judgment in faith, and do righteousness in deed. ...

5. Next, since God justifieth, that is, maketh men righteous, by healing them from their iniquities, a prayer followeth: "Remember me, O Lord, according to the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people" (ver. 4): that is, that we may be among those with whom Thou art well pleased; since God is not well pleased with them all. "O visit me with Thy salvation. This is the Saviour Himself, in whom sins are forgiven, and souls healed, that they may be able to keep judgment, and do righteousness; and since they who here speak know such men to be blessed, they pray for this themselves. ..."Visit us," then, "with Thy salvation," that is, with Thy Christ. "To see the felicity of Thy chosen, and to rejoice in the gladness of Thy people" (ver. 5): that is, visit us for this reason with Thy salvation, that we may see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people. For "felicity" some copies read "sweetness; as in the former passage, "For He is gracious; where others read, "for He is sweet. And it is the same word in the Greek, as is elsewhere read, "The Lord shall show sweetness: which some have translated "felicity," others "bounty. But what meaneth, "Visit us to see the felicity of Thy chosen: that is, that happiness which Thou givest to Thine elect: except that we may not remain blind, as those unto whom it is said, "But now ye say we see: therefore your sin remaineth.

For the Lord giveth sight to the blind, not by their own merits, but in the felicity He giveth to His chosen, which is the meaning of "the felicity of Thy chosen: as, the help of my countenance, is not of myself, but is my God. And we speak of our daily bread, as ours, but we add, Give unto us. ..."That Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance. I wonder this verse hath been so interpreted in many copies, since the Greek phrase is one and the same in these three verses. ...But since this seemeth a doubtful expression, if that sense be true according to which interpreters have preferred, "That Thou mayest be praised," the two preceding verses also must be so understood, because, as I have said, there is one Greek expression in these three verses; so that the whole should be thus understood, "Visit us with Thy salva-

tion, that Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy chosen; that is, visit us for this purpose, that Thou mayest cause us to be there, and mayest see us there; that "Thou mayest rejoice in the gladness of Thy people," that is, that Thou mayest be said to rejoice, since they rejoice in Thee; that "Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance," that is, mayest be praised with it, since it may not be praised save for Thy sake. ...

6. But let us hear what they next confess: "we have sinned with our fathers: we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly" (ver. 6). What meaneth "with our fathers"? ... "Our fathers," he saith, "regarded not Thy wonders in Egypt" (ver. 7); and many other things also, he doth relate of their sins. Or is, "we have sinned with our fathers," to be understood as meaning, we have sinned like our fathers, that is, by imitating their sins? If it be so, it should be supported by some example of this mode of expression: which did not occur to me when I sought on this occasion an instance of any one saying that he had sinned, or done anything, with another, whom he had imitated by a similar act after a long interval of time. What meaneth then, "Our fathers understood not Thy wonders; save this, they did not know what Thou didst wish to convince them of by these miracles? What indeed, save life eternal, and a good, not temporal, but immutable, which is waited for only through endurance? For this reason they impatiently murmured, and provoked, and they asked to be blessed with present and fugitive blessings, "Neither were they mindful of the greatness of Thy mercy. He reproveth both their understanding and memory. Understanding there was need of, that they might meditate unto what eternal blessings God was calling them through these temporal ones;

and of memory, that at least they might not forget the temporal wonders which had been wrought, and might faithfully believe, that by the same power which they had already experienced, God would free them from the persecutions of their enemies; whereas they forgot the aid which He had given them in Egypt, by means of such wonders, to crush their enemies. "And they provoked, as they went up to the sea, even to the Red Sea. We ought especially to notice how the Scripture doth censure the not understanding that which ought to have been understood, and the not remembering that which ought to have been remembered; which men are unwilling to have ascribed to their own fault, for no other reason than that they may pray less, and be less humble unto God, in whose sight they should confess what they are, and

might by praying for His aid, become what they are not. For it is better to accuse even the sins of ignorance and negligence, that they may be done away with, than to excuse them, so that they remain; and it is better to clear them off by calling upon God, than to clench them by provoking Him.

He addeth, that God acted not according to their unbelief. "Nevertheless," he saith, "He saved them for His Name's sake: that He might make His power to be known" (ver. 8): not on account of any deservings of their own. 7. "He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up" (ver. 9). We do not read that any voice was sent forth from Heaven to rebuke the sea; but he hath called the Divine Power by which this was effected, a rebuke: unless indeed any one may choose to say, that the sea was secretly rebuked, so that the waters might hear, and yet men could not. The power by which God acteth is very abstruse and mysterious, a power which He causeth that even things devoid of sense instantly obey at His will. "So He led them through the deeps, as through a wilderness." He calleth a multitude of waters the deeps. For some wishing to give the sense of this whole verse, have translated, "So He led them forth amid many waters." What then doth "through the deeps, as through a wilderness," mean, except that that had become as a wilderness from its dryness, where before had been the watery deeps?

8. "And He saved them from the hating ones" (ver. 10). Some translators, in order to avoid an expression unusual in Latin, have rendered the word, by a circumlocution, "And He saved them from the hand of those that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy." What price was given in this redemption? Is it a prophecy, since this deed was a figure of Baptism, wherein we are redeemed from the hand of the devil at a great price, which price is the Blood of Christ? whence this is more consistently figured forth, not by any sea indiscriminately, but by the Red Sea; since blood hath a red colour. 9. "As for those that troubled them, the waters overwhelmed them: there was not one of them left" (ver. 11); not of all the Egyptians, but of those who pursued the departing Israelites, desirous either of taking or of killing them.

10. "Then believed they in His words" (ver. 12). The expression seemeth barely Latin, for he saith not "believed His word," or "on His words," but "in His words;" yet it is very frequent in Scripture. "And praised praise unto Him;" such an expression as when we say, "This servitude he served," "such a life he lived." He is here alluding to that well-known hymn, commencing, "I will

sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and the rider hath He thrown into the sea." 11. "They acted hastily: they forgot His works" (ver. 13): other copies read more intelligibly, "They hastened, they forgot His works, and would not abide His counsel." For they ought to have thought, that so great works of God towards themselves were not without a purpose, but that they invited them to some endless happiness, which was to be waited for with patience; but they hastened to make themselves happy with temporal things, which give no man true happiness, because they do not quench insatiable longing: for "whosoever," saith our Lord, "shall drink of this water, shall thirst again."

12. Lastly, "And they lusted a lust in the wilderness, and they tempted God in the dry land" (ver. 14). The "dry land," or land without water, and "desert," are the same: so also are, "they lusted a lust," and, "they tempted God." The form of speech is the same as above, "they praised a praise." 13. "And He gave them their desire, and sent fulness withal into their souls" (ver. 15). But He did not thus render them happy: for it was not that fulness of which it is said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." In this passage he doth not speak of the rational soul, but of the soul as giving animal life to the body; to the substance of which belong meat and drink, according to what is said in the Gospel, "Is not the soul more than meat, and the body than raiment?" as if it belonged to the soul to eat, to the body to be clothed.

14. "And they angered Moses in the tents, and Aaron the saint of the Lord" (ver. 16). What angering, or, as some have more literally rendered it, what provocation, he speaketh of, the following words sufficiently show. 15. "The earth opened," he saith, "and swallowed up Dathan, and covered over the congregation of Abiram" (ver. 17): "swallowed up" answereth to "covered over." Both Dathan and Abiram were equally concerned in a most sacrilegious schism. 16. "And the fire was kindled in their company; the flame burnt up the sinners" (ver. 18). This word is not in Scripture usually applied to those, who, although they live righteously, and in a praiseworthy manner, are not without sin. Rather, as there is a difference between those who scorn and scorers, between men who murmur and murmurers, between men who are writing and writers, and so forth; so Scripture is wont to signify by sinners such as are very wicked, and laden with heavy loads of sins.

17. "And they made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the graven image" (ver. 19). "Thus they changed their glory, in the similitude of a calf that eateth hay" (ver. 20). He saith not "into" the likeness, but "in" the likeness. It is such a form of speech as where he said "and they believed in His words." With great effect in truth he saith not, they changed the glory of God when they did this; as the Apostle also saith, "They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man:" but "their glory." For God was their glory, if they would abide His counsel, and hasten not. ... 18. "They forgat God who saved them" (ver. 21). How did He save them? "Who did so great things in Egypt: Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and fearful things in the Red Sea" (ver. 22). The things that are wondrous, are also fearful; for there is no wonder without a certain fear: although these might be called fearful, because they beat down their adversaries, and showed them what they ought to fear.

19. "So He said, He would have destroyed them" (ver. 23). Since they forgot Him who saved them, the Worker of wondrous works, and made and worshipped a graven image, by this atrocious and incredible impiety they deserved death. "Had not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the breaking." He doth not say, that he stood in the breaking, as if to break the wrath of God, but in the way of the breaking, meaning the stroke which was to strike them: that is, had he not put himself in the way for them, saying, "Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin;-and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book." Where it is proved how greatly the intercession of the saints in behalf of others prevaieth with God. For Moses, fearless in the justice of God, which could not blot him out, implored mercy, that He would not blot out those whom He justly might. Thus he "stood before Him in the breaking, to turn away His wrathful indignation, lest He should destroy them."

20. "Yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land" (ver. 24). But had they seen it? How then could they scorn that which they had not seen, except as the following words explain, "and believed not in His words." Indeed, unless that land which was styled the land that flowed with milk and honey, signified something great, through which, as by a visible token, He was leading those who understood His wondrous works to invisible grace and the kingdom of heaven, they could not be blamed for scorning that land, whose temporal kingdom we also ought to esteem as nothing, that we may love that Jerusalem which is free, the mother of us all, which is in heaven, and

truly to be desired. But rather unbelief is here reproved, since they gave no credence to the words of God, who was leading them to great things through small things, and hastening to bless themselves with temporal things, which they carnally savoured of, they "abided not His counsel," as is said above.

21. "But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord" (ver. 25); who strongly forbade them to murmur. 22. "Then lift He up His hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness" (ver. 26); "to cast out their seed among the nations: and to scatter them in the lands" (ver. 27). 23. "They were initiated also unto Baalpeor;" that is, were consecrated to the Gentile idol; "and ate the offerings of the dead" (ver. 28). "Thus they provoked Him to anger with their own inventions; and destruction was multiplied among them" (ver. 29). As if He had deferred the lifting up of His hand which was to cast them down in the desert, and to cast out their seed among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands; as the Apostle saith: "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." "'Destruction,' therefore, 'was multiplied among them,' when they were heavily punished for their heavy sins."

24. "Then stood up Phineas, and appeased Him, and the shaking ceased" (ver. 30). He hath related the whole briefly, because he is not here teaching the ignorant, but reminding those who know the history. The word "shaking" here is the same as "breaking" before. For it is one word in the Greek. Lastly, so great was their wickedness, in being consecrated to the idol, and eating the sacrifices of the dead (that is, because the Gentiles sacrificed to dead men as to God), that God would not be otherwise appeased than as Phineas the Priest appeased Him, when he slew a man and a woman together whom he found in adultery. If he had done this from hatred towards them, and not from love, while zeal for the house of God devoured him, it would not have been counted unto him for righteousness. ...Christ our Lord indeed, when the New Testament was revealed, chose a milder discipline; but the threat of hell is more severe, and this we do not read of in those threatenings held out by God in His temporal government.

25. "And that was counted unto him for righteousness among all posterities for evermore" (ver. 31). God counted this unto His Priest for righteousness, not only as long as posterity shall exist, but "for evermore;" for He who

knoweth the heart, knoweth how to weigh with how much love for the people that deed was done. 26. "And they angered Him at the waters of strife: so that Moses was vexed for their sakes" (ver. 32); "because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake doubtfully with his lips" (ver. 33). What is spake doubtfully? As if God, who had done so great wonders before, could not cause water to flow from a rock. For he touched the rock with his rod with doubt, and thus distinguished this miracle from the rest, in which he had not doubted. He thus offended, thus deserved to hear that he should die, without entering into the land of promise. For being disturbed by the murmurs of an unbelieving people, he held not fast that confidence which he ought to have held. Nevertheless, God giveth unto him, as unto His chosen, a good testimony even after his death, so that we may see that this wavering of faith was punished with this penalty only, that he was not allowed to enter that land, whither he was leading the people. ...

27. But they of whose iniquities this Psalm speaketh, when they had entered into that temporal land of promise, "destroyed not the heathen, which the Lord commanded them" (ver. 34); "but were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works" (ver. 35). "Insomuch that they worshipped their idols, which became to them an offence" (ver. 36). Their not destroying them, but mingling with them, became to them an offence. 28. "Yea, they offered their sons and their daughters unto devils" (ver. 37); "and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan" (ver. 38). That history doth not relate that they offered their sons and daughters to devils and idols; but neither can that Psalm lie, nor the Prophets, who assert this in many passages of their rebukes. But the literature of the Gentiles is not silent respecting this custom of theirs. But what is it that followeth? "And the land was slain with bloods. We might suppose that this was a mistake of the writer, and that he had written interfect a for infecta, were it not for the goodness of God, who hath willed His Scriptures to be written in many languages; were it not that we see it written as in the text in many Greek copies which we have inspected; "the land was slain with bloods. What meaneth then, "the land was slain," unless this be referred to the men who dwelt in the land, by a metaphorical expression. ...For they themselves were slaying their own souls when they offered up their sons, and when they shed the blood of infants who were far from consent to this crime: whence it is said, "They shed innocent blood. "The land"

therefore "was slain with bloods, and defiled by their works" (ver. 39), since they themselves were slain in soul, and defiled by their works; "and they went a whoring after their own inventions.

By inventions are meant what the Greeks call *epithdeumata*: for this word doth occur in the Greek copies both in this and a former passage, where it is said, "They provoked Him to anger with their own inventions; "inventions" in both instances signifying what they had initiated others in. Let no man therefore suppose inventions to mean what they had of themselves instituted, without any example before them to imitate. Whence other translators in the Latin tongue have preferred pursuits, affections, imitations, pleasures, to inventions: and the very same who here write inventions, have elsewhere written pursuits. I chose to mention this, lest the word inventions, applied to what they had not invented, but imitated from others, might raise a difficulty. 29. "Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against His own people" (ver. 40). Our translators have been unwilling to use the word anger, for the Greek *qumoj*; though some have used it; while others translate by "indignation" or "mind." Whichever of these terms be adopted, passion doth not affect God; but the power of punishing hath assumed this name metaphorically from custom.

30. "Insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance; and He gave them over into the hand of the heathen: and they that hated them were lords over them" (ver. 41): "and their enemies oppressed them, and they were brought low under their hands" (ver. 42). Since he hath called them the inheritance of God, it is clear that He abhorred them, and gave them over into their enemies' hands, not in order to their perdition, but for their discipline. Lastly, he saith, "Many a time did He deliver them." "But they provoked Him with their own counsels" (ver. 43). This is what he said above, "They did not abide His counsel." Now a man's counsel is pernicious to himself, when he seeketh those things which are his own only, not those which are God's. In whose inheritance, which inheritance He Himself is to us, when He deigneth His presence for our enjoyment, being with the Saints, we shall suffer no straitening from the society, by our love of anything as our own possession. For that most glorious city, when it hath gained the promised inheritance, in which none shall die, none shall be born, will not contain citizens who shall individually rejoice in their own, for "God shall be all in all." And whoever in this pilgrimage faithfully and earnestly doth long for this society,

doth accustom himself to prefer common to private interests, by seeking not his own things, but Jesus Christ's: lest, by being wise and vigilant in his own affairs, he provoke God with his own counsel; but, hoping for what he seeth not, let him not hasten to be blessed with things visible; and, patiently waiting for that everlasting happiness which he seeth not, follow His counsel in His promises, whose aid he prayeth for in his prayers. Thus he will also become humble in his confessions; so as not to be like those, of whom it is said, "They were brought down in their wickedness."

31. Nevertheless, God, full of mercy, forsook them not. "And He saw when they were in adversity, when He heard their complaint" (ver. 44). "And He thought upon His covenant, and repented, according to the multitude of His mercies" (ver. 45). He saith, "He repented," because He changed that wherewith He seemed about to destroy them. With God indeed all things are arranged and fixed; and when He seemeth to act upon sudden motive, He doth nothing but what He foreknew that He should do from eternity; but in the temporal changes of creation, which He ruleth wonderfully, He, without any temporal change in Himself, is said to do by a sudden act of will what in the ordained causes of events He hath arranged in the unchangeableness of His most secret counsel, according to which He doth everything according to defined seasons, doing the present, and having already done the future. And who is capable of comprehending these things? Let us therefore hear the Scripture, speaking high things humbly, giving food for the nourishment of children, and proposing subjects for the research of the older: that everlasting covenant "which He made with Abraham," not the old which is abolished, but the new which is hidden even in the old. "And pitied them," etc. He did that which He had covenanted, but He had foreknown that He would yield this to them when they prayed in their adversity; since even their very prayer, when it was not uttered, but was still to be uttered, undoubtedly was known unto God.

32. So "He gave them unto compassions, in in the sight of all that had taken them captive" (ver. 46). That they might not be vessels of wrath, but vessels of mercy. The compassions unto which He gave them are named in the plural for this reason, I imagine, because each one hath a gift of his own from God, one in one way, another in another. Come then, whosoever readest this, and dost recognise the grace of God, by which we are redeemed unto eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, by reading in the apostolical writ-

ings, and by searching in the Prophets, and seest the Old Testament revealed in the New, the New veiled in the Old; remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, where, when He driveth him out of the hearts of the faithful, He saith, "Now is the prince of this world cast out:" and again of the Apostle, when he saith, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." Meditate on these and such like things, examine also the Old Testament, and see what is sung in that Psalm, the title of which is, When the temple was being built after the captivity: for there it is said, "Sing unto the Lord a new song." And, that thou mayest not think it doth refer to the Jewish people only, he saith, "Sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth: sing unto the Lord, and praise His Name: declare," or rather, "give the good news of," or, to transfer the very word used in the Greek, "evangelize day from day, His salvation." Here the Gospel (Evangelium) is mentioned, in which is announced the Day that came from Day, our Lord Christ, the Light from Light, the Son from the Father. This also is the meaning of His salvation: for Christ is the Salvation of God, as we have shown above. . . .

33. "Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations (other copies read, "from the heathen"); that we may give thanks unto Thy holy Name, and make our boast of Thy praise" (ver. 47), Then he hath briefly added this very praise, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and world without end" (ver. 48): by which we understand from everlasting to everlasting; because He shall be praised without end by those of whom it is said, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be alway praising Thee. This is the perfection of the Body of Christ on the third day, when the devils had been east out, and cures perfected, even unto the immortality of the body itself, the everlasting reign of those who perfectly praise Him, because they perfectly love Him; and perfectly love Him, because they behold Him face to face. For then shall be completed the prayer at the commencement of this Psalm: "Remember us, O Lord, according to the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people," etc. For from the Gentiles He doth not gather only the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but also those which do not belong to that fold; so that there is one flock, as is said, and one Shepherd.

But when the Jews suppose that that prophecy belongeth to their visible kingdom, because they know not how to rejoice in the hope of good things unseen, they are about to rush into the snares of him, of whom the Lord

saith, "I am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. Of whom the Apostle Paul saith: "that Man of Sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition," etc. And a little after he saith, "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming," etc. ...Through that Apostate, through him who exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, it seemeth to me, that the carnal people of Israel will suppose that prophecy to be fulfilled, where it is said, "Deliver us, O Lord, and gather us from among the heathen; that under His guidance, before the eyes of their visible enemies, who had visibly taken them captive, they are to have visible glory. Thus they will believe a lie, because they have not received the love of truth, that they might love not carnal, but spiritual blessings. ...For Christ had other sheep that were not of this fold: but the devil and his angels had taken captive all those sheep, both among the Israelites and the Gentiles.

The power, therefore, of the devil having been cast out of them, in the sight of the evil spirits who had taken them captive, their cry in this prophecy is, that they may be saved and perfected for evermore: "Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen. Not, as the Jews imagine it, fulfilled through Antichrist, but through our Lord Christ coming in the name of His Father, "Day from day, His salvation; of whom it is here said, "O visit us in Thy salvation! And let all the people say," the predestined people of the circumcision and of the uncircumcision, a holy race, an adopted people, "So be it! So be it!"

PSALM 107

1. This Psalm commendeth unto us the mercies of God, proved in ourselves, and is therefore the sweeter to the experienced. And it is a wonder if it can be pleasing to any one, except to him who has learned in his own case, what he hears in this Psalm. Yet was it written not for any one or two, but for the people of God, and set forth that it might know itself therein as in a mirror. Its title needeth not now to be treated, for it is Halleluia, and again Halleluia. Which we have a custom of singing at a certain time in our solemnities, after an old tradition of the Church: nor is it without a sacred meaning that we sing it on particular days. Halleluia we sing indeed on certain days, but every day we think it. For if in this word is signified the praise of God, though not in the mouth of the flesh, yet surely in the mouth of the heart.

"His praise shall ever be in my mouth." But that the title hath Halleluia not once only but twice, is not peculiar to this Psalm, but the former also hath it so. And as far as appears from its text, that was sung of the people of Israel, but this is sung of the universal Church of God, spread through the whole world. Perchance, it not unfitly hath Halleluia twice, because we cry, Abba, Father. Since Abba is nothing else but Father, yet not without meaning the Apostle said, "in whom we cry, Abba, Father;" but because one wall indeed coming to the Corner Stone crieth Abba, but the other, from the other side crieth Father; viz., in that Corner Stone, "who is our Peace, who hath made bothone." ...

2. "Confess unto the Lord that He is sweet, because for aye in His mercy" (ver. 1). This confess ye that He is sweet: if ye have tasted, confess. But he cannot confess, who hath not chosen to taste, for whence shall he say that that is sweet, which he knoweth not. But ye if ye have tasted how sweet the Lord is, "Confess ye to the Lord that He is sweet." If ye have tasted with eagerness, break forth with confession. "For aye is His mercy," that is, for ever. For here "for aye," is so put, since also in some other places of Scripture, for aye, that is, what in Greek is called *eij aiwna*, is understood for ever. For His mercy is not for a time, so as not to be for ever, since for this purpose His present mercy is over men, that they may live with the Angels for ever.

3. "Let them say who are redeemed of the Lord, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of their enemies" (ver. 2). Redeemed indeed it seems was also the people of Israel from the land of Egypt, from the hand of slavery, from fruitless labours, from miry works; yet let us see whether those who say these things, are they who were freed by the Lord from Egypt. It is not so. But who are they? "Those whom He redeemed." Still one might take it also of them, as redeemed from the hand of their enemies, that is, of the Egyptians. Let them be expressed exactly who they are, for whom this Psalm would be sung. "He gathered them from the lands;" these might still be the lands of Egypt, for there are many lands even in one province. Let him speak openly. "From the east and the west, from the north and the sea" (ver. 3). Now then we understand these redeemed, in the whole circle of the earth. This people of God, freed from a great and broad Egypt, is led, as through the Red Sea, that in Baptism it may make an end of its enemies. For by the sacrament as it were of the Red Sea, that is by Baptism consecrated with the Blood of Christ, the pursuing Egyptians, thesins, are washed away. ..."But all these things

happened to them in a figure, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come." ...

4. "They wandered in the wilderness, in a dry place, they found not the way of a city to dwell in" (ver. 4). We have heard a wretched wandering; what of want? "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them" (ver. 5). But wherefore did it faint? for what good? For God is not cruel, but He maketh Himself known, in that it is expedient for us, that He be entreated by us fainting, and that aiding us He be loved. And therefore after this wandering, and hunger, and thirst, "And they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distress" (ver. 6). And what did He for them, as they were wandering? "And He led them in the right way" (ver. 7). They found not the way of a city to dwell in, with hunger and thirst they were vexed and faint, "and He led them into the right way, that they might go into a city to dwell in." How He helped their hunger and thirst, He saith not, but even this expect ye: "Let them confess unto the Lord His mercies, and His wonders towards the children of men" (ver. 8). Tell them, ye that are experienced, to the inexperienced; ye that are already in the way, already directed towards finding the city, already at last free from hunger and thirst. "Because He hath satisfied the empty soul, and filled the hungry soul with good things" (ver. 9).

5. "Them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, fast bound in beggary and iron" (ver. 10). Whence this, but that thou wast attributing things to thyself? that thou wast not owning the grace of God? that thou wast rejecting the counsel of God concerning thee? For see what He addeth: "Because they rebelled against the words of the Lord through pride" (ver. 11), not knowing the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish their own, "and they were bitter against the counsel of the Most High. "And their heart was brought low in labour" (ver. 12). And now fight against lust; if God cease to aid thou mayest strive, thou canst not conquer. And when thou shalt be pressed by thine evil, thy heart will be brought low in labour, so that now with humbled heart thou mayest learn to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" ...Freed, thou wilt confess the mercies of the Lord. "And they cried unto the Lord when they were troubled, and He delivered them out of their distresses" (ver. 13). They were freed from the second temptation. There remains that of weariness and loathing. But first see what He did for them when freed. "And He led them

out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bonds asunder" (ver. 14). "Let them confess to the Lord His mercies, and His wonders to the children of men" (ver. 15). Wherefore? what difficulties hath He overcome?

"Because He brake the gates of brass, and snapped the bars of iron" (ver. 16). "He took them up from the way of their iniquity, for because of their unrighteousnesses they were brought low" (ver. 17). Because they gave honour to themselves, not to God, because they were establishing their own righteousness, not knowing the righteousness of God, they were brought low. They found that they were helpless without His aid, who were presuming on their own strength alone. 6. "Their soul abhorred all manner of meat" (ver. 18). Now they suffer satiety. They are sick of satiety. They are in danger from satiety. Unless perchance thou thinkest they could be killed with famine, but cannot with satiety. See what followeth. When he had said, "Their soul abhorred all manner of meat," lest thou shouldest think them, as it were, safe of their fulness, and not rather see that they would die of satiety: "And they came near," he saith, "even unto the gates of death." What then remaineth? That even when the word of God delighteth thee, thou account it not to thyself; nor for this be puffed up with any sort of arrogance, and having an appetite for food, proudly spurn at those who are in danger from satiety. "And they cried out unto the Lord when they were in trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses" (ver. 19). And because it was a sickness not to be pleased, "He sent His Word, and healed them" (ver. 20). See what evil there is in satiety; see whence He delivers, to whom he crieth that loathes his food. "He sent His Word, and healed them, and snatched them," from whence? not from wandering, not from hunger, not from the difficulty of overcoming sins, but "from their corruption." It is a sort of corruption of the mind to loathe what is sweet. Therefore also of this benefit, as of the others before, "Let them confess to the Lord His mercies, and His wonders unto the sons of men" (ver. 21). "And sacrifice the sacrifice of praise" (ver. 22). For now that He may be praised, the Lord is sweet, "and let them tell out His works with gladness." Not with weariness, not with sadness, not with anxiety, not with loathing, but "with gladness."

7. "...They who go down on the sea in ships, doing their business on the mighty waters" (ver. 23); that is, amongst many peoples. For that waters are often put for peoples, the Apocalypse of John is witness, when on John's ask-

ing what those waters were, it was answered him, they are peoples. They then who do their business on mighty waters, "they have seen the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep" (ver. 24). For what is deeper than human hearts? hence often break forth winds; storms of sedition, and dissensions, disturb the ship. And what is done in them? God, willing that both they who steer, and they who are conveyed, should cry unto Him, "He spake, and the breath of the storm stood" (ver. 25). What is, stood? Abode, continued, still disturbeth, long tosseth; rageth, and passeth not away. "For He spake, and the breath of the storm stood. And what did that breath of the storm? "They go up even to the heavens," in daring; "They go down even into the deeps" (ver. 26), in fearing. "Their soul wasted in miseries. "They were disturbed, and moved like a drunken man" (ver. 27). They who sit at the helm, and they who faithfully love the ship, feel what I say. Certainly, when they speak, when they read, when they interpret, they appear wise. Woe for the storm! "and all their wisdom," he saith, "was swallowed up. Sometimes all human counsels fail;

whichever way one turns himself, the waves roar, the storm rageth, the arms are powerless: where the prow may strike, to what wave the side may be exposed, whither the stricken ship may be allowed to drift, from what rocks she must be kept back lest she be lost, is impossible for her pilots to see. And what is left but that which follows? "And they cried out unto the Lord when they were troubled, and He delivered them from their distresses" (ver. 28). "And He commanded the storm, and it stood unto clear air" (ver. 29), "and the waves of it were still. Hear on this point the voice of a steersman, one that was in peril, was brought low, was freed. "I would not," he saith, "have you ignorant, brethren, of our distress, which befell us in Asia, that "we were pressed above strength, and above measure" (I see all his "wisdom swallowed up"), "so that we were weary," he saith, "even of life." ...

"And they were glad, because they were still, and He brought them into the haven of their desire" (ver. 30). "Let His mercies confess unto the Lord, and His wonders towards the sons of men" (ver. 31). Everywhere, without exception, let not our merits, not our strength, not our wisdom, "confess unto the Lord," but, "His mercies." Let Him be loved in every deliverance of ours, who has been invoked in every distress. 8. "And let them exalt Him in the assembly of the people, and praise Him in the seat of the elders" (ver. 32). Let them exalt, let them praise, peoples and elders, merchants and pilots. For

what hath He done in this assembly? What hath He established? Whence hath He rescued it? What hath He granted it? Even as He resisted the proud, and gave grace to the humble: the proud, that is, the first people of the Jews, arrogant, and extolling itself on its descent from Abraham, and because to that nation "were entrusted the oracles of God." These things did not avail them unto soundness, but unto pride of heart, rather to swelling than to greatness. What then did God, resisting the proud, but giving grace to the humble; cutting off the natural branches for their pride; grafting in the wild olive for its humility?

"He made the rivers a wilderness" (ver. 33). Waters did run there, prophecies were in course. Seek now a prophet among the Jews; thou findest none. For "He made the outgoings of waters to be thirst." Let them say, "Now there is no prophet more, and He will not know us any more." "A fruitful land to be salt pools" (ver. 34). Thou seekest there the faith of Christ, thou findest not: thou seekest a prophet, thou findest not: thou seekest a sacrifice, thou findest not: thou seekest a temple, thou findest none. Wherefore this? "From the wickedness of them that dwell therein." Behold how He resisteth the proud: hear how He giveth grace to the humble. "He made the wilderness to be a standing water, and the dry ground to be outgoings of waters" (ver. 35). "And He caused the hungry to dwell there" (ver. 36). Because to Him it was said, "Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec." For thou seekest a sacrifice among the Jews; thou hast none after the order of Aaron. Thou seekest it after the order of Melchizedec; thou findest it not among them, but through the whole world it is celebrated in the Church. "From the rising of the sun to the setting thereof the name of the Lord is praised." ... "And they sowed fields, and planted vineyards, and gat fruit of corn" (ver. 37): at which that workman rejoiceth, who saith, "Not because I desire a gift, but I seek fruit." "And He blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly, and their cattle were not diminished" (ver. 38). This standeth. For "the foundation of God standeth sure; because the Lord knoweth them that are His." They are called "beasts of burden," and "cattle," that walk simply in the Church, yet are useful; not much learned, but full of faith. Therefore, whether spiritual or carnal, "He blessed them."

9. "And they became few, and were vexed" (ver. 39). Whence this? From athwart? Nay, from within. For that they should "become few," "They went out from us, but they were not of us. But therefore he speaketh as of these, of

whom he spake before, that they may be discerned with understanding; because he speaketh as if of the same, because of the sacraments they have in common. For they belong to the people of God, though not by the virtue, yet surely by the appearance of piety: for concerning them we have heard the Apostle, "In the last times there shall come grievous times, for there shall be men lovers of themselves. The first evil is, "lovers of themselves; that is, as being pleased with themselves. Would that they were not pleasing to themselves, and were pleasing to God: would that they would cry out in their difficulties, and be freed from their distresses. But while they presumed greatly on themselves, "they were made few. It is manifest, brethren: all who separate themselves from unity become few. For they are many; but in unity, while they are not parted from unity. For when the multitude of unity hath begun no more to belong to them, in heresy and schism, they are few. "And they were vexed, from distress of miseries and grief. "Contempt was poured on princes" (ver. 40).

For they were rejected by the Church of God, and the more because they wished to be princes, therefore they were despised, and became salt that had lost its savour, cast out abroad, so that it is trodden under foot of men. "And He led them astray in the pathless place, and not in a way. Those above in the way, those directed to a city, and finally led thither, not led astray; but these, where there was no way, led astray. What is, "Led them astray"? God "gave them up to their own hearts' lusts. For "led astray" means this, gave them up to themselves. For if thou enquire closely, it is they that lead themselves astray. ..."And He helped the poor out of beggary" (ver. 41). What meaneth this, brethren? Princes are despised, and the poor helped. The proud are cast aside, and the humble provided for. ..."And made him households like sheep. Thou understandest one poor man and one beggar of him concerning whom he said, "He hath helped the poor out of misery: this poor man is now many households, this poor man is many nations; many Churches are one Church, one nation, one household, one sheep. These are great mysteries, great types, how profound, how full of hidden meanings; how sweetly discovered, since long hidden. Therefore, "the righteous will consider this, and rejoice: and the mouth of all wickedness shall be stopped" (ver. 42). That wickedness that doth prate against unity, and compelleth truth to be made manifest, shall be convicted, and have its mouth stopped.

10. "Who is wise? and he will consider these things; and will understand the mercies of the Lord" (ver. 43). ...Not his own deservings, not his own strength, not his own power; but "the mercies of the Lord;" who, when he was wandering and in want, led him back to the path, and fed him; who, when he was struggling against the difficulties of his sins, and bound down with the fetters of habit, released and freed him; who, when he loathed the Word of God, and was almost dying with a kind of weariness, restored him by sending him the medicine of His Word; who, when he was endangered among the risks of shipwreck and storm, stilled the sea, and brought him into port; who, finally, placed him in that people, where He giveth grace to the humble; not in that where he resisteth the proud; and hath made him His own, that remaining within he may be multiplied, not that going out he may be minished. The righteous see this, and rejoice. "The mouth," therefore, "of all wickedness shall be stopped."

PSALM 108

1. I have not thought that the CVIII Psalm required an exposition; since I have already expounded it in the LVII Psalm, and in the LX, of the last divisions of which this Psalm consisteth. For the last part of the LVII is the first of this, as far as the verse, "Thy glory is above all the earth. Henceforth to the end, is the last part of the LX: as the last part of the CXXXV is the same as that of the CXV, from the verse, "The images of the heathen are but gold and silver: as the XIV and LIIID, with a few alterations in the middle, have everything the same from the beginning to the end. Whatever slight differences therefore occur in this CVIII Psalm, compared with those two, of parts of which it is composed, are easy to understand; just as we find in the LVI, "I will sing and give praise; awake, O my glory: here," I will sing and give praise, with my glory. Awake, is said there, that he may sing and give praise there-with. Also, there, "Thy mercy is great" (or, as some translate, "is lifted up") "unto the heavens; but here, "Thy mercy is great above the heavens. For it is great unto the heavens, that it may be great in the heavens; and this is what he wished to express by "above the heavens. Also in the LX, "I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem: here "I will be exalted, and will divide Shechem.

Where is shown what is signified in the division of Shechem, which it was prophesied should happen after the Lord's exaltation, and that this joy doth refer to that exaltation; so that He rejoiceth, because He is exalted. Whence he elsewhere saith, "Thou hast turned my heaviness into joy; Thou hast put

off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness. Also there "Ephraim, the strength of my head: but here, "Ephraim the taking up of my head. But strength cometh from taking up, that is, He maketh men strong by taking up, causing fruit in us; for the interpretation of Ephraim is, bearing fruit. But "taking up" may be understood of us, when we take up Christ; or of Christ, when He, who is Head of the Church, taketh us up. And the words, "them that trouble us," in the former Psalm, are the same with "our enemies," in this.

2. We are taught by this Psalm, that those titles which seem to refer to history are most rightly understood prophetically, according to the object of the composition of the Psalms. ...And yet this Psalm is composed of the latter portions of two, whose titles are different. Where it is signified that each concur in a common object, not in the surface of the history, but in the depth of prophecy, the objects of both being united in this one, the title of which is, "A Song or Psalm of David:" resembling neither of the former titles, otherwise than in the word David. Since, "in many places, and in diverse manners," as the Epistle to the Hebrews saith, "God spoke in former times to the fathers through the Prophets;" yet He spoke of Him whom He sent afterwards, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: for "all the promises of God in Him are yea."

PSALM 109

1. Every one who faithfully readeth the Acts of the Apostles, acknowledgeth that this Psalm containeth a prophecy of Christ; for it evidently appeareth that what is here written, "let his days be few, and let another take his office," is prophesied of Judas, the betrayer of Christ. ...For as some things are said which seem peculiarly to apply to the Apostle Peter, and yet are not clear in their meaning, unless when referred to the Church, whom he is acknowledged to have figuratively represented, on account of the primacy which he bore among the Disciples; as it is written, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," and other passages of the like purport: so Judas doth represent those Jews who were enemies of Christ, who both then hated Christ, and now, in their line of succession, this species of wickedness continuing, hate Him. Of these men, and of this people, not only may what we read more openly discovered in this Psalm be conveniently understood, but also those things which are more expressly stated concerning Judas himself.

2. The Psalm, then, beginneth thus: "O God, be not silent as to my praise; for the mouth of the ungodly, yea, the mouth of the deceitful is opened upon me" (ver. 1). Whence it appeareth, both that the blame, which the ungodly and the deceitful is not silent of, is false, and that the praise, which God is not silent of, is true. "For God is true, but every man a liar;" for no man is true, except him in whom God speaketh. But the highest praise is that of the only-begotten Son of God, in which He is proclaimed even that which He is, the only-begotten Son of God. But this did not appear, but, when His weakness appeared, lay hid, when the mouth of the ungodly and deceitful was opened upon Him; and for this reason his mouth was opened, because His virtue was concealed: and he saith, "the mouth of the deceitful was opened," because the hatred which was covered by deceit burst out into language.

3. "They have spoken against me with false tongues" (ver. 2): then chiefly when they praised him as a "good Master" with insidious adulation. Whence it is elsewhere said: "and they that praised me, are sworn together against me." Next, because they burst into cries, "Crucify Him, crucify Him;" he hath added, "They compassed me about also with words of hatred." They who with a treacherous tongue spoke words seemingly of love, and not of hatred, "against me," since they did this insidiously; afterwards "compassed me about with words" not of false and deceitful love, but of open "hatred, and fought against me without a cause." For as the pious love Christ for nought, so do the wicked hate Him for nought; for as truth is earnestly sought by the best men on its own account, without any advantage, external to itself, in view, so is wickedness sought by the worst men. Whence among secular authors it is said of a very bad man, "he was wicked and cruel for no object."

4. "In place," saith he, "of loving me, they detracted from me" (ver. 3). There are six different acts of this class, which may, when mentioned, very easily be borne in mind; (1) to return good for evil, (2) not to return evil for evil; (3) to return good for good, (4) to return evil for evil; (5) not to return good for good, (6) to return evil for good. The two first of these belong to the good, and the first of these two is the better; the two last belong to the wicked, and the latter of the two is the worse; the two middle to a sort of middle class of persons, but the first of these borders upon the good, the latter on the bad. We should remark these things in the holy Scriptures. Our Lord Himself returneth good for evil, who "justifieth the ungodly;" and who,

when hanging upon the Cross, said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." ...

5. But after he had said, "in place of loving me, they detracted from me;" what doth he add? "But I gave myself unto prayer." He said not indeed what he prayed, but what can we better understand than for them themselves? For they were detracting greatly from Him whom they crucified, when they ridiculed Him as if He were a man, whom in their opinion they had conquered; from which Cross He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" so that while they in the depth of their malignity were rendering evil for good, He in the height of His goodness was rendering good for evil. ...The divine words then teach us by our Lord's example, that when we feel others ungrateful to us, not only in that they do not repay us with good, but even return evil for good, we should pray; He indeed for others who were raging against Him, or in sorrow, or endangered in faith; but we for ourselves in the first place, that we may by the mercy and aid of God conquer our own mind, by which we are borne on to the desire of revenge, when any detraction is made from us, either in our presence or our absence. ...

6. He addeth, "Thus have they rewarded me evil for good" (ver. 4). And as if we asked, what evil? for what good? "And hatred," he saith, "for my good will." This is the sum total of their great guilt. For how could the persecutors injure Him who died of His own free-will, and not by compulsion? But this very hatred is the greatest crime of the persecutor, although it be the willing atonement of the sufferer. And he hath sufficiently explained the sense of the above words, "In place of loving me," since they owed love not as a general duty only, but in return for His love: in that he hath here added, "for my good will." This love He mentioneth in the Gospel, when He saith, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, and thou wouldest not!" 7. He then beginneth to prophesy what they should receive for this very impiety; detailing their lot in such a manner, as if he wished its realization from a desire of revenge. Some not understanding this mode of predicting the future, under the appearance of wishing evil, suppose hatred to be returned for hatred, and an evil will for an evil will, since in truth it belongeth to few to distinguish, in what way the punishment of the wicked pleaseth the accuser, who longeth to satiate his enmity; and in how widely different a way it pleaseth the judge, who with a righteous mind punisheth sins. For the

former returneth evil for evil: but the judge when he punisheth doth not return evil for evil, since he returneth justice to the unjust; and what is just, is surely good. He therefore punisheth not from delight in another's misery, which is evil for evil: but from love of justice, which is good for evil. ...

8. "Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him; and let Satan stand at his right hand" (ver. 5). Though the complaint had been before concerning many, the Psalm is now speaking of one. ...Since therefore he is here speaking of the traitor Judas, who, according to the Scripture in the Acts of the Apostles, was to be punished with the penalty due to him, what meaneth, "set thou an ungodly man over him," save him whom in the next verse he mentioneth by name, when he saith, "and let Satan stand at his right hand"? He therefore who refused to be subject unto Christ, deserved this, that he should have the devil set over him, that is, that he should be subject unto the devil. ...For this reason also it is said of those who, preferring the pleasures of this world to God, stiled the people blessed who have such and such things, "their right hand is a right hand of iniquity." ...

9. "When sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned, and let his prayer be turned into sin" (ver. 6). For prayer is not righteous except through Christ, whom he sold in his atrocious sin: but the prayer which is not made through Christ, not only cannot blot out sin, but is itself turned into sin. But it may be inquired on what occasion Judas could have so prayed, that his prayer was turned into sin. I suppose that before he betrayed the Lord, while he was thinking of betraying Him; for he could no longer pray through Christ. For after he betrayed Him, and repented of it, if he prayed through Christ, he would ask for pardon; if he asked for pardon, he would have hope; if he had hope, he would hope for mercy; if he hoped for mercy, he would not have hanged himself in despair. ...

10. "Let his days be few" (ver. 7). By "his days," he meant the days of his apostleship, which were few; since before the Passion of our Lord, they were ended by his crime and death. And as if it were asked, What then shall become of that most sacred number twelve, within which our Lord willed, not without a meaning, to limit His twelve first Apostles? he at once addeth, "and let another take his office." As much as to say, let both himself be punished according to his desert, and let his number be filled up. 11. "Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow" (ver. 8). After his death, both his children were fatherless, and his wife a widow. "Let his children be vaga-

bonds, and be carried away, and beg their bread" (ver. 9). By "vagabonds" he meaneth, uncertain whither to go, destitute of all help. "Let them be driven from their habitations." He here explaineth what he had said above, "Let them be carried away." How all this happened to his wife and children, the following verses explain.

12. "Let the extortioner search out all his substance, and let the strangers spoil his labour" (ver. 10). "Let there be no man to help him" (ver. 11): that is, to guard his posterity; wherefore followeth, "nor to have compassion on his fatherless children" 13. But as even orphans may, without one to help them, and without a guardian, nevertheless increase amid trouble and want, and preserve their race by descent; he next saith, "Let his posterity be destroyed; and in the next generation let his name be clean put out" (ver. 12): that is, let what hath been generated by him generate no more, and quickly pass away. 14. But what is it that he next addeth? "Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be done away" (ver. 13). Is it to be understood, that even the sins of his fathers shall be visited upon him? For upon him they are not visited, who hath been changed in Christ, and hath ceased to be the child of the wicked, by not having imitated their conduct. ...And to these words, "I will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children," is added, "who hate Me;" that is, hate Me as their fathers hated Me: so that as the effect of imitating the good is that even their own sins are blotted out, so the imitation of the wicked causeth men to suffer not their own deservings only, but those also of those whom they have imitated. ...

15. "Let them alway be against the Lord" (ver. 14). "Against the Lord," meaneth in the Lord's sight: for other translators have rendered this line, "let them be always in the sight of the Lord;" while others have rendered it, "let them be before the Lord alway;" as it is elsewhere said, "Thou hast set our misdeeds in Thy sight." By "alway," he meaneth that this great crime should be without pardon, both here, and in a future life. "Let the memorial of them perish from off the earth:" that is, of his father and of his mother. By memorial of them, he meaneth, that which is preserved by successive generations: this he prophesied should perish from the earth, because both Judas himself, and his sons, who were the memorial of his father and mother, without any succeeding offspring, as it is said above, were consumed in the short space of one generation. ...

16. "And that, because he remembered not to act mercifully" (ver. 15); either Judas, or the people itself. But "remembered not" is better understood of the people: for if they slew Christ, they might well remember the deed in penitence, and act mercifully towards His members, whom they most perseveringly persecuted. For this reason he saith, "but persecuted the poor man and the beggar" (ver. 16). It may indeed be understood of Judas; for the Lord did not disdain to become poor, when He was rich, that we might be enriched by His poverty. But how shall I understand the word "beggar," save perhaps because He said to the Samaritan woman, "Give me to drink," and on the Cross He said, "I thirst." But as to what followeth, I do not see how it can be understood of our Head Himself, that is, the Saviour of His own body, whom Judas persecuted. For after saying, "He persecuted the poor man and the beggar:" he addeth, "and to slay," that is, "that he might slay Him," for some have so rendered it, "Him that was pricked at the heart." This expression is not commonly used except of the stings of past sins in the sorrows of penitence; as it is said of those who, when they had heard the Apostles after our Lord's ascension, were "pricked in heart," even they who had slain the Lord. ...

17. The Psalm then continueth: "His delight was in cursing, and it shall happen to him" (ver. 17). Although Judas loved cursing, both in stealing from the money bag, and selling and betraying the Lord: nevertheless, that people more openly loved cursing, when they said, "His blood be on us, and on our children." "He loved not blessing, therefore it shall be far from him." Such was Judas indeed, since he loved not Christ, in whom is everlasting blessing; but the Jewish people still more decidedly refused blessing, unto whom he who had been enlightened by the Lord said, "Will ye also be His disciples?" "He clothed himself with cursing, like as with a raiment:" either Judas, or that people. "And it came into his bowels like water." Both without, then, and within; without, like a garment; within, like water: since he hath come before the judgment-seat of Him "who hath power to destroy both body and soul in hell," the body without, the soul within. "And like oil into his bones." He showeth that he worketh evil with delight, and storeth up cursing for himself, that is, everlasting punishment; for blessing is eternal life. For at present evil deeds are his delight, flowing like water into his bowels, like oil into his bones; but it is styled cursing, because God hath appointed torments for such men.

18. "Let it be unto him as the cloak which covereth him" (ver. 18). Since he hath before spoken of the cloak, why doth he repeat it? When he said, "He clothed himself with cursing as with a raiment;" doth the raiment with which he is "covered" differ from that with which he is "clothed"? For every man is clothed with his tunic, covered with his cloak; and what is this, save boasting in iniquity, even in the sight of men? "and as the girdle," he saith, "that he is alway girded withal." Men are girded chiefly that they may be better fit for toil, that they may not be hindered by the folds of their dress. He therefore girdeth himself with curses, who designeth an evil which he hath carefully contrived, not on a sudden impulse, and who learneth in such a manner to do evil, that he is always ready to commit it.

19. "This is the work of them that slander me before the Lord" (ver. 19). He said not, "their reward," but, "their work:" for it is clear that by the clothing, covering, water, oil, and girdle, he was describing the very works by which eternal curses are procured. It is not then one Judas, but many, of whom it is said, "This is the work of them that slander me before the Lord." Although indeed the plural number might have been put for the singular; even as, when Herod died, it was said by the Angel, "They are dead which sought the young Child's life." But who slander Christ more before the Lord, than they who slander the very words of the Lord, by declaring that it is not He whom the Law of the Lord and His Prophets announced beforehand? "And of those that speak evil against my soul:" by denying that He, when He had willed, could have arisen: though He saith, "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again."

20. "But work Thou with me, O Lord God" (ver. 20). Some have thought "mercifully" should be understood, some have actually added it; but the best copies have the words thus: "But work Thou with me, O Lord God, for Thy Name's sake." Whence a higher sense should not be passed over, supposing the Son to have thus addressed the Father, "Deal Thou with Me," since the works of the Father and of the Son are the same. Where although we understand mercy, -for these words follow, "for sweet is Thy mercy," -because he said not, "In me," or, "over me;" or anything of this sort: but, "work Thou with Me;" we rightly understand that the Father and Son together work mercifully towards the vessels of mercy. "Work with me," may also be understood to mean, help me. We use this expression in our daily language, when we are speaking of anything which is in our favour; "It works with us." For

the Father aideth the Son, as far as the Deity aideth Man, on account of His having assumed the "form of a servant," to which Man, God, and to which "Form of a servant," the Lord too is Father. For in the "form of God," the Son needeth not aid, for He is equally all-powerful with the Father, on which account He also is the helper of men. ...And because when he had said, "Work Thou with me," he added, "for Thy Name's sake," he hath commended grace. For without previous deserving works, human nature was raised to such a height, that the whole in one, the Word and Flesh, that is, God and Man, was styled the Only-begotten Son of God. And this was done that that which had been lost might be sought by Him who had created it, through that which had not been lost; whence the following words, "For Thy mercy is sweet."

21. "O deliver me, for I am needy and poor" (ver. 21). Need and poverty is that weakness, through which He was crucified. "And my heart is disturbed within me." This alludeth to those words which He spoke when His Passion was drawing near, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." 22. "I go hence like a shadow that declineth" (ver. 22). By this he signified death itself. For as night comes of the shadow's declining, so death comes of mortal flesh. "And am driven away as the locusts." This I think would be more suitably understood of His members, that is, of His faithful disciples. That he might make it much plainer, he preferred writing "locusts" in the plural number: although many may be understood where the singular number is used, as in that passage, "He spake, and the locust came;" but it would have been more obscure. His disciples, then, were driven away, that is, were put to flight by persecutors, either the multitude of whom He wished to be signified by the word locusts, or their passing from one place to another.

23. "My knees are weak through fasting" (ver. 23). We read, that our Lord Christ underwent a fast of forty days: but had fasting so great power over Him, that His knees were weakened? Or is this more suitably understood of His members, that is, of His saints? "And my flesh is changed because of the oil;" because of spiritual grace, Whence Christ was so called from the Greek word, *chrisma*, which signifies unction. But the flesh was changed through the oil, not for the worse, but for the better, that is, rising from the dishonour of death to the glory of immortality. ...His flesh was not yet changed. But whether the Holy Spirit be represented by water through the notion of ablution or irrigation, or by oil through that of exultation and the inflaming of

charity; It doth not differ from Itself, because Its types are different. For there is a great difference between the lion and the lamb, and yet Christ is represented by both. ...

24. "I became also a reproach unto them" (ver. 24): through the death of the Cross. "For Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "They looked upon Me, and shook their heads." Because they beheld His crucifixion, without beholding His resurrection: they saw when His knees were weakened, they saw not when His flesh was changed. 25. "Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to Thy mercy" (ver. 25). This may be referred to the whole, both to the Head and to the body: to the Head, owing to His having taken the form of a servant; to the body, on account of the servants themselves. For He might even in them have said unto God, "Help Me:" and, "O save Me:" as in them He said unto Paul, "Why persecutest thou Me"? The following words, "according to Thy mercy," describe grace given gratuitously, not according to the merit of works.

26. "And let them know how that this is Thy Hand, and that Thou, Lord, hast made it" (ver. 26). He said, "Let them know," of those for whom He even prayed while they were raging; for even those who afterwards believed in Him were among the crowd who shook their heads in mockery of Him. But let those who ascribe unto God the shape of the human body, learn in what sense God hath a hand. Let us therefore understand, that the Hand of God meaneth Christ: whence it is elsewhere said, "Unto whom is the arm of the Lord revealed:" ... 27. "Though they curse, yet bless Thou" (ver. 27). Vain therefore and false is the cursing of the sons of men, that have pleasure in vanity, and seek a lie; but when God blesseth, He doth what He saith. "Let them be confounded that rise up against me." For their imagining that they have some power against Me, is the reason that they rise up against Me; but when I shall have been exalted above the heavens, and My glory shall have commenced spreading over the whole earth, they shall be confounded. "But Thy servant shall rejoice:" either on the right hand of the Father, or in His members when they rejoice, both in hope among temptations, and after temptations for evermore.

28. "Let my slanderers be clothed with shame" (ver. 28): that is, let it shame them to have slandered me. But this may also be understood as a blessing, in that they are amended. "And let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a double cloak;" for diplois is a double cloak; that is,

let them be confounded both within and without: both before God and before men. 29. "As for me, I will confess greatly unto the Lord with my mouth" (ver. 29). ...Is He said to "praise among the multitude" because He is with His Church here even unto the end of the world; so that we may understand by "among the multitude," that He is honoured by this very multitude? For he is said to be in the midst, unto whom the chief honour is paid. But if the heart is, as it were, that which is mid-most of a man, no better construction can be put on this passage than this, I will praise Him in the hearts of many. For Christ dwelleth through faith in our hearts; and therefore he saith, "with my mouth," that is, with the mouth of my body, which is the Church.

30. "For He stood at the right hand of the poor" (ver. 30). It was said of Judas, "Let Satan stand at his right hand;" since he chose to increase his riches by selling Christ; but here the Lord stood at the right hand of the poor, that the Lord Himself might be the poor man's riches. "He stood at the right hand of the poor," not to multiply the years of a life that one day must end, nor to increase his stores, nor to render him strong in the strength of the body, or secure for a time; "but," he saith, "to save my soul from the persecutors." Now the soul is rendered safe from the persecutors, if we do not consent to them unto evil; but there is no such consent to them when the Lord standeth at the right hand of the poor, that he may not give way through his very poverty, that is, weakness. This aid was given to the Body of Christ in the case of all the holy Martyrs.

PSALM 110

1. ...This Psalm is one of those promises, surely and openly prophesying our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; so that we are utterly unable to doubt that Christ is announced in this Psalm, since we are now Christians, and believe the Gospel. For when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ asked of the Jews, whose Son they alleged Christ to be, and they had replied, "the Son of David;" He at once replied to their answer, "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto My Lord?" etc. "If then," He asked, "David in the spirit call Him Lord, how is He his son?" With this verse this Psalm beginneth. 2. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (ver. 1). We ought, therefore, thoroughly to consider this question proposed to the Jews by the Lord, in the very commencement of the Psalm. For if what the Jews answered be

asked of us, whether we confess or deny it; God forbid that we should deny it. If it be said to us, Is Christ the Son of David, or not? if we reply, No, we contradict the Gospel for the Gospel of St. Matthew thus beginneth, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David." The Evangelist declareth, that he is writing the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. The Jews, then, when questioned by Christ, whose Son they believed Christ to be, rightly answered, the Son of David. The Gospel agreeth with their answer. Not only the suspicion of the Jews, but the faith of Christians, doth declare this. ... "If then David in the spirit called Him Lord, how is He his son?" The Jews were silent at this question: they found no further reply: yet they did not seek Him as the Lord, for they did not acknowledge Him to be Himself that Son of David. But let us, brethren, both believe and declare: for, "with the heart we believe unto righteousness: but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation;" let us believe, I say, and let us declare both the Son of David, and the Lord of David. Let us not be ashamed of the Son of David, lest we find the Lord of David angry with us.

3. ... We know that Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father, since His resurrection from the dead, and ascent into heaven. It is already done: we saw not it, but we have believed it: we have read it in the Scripture, have heard it preached, and hold it by faith. So that by the very circumstance that Christ was David's Son, He became His Lord also. For That which was born of the seed of David was so honoured, that It was also the Lord of David. Thou wonderest at this, as if the same did not happen in human affairs. For if it should happen, that the son of any private person be made a king, will he not be his father's lord? What is yet more wonderful may happen, not only that the son of a private person, by being made a king, may become his father's lord; but that the son of a layman, by being made a Bishop, may become his father's father. So that in this very circumstance, that Christ took upon Him the flesh, that He died in the flesh, that He rose again in the same flesh, that in the same He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of His Father, in this same flesh so honoured, so brightened, so changed into a heavenly garb, He is both David's Son, and David's Lord. ...

4. Christ, therefore, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Son is on the right hand of the Father, hidden from us. Let us believe. Two things are here said: that God said, "Sit Thou on My right hand;" and added, "until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool;" that is, beneath Thy feet. Thou dost not see

Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father: yet thou canst see this, how His enemies are made His footstool. While the latter is fulfilled openly, believe the former to be fulfilled secretly. What enemies are made His footstool? Those to whom imagining vain things it is said, "Why do the heathen so furiously rage together: and why do the people imagine a vain thing?" etc. ...He therefore sitteth at the right hand of God, till His enemies be placed beneath His feet. This is going on, this is taking place: although it is accomplished by degrees, it is going on without end. For though the heathen rage, will they, taking counsel together against Christ, prevent the fulfilment of these words: "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession"? ... "Their memorial is perished with a cry," but, "The Lord shall endure for ever:" as another Psalm, but not another Spirit, saith.

5. And what followeth? "The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion" (ver. 2). It appeareth, brethren, it most clearly appeareth, that the Prophet is not speaking of that kingdom of Christ, in which He reigneth for ever with His Father, Ruler of the things which are made through Him: for when doth not God the Word reign, who is in the beginning with God? For it is said, "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever." To what eternal King? To one invisible, incorruptible. For in this, that Christ is with the Father, invisible and incorruptible, because He is His Word, and His Power, and His Wisdom, and God with God, through whom all things were made; He is "King eternal;" but, nevertheless, that reign of temporal government, by which, through the mediation of His flesh, He called us into eternity, beginneth with Christians; but of His reign there shall be no end. His enemies therefore are made His footstool, while He is sitting on the right hand of His Father, as it is written; this is now going on, this will go on unto the end. ...

6. When therefore He hath sent the rod of His power out of Sion: what shall happen? "Be Thou ruler, even in the midst among Thine enemies." First, "Be Thou ruler in the midst of Thine enemies:" in the midst of the raging heathen. For shall He rule "in the midst of His enemies" at a later season, when the Saints have received their reward, and the ungodly their condemnation? And what wonder if He shall then rule, when the righteous reign with Him for ever, and the ungodly burn with eternal punishments? What wonder, if He shall then? Now "in the midst of Thine enemies," now

in this transition of ages, in this propagation and succession of human mortality, now while the torrent of time is gliding by, unto this is the rod of Thy power sent out of Sion, "that Thou mayest be Ruler in the midst of Thine enemies." Rule Thou, rule among Pagans, Jews, heretics, false brethren. Rule Thou, rule, O Son of David, Lord of David, rule in the midst of Pagans, Jews, heretics, false brethren. "Be Thou Ruler in the midst of Thine enemies." We understand not this verse aright, if we do not see that it is already going on. ...

7. "With Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power" (ver. 3). What is this day of His power, when is there beginning with Him, or what beginning, or in what sense is there beginning with Him, since He is the Beginning? ... 8. What meaneth, "With Thee is the beginning"? Suppose anything you please as the beginning. Of Christ Himself, it would rather have been said, Thou art the Beginning, than, With Thee is the beginning. For He answered to those who asked Him, "Who art Thou?" and said, "Even the same that I said unto you, the Beginning;" since His Father also is the Beginning, of whom is the only-begotten Son, in which Beginning was the Word, for the Word was with God. What then, if both the Father and the Son are the beginning, are there two beginnings? God forbid! For as the Father is God, and the Son is God, but the Father and the Son are not two Gods, but one God: so is the Father Beginning and the Son Beginning, but the Father and the Son are not two, but one Beginning. "With Thee is the beginning." Then it shall appear in what sense the beginning is with Thee. Not that the beginning is not with Thee here also. For hast Thou not also said, "Behold, ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; but I am not alone, because the Father is with Me"? Here therefore also, the beginning is with Thee. For Thou hast said elsewhere also, "But the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth His works." "With Thee is the beginning:" nor was the Father ever separated from Thee. But when the Beginning shall appear to be with Thee, then shall it be manifest unto all who are made like Thee; since they shall see Thee as Thou art; for Philip saw Thee here, and sought the Father. Then therefore shall be seen what now is believed: then shall "the beginning be with Thee" in the sight of the righteous, in the sight of saints; the ungodly being removed, that they may not see the brightness of the Lord. ...

9. Explain of what power thou speakest. Because here also, as is said, His power is mentioned, when the rod of His power is sent forth out of Sion, that He may be Ruler in the midst of His enemies. Of what power speakest thou, "In the splendour of the saints"? "In the splendour," he saith, "of the saints." He speaketh of that power when the saints shall be in splendour; not when still carrying about their earthly flesh, and groaning in a mortal and corruptible body. ... 10. But this is put off, this will be granted afterwards: what is there now? "From the womb I have begotten Thee, before the morning star." What is here? If God hath a Son, hath He also a womb? Like fleshly bodies, He hath not; for He hath not a bosom either; yet it is said, "He who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him." But that which is the womb, is the bosom also: both bosom and womb are put for a secret place. What meaneth, "from the womb"? From what is secret, from what is hidden; from Myself, from My substance; this is the meaning of "from the womb;" for, "Who shall declare His generation?" Let us then understand the Father saying unto the Son, "From My womb before the morning star have I brought Thee forth." What then meaneth, "before the morning star"? The morning star is put for the stars, as if the Scripture signified the whole from a part, and from one conspicuous star all the stars. But how were those stars created? "That they may be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years." ... This expression also, "before the morning star," is used both figuratively and literally, and was thus fulfilled. For the Lord was born at night from the womb of the Virgin Mary; the testimony of the shepherds doth assert this, who were "keeping watch over their flock." So David: O Thou, my Lord, who sittest at the right hand of my Lord, whence art Thou my Son, except because, "From the womb before the morning star I have begotten Thee"?

11. And unto what art Thou born? "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec" (ver. 4). For unto this wast Thou born from the womb before the morning star, that Thou mightest be a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec. For in that character in which He was born of the Father, God with God, coeternal with Him who begot Him, He is not a Priest; but He is a Priest on account of the flesh which He assumed, on account of the victim which He was to offer for us received from us. "The Lord," then, "hath sworn. What then meaneth, the Lord hath sworn? Doth the Lord, who forbiddeth men to swear Himself swear? Or doth He possibly forbid man to swear chiefly on this account,

that he may not fall into perjury, and for this reason the Lord may swear, since He cannot be forsworn. For man, who, through a habit of swearing, may slip into perjury, is rightly forbidden to swear: for he will be farther from perjury in proportion as he is far from swearing. For the man who sweareth, may swear truly or falsely: but he who sweareth not, cannot swear falsely; for he sweareth not at all. Why then should not the Lord swear, since the Lord's oath is the seal of the promise? Let Him swear by all means. What then dost thou, when thou swearest? Thou callest God to witness:

this is to swear, to call God to witness; and for this reason there must be anxiety, that thou mayest not call God to witness anything false. If therefore thou by an oath dost call God to witness, why then should not God also call Himself to witness with an oath? "I live, saith the Lord," this is the Lord's oath. ..."The Lord sware," then, that is, confirmed: "He will not repent," He will not change. What? "Thou art a Priest for ever. "For ever," for He will not repent. But Priest, in what sense? Will there be those victims, victims offered by the Patriarchs, altars of blood, and tabernacle, and those sacred emblems of the Old Covenant? God forbid! These things are already abolished; the temple being destroyed, that priesthood taken away, their victim and their sacrifice having alike disappeared, not even the Jews have these things. They see that the priesthood after the order of Aaron hath already perished, and they do not recognise the Priesthood after the order of Melchizedec. I speak unto believers. If catechumens understand not something, let them lay aside sloth, and hasten unto knowledge. It is not therefore needful for me to disclose mysteries here: let the Scriptures intimate to you what is the Priesthood after the order of Melchizedec.

12. "The Lord on Thy right hand" (ver. 5). The Lord had said, "Sit Thou on My right hand; now the Lord is on His right hand, as if they changed seats. ...That very Christ, the "Lord on Thy right hand," unto whom Thou hast sworn, and it will not repent Thee: what doth He, Priest for evermore? What doth He, who is at the right hand of God, and intercedeth for us, like a priest entering into the inner places, and into the holy of holies, into the mysteries of heaven, He alone being without sin, and therefore easily purifying from sins. He therefore "on Thy right hand shall wound even kings in the day of His wrath. What kings, dost thou ask? Hast thou forgotten? "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. These kings He wounded by His glory, and

by the weight of His Name made kings weak, so that they had not power to effect what they wished. For they strove amain to blot out the Christian name from the earth, and could not; for "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken. Kings therefore fall on this "stone of offence," and are therefore wounded, when they say, Who is Christ? I know not what Jew or what Galilean He may have been, who died, who was slain in such a manner! The stone is before thy feet, lying, so to speak, mean and humble:

therefore by scorning thou dost stumble, by stumbling thou fallest, by falling thou art wounded. ..."But on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. When therefore any one falleth upon it, it lieth as it were low; it then woundeth: but when it shall grind him to powder, then it will come from above. See how in these two words, it shall wound him and grind him to powder: he striketh upon it, and it shall come down upon him: are distinguished the two seasons, of the humiliation and the majesty of Christ, of hidden punishment and future judgment. He will not crush, when He cometh, that man whom He doth not wound when He lieth in a contemptible appearance. ... 13. "He shall judge among the heathen: He shall fill up what hath fallen" (ver. 6). Whoever thou art who art obstinate against Christ, thou hast raised on high a tower that must fall. It is good that thou shouldst cast thyself down, become humble, throw thyself at the feet of Him who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, that in thee a ruin may be made to be built up. For if thou abidest in thy evil height, thou shalt be cast down when thou canst not be built up. For of such the Scripture saith in another passage: "Therefore shall He break down, and not build them up." Beyond doubt he would not say this of some, unless there were some whom He broke down so as to build them up again. And this is going on at this time, while Christ is judging among the heathen in such a manner as to fill up what hath fallen. "He shall smite many heads over the earth." Here upon the earth in this life He shall smite many heads. He maketh them humble instead of proud; and I dare to say, my brethren, that it is more profitable to walk here humbly with the head wounded, than with the head erect to fall into the judgment of eternal death. He will smite many heads when he causeth them to fall, but He will fill them up and build them up again.

14. "He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up his head" (ver. 7). Let us consider Him drinking of the brook in the way: first of all, what is the brook? the onward flow of human mortality: for as a brook is

gathered together by the rain, overflows, roars, runs, and by running runs down, that is, finishes its course; so is all this course of mortality. Men are born, they live, they die, and when some die others are born, and when they die others are born, they succeed, they flock together, they depart and will not remain. What is held fast here? what doth not run? what is not on its way to the abyss as if it was gathered together from rain? For as a river suddenly drawn together from rain from the drops of showers runneth into the sea, and is seen no more, nor was it seen before it was collected from the rain; so this hidden rain is collected together from hidden sources, and floweth on; at death again it travellethe where it is hidden: this intermediate state soundeth and passeth away. Of this brook He drinketh, He hath not disdained to drink of this brook; for to drink of this brook was to Him to be born and to die. What this brook hath, is birth and death; Christ assumed this, He was born, He died. "Therefore hath He lifted up His head;" that is, because He was humble, and "became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: therefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ the Lord is in the glory of God the Father."

PSALM 111

1. The days have come for us to sing Allelujah. ...Now these days come only to pass away, and pass away to come, again, and typify the clay which does not come and pass away, because it is neither preceded by yesterday to cause it to come, nor pressed upon by the morrow to cause it to pass. ...For as these days succeed in regular season, with a joyful cheerfulness, the past days of Lent, whereby the misery of this life before the Resurrection of the Lord's body is signified; so that day which after the Resurrection shall be given to the full body of the Lord, that is, to the holy Church, when all the troubles and sorrows of this life have been shut out, shall succeed with perpetual bliss. But this life demandeth from us self-restraint, that although groaning and weighed down with our toil and struggles, and desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, we may refrain from secular pleasures: and this is signified by the number of forty, which was the period of the fasts of Moses, and Elias, and our Lord Himself. ...But by the number fifty after our Lord's resurrection, during which season we sing Allelujah, not the term

and passing away of a certain season is signified, but that blessed eternity; because the denary added to forty signifieth the reward paid to the faithful who toil in this life, which our Father hath prepared an equal share of for the first and for the last. Let us therefore hear the heart of the people of God full of divine praises. He representeth in this Psalm some one exulting in happy joyfulness, he prefigureth the people whose hearts are overflowing with the love of God, that is, the body of Christ, freed from all evil.

2. "I will make confession unto Thee, O Lord," he saith, "with my whole heart" (ver. 1). Confession is not always confession of sins, but the praise of God is poured forth in the devotion of confession. The former mourneth, the latter rejoiceth: the former showeth the wound to the physician, the latter giveth thanks for health. The latter confession signifieth some one, not merely freed from every evil, but even separate from all the ill-disposed. And for this reason let us consider the place where he confesseth unto the Lord with all his heart. "In the counsel," he saith, "of the upright, and in the congregation:" I suppose, of those who shall "sit upon the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." For there will be no longer an unjust man among them, the thefts of no Judas are allowed, no Simon Magus is baptized, wishing to buy the Spirit, whilst hedesigneth to sell it; no coppersmith like Alexander doth many evil deeds no man covered with sheep's clothing creepeth in with feigned fraternity; such as those among whom the Church must now groan, and such as she must then shut out, when all the righteous shall be gathered together.

"These are the great works of the Lord, sought out unto all His wills" (ver. 2): through which mercy forsaketh none who confesseth, no man's wickedness is unpunished. ...Let man choose for himself what he listeth: the works of the Lord are not so constituted, that the creature, having free discretion allowed him, should transcend the will of the Creator, even though he act contrary to His will. God willeth not that thou shouldest sin; for He forbideth it: yet if thou hast sinned, imagine not that the man hath done what he willed, and that hath happened to God which He willed not. For as He would that man would not sin, so would He spare the sinner, that he may return and live; He so willeth finally to punish him who persisteth in his sin, that the rebellious cannot escape the power of justice. Thus whatever choice thou hast made, the Almighty will not be at a loss to fulfil His will concerning thee.

3. "Confession and glorious deeds are His work" (ver. 3). What is a more glorious deed than to justify the ungodly? But perhaps the work of man preventeth that glorious work of God, so that when he hath confessed his sins, he deserveth to be justified. ...This is the glorious work of the Lord: for he loveth most, to whom most is forgiven. This is the glorious work of the Lord: for "where sin abounded, there did grace much more abound." But perhaps a man would deserve justification from works. "Not," saith he, "of works, lest any man boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" For a man worketh not righteousness save he be justified: but by "believing on Him that justifieth the ungodly," he beginneth with faith; that good may not by preceding show what he hath deserved, but by following what he hath received. ...

4. "He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered" (ver. 4): by abasing this man, exalting that. Reserving unusual miracles for a fit season, that thus human weakness, intent upon novelty, may remember them, although His daily miracles be greater. He created so many trees throughout the whole earth, and no one wondereth: He dried up one with a word, and the hearts of mortals were thunderstruck. For that miracle, which hath not through its frequency become common, will cling most firmly to the heart. But of what use were the miracles, savethat He might be feared? What too would fearprofit, unless "the gracious and merciful Lord" gave "meat unto them that fear Him"? (ver. 5). meat that doth not spoil, "bread that cometh down from heaven," which He gave to no deservings of ours. For "Christ died for the ungodly." No one then would give such food, save a gracious and merciful Lord. But if He gave so much to this life, if the sinner who was to be justified received the Word made flesh; what shall he receive when glorified in a future world? For, "He shall ever be mindful of His covenant." Nor hath He who hath given a pledge, given the whole.

5. "He shall show His people the power of His works" (ver. 6). Let not the holy Israelites, who have left all their possessions and have followed Him, be saddened; let them not be sorrowful and say, "Who then can be saved?" For "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." For "with men these things are impossible, but with God all things are possible." "That He may give them the heritage of the heathen." For they went to the heathen, and enjoined the rich of this world "not to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain riches,

but in the living God," to whom that is easy which is difficult for men. For thus many were called, thus the heritage of the heathen has been occupied, thus it hath happened, that even many who have not abandoned all their possessions in this life in order to follow Him, have despised even life itself for the sake of confessing His Name; and like camels humbling themselves to bear the burden of troubles, have entered as it were through a needle's eye, through the piercing straits of suffering. He hath wrought these effects, unto whom all things are possible.

6. "The works of His hands are verity and judgment" (ver. 7). Let verity be held by those who are judged here. Martyrs are heresentenced, and brought to the judgment-seat, that they may judge not only those by whom they have been judged, but even give judgment on angels, against whom was their struggle here, even when they seemed to be judged by men. Let not tribulation, distress, famine, nakedness, the sword, separate from Christ. For "all His commandments are true; He deceiveth not, He giveth us what He promised. Yet we should not expect here what He promised; we should not hope for it: but "they stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and equity" (ver. 8). It is equitable and just that we should labour here and repose there; since "He sent redemption unto His people" (ver. 9). But from what are they redeemed, save from the captivity of this pilgrimage? Let not therefore rest be sought, save in the heavenly country. God indeed gave the carnal Israelites an earthly Jerusalem, "which is in bondage with her children: but this is the Old Covenant, pertaining unto the old man. But they who there understood the figure, even then were heirs of the New Covenant; for "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is our everlasting mother in heaven. But that transitory promises were given in that Old Testament is proved by the fact itself: however, "He hath commended His covenant for ever. But what, but the New?

Whosoever dost wish to be heir of this, deceive not thyself, and think not of a land flowing with milk and honey, nor of pleasant farms, nor of gardens abounding in fruits and shade: desire not how to gain anything of this sort, such as the eye of covetousness is wont to lust for. For since "covetousness is the root of all evils," it must be cut off, that it may be consumed here; not be put off, that it may be satisfied there. First escape punishments, avoid hell; before thou longest for a God who promiseth, beware of one who threateneth. For "holy and reverend is His Name." 7. ..."The fear of the Lord," there-

fore, "is the beginning of wisdom." "Understanding is good" (ver. 10). Who gainsayeth? But to understand, and not to do, is dangerous. It is "good," therefore, "to those that do there after." Nor let it lift up the mind unto pride; for, "the praise of Him," the fear of whom is the beginning of wisdom, "endureth for ever:" and this will be the reward, this the end, this the everlasting station and abode. There are found the true commandments, made fast for ever and ever; here is the very heritage of the New Covenant commanded for ever. "One thing," he saith, "I have desired of the Lord, which I will require: even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." For, "blessed are they that dwell in the house" of the Lord: "they will be alway praising" Him; for "His praise endureth for ever."

PSALM 112

1. I believe, brethren, that ye remarked and committed to memory the title of this Psalm. "The conversion," he saith, "of Haggai and Zechariah." These prophets were not as yet in existence, when these verses were sung. ... But both, the one within a year after the other, began to prophesy that which seemeth to pertain to the restoration of the temple, as was foretold so long before. ... "For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." Whoever therefore converteth himself to the work of this building together, and to the hope of a firm and holy edifice, like a living stone from the miserable ruin of this world, understandeth the title of the Psalm, understandeth "the conversion of Haggai and Zechariah." Let him therefore chant the following verses, not so much with the voice of his tongue as of his life. For the completion of the building will be that ineffable peace of wisdom, the "beginning" of which is the "fear of the Lord:" let him therefore, whom this conversion buildeth together, begin thence.

2. "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: he will have great delight in His commandments" (ver. 1). God, who alone judgeth both truthfully and mercifully, will see how far he obeyeth His commandments: since "the life of man on earth is a temptation," as holy Job saith. But "He who judgeth us is the Lord." ... He therefore will see how far each man profiteth in His commandments; yet he who loveth the peace of this building together, shall have great delight in them; nor ought he to despair, since there is "peace on earth for men of good will." 3. Next follows, "His seed shall be mighty upon earth" (ver. 2). The Apostle witnesseth, that the works of mercy are the seed of the future harvest, when he saith, "Let us not be weary in well doing, for

in due season we shall reap;" and again, "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly." But what, brethren, is more mighty than that not only Zacchaeus should buy the kingdom of Heaven by the half of his goods, but even the widow for two mites, and that each should possess an equal share there? What is more mighty, than that the same kingdom should be worth treasures to the rich man, and a cup of cold water to the poor? ..."Glory and riches shall be in his house" (ver. 3). For his house is his heart; where, with the praise of God, he liveth in greater riches with the hope of eternal life, than with men flattering, in palaces of marble, with splendidly adorned ceilings, with the fear of everlasting death. "For his righteousness endureth for ever:" this is his glory, there are his riches. While the other's purple, and fine linen, and grand banquets, even when present, are passing away; and when they have come to an end, the burning tongue shall cry out, longing for a drop of water from the finger's end.

4. "Unto the right-hearted there ariseth up light in the darkness" (ver. 4). Justly do the godly direct their heart unto their God, justly do they walk with their God, preferring His will to themselves; and having no proud presumption in their own. For they remember that they were some time in darkness, but are now light in the Lord. "Merciful, pitying, and just is the Lord God." It delighteth us that He is "merciful and pitying," but it perhaps terrifieth us that the Lord God is "just." Fear not, despair not at all, happy man, who fearest the Lord, and hast great delight in His commandments; be thou sweet, be merciful and lend. For the Lord is just in this manner, that He judgeth without mercy him who hath not shown mercy; but, "Sweet is the man who is merciful and lendeth" (ver. 5): God will not spew him out of His mouth as if he were not sweet. "Forgive," He saith, "and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you." Whilst thou forgivest that thou mayest be forgiven, thou art merciful; whilst thou givest that it may be given unto thee, thou lendest. For though all be called generally mercy where another is assisted in his distress, yet there is a difference where thou spendest neither money, nor the toil of bodily labour, but by forgiving what each man hath sinned against thee, thou gainest free pardon for thine own sins also. ...He who is unwilling to give to the poor, seeketh riches; listen to what is written, "Thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Thou wilt not then lose honour by forgiving: for it is a very laudable triumph to conquer anger: wilt not grow poor by giving; for a heavenly treasure is a more safe possession. The former verse,

"Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house," was pregnant with this verse.

5. He therefore who doth these things, "shall guide his words with discretion." His deeds themselves are the words whereby he shall be defended at the Judgment; which shall not be without mercy unto him, since he hath himself shown mercy. "For he shall never be moved" (ver. 6): he who, called to the right hand, shall hear these words, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." For no works of theirs, save works of mercy, are there mentioned. He therefore shall hear, "Come, ye blessed of My Father;" for, "the generation of the right ones shall be blessed." Thus, "the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance." "He will not be afraid of any evil hearing; for his heart standeth fast and believeth in the Lord" (ver. 7). Such as the words which he will hear addressed to those on the left hand, "Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." He therefore who seeketh here not his own things, but those of Jesus Christ, most patiently endureth sufferings, waiteth for the promises with faith. Nor is he broken down by any temptations: "His heart is established, and will not shrink, until he see beyond his enemies" (ver. 8). His enemies wished to see good things here, and when invisible blessings were promised them, used to say, "Who will show us any good?" Let our heart therefore be established, and shrink not, until we see beyond our enemies. For they wish to see good things of men in the land of the dying; we trust to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living.

6. But it is a great thing to have the heart established, and not to be moved, while they rejoice who love what they see, and mock at him who hopeth for what he seeth not; "what the Lord hath prepared for them that love Him." How great is the value of this which is not seen, and it is bought for so much as each man is able to give for it. On this account he also "dispersed abroad, and gave to the poor" (ver. 9): he saw not, yet he kept buying; but He was storing up the treasure in heaven, who deigned to hunger and thirst in the poor on earth. It is no wonder then if "his righteousness remaineth for ever:" He who created the ages being his guardian. "His horn," whose humility was scorned by the proud, "shall be exalted with honour." 7. "The ungodly shall see it, and he shall be angered" (ver. 10): this is that late and fruitless repentance. For with whom rather than himself is he "angered," when he shall

say, "Our pride, what hath it profiled us? the boast-fulnes of our riches, what hath it given us?" seeing the horn of him exalted with honour, who "dispersed abroad, and gave to the poor." "He shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away:" for "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." For he will no more bring forth leaves and bloom, as would happen if he had repented in season: but he will then repent, when "the desire of the ungodly shall perish," no consolation succeeding. "The desire of the ungodly shall perish," when "all things shall pass away like a shadow," when the flower shall fall down on the withering of the grass. "But the word of the Lord that endureth for ever," as it is mocked by the vanity of the falsely happy, so will laugh at the perdition of the same when truly miserable.

PSALM 113

1. ...When ye hear sung in the Psalms, "Praise the Lord, ye children" (ver. 1); imagine not that that exhortation pertaineth not unto you, because having already passed the youth of the body, ye are either blooming in the prime of manhood, or growing gray with the honours of old age: for unto all of you the Apostle saith, "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." What malice in particular, save pride? For it is pride that, presuming in false greatness, suffereth not man to walk along the narrow path, and to enter by the narrow gate; but the child easily entereth through the narrow entrance; and thus no man, save as a child, entereth into the kingdom of heaven. "Praise the Name of the Lord." ...Let Him therefore be alway proclaimed: "Blessed be the Name of the Lord, from this time forth for evermore" (ver. 2). Let Him be proclaimed everywhere: "From the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, praise ye the Name of the Lord" (ver. 3).

2. If any of the holy children who praise the Name of the Lord were to ask of me and say to me, "for evermore" I understand to mean unto all eternity: but why "from this," and why is not the Name of the Lord blessed before this, and before all ages? I will answer the infant, who asketh not in contumacy. Unto you it is said, masters and children, unto you it is said, "Praise the Name of the Lord; blessed be the Name of the Lord:" let the Name of the Lord be blessed, "from this," that is, from the moment ye speak these words. For ye begin to praise, but praise ye without end. ...Or, since in this passage he seemeth to signify rather humility than childhood, the contrary of which is the vain and false greatness of pride; and for this reason none but children

praise the Lord, since the proud know not how to praise Him; let old age be childlike, and your childhood like old age; that is, that neither may your wisdom be with pride, nor your humility without wisdom, that ye may "praise the Lord from this for evermore." Wherever the Church of Christ is diffused in her childlike saints, "Praise ye the Name of the Lord;" that is, "from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same."

3. "The Lord is high above all heathen" (ver. 4). The heathen are men: what wonder if the Lord be above all men? They see with their eyes those whom they worship high above themselves to shine in heaven, the sun and moon and stars, creatures which they serve while they neglect the Creator. But not only "is the Lord high above all heathen;" but "His glory" also "is above the heavens." The heavens look up unto Him above themselves; and the humble have Him together with them, who do not worship the heavens instead of Him, though placed in the flesh beneath the heavens. 4. "Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high; and yet beholdeth the humble:" (ver. 5). Any one would think that He dwelleth in the lofty heavens, whence He may behold the humble things on earth; but "He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth" (ver. 6): what then is His high dwelling, whence He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth? Are the humble things He beholdeth His own high dwelling itself? For He thus exalteth the humble, so as not to make them proud. He therefore both dwelleth in those whom He raiseth high, and maketh them heaven for Himself, that is, His own abode; and by seeing them not proud, but constantly subject to Himself, He beholdeth even in heaven itself these very humble things, in whom raised on high He dwelleth. For the Spirit thus speaketh through Isaiah: "Thus saith the Highest that dwelleth on high, that inhabiteth eternity; the Lord Most High, dwelling in the holy." He hath expounded what He meant by dwelling on high, by the more full expression, "dwelling in the holy." ...

5. And he hath moved us also to enquire whether the Lord our God beholdeth the same humble things in heaven and in earth: or different humble things in heaven to what He beholdeth on earth. ...But if the Lord our God beholdeth other humble things in heaven to what He doth on earth; I suppose that He already beholdeth in heaven those whom He hath called, and in whom He dwelleth; while on earth He beholdeth those whom He is now calling, that He may dwell in them. For He hath the one with Him musing

on heavenly things, the others He is waking, while they yet dream things earthly. But since it is difficult to call even those humble, who have not as yet submitted their necks in piety to the gracious yoke of Christ, since the divine writings throughout the whole Psalm warn us to understand holy by the word humble; there is also another interpretation, which, Beloved, ye may consider with me. I believe that those are now meant by heavens who shall sit upon twelve thrones, and shall judge with the Lord; and under the name of the earth, the rest of the multitude of the blessed, who shall be set on the right hand, that through works of mercy they may be praised and received into everlasting habitations by those whom they have made friends to themselves from the mammon of unrighteousness in this mortal life. . . .

6. "He taketh up the destitute out of the dust, and lifteth the poor out of the mire" (ver. 7); "that He may set Him with the princes, even with the princes of His people" (ver. 8). Let not then the heads of the exalted disdain to be humble, beneath the Lord's right hand. For though the faithful steward of the Lord's money be placed together with the princes of the people of God, although he be destined to sit on the twelve seats, and even to judge angels; yet he is taken up destitute from the dust, and lifted from out of the mire. Was not he possibly lifted up from the mire, who "served divers lusts and pleasures"? ... 7. What then, brethren, if we have already heard of those humble things which are in heaven, lifted up from the mire, that they might be set with the princes of the people; have we by consequence heard nothing of the humble things which the Lord beholdeth on the earth? For those friends who will judge with their Lord are fewer, while those whom they receive into everlasting habitations are more in number. For although the whole of a heap of corn compared with the separate chaff may seem to contain few in number; yet considered by itself, it is abundant. ... The Church then speaketh thus in that sense, wherein she seemeth to bear no offspring among those crowds who have not given up all things, that they might follow the Lord, and might sit upon the twelve thrones. But how many in the same crowd, who make unto themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, shall stand on the right hand through works of mercy? He not only then lifteth up from the mire him whom He is to place with the princes of His people; but also, "Maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children" (ver. 9): He who dwelleth on high, and beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth, the seed of Abraham like

the stars of heaven, holiness set on high in heavenly habitations; and like the sand on the sea shore, a merciful and countless multitude gathered together from the harmful waves, and the bitterness of impiety.

PSALM 114

1. The river Jordan, when they were entering across it into the land of promise, when touched by the feet of the priests who bore the Ark, stood still from above with bridled stream, while it flowed down from below, where it ran on into the sea, until the whole people passed over, the priests standing on the dry ground. We know these things, but yet we should not imagine in this Psalm, to which we have now answered by chanting Allelujah, that it is the purpose of the Holy Spirit, that while we call to mind those deeds of the past, we should not consider things like unto them yet to take place. For "these things," as the Apostle saith, "happened unto them for ensamples." 2. "When Israel came out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among the strange people" (ver. 1), "Judah was His sanctuary, and Israel His dominion" (ver. 2); "the sea saw that and fled, Jordan was driven back" (ver. 3). Think not that past deeds are related unto us, but rather that the future is predicted; since, while those miracles also were going on in that people, things present indeed were happening, but not without an intimation of things future. ...Some things he has related differently to what we have learnt and read there: that he might not truly be thought to be repeating past acts rather than to be prophesying future things. For in the first place, we read not that the Jordan was driven back, but that it stood still on the side nearest the source of its streams, while the people were passing through; next, we read not of the mountains and hills skipping: all which he hath added, and repeated. For after saying, "The sea saw that, and fled; Jordan was driven back:" he added, "The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like young sheep" (ver. 4): and then asketh, "What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou reddest: and thou, Jordan, that thou wast driven back?" (ver. 5). "Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like young sheep?" (ver. 6).

3. Let us therefore consider what we are taught here; since both those deeds were typical of us, and these words exhort us to recognise ourselves. For if we hold with a firm heart the grace of God which hath been given us, we are Israel, the seed of Abraham: unto us the Apostle saith, "Therefore are ye the seed of Abraham." ...Let therefore no Christian consider himself alien to

the name of Israel. For we are joined in the corner stone with those among the Jews who believed, among whom we find the Apostles chief. Hence our Lord in another passage saith, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd." The Christian people then is rather Israel, and the same is preferably the house of Jacob; for Israel and Jacob are the same. But that multitude of Jews, which was deservedly reprobated for its perfidy, for the pleasures of the flesh sold their birthright, so that they belonged not to Jacob, but rather to Esau. For ye know that it was said with this hidden meaning, "That the elder shall serve the younger."

4. But Egypt, since it is said to mean affliction, or one who afflicteth, or one who oppreseth, is often used for an emblem of this world; from which we must spiritually withdraw, that we may not be bearing the yoke with unbelievers. For thus each one becometh a fit citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, when he hath first renounced this world; just as that people could not be led into the land of promise, save first they had departed from Egypt. But as they did not depart thence, until freed by Divine help; so no man is turned away in heart from this world, unless aided by the gift of the Divine mercy. For what was there once prefigured, the same is fulfilled in every faithful one in the daily travailings of the Church, in this end of the world, in this, as the blessed John writeth, last time. Hear the Apostle the teacher of the Gentiles, thus instructing us: "I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples. What more do ye wish, most beloved brethren?"

For it is surely clear, not from human conjecture, but from the declaration of an Apostle, that is, of God and our Lord: for God spoke in them, and though from clouds of flesh, yet it was God who thundered: surely then it is clear by so great testimony that all these things which were done in figure, are now fulfilled in our salvation; because then the future was predicted, now the past is read, and the present observed. 5. Hear what is even more wonderful, that the hidden and veiled mysteries of the ancient books are in some

degree revealed by the ancient books. For Micah the prophet speaketh thus. "According to the days of thy coming out of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things, etc. ...In this Psalm, therefore, although the wonderful spirit of prophecy doth look into the future, yet it seemeth, as it were, to be merely detailing to the past. "Judah," he saith, "was His sanctuary: the sea saw that and fled: "was," "saw," and "fled," are words of the past tense; and "Jordan was driven back, and the mountains skipped, and the earth trembled," in like manner have a past expression, without, however, any difficulty in understanding by them the future. ...For though it was so long after the departure of that people from Egypt, and so long before these seasons of the Church, that he sang what I have quoted; nevertheless, he witnesseth that he is foretelling the future without any question. "According to the days," he saith, "of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things. "The nations shall see and be confounded. This is what is here said, "The sea saw that, and fled: for if in this passage, through words of the past tense the future is secretly revealed, as is the case; who would venture to explain the words, "shall see and be confounded," of past events?

And a little lower down he alludeth more clearly than light itself to those very enemies of ours, who followed us flying, that they might slay us, that is, our sins, which are overwhelmed and extinguished in Baptism, just as the Egyptians were drowned in the sea, saying, since "He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He is of good will and merciful, He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us, He will drown our iniquities: and Thou wilt east all their sins into the depths of the sea." 6. What is it, most beloved? ye who know yourselves to be Israelites according to Abraham's seed, ye who are of the house of Jacob, heirs according to promise, know that even ye have gone forth from Egypt, since ye have renounced this world; that ye have gone forth from a foreign people, since by the confession of piety, ye have separated yourselves from the blasphemies of the Gentiles. For it is not your tongue, but a foreign one, which knoweth not how to praise God, to whom ye sing Allelujah. For "Judah" hath become "His sanctuary" in you; for "he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and by circumcision of the heart." Examine then your hearts, if faith hath circumcised them, if confession hath cleansed them; in you "Judah" hath become "His sanctuary,"

in you "Israel" hath become "His dominion." For "He gave" unto you "the power to become the sons of God." ...

7. But I would not that ye should seek without yourselves, how the Jordan was turned back, I would not ye should augur anything evil. For the Lord chideth those who have "turned" their "back" unto Him, "and not their face." And whoever forsaketh the source of his being, and turneth away from his Creator; as a river into the sea, he glides into the bitter wickedness of this world. It is therefore good for him that he turn back, and that God whom he had set behind his back, may be before his face as he returneth; and that the sea of this world, which he had set before his face, when he was gliding on towards it, may become behind him; and that he may so forget what is behind him, that he may "reach forward to what is before him;" which is profitable for him when once converted. ...

8. "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob" (ver. 7). What meaneth, "at the presence of the Lord," save at the presence of Him who said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." For the earth trembled; but because it had remained slothful, it was made to tremble, so that it might be more firmly fixed at the presence of the Lord. 9. "Who turned the hard rock into standing waters, and the flint stone into springing wells" (ver. 8). For He melted Himself, and what may be called His hardness to water those who believe on Him, that He might in them become "a fountain of water gushing forth unto everlasting life;" because formerly, when He was not known, He seemed hard. Hence they who said, "This is an hard saying, who can bear it?" were confounded, and waited not until He should flow and stream upon them when the Scriptures were revealed. The rock, that hardness, was turned into pools of water, that stone into fountains of waters, when on His resurrection, "He expounded unto them, commencing with Moses and all the prophets, how Christ ought to suffer thus;" and sent the Holy Ghost, of whom He said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink."

PSALM 115

1. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the praise" (ver. 1). For that grace of the water that gushed from the rock ("now that rock was Christ"), was not given on the score of works that had gone before, but of His mercy "that justifieth the ungodly." For "Christ died for sinners," that men might not seek any glory of their own, but in the Lord's

Name. 2. "For Thy loving mercy, and for Thy truth's sake" (ver. 2). Observe how often these two qualities, loving mercy and truth, are joined together in the holy Scriptures. For in His loving mercy He called sinners, and in His truth He judgeth those who when called refused to come. "That the heathen may not say, Where is now their God?" For at the last, His loving mercy and truth will shine forth, when "the sign of the Son of man shall appear in heaven, and then shall all tribes of the earth cry woe;" nor shall they then say, "Where is their God?" when He is no longer preached unto them to be believed in, but displayed before them to be trembled at.

3. "As for our God, He is in heaven above" (ver. 3). Not in heaven, where they see the sun and moon, works of God which they adore, but "in heaven above," which overpasseth all heavenly and earthly bodies. Nor is our God in heaven in such a sense, as to dread a fall that should deprive Him of His throne, if heaven were withdrawn from under Him. "In heaven and earth He hath made whatsoever pleased Him." Nor doth He stand in need of His own works, as if He had place in them where He might abide; but endureth in His own eternity, wherein He abideth and hath done whatsoever pleased Him, both in heaven and earth; for they did not support Him, as a condition of their being created by Him: since, unless they had been created, they could not have supported Him. Therefore, in whatsoever He Himself dwelleth, He, so to speak, containeth this as in need of Himself, He is not contained by this as if He needed it. Or it may be thus understood: "In heaven and in earth He hath done whatsoever pleased Him," whether among the higher or the lower orders of His people, He hath made His grace His free gift, that no man may boast in the merits of his own works. ...

4. "Their idols," he saith, "are silver and gold, even the work of men's hands" (ver. 4). That is, although we cannot display our God to your carnal eyes, whom ye ought to recognise through his works; yet be not seduced by your vain pretences, because ye can point with the finger to, the objects of your worship. For it were much worthlet for you not to have what to point to, than that your hearts' blindness should be displayed in what is exhibited to these eyes by you: for what do ye exhibit, save gold and silver? They have indeed both bronze, and wood, and earthenware idols, and of different materials of this description; but the Holy Spirit preferred mentioning the more precious material, because when every man hath blushed for that which he sets more by, he is much more easily turned away from the worship of mean-

er objects. For it is said in another passage of Scripture concerning the worshippers of images, "Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth." But lest that man who speaketh thus not to a stone or stock, but to gold and silver, seem wiser to himself; let him look this way, let him turn hitherwards the ear of his heart: "The idols of the Gentiles are gold and silver." Nothing mean and contemptible is here mentioned: and indeed to that mind which is not earth, both gold and silver is earth, but more beautiful and brilliant, more solid and firm. Employ not then the hands of men, to create a false Deity out of that metal which a true God hath created; nay, a false man, whom thou mayest worship for a true God. ...

5. "For they have mouths, and speak not: eyes have they, and see not" (ver. 5). "They have ears, and hear not: noses have they, and smell not" (ver. 6). "They have hands, and handle not; feet have they, and walk not; neither cry they through their throat" (ver. 7). Even their artist therefore surpasseth them, since he had the faculty of moulding them by the motion and functions of his limbs: though thou wouldest be ashamed to worship that artist. Even thou surpassest them, though thou hast not made these things, since thou doest what they cannot do. Even a beast doth excel them; for unto this it is added, "neither cry they through their throat. For after he had said above, "they have mouths, and speak not; what need was there, after he had enumerated the limbs from head to feet, to repeat what he had said of their crying through their throat; unless, I suppose, because we perceive that what he mentioned of the other members, was common to men and beasts? For they see, and hear, and smell, and walk, and some, apes for instance, handle with hands. But what he had said of the mouth, is peculiar to men: since beasts do not speak. But that no one might refer what hath been said to the works of human members alone, and prefer men only to the gods of the heathen; after all this he added these words, "neither cry they through their throat:

which again is common to men and cattle. ...How much better then do mice and serpents, and other animals of like sort, judge of the idols of the heathen, so to speak, for they regard not the human figure in them when they see not the human life. For this reason they usually build nests in them, and unless they are deterred by human movements, they seek for themselves no safer habitations. A man then moveth himself, that he may frighten

away a living beast from his own god; and yet worshippeth that god who cannot move himself, as if he were powerful, from whom he drove away one better than the object of his worshipEven the dead surpasseth a deity who neither liveth nor hath lived. ... 6. But they seem to themselves to have a purer religion, who say, I neither worship an idol, nor a devil; but in the bodily image I behold an emblem of that which I am bound to worship. ...They presume to reply, that they worship not the bodies themselves, but the deities which preside over the government of them. One sentence of the Apostle, therefore, testifieth to their punishment and condemnation; "Who," he saith, "have changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever." For in the former part of this sentence he condemned idols; in the latter, the account they give of their idols: for by designating images wrought by an artificer by the names of the works of God's creation, they change the truth of God into a lie; while, by considering these works themselves as deities, and worshipping them as such, they serve the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. ...

7. But, it will be said, we also have very many instruments and vessels made of materials or metal of this description for the purpose of celebrating the Sacraments, which being consecrated by these ministrations are called holy, in honour of Him who is thus worshipped for our salvation: and what indeed are these very instruments or vessels, but the work of men's hands? But have they mouth, and yet speak not? have they eyes, and see not? do we pray unto them, because through them we pray to God? This is the chief cause of this insane profanity, that the figure resembling the living person, which induces men to worship it, hath more influence in the minds of these miserable persons, than the evident fact that it is not living, so that it ought to be despised by the living. 8. The result that ensueth is that described in the next verse: "They that make them are like unto them, and so are all such as put their trust in them" (ver. 8). Let them therefore see with open eyes, and worship with shut and dead understandings, idols that neither see nor live. "But the house of Israel hath hoped in the Lord" (ver. 9). "For hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." But that this patience may endure to the end, "He is their helper and defender." Do perhaps spiritual persons (by whom carnal minds are built up in "the spirit of

meekness," because they pray as higher for lower minds) already see, and is that already to them reality which to the lower is hope? It is not so. For even "the house of Aaron hath hope in the Lord" (ver. 10). Therefore, that they also may stretch forward perseveringly towards those things which are before them, and may run perseveringly, until they may apprehend that for which they are apprehended, and may know even as they are known, "He is their helper and defender." For both "fear the Lord, and have hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and defender" (ver. 11).

9. For we do not by our deservings prevent the mercy of God; but, "The Lord hath been mindful of us, and hath blessed us. He hath blessed the house of Israel, He hath blessed the house of Aaron" (ver. 12). But in blessing both of these, "He hath blessed all that fear the Lord" (ver. 13). Dost thou ask, who are meant by both of these? He answereth, "both small and great." That is, the house of Israel with the house of Aaron, those who among that nation believed in Jesus the Saviour. ...For in the character of those who out of that nation believed, it is said, "Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha." Seed, because when it has been scattered over the earth, it multiplied. 10. For the great ones, of the house of Aaron, have said, "May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children" (ver. 14). And thus it hath happened. For children that have been raised even from the stones have flocked unto Abraham: sheep which were not of this fold, have flocked unto him, that there might be one flock, and one shepherd; the faith of all nations was added, and the number grew, not only of wise priests, but of obedient peoples; the Lord increasing not only their fathers more and more, who in Christ might show the way to the rest who should imitate them, but also their children, who should follow their fathers' pious footsteps.

11. Therefore the Prophet saith unto these great and small, the mountains and the little hills, the rams and the young sheep, what followeth: "Ye are the blessed of the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (ver. 15). As if he should say, Ye are the blessed of the Lord, who made the heaven in the great, earth in the small: not this visible heaven, studded with luminaries which are objects to these eyes. For "The heaven of heavens is the Lord's" (ver. 16); who hath elevated the minds of some saints to such a height, that they became teachable by no man, but by God Himself; in comparison of which heaven, whatever is discerned with carnal eyes is to be called earth; which "He hath

given to the children of men;" that when it is contemplated, whether in that region which illumineth above, as that which is called heaven, or in that which is illumined beneath, which is properly called earth (since in comparison with that which is called heaven of heaven, the whole, as we have said, is earth;) the whole therefore of this earth He hath given to the children of men, that by the consideration of it, as far as they can, they may conceive of the Creator, whom with their yet weak hearts they cannot see without that aid to their conception.

12. ...But nevertheless since they derive the truth and richness of wisdom, not from man nor through man, but through God Himself, they have received little ones who shall be heaven, that they may know that they are heaven of heaven; as yet however earth, unto which they say, "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." For to those very sons of men whom He made heaven, He who knoweth how to provide for the earth through heaven, hath given earth upon which they work. May they therefore abide, heaven and earth, in their God, who made them, and let them live from Him, confessing unto Him, and praising Him; for if they choose to live from themselves, they shall die, as it is written, "From the dead, as though he were not, confession ceaseth." But, "The dead praise not Thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into silence" (ver. 17). For the Scripture in another passage proclaimeth, "Thesinner, when he cometh into the abyss of wickednesses, scorneth." "But we, who live, will praise the Lord, from this time forth for evermore" (ver. 18).

PSALM 116

1. "I have loved, since the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer" (ver. 1). Let the soul that is sojourning in absence from the Lord sing thus, let that sheep which had strayed sing thus, let that son who had "died and returned to life," who had "been lost and was found;" let our soul sing thus, brethren, and most beloved sons. Let us be taught, and let us abide, and let us sing thus with the Saints: "I have loved: since the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer." Is this a reason for having loved, that the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer? and do we not rather love, because He hath heard, or that He may hear? What then meaneth, "I have loved, since the Lord will hear"? Doth he, because hope is wont to inflame love, say that he hath loved, since he hath hoped that God will listen to the voice of his prayer?

2. But whence hath he hoped for this? Since, he saith, "He hath inclined His ear unto me: and in my days I have called upon Him" (ver. 2). I loved, therefore, because He will hear; He will hear, "because He hath inclined His ear unto me." But whence knowest thou, O human soul, that God hath inclined His ear unto thee, except thou sayest, "I have believed"? These three things, therefore, "abide, faith, hope, charity:" because thou hast believed, thou hast hoped; because thou hast hoped, thou hast loved. ... 3. And what are thy days, since thou hast said, "In my days I have called upon Him"? Are they those perchance, in which "the fulness of time came," and "God sent His Son," who had already said, "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee"? ...I may rather call my days the days of my misery, the days of my mortality, the days according to Adam, full of toil and sweat, the days according to the ancient corruption. "For I lying, stuck fast in the deep mire," in another Psalm also have cried out, "Behold, Thou hast made my days old;" in these days of mine have I called upon Thee. For my days are different from the days of my Lord. I call those my days, which by my own daring I have made for myself, whereby I have forsaken Him: and, since He reigneth everywhere, and is all-powerful, and holdeth all things, I have deserved prison; that is, I have received the darkness of ignorance, and the bonds of mortality. ...For in these days of mine, "The snares of death compassed me round about, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me" (ver. 3): pains that would not have overtaken me, had I not wandered from Thee. But now they have overtaken me; but I found them not, while I was rejoicing in the prosperity of the world, in which the snares of hell deceive the more.

4. But after "I too found trouble and heaviness, I called upon the Name of the Lord" (ver. 4). For trouble and profitable sorrow I did not feel; trouble, wherein He giveth aid, unto whom it is said, "O be Thou our help in trouble: and vain is the help of man." For I thought I might rejoice and exult in the vain help of man; but when I had heard from my Lord, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted:" I did not wait until I should lose those temporal blessings in which I rejoiced, and should then mourn: but I gave heed to that very misery of mine which caused me to rejoice in such things, which I both feared to lose, and yet could not retain; I gave heed to it firmly and courageously, and I saw that I was not only agonized by the adversities of this world, but even bound by its good fortune; and thus "I found the trouble

and heaviness" which had escaped me, "and called upon the Name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul." Let then the holy people of God say, "I called upon the Name of the Lord:" and let the remainder of the heathen hear, who do not as yet call upon the Name of the Lord; let them hear and seek, that they may discover trouble and heaviness, and may call upon the Name of the Lord, and be saved. ...

5. "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful" (ver. 5). He is gracious, righteous, and merciful. Gracious in the first place, because He hath inclined His ear unto me; and I knew not that the ear of God had approached my lips, till I was aroused by those beautiful feet, that I might call upon the Lord's Name: for who hath called upon Him, save he whom He first called? Hence therefore He is in the first place "gracious;" but "righteous," because He scourgeth; and again, "merciful," because He receiveth; for "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth;" nor ought it to be so bitter to me that He scourgeth, as sweet that He receiveth. For how should not "The Lord, who keepeth little ones" (ver. 6), scourge those whom, when of mature age, He seeketh to be heirs; "for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" "I was in misery, and He helped me." He helped me, because I was in misery; for the pain which the physician causeth by his knife is not penal, but salutary.

6. "Turn again then unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath done good to thee" (ver. 7): not for thy deservings, or through thy strength; but because the Lord hath done good to thee. "Since," he saith, "He hath delivered my soul from death" (ver. 8). It is wonderful, most beloved brethren, that, after he had said that his soul should turn unto rest, since the Lord had rewarded him; he added, since "He hath delivered my soul from death. Did it turn unto rest, because it was delivered from death? Is not rest more usually said of death? What is the action of him whose life is rest, and death disquietude? Such then ought to be the action of the soul, as may tend to a quiet security, not one that may increase restless toil; since He hath delivered it from death, who, pitying it, said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," etc. Meek therefore and humble, following, so to speak, Christ as its path, should the action of the soul be that tendeth towards repose; nevertheless, not slothful and supine; that it may finish its course, as it is written, "In quietness make perfect thy works." Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from

falling. Whoever feeleth the chain of this flesh, chanteth these things as fulfilled in hope towards himself. For it is truly said, "I was in misery, and He delivered me;

but the Apostle saith this also truly, that we are saved by hope. And that we are delivered from death, is well said to be already fulfilled, so that we may understand the death of unbelievers, of whom he saith, "Leave the dead to bury their dead." ...He will then clear our eyes of tears, when He shall save our feet from falling. For there will then be no slipping of our feet as they walk, when there will be no sliding of the weak flesh. But now, however firm our path, which is Christ, be; yet since we place flesh, which we are enjoined to subdue, beneath us; in the very work of chastening and subduing it, it is a great thing not to fall: but not to slip in the flesh, who can attain? "I shall please in the sight of the Lord, in the land of the living" (ver. 9). ...We "labour" indeed now, because we are awaiting "the redemption of our body: but, "when death shall have been swallowed up in victory, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality; then there will be no weeping, because there will be no falling; and no falling, because no corruption. And therefore we shall then no longer labour to please, but we shall be entirely pleasing in the sight of the Lord, in the land of the living.

7. ..."I believed," saith he, "and therefore did I speak. But I was sorely brought down" (ver. 10). For he suffered many tribulations, for the sake of the word which he faithfully held, faithfully preached; and he was sorely brought down; as they feared who loved the praise of men better than that of God. But what meaneth, "But I"? He should rather say, I believed, and therefore I have spoken, and I was sorely brought down: why did he add, "But I," save because a man may be sorely brought down by those who oppose the truth, the truth itself cannot, which he believeth and speaketh? Whence also the Apostle, when he was speaking of his chain, saith, "the word of God is not bound." So this man also, since there is one person of the holy witnesses, that is, of the Martyrs of God, saith, "I believed, and therefore will I speak." "But I," not that which I believed, not the word which I have delivered; "but I was sorely brought down."

8. "I said in my trance, All men are liars" (ver. 11). By trance he meaneth fear, which when persecutors threaten, and when the sufferings of torture or death impend, human weakness suffereth. For this we understand, because in this Psalm the voice of Martyrs is heard. For trance is used in another sense

also, when the mind is not beside itself by fear, but is possessed by some inspiration of revelation. "But I said in my haste, All men are liars." In consternation he hath had regard to his infirmity, and hath seen that he ought not to presume on himself; for as far as pertaineth to the man himself, he is a liar, but by the grace of God he is made true; lest yielding to the pressure of his enemies he might not speak what he had believed, but might deny it; even as it happened to Peter, since he had trusted in himself, and was to be taught that we ought not to trust in man. And if every one ought not to trust in man, surely not in himself; because he is a man. Rightly therefore in his fear did he perceive that every man was a liar; since they also whom no fear robs of their presence of mind, so that they never lie by yielding to the persecutors, are such by the gifts of God, not by their own strength. ...

9. "What," he asketh, "what reward shall I give unto the Lord, for all the benefits that He hath returned unto me?" (ver. 12). He saith not, for all the benefits that He hath done unto me but "for all the benefits that He hath returned unto me." What deeds then on the man's part had preceded, that all the benefits of God were not said to be given, but returned? What had preceded, on the man's part, save sins? God therefore repayeth good for evil, whilst unto Him men repay evil for good; for such was the return of those who said, "This is the heir: come, let us kill him." 10. But this man seeketh what he may return unto the Lord, and findeth not, save out of those things which the Lord Himself returneth. "I will receive," he saith, "the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord" (ver. 13). "My vows will I render to the Lord, before all His people" (ver. 14). Who hath given thee the cup of salvation, which when thou takest, and callest upon the Name of the Lord, thou shalt return unto Him a reward for all that He hath returned unto thee? Who, save He who saith, "Are ye able to drink the cup that I shall drink of?" Who hath given unto thee to imitate His sufferings, save He who hath suffered before for thee? And therefore, "Right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints" (ver. 15). He purchased it by His Blood, which He first shed for the salvation of slaves, that they might not hesitate to shed their blood for the Lord's Name; which, nevertheless, would be profitable for their own interests, not for those of the Lord.

11. Let therefore the slave purchased at so great a price confess his condition, and say, "Behold, O Lord, how that I am Thy servant: "I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid" (ver. 16). ...This, therefore, is the son

of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is above, the free mother of us all. And free indeed from sin she is, but the handmaid of righteousness; to whose sons still pilgrims it is said, "Ye have been called unto liberty;" and again he maketh them servants, when he saith, "but by love serve one another." ...Let therefore that servant say unto God, Many call themselves martyrs, many Thy servants, because they hold Thy Name in various heresies and errors; but since they are beside Thy Church, they are not the children of Thy handmaid. But "I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid." "Thou hast broken my bonds asunder."

12. "I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of praise" (ver. 17). For I have not found any deserts of mine, since Thou hast broken my bonds asunder; I therefore owe Thee the sacrifice of praise; because, although I will boast that I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid, I will glory not in myself, but in Thee, my Lord, who hast broken asunder my bonds, that when I return from my desertion, I may again be bound unto Thee. 13. "I will pay my vows unto the Lord" (ver. 18). What vows wilt thou pay? What victims hast thou vowed? what burnt-offerings, what holocausts? Dost thou refer to what thou hast said a little before, "I will receive the cup of salvation, and will call upon the Name of the Lord;" and, "I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving"? and indeed whosoever well considereth what he is vowing to the Lord, and what vows he is paying, let him vow himself, let him pay himself as a vow: this is exacted, this is due. On looking at the coin, the Lord saith, "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's:" his own image is rendered unto Caesar: let His image be rendered unto God.

14. "In the courts," he saith, "of the Lord's house" (ver. 19). What is the Lord's house, the same is the Lord's handmaid: and what is God's house, save all His people? It therefore followeth, "In the sight of all His people." And now he more openly nameth his mother herself. For what else is His people, but what followeth, "In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem"? For than that which is returned grateful, if it be returned from peace, and in peace. But they who are not sons of this handmaid, have loved war rather than peace. ...

PSALM 117

1. "O praise the Lord, all ye heathen: praise Him, all ye nations" (ver. 1). These are the courts of the Lord's house, this all His people, this the true Jerusalem. Let those rather listen who have refused to be the children of this city, since

they have cut themselves off from the communion of all nations. "For His merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever" (ver. 2). These are those two things, loving-kindness and truth, which in the CXV Psalm I admonished you should be committed to memory. But "the merciful kindness of the Lord is ever more and mere towards us," since the furious tongues of hostile nations have yielded to His Name, through which we have been freed: "and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever," whether in those things which He promised to the righteous, or in those which He hath threatened to the ungodly.

PSALM 118

1. ...We are taught in this Psalm, when we chaunt Allelujah, which meaneth, Praise the Lord, that we should, when we hear the words, "Confess unto the Lord" (ver. 1), praise the Lord. The praise of God could not be expressed in fewer words than these, "For He is good." I see not what can be more solemn than this brevity, since goodness is so peculiarly the quality of God, that the Son of God Himself when addressed by some one as "Good Master," by one, namely, who beholding His flesh, and comprehending not the fulness of His divine nature, considered Him as man only, replied, "Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God." And what is this but to say, If thou wishest to call Me good, recognise Me as God? But since it is addressed, in revelation of things to come, to a people freed from all toil and wandering in pilgrimage, and from all admixture with the wicked, which freedom was given it through the grace of God, who not only doth not evil for evil, but even returneth good for evil; it is most appropriately added, "Because His mercy endureth for ever."

2. "Let Israel now confess that He is good, and that His mercy endureth for ever" (ver. 2). "Let the house of Aaron now confess that His mercy endureth for ever" (ver. 3). "Yea, let all now that fear the Lord confess that His mercy endureth for ever" (ver. 4). Ye remember, I suppose, most beloved, what is the house of Israel, what is the house of Aaron, and that both are those that fear the Lord. For they are "the little and the great," who have already in another Psalm been happily introduced into your hearts: in the number of whom all of us should rejoice that we are joined together, in His grace who is good, and whose mercy endureth for ever; since they were listened to who said, "May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children;" that the host of the Gentiles might be added to the Israelites

who believed in Christ, of the number of whom are the Apostles our fathers, for the exaltation of the perfect and the obedience of the little children; that all of us when made one in Christ, made one flock under one Shepherd, and the body of that Head, like one man, may say, "I called upon the Lord in trouble, and the Lord heard me at large" (ver. 5). The narrow straits of our tribulation are limited: but the large way whereby we pass along hath no end. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

3. "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man doeth unto me" (ver. 6). But are men, then, the only enemies that the Church hath? What is a man devoted to flesh and blood, save flesh and blood? But the Apostle saith, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against," ...he saith, "spiritual wickedness in high places;" that is, the devil and his angels; that devil whom elsewhere he calleth "the prince of the power of the air." Hear therefore what followeth: "The Lord is my helper: therefore shall I despise mine enemies" (ver. 7). From what class soever my enemies may arise, whether from the number of evil men, or from the number of evil angels; in the Lord's help, unto whom we chant the confession of praise, unto whom we sing Allelujah, they shall be despised. 4. But, when my enemies have been brought to contempt, let not my friend present himself unto me as a good man, so as to bid me repose my hope in himself: for "It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in man" (ver. 8). Nor let any one, who may in a certain sense be styled a good angel, be regarded by myself as one in whom I ought to put my trust: for "no one is good, save God alone;" and when a man or an angel appear to aid us, when they do this of sincere affection, He doth it through them, who made them good after their measure. "It is" therefore "better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in princes" (ver. 9). For angels also are called princes, even as we read in Daniel, "Michael, your prince."

5. "All nations compassed me round about, but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them" (ver. 10). "They kept me in on every side, they kept me in, I say, on every side; but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them" (ver. 11). He signifieth the toils and the victory of the Church; but, as if the question were asked how she could have overcome so great evils, he looketh back to the example, and declareth what she had first suffered in her Head, by adding what followeth, "They kept me in on every side:" and the words, "All nations," are with reason not repeated here,

because this was the act of the Jews alone. There that very religious nation (which is the body of Christ, and in behalf of which was done all that was done in mortal form with immortal power, by that inward divinity, through the outward flesh), suffered from persecutors, of whose race that flesh was assumed and hung upon the cross.

6 "They came about me as bees do a hive, and burned up even as the fire among the thorns: and in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them" (ver. 12). Here then the order of the words corresponds with the order of events. For we rightly understand that our Lord Himself, the Head of the Church, was surrounded by persecutors, even as bees surround a hive. For the Holy Spirit is speaking with mystic subtlety of what was done by those who knew not what they did. For bees make honey in the hives: while our Lord's persecutors, unconscious as they were, rendered Him sweeter unto us even by His very Passion; so that we may taste and see how sweet is the Lord, "Who died for our sins, and arose for our justification." But what followeth, "and burned up even as the fire among the thorns," is better understood of His Body, that is, of a people spread abroad, whom all nations compassed about, since it was gathered together from all nations. They consumed this sinful flesh, and the grievous piercings of this mortal life, in the flame of persecution. "Taken vengeance on them:" either because they themselves, that wickedness, which in them persecuted the righteous, having been extinguished, were joined with the people of Christ; or because the rest of them, who have at this time scorned the mercy of Him who calleth them, will at the end feel the truth of Him who judgeth them.

7. "I have been driven on like a heap of sand, so that I was falling, but the Lord upheld me" (ver. 13). For though there were a great multitude of believers, that might be compared to the countless sand, and brought into one communion as into one heap; yet "what is man, save Thou be mindful of Him?" He said not, the multitude of the Gentiles could not surpass the abundance of my host, but, "the Lord," he saith, "hath upheld me." The persecution of the Gentiles succeeded not in pushing forward, to its overthrow, the host of the faithful dwelling together in the unity of the faith. 8. "The Lord is my strength and my praise, and is become my salvation" (ver. 14). Who then fall, when they are pushed, save they who choose to be their own strength and their own praise? For no man falleth in the contest, except he whose strength and praise faileth. He therefore whose strength and praise is

the Lord, falleth no more than the Lord falleth. And for this reason He hath become their salvation; not that He hath become anything which He was not before, but because they, when they believed on Him, became what they were not before, and then He began to be salvation unto them when turned towards Him, which He was not to them when turned away from Himself.

9. "The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous" (ver. 15); where they who raged against their bodies thought there was the voice of sorrow and destruction. For they did not know the inward joy of the saints in their future hope. Whence the Apostle also saith, "As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing;" and again, "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also." 10. "The right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass" (ver. 16). What mighty things? saith he. "The right hand of the Lord," he saith, "hath exalted me." It is a mighty thing to exalt the humble, to deify the mortal, to bring perfection out of infirmity, glory from subjection, victory from suffering, to give help, to raise from trouble; that the true salvation of God might be laid open to the afflicted, and the salvation of men might remain of no avail to the persecutors. These are great things: but what art thou surprised at hear what he repeateth: "The right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass."

11. "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord" (ver. 17). But they, while they were dealing havoc and death on every side, thought that the Church of Christ was dying. Behold, he now declareth the works of the Lord. Everywhere Christ is the glory of the blessed Martyrs. By being beaten He conquered those who struck Him; by being patient of torments, the tormentors; by loving, those who raged against Him. 12. Nevertheless, let him point out to us, why the body of Christ, the holy Church, the people of adoption, suffered such indignities. "The Lord," he saith, "hast chastened and corrected me, but He hath not given me over unto death" (ver. 18). Let not then the boastful wicked imagine that aught hath been permitted to their power: they would not have that power, were it not given them from above. Oft doth the father of a family command his sons to be corrected by the most worthless slaves; though he designeth the heritage for the former, fetters for the latter. What is that heritage? Is it of gold, or silver, or jewels, or farms, or pleasant estates? Consider how we enter into it: and learn what it is.

13. "Open me," he saith, "the gates of righteousness" (ver 19). Behold, we have heard of the gates. What is within? "That I may," he saith, "go into

them, and give thanks unto the Lord." This is the confession of praise full of wonder, "even unto the house of God, in the voice of joy and confession of praise, among such as keep holiday:" this is the everlasting bliss of the righteous, whereby they are blessed who dwell in the Lord's house, praising Him for evermore. 14. But consider how the gates of righteousness are entered into. "These are the gates of the Lord" he saith, "the righteous shall enter into them" (ver. 20). At least let no wicked man enter there, that Jerusalem which receiveth not one uncircumcised, where it is said, "Without are dogs." Be it enough, that in my long pilgrimage "I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar:" I endured even unto the end the intercourse of the wicked, but "these are the gates of the Lord: the righteous shall enter into them."

15. "I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation" (ver. 21). How often is that confession proved to be one of praise, that doth not point out wounds to the physician, but giveth thanks for the health it hath received. But the Physician Himself is the Salvation. 16. But who is this whom we speak of? "The Stone which the builders rejected" (ver. 22); for "It hath become the head Stone of the corner" to "make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body;" circumcision, to wit, and uncircumcision. 17. "By the Lord was it made unto it" (ver. 23): that is, it is made into the head stone of the corner by the Lord. For although He would not have become this, had He not suffered: yet He became not this through those from whom He suffered. For they who were building, refused Him: but in the edifice which the Lord was secretly raising, that was made the head stone of the corner which they rejected. "And it is marvellous in our eyes:" in the eyes of the inner man, in the eyes of those that believe, those that hope, those that love; not in the carnal eyes of those who, through scorning Him as if He were a man, rejected Him.

18. "This is the day which the Lord hath made" (ver. 24). This man remembereth that he had said in former Psalms, "Since He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live;" making mention of his old days; whence he now saith, "This is the day which the Lord hath made;" that is, wherein He hath given me Salvation. This is the day whereof He said, "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of Salvation have I helped thee;" that is, a day wherein He, the Mediator, hath

become the head Stone of the corner. "Let us rejoice," therefore, "and be glad in Him." 19. "Save me now, O Lord: prosper Thou well my way, O Lord" (ver. 25). Because it is the day of Salvation, "save me:" because we, returning from a long pilgrimage, are separated from those who hated peace, with whom we were peaceful, and who, when we spoke to them, made war upon us without a cause; "prosper well our way" as we return, since Thou hast become our Way.

20. "Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord" (ver. 26). Cursed, therefore, is he that cometh in his own name; as He saith in the Gospel: "if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." "We have blessed you out of the house of God." I believe that these are the words of the great to the little, of those great ones, to wit, who in spirit commune with God the Word, who is with God, as they may in this life; and yet temper their discourse for the sake of the little ones, so that they may sincerely say what the Apostle saith: "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for yourcause. For the love of Christ constraineth us." They bless the little children from the inner house of the Lord, where that praise faileth not age after age: consider therefore what they proclaim from thence.

21. "God is the Lord, who hath showed us light" (ver. 27). That Lord, who came in the Lord's Name, whom the builders refused, and who became the head Stone of the corner, that "Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ," is God, He is equal with the Father, He hath showed us light, that we might understand what we believed, and declare it to you who understand it not as yet, but already believe it. But that ye also may understand, "Declare a holy day in full assemblies, even unto the horns of the altar;" that is, even unto the inner house of God, from which we have blessed you, where are the high places of the altar. "Declare a holy day," not in a slothful manner, but "in full assemblies" (ver. 28). For this is the voice of joyfulness among those that keep holy day, who walk "in the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God." For if there be there the spiritual sacrifice, the everlasting sacrifice of praise, both the Priest is everlasting, and the peaceful mind of the righteous an everlasting altar. ...

22. And what shall we sing there, save His praises? What else shall we say there, save, "Thou art my God, and I will confess unto Thee; Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee I wilt confess unto Thee, for Thou hast heard me, and art become my Salvation." We will not say these things in loud words;

but the love that abideth in Him of itself crieth out in these words, and these words are love itself. Thus as he began with praise, so he endeth: "Confess unto the Lord, for He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever" (ver. 29). With this the Psalm commenceth, with this it endeth; since, as from the commencement which we have left behind, so in the end, whither we are returning, there is not anything that can more profitably please us, than the praise of God, and Allelujah evermore.

PSALM 119

Aleph.

1. From its commencement, dearly beloved, doth this great Psalm exhort us unto bliss, which there is no one who desireth not. ...And therefore this is the lesson which he teacheth, who saith, "Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord" (ver. 1). As much as to say, I know what thou wishest, thou art seeking bliss: if then thou wouldest be blessed, be undefiled. For the former all desire, the latter fear: yet without it what all wish cannot be attained. But where will any one be undefiled, save in the way? In what way, save in the law of the Lord? ... 2. Listen now to what he addeth: "Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart" (ver. 2). No other class of the blessed seemeth to me to be mentioned in these words, than that which has been already spoken of. For to examine into the testimonies of the Lord, and to seek Him with all the heart, this is to be undefiled in the way, this is to Walk in the law of the Lord. He then goeth on to say, "For they who do wickedness, shall not walk in His ways" (ver. 3). And yet we know that the workers of wickedness do search the testimonies of the Lord for this reason, that they prefer being learned to being righteous: we know that others also search the testimonies of the Lord, not because they are already living well, but that they may know how they ought to live. Such then do not as yet walk undefiled in the law of the Lord, and for this reason are not as yet blessed. ...

3. It is written, and is read, and is true, in this Psalm, that "They who do wickedness, walk not in His ways" (ver. 3). But we must endeavour, with the help of God, "in" whose "hand are both we and our words," that what is rightly said, by not being rightly understood, may not confuse the reader or hearer. For we must beware, lest all the Saints, whose words these are, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" may either not be thought to walk in the ways of the Lord, since sin is wicked-

ness, and "they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways;" or, because it is not doubtful that they walk in the ways of the Lord, may be thought to have no sin, which is beyond doubt false. For it is not said merely for the sake of avoiding arrogance and pride. Otherwise it would not be added, "And the truth is not in us;" but it would be said, Humility is not in us: especially because the following words throw a clearer light on the meaning, and remove all the causes of doubt. For when the blessed John had said this, he added, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." ...

4. What meaneth, "Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much"? (ver. 4). Is it, "Thou hast charged too much"? or, "to keep too much"? Whichever of these we understand, the sense seems contrary to that memorable and noble sentiment which the Greeks praise in their wise men, and which the Latins agree in praising. "Do nothing too much." ...But the Latin language sometimes uses the word *nimis* in such a sense, that we find it in the holy Scripture, and employ it in our discourses, as signifying, very much. In this passage, "Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much," we simply understand very much, if we understand rightly; and if we say to any very dear friend, I love you too much, we do not wish to be understood to mean more than is fitting, but very much. 5. "O that," he saith, "my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes" (ver. 5). Thou indeed hast charged: O that I could realize what thou hast charged. When thou hearest, "O that," recognise the words of one wishing; and having recognised the expression of a wish, lay aside the pride of presumption. For who saith that he desireth what he hath in such a manner in his power, that without need of any help he can do it? Therefore if man desireth what God chargeth, God must be prayed to grant Himself what He enjoineth. ...

6. "So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments" (ver. 6). We ought to look upon the commandments of God, whether when they are read, or when they are recalled to memory, as a looking-glass, as the Apostle James saith. This man wisheth himself to be such, that he may regard as in a mirror the commandments of God, and may not be confounded; because he chooses not merely to be a hearer of them, but a doer. On this account he desireth that his ways may be made direct to keep the statutes of God. How to be made direct, save by the grace of God? Other-

wise he will find in the law of God not a source of rejoicing, but of confusion, if he hath chosen to look into commandments, which he cloth not. 7. "I will confess unto Thee," he saith, "O Lord, in the directing of my heart; in that I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness" (ver. 7). This is not the confession of sins, but of praise; as He also saith in whom there was no sin, "I will confess unto Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth;" and as it is written in the Book of Ecclesiasticus "Thus shalt thou say in confession, of all the works of God, that they are very good." "I will confess unto Thee," he saith, "in the directing of my heart." Indeed, if my ways are made straight, I will confess unto Thee, since Thou hast done it, and this is Thy praise, and not mine. ...

8. Next he addeth: "I will keep Thy ordinances" (ver. 8). ...But what is it that followeth? "O forsake me not even exceedingly!" or, as some copies have it, "even too much," instead of, "even exceedingly." But since God had left the world to the desert of sins, He would have forsaken it "even exceedingly," if so powerful a cure had not supported it, that is, the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; but now, according to this prayer of the body of Christ, He forsook it not "even exceedingly;" for, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." ...

Beth.

9. "Wherewithal shall a young man correct his way? even by keeping Thy words" (ver. 9). He questioneth himself, and answereth himself. "Wherewithal?" So far it is a question: next cometh the answer, "even by keeping Thy words." But in this place the keeping of the words of God, must be understood as the obeying His commandments in deed: for they are kept in memory in vain, if they are not kept in life also. But what is meant by "young man" here? For he might have said, wherewithal shall any one (*homo*) correct his way? or, wherewithal shall a man (*vir*) correct his way? which is usually put by the Scriptures in such a way, that the whole human race is understood. ...But in this passage he saith neither any one, nor a man, but, "a young man." Is then an old man to be despaired of? or doth an old man correct his way by any other means than by ruling himself after God's word? Or is it perhaps an admonition at what age we ought chiefly to correct our way; according to what is elsewhere written, "My son, gather instruction from thy youth up: so shall thou find wisdom till thy gray hairs." There is another mode of interpreting it, by recognising in the expression the younger son in

the Gospel, who returned to himself, and said, "I will arise and go to my father." Wherewithal did he correct his way, save by ruling himself after the words of God, which he desired as one longing for his father's bread. ...

10. "With my whole heart," he saith, "have I sought thee; O repel me not from Thy commandments" (ver. 10). Behold, he prayeth that he may be aided to keep the words of God, wherewith he had said that the young man corrected his way. For this is the meaning of the words, "O repel me not from Thy commandments:" for what is it to be repelled of God, save not to be aided? For human infirmity is not equal to obeying His righteous and exalted commandments, unless His love doth prevent and aid. But those whom He aideth not, these He is justly said to repel. ... 11. "Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I may not sin against Thee" (ver. 11). He at once sought the Divine aid, lest the words of God might be hidden without fruit in his heart, unless works of righteousness followed. For after saying this, he added, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy righteousnesses." (ver. 12). "Teach me," he saith, as they learn who do them; not as they who merely remember them, that they may have somewhat to speak of. Why then doth he say, "Teach me Thy righteousnesses," save because he wisheth to learn them by deeds, not by speaking or retaining them in his memory? Since then, as it is read in another Psalm, "He shall give blessing, who gave the law;" therefore, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord," he saith, "O teach me Thy righteousness." For because I have hidden Thy words in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee, Thou hast given a law; give also the blessing of Thy grace, that by doing right I may learn what Thou by teaching hast commanded. ...

12. "With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth" (ver. 13); that is, I have kept silent nothing of Thy judgments, which Thou didst will should become known to me through Thy words, but I have been telling of all of them without exception with my lips. This he seemeth to me to signify, since he saith not, all Thy judgments, but, "all the judgments of Thy mouth;" that is, which Thou hast revealed unto me: that by His mouth we may understand His word, which He hath discovered unto us in many revelations of the Saints, and in the two Testaments; all which judgments the Church ceaseth not to declare at all times with her lips. 13. "I have had as great delight in the way Thy testimonies, as in all manner of riches" (ver. 14). We understand that there is no more speedy, no more sure, no shorter, no higher way of the testimonies of God than Christ, "in whom

are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Thence he saith that he hath had as great delight in this way, as in all riches. Those are the testimonies, by which He deigneth to prove unto us how much He loveth us. ...

14. "I will talk of Thy commandments, and have respect unto Thy ways" (ver. 15). And thus the Church doth exercise herself in the commandments of God, by speaking in the copious disputations of the learned against all the enemies of the Christian and Catholic faith; which are fruitful to those who compose them, if nothing but the ways of the Lord is regarded in them; but "All the ways of the Lord are," as it is written, "mercy and truth;" the fulness of which both is found in Christ. Through this sweet exercise is gained also what he subjoineth: "My meditation shall be in Thy statutes, and I will not forget Thy word" (ver. 16). "My meditation" shall be therein, that I may not forget them. Thus the blessed man in the first Psalm "shall meditate in the law" of the Lord "day and night." ...

Gimel.

15. He had said, "Wherewithal shall a youngman cleanse his way? Even by keeping Thy words." Behold he now more openly asketh aid that he may do this: "Reward," he saith, "Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word" (ver. 17) ...It is his reward that he asketh, who saith, "Reward Thy servant." For there are four modes of reward: either evil for evil, as God will reward everlasting fire to the unrighteous; or good for good, as He will reward an everlasting kingdom to the righteous; or good for evil, as Christ by grace justifieth the ungodly; or evil for good, as Judas and the Jews through their wickedness persecuted Christ. Of these four modes of reward, the first two belong to justice, whereby evil is rewarded for evil, good for good; the third to mercy, whereby good is rewarded for evil; the fourth God knoweth not, for to none doth He reward evil for good. But that which I have placed third in order, is in the first instance necessary: for unless God rewarded good for evil, there would be none to whom He could reward good for good. ...

16. Nowhere then let human pride raise itself up: God giveth good rewards unto His own gifts. ... 17. "Open Thou mine eyes. and I will consider wondrous things of Thy law" (ver. 18). What he addeth, "I am a lodger upon earth" (ver. 19): or, as some copies read, "I am a sojourner upon earth, O hide not Thy commandments from me," hath the same meaning. ... 18. Here an important question ariseth respecting the soul. For the words, I am a sojourner, or lodger, or stranger upon earth, cannot seem to have been said in

reference to the body, since the body derives its origin from the earth. But in this most profound question I dare not define anything. For if it might justly have been said in respect of the soul (which God forbid we should suppose derived from the earth), "I am a lodger," or "stranger upon earth;" or in reference to the whole man, since he was at one time an inhabitant of Paradise, where he who spake these words was not; or, what is more free from all controversy, if it be not every man who could say this, but one to whom an everlasting country hath been promised in heaven: this I know, "that the life of man on earth is a temptation;" and that "there is a heavy yoke upon the sons of Adam." But it pleaseth me more to discuss the question in accordance with this construction, that we say we are tenants or strangers upon earth, because we have found our country above, whence we have received a pledge, and where when we have arrived we shall never depart. ...

19. Those whose conversation is in heaven, as far as they abide here conversant, are in truth strangers. Let them pray therefore that the commandments of God may not be hidden from them, whereby they may be freed from this temporary sojourn, by loving God, with whom they will be for evermore; and by loving their neighbour, that he may be there where they also themselves will be. 20. But what is loved by loving, if love itself be not loved? Whence by consequence that stranger upon earth, after praying that the commandments of God might not be hidden from him, wherein love is enjoined either solely or principally; declareth that he desireth to have a love for love itself, saying, "My soul hath coveted to have a desire alway after Thy judgments" (ver. 20). This coveting is worthy of praise, not of condemnation. ... 21. But he saith not, "coveteth," only; but, "My soul hath coveted to desire Thy judgments." For there is no obstacle to possessing the judgments of God, save that they are not desired, while love hath no warmth toward winning them, though their light is so clear and shining. ...

22. "Thou hast rebuked the proud: and cursed are they that do err from Thy commandments" (ver. 21). For the proud err from the commandments of God. For it is one thing not to fulfil the commandments of God through infirmity or ignorance; another to err from them through pride; as they have done, who have begotten us in our mortal state unto these evils. ...But consider now, after saying, "Thou hast rebuked the proud," he saith not, Cursed are they that have erred from Thy commandments; so that only that sin of the first men should come into the mind; but he saith, "Cursed are they

that do err." For it was needful that all might be terrified by that example, that they might not err from the divine commandments, and by loving righteousness in all time, recover in the toil of this world, what we lost in the pleasure of Paradise.

23. "O turn from me shame and rebuke; for I have sought out Thy testimonies" (ver. 22). Testimonies are called in Greek *marturia*, which word we now use for the Latin word: whence those who on account of their testimony to Christ have been brought low by various sufferings, and have contended unto death for the truth, are not called testes, but by the Greek term *Martyrs*. Since then ye hear in this term one more familiar and grateful, let us take these words as if it, were said, "O turn from me shame and rebuke; because I have sought out Thy martyrdoms." When the body of Christ speaketh thus, doth it consider it any punishment to hear rebuke and shame from the ungodly and the proud, since it rather reacheth the crown by this means? Why then doth it pray that it should be removed from it as something heavy and insupportable, save because, as I said, it prayeth for its very enemies, to whom it seeth it is destructive, to cast the holy name of Christ as a reproach to Christians. ...For my enemies, whom Thou enjoimest to be loved by me, who more and more die and are lost, when they despise Thy martyrdoms and accuse them in me, will indeed be recalled to life and be found, if they reverence Thy martyrdoms in me. Thus it hath happened: this we see. Behold, martyrdom in the name of Christ, both with men and in this world, is not only not a disgrace, but a great ornament: behold, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of men, "precious is the death of His Saints;" behold, His martyrs are not only not despised, but honoured with great distinctions. ...

24. "Princes also did sit and speak against me: but Thy servant is exercised in Thy statutes" (ver. 23). Thou who desirest to know what sort of exercise this was, understand what he hath added, "For Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors" (ver. 24). Remember what I have above instructed you, that testimonies are acts of martyrdom. Remember that among the statutes of the Lord there is none more difficult and more worthy of admiration, than that every man should love his enemies. Thus then the body of Christ was exercised, so that it meditated on the acts of martyrdom that testified of Him, and loved those from whom, while they

rebuked and despised the Church for these very martyrdoms, she suffered persecutions. ...

Daleth.

25. "My soul cleaveth to the pavement: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word" (ver. 25). What meaneth, "My soul cleaveth to the pavement, O quicken Thou me according to Thy word"? ...If we look upon the whole world as one great house, we see that the heavens represent its vaulting, the earth therefore will be its pavement. He wisheth therefore to be rescued from earthly things, and to say with the Apostle, "Our conversation' is in heaven." To cling therefore to earthly things is the soul's death; the contrary of which evil, life is prayed for, when he saith, "O quicken Thou me." 26. ...The body itself also, because it is of the earth, is reasonably understood by the word pavement; since, because it is still corruptible and weigheth down the soul, we justly groan while in it, and say unto God, "O quicken Thou me." For we shall not be without our bodies when we shall be for evermore with the Lord; but then because they will not be corruptible, nor will they weigh down our souls, if we view it strictly, we shall not cleave unto them, but they rather unto us, and we unto God. ...

27. For what he was by himself, he confesseth in the following words: "I have acknowledged my ways, and Thou heardest me" (ver. 26). Some copies indeed read, "Thy ways:" but more, and the best Greek, read "my ways," that is, evil ways. For he seemeth to me to say this; I have confessed my sins, and Thou hast heard me; that is, so that Thou wouldest remit them. "O teach me Thy statutes." I have acknowledged my ways: Thou hast blotted them out: teach me Thine. So teach me, that I may act; not merely that I may know how I ought to act. For as it is said of the Lord, that He knew not sin, and it is understood, that He did no sin; so also he ought truly to be said to know righteousness, who doeth it. This is the prayer of one who is improving. ...

28. Finally he addeth, "Intimate to me the way of Thy righteousness" (ver. 27); or, as some copies have it, "instruct me;" which is expressed more closely from the Greek, "Make me to understand the way of Thy righteousnesses; so shall I be exercised in Thy wondrous things." These higher commandments, which he desireth to understand by edification, he calleth the wondrous things of God. There are then some righteousnesses of God so wondrous, that human weakness may be believed incapable of fulfilling them by those who have not tried. Whence the Psalmist, struggling and wearied with the

difficulty of obeying them, saith, "My soul hath slumbered for very heaviness: O stablish Thou me with Thy word!" (ver. 28). What meaneth, hath slumbered? save that he hath cooled in the hope which he had entertained of being able to reach them. But, he addeth, "Stablish Thou me with Thy word:" that I may not by slumbering fall away from those duties which I feel that I have already attained: stablish Thou me therefore in those words of Thine that I already hold, that I may be able to reach unto others through edification.

29. "Take Thou from me the way of iniquity" (ver. 29). And since the law of works hath entered in, that sin might abound; he addeth, "And pity me according to Thy law." By what law, save by the law of faith? Hear the Apostle: "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works. Nay: but by the law of faith." This is the law of faith, whereby we believe and pray that it may be granted us through grace; that we may effect that which we cannot fulfil through ourselves; that we may not, ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to stablish our own, fail to submit ourselves unto the righteousness of God. 30. But after he had said, "And pity me according to Thy law;" he mentioneth some of those blessings which he hath already obtained, that he may ask others that he hath not yet gained. For he saith, "I have chosen the way of truth: and Thy judgments I have not forgotten" (ver. 30). "I have stuck unto Thy testimonies: O Lord, confound me not" (ver. 31): may I persevere in striving toward the point whereunto I am running: may I arrive whither I am running! So then "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." He next saith, "I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my heart" (ver. 32). I could not run hadst Thou not widened my heart. The sense of the words, "I have chosen the way of truth, and Thy judgments I have not forgotten: I have stuck unto Thy testimonies," is clearly explained in this verse. For this running is along the way of the commandments of God. And because he doth allege unto the Lord rather His blessings than his own deservings; as if it were said unto him, How hast thou run that way, by choosing, and by not forgetting the judgments of God, and by sticking to His testimonies? Couldst thou do these things by thyself? I could not, he replieth. It is not therefore through my own will, as though it needed no aid of Thine; but because "Thou has widened my heart." The widening of the heart is the delight we take in righteousness. This is the gift of God, the effect of

which is, that we are not straitened in His commandments through the fear of punishment, but widened through love, and the delight we have in righteousness. ...

He.

31. In this great Psalm there cometh next in order that which, with the Lord's help, we must consider and treat of. "Set a law for me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes, and I shall seek it alway" (ver. 33). ... 32. Why doth this man still pray for a law to be laid down for him; which, if it had not been laid down for him, he could not have run the way of God's commandments in the breadth of his heart? But since one speaketh who is growing in grace, and who knoweth that it is God's gift that he profiteth in grace; what else doth he pray, when he prayeth that a law may be laid down for him, save that he may profit more and more? As, if thou holdest a full cup, and givest it to a thirsty man; he both exhausts it by drinking it, and prayeth for it by still longing for it. ...

33. But what meaneth, "Evermore"? ...Doth "evermore" mean as long as we live here, because we progress in grace so long; but after this life, he who was in a good course of improvement here, is made perfect there? Here the law of God is examined into, as long as we progress in it, both by knowing it and by loving it: but there its fulness abideth for our enjoyment, not for our examination. Thus also is this spoken, "Seek His face evermore." Where, evermore, save here? For we shall not there also seek the face of God, when "we shall see face to face." Or if that which is loved without a change of affection is rightly said to be sought after, and our only object is, that it be not lost, we shall indeed evermore seek the law of God, that is, the truth of God: for in this very Psalm it is said, "And Thy law is the truth." It is now sought, that it may be held fast; it will then be held fast that it may not be lost. ...

34. "Give me understanding, and I shall search Thy law, yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart" (ver. 34). For when each man hath searched the law, and searched its deep things, in which its whole meaning doth consist; he ought indeed to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind; and his neighbour as himself. "For on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." This he seemeth to have promised, when he said, "Yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart." 35. But since he hath no power to do even this, save he be aided by Him who commandeth him to do what He commandeth, "Make me," he addeth, "to go in the path of Thy

commandments, for therein is my desire" (ver. 35). My desire is powerless, unless Thou Thyself makest me to go where I desire. And this is surely the very path, that is, the path of God's commandments, which he had already said that he had run, when his heart was enlarged by the Lord. And this he calleth a "path," because "the way is narrow which leadeth unto life;" and since it is narrow, we cannot run therein save with a heart enlarged. ...

36. He next saith, "Incline mine heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness" (ver. 36). This then he prayeth, that he may profit in the will itself. ...But the Apostle saith, "Avarice is a root of all evils." But in the Greek, whence these words have been rendered into our tongue, the word used by the Apostle is not *pleonecia*, which occurs in this passage of the Psalms; but *filarguria*, by which is signified "love of money." But the Apostle must be understood to have meant genus by species when he used this word, that is, to have meant avarice universally and generally by love of money, which is truly the root of all evils. ...If therefore our heart be not inclined to covetousness, we fear God only for God's sake, so that He is the only reward of our serving Him. Let us love Him in Himself, let us love Him in ourselves, Him in our neighbours whom we love as ourselves, whether they have Him, or in order that they may have Him. ...

37. The next words in the Psalm which we have undertaken to expound are, "O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity: and quicken Thou me in Thy way" (ver. 37). Vanity and truth are directly contrary to one another. The desires of this world are vanity: but Christ, who freeth us from the world, is truth. He is the way, too, wherein this man wisheth to be quickened, for He is also the life: "I am the way, the truth, and the life," are His own words. 38. ...He prayeth that those eyes wherewith we consider on what account we do what we do, may be turned away that they behold not vanity; that is, that he may not look to vanity, as his motive, when he doeth anything good. In this vanity the first place is held by the love of men's praise, on account of which many great deeds have been wrought by those who are styled great in this world, and who have been much praised in heathen states, seeking glory not with God, but among men, and on account of this living in appearance prudently, courageously, temperately, and righteously; and when they have reached this they have reached their reward: vain men, and vain reward. ...Moreover, if it be a vain thing to do good works for the sake of men's praises, how much more vain for the sake of getting

money, or increasing it, or retaining it, and any other temporal advantage, which cometh unto us from without? Since "all things are vanity: what is man's abundance, with all his toil, wherein he laboureth under the sun?" For our temporal welfare itself finally we ought not to do our good works, but rather for the sake of that everlasting welfare which we hope for, where we may enjoy an unchangeable good, which we shall have from God, nay, what God Himself is unto us. For if God's Saints were to do good works for the sake of this temporal welfare, never would the martyrs of Christ achieve a good work of confession in the loss of this same welfare. ...

39. "O stablish Thy word in Thy servant, that I may fear Thee" (ver. 38). And what else is this than, Grant unto me that I may do according to what Thou sayest? For the word of God is not stablished in those who remove it in themselves by acting contrary to it; but it is stablished in those in whom it is immoveable. God therefore stablisheth His word, that they may fear Him, in those unto whom He giveth the spirit of the fear of Him; not that fear of which the Apostle saith, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;" for "perfect love casteth out" this "fear," but that fear which the Prophet calleth "the spirit of the fear of the Lord;" that fear which "is pure, and endureth for ever;" that fear which feareth to offend Him whom it loveth. 40. "Take away my reproach which I have suspected, for Thy judgments are sweet" (ver. 39). Who is he who suspected his own reproach, and who doth not know his own reproach better than that of his neighbour? For a man may rather suspect another's than his own; since he knoweth not that which he suspecteth; but in each one's own reproach there is not suspicion for him, but knowledge, wherein conscience speaketh. What then mean the words, "the rebuke which I have suspected"? The meaning of them must be derived from the former verse; since as long as a man doth not turn away his eyes lest they behold vanity, he suspecteth in others what is going on in himself; so that he believeth another to worship God, or do good works, from the same motive as himself. For men can see what we do, but with a view to what end we act, is hidden. ...

41. "Behold, I have coveted Thy commandments: O quicken Thou me in Thy righteousness" (ver. 40). Behold, I have coveted to love Thee with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my mind, and my neighbour as myself, but, "O quicken Thou me" not in my own, but "in Thy righteousness," that is, fill me with that love which I have longed for. Aid me that I may do

that which Thou chargest me: Thyself give what Thou dost command. "O quicken Thou me in Thy righteousness:" for in myself I had that which would cause my death: but I find not save in Thee whence I may live. Christ is Thy righteousness, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom," etc. And in Him I find Thy commandments, which I have coveted, that in Thy righteousness, that is, in Him, Thou mayest quicken me. For the Word Himself is God; and "the Word was made flesh," that He Himself also might be my neighbour.

Vav.

42. "And let Thy loving mercy come also unto us, O Lord" (ver. 41). This sentence seems annexed to the foregoing: for he doth not say, Let it come unto me, but, "And let it come unto me." ...What then doth he here pray for, save that through His loving mercy who commanded, he may perform the commandments which he hath coveted? For he explaineth in some degree what he meant by adding, "even Thy salvation, according to Thy word:" that is, according to Thy promise. Whence the Apostle desireth us to be understood as the children of promise: that we may not imagine that what we are is our own work, but refer the whole to the grace of God. ...Christ Himself is the Salvation of God, so that the whole body of Christ may say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." 43. "And so shall I make answer," he saith, "to them that reproach me with the word" (ver. 42). It is doubtful whether it be "reproach me with a word;" or, "I will answer with a word;" but either signifieth Christ. They to whom Christ crucified is a stumbling-block or foolishness, reproach us with Him; ignorant that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us;" the Word which "was in the beginning," and "was with God, and was God." But although they may not reproach us with the Word which is unknown unto them, because His Divinity is not known unto those by whom His weakness on the Cross is despised; let us nevertheless make answer of the Word, and let us not be terrified or confounded by their reproaches. For "if they had known" the Word, "they would never have crucified the Lord of glory." ...Therefore, when the Psalmist had said, "I will make answer unto them that reproach me with the word:" he at once addeth, "For my trust is in Thy words," which meaneth exactly, in Thy promises.

44. "O take not the word of Thy truth away out of my mouth even exceedingly" (ver. 43). He saith, out of my mouth, because the unity of the body is speaking, among whose members those also are counted who failed

at the hour by denying, but by penitence afterwards came again to life, or even, by renewing their confession, received the palm of martyrdom, which they had lost. The word of truth, therefore, was not "even exceedingly," or, as some copies have it, even every way, that is not altogether taken from the mouth of Peter, in whom was the type of the Church; because although he denied for the hour, being disturbed with fear, yet by weeping he was restored, and by confessing was afterwards crowned. The whole body of Christ therefore speaketh. ...Next followeth, "for I have hoped in Thy judgments." Or, as some have more strictly rendered it from the Greek, "I have hoped more;" a word which, although compounded in a somewhat unusual way, yet answers the necessary purpose of conveying the truth in a translation. ...Behold the saints and the humble in heart when they have trusted in Thee, have not failed in persecutions: behold also those who from trusting in themselves have failed, and nevertheless have belonged to the Very Body, have wept when they became known unto themselves, and have found Thy grace a more solid support, because they have lost their own pride.

45. "So shall I always keep Thy law" (ver. 44): that is, if Thou wilt not take the word of Thy truth out of my mouth. "Yea, unto age, and age of age:" he sheweth what he meant by "always." For sometimes by "always" is meant, as long as we live here; but this is not, "unto age, and age of age." For it is better thus translated than as some copies have, "to eternity, and to age of age," since they could not say, and to eternity of eternity. That law therefore should be understood, of which the Apostle saith, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." For this will be kept by the saints, from whose mouth the word of truth is not taken, that is, by the Church of Christ Herself, not only during this world, that is, until this world is ended; but for another also which is styled, "world without end." ...

46. "And I walked at liberty: for I sought Thy precepts" (ver. 45). ... "And I walked at liberty." Here the copulative conjunction, "and," is not used as a connecting particle; for he doth not say, and I will walk, as he had said, "and I will keep Thy commandments for ever and ever:" or if this latter verse be in the optative mood, and may I keep Thy law; he doth not add, And may I walk at liberty, as if he had desired and prayed for both of these things; but he saith, "And I walked at liberty." If this conjunction were not used here, and if the sentence were introduced free from any such connection with what preceded, "I walked at liberty," the reader would never be induced by

anything unusual in the mode of speech to think he should seek for some hidden sense. Doubtless, then, he wished what he hath not said to be understood, that is, that his prayers had been heard; and he then added what he had become: as if he were to say, When I prayed for these things, Thou heardest me, "And I walked at liberty;" and so with the remaining expressions which he hath added to the same purpose.

47. ...Whence after he had said, "And I walked at liberty," he subjoined the reason, "For I sought out Thy commandments." Some copies have not "commandments" but "testimonies:" but we find "commandments" in most, and especially in the Greek; and who would hesitate rather to believe this tongue, as prior to our own, and that from which these Psalms have been rendered into Latin? If then we wish to know how he sought out these commandments, or how they ought to be sought out, let us consider what our good Master, who both taught and gave them, saith: "Ask, and it shall be given you." And a little lower, "If ye then," He saith, "being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him." Where He evidently showeth, that the words He had spoken, seek, ask, knock, belong only to earnestness in asking, that is, in praying. Moreover, another Evangelist saith not, He will give good things to them that ask Him; which may be understood in many ways, either as earthly or spiritual blessings; but has excluded other interpretations, and very carefully expressed what our Lord wished us to pray earnestly and instantly for, in these words: "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." ...

48. "I spoke of Thy testimonies also," he saith, "before kings, and I was not ashamed" (ver. 46): as one who had sought and had received grace to answer those who reproached him with the word, and the promise that the word of truth should not be taken from his mouth. Struggling for this truth even unto death, not even before kings was he ashamed to speak of it. For testimonies, whereof he doth avow that he was speaking, are in Greek styled *marturia*, a word which we now employ instead of the Latin. The name of "Martyrs," unto whom Jesus foretold, that they should confess Him even before kings, is derived hence. 49. "And I meditated," he saith, "on Thy commandments, which I have loved" (ver. 47). "My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved" (ver. 48); or, as some copies

read, "which I have loved exceedingly," or "too much," or "vehemently," as they have chosen to render the Greek word *sfodra*. He then loved the commandments of God because he walked at liberty; that is, through the Holy Spirit, through whom love itself is shed abroad, and enlargeth the hearts of the faithful. But he loved, both in thought and in acts. With a view to thought, he saith, "And I meditated:" as to action, "My hands also have I lifted up." But to both sentences, he hath annexed the words, "which I have loved:" for "the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart." ...The following words, "And my study was in Thy statutes," relate to both. This expression most of the translators have preferred to this, "I rejoiced in," or "I talked of," a version which some have given from the Greek *hdolesxoun*. For he who keepeth the commandments of God, which he loveth, both in thought and in works taking delight in them, is exercised with joy, and with a certain abundance of speech, in the judgments of God.

Zain.

50. "O remember Thy word unto Thy servant, wherein Thou hast given me hope" (ver. 49). Is forgetfulness incident to God, as it is to man? Why then is it said unto Him, "O remember"? Although in other passages of holy Scripture this very word is used, as, "Why hast Thou forgotten me?" and, "Wherefore forgettest Thou our misery?" ...These expressions are borrowed from moral discourses on human affections; although God doth these things according to a fixed dispensation, with no failing memory, nor with an understanding obscured, nor with a will changed. When therefore it is said unto Him, "O remember," the desire of him who prayeth is displayed, because he asketh for what was promised; God is not admonished, as if the promise had escaped from His mind. "O remember," he saith, "Thy word unto Thy servant:" that is, fulfil Thy promise to Thy servant. "Wherein Thou hast given me hope:" that is, in Thy Word, since Thou hast promised, Thou hast caused me to hope.

51. "The same is my comfort in my humiliation" (ver. 50). Namely, that hope which is given to the humble, as the Scripture saith: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." Whence also our Lord Himself saith with His own lips, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." We well understand here that humiliation also, not whereby each man humbleth himself by confessing his sins, and by not arrogating righteousness to himself; but when each man is

humbled by some tribulation or mortification which his pride deserved; or when he is exercised and proved by endurance; whence a little after this Psalm saith, "Before I was troubled, I went wrong." ...And the Lord Jesus, when He foretold that this humiliation would be brought upon His disciples by their persecutors, did not leave them without a hope; but gave them one, whereby they might find comfort, in these words: "In your patience shall ye possess your souls;" and declared even of their very bodies, which might be put to death by their enemies, and seemingly be utterly annihilated, that not a hair of their heads should perish. This hope was given to Christ's Body, that is, to the Church, that it might be a comfort to Her in her humiliation. ...This hope He gave in the prayer which He taught us, where He enjoined us to say, "Lead us not into temptation:" for He in a manner implicitly promised that He would give to His disciples in their danger that which He taught them to ask for in their prayers. And indeed this Psalm is rather to be understood to speak of this hope: "For 'Thy word hath quickened me.'" Which they have rendered more closely who have put not "word," but "utterance." For the Greek has *logion*, which is "utterance;" not *logoj*, which is "word."

52. The next verse is, "The proud dealt exceeding wickedly: yet have I not shrunk from Thy law" (ver. 51). By the proud he wished to be understood the persecutors of the pious; and he therefore added, "yet have I not shrunk from Thy laws," because the persecution of the proud attempted to force him to do this. He saith that they dealt "exceeding wickedly," because they were not only wicked themselves, but even tried to make the godly wicked. In this humiliation, that is, in this tribulation, that hope comforted him which was given in the word of God, who promised aid, that the faith of the Martyrs might not faint; and who by the presence of His Spirit gave strength to them in their toils, that they might escape from the snare of the fowlers. ... 53. "For I was mindful of Thy judgments from the beginning of the world, O Lord, and received comfort" (ver. 52); or, as other copies have it, "and I was exhorted," that is, I received exhortation. For either might be rendered for the Greek *pareklhqhn*. "From the beginning of the world," that is, from the birth of the human race, "I was mindful of Thy judgments" upon the vessels of wrath, which are fitted unto perdition: "and I received comfort," since through these also hast Thou shown the riches of Thy glory on the vessels of Thy mercy.

54. "Weariness hath held me; for the ungodly that forsake Thy law" (ver. 53). "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage" (ver. 54). This is the low estate, in the house of mortality, of the man who so journeyeth away from Paradise and the Jerusalem above, whence one going down to Jericho fell among robbers; but, in consequence of the deed of mercy which was done him by that Samaritan, the statutes of God became his song in the house of his pilgrimage; although he was weary for the ungodly that forsook the law of God, since he was compelled to converse with them for a season in this life, until the floor be threshed. But these two verses may be adapted to the two clauses of the preceding verse, respectively. 55. "I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season, and have kept Thy law" (ver. 55). Night is that low estate wherein is the trouble of mortality; night is in the proud who deal exceeding wickedly; night is the fear for the ungodly who forsake the law of the Lord; night is, lastly, the house of this pilgrimage, "until the Lord come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God." In this night, therefore, man ought to remember the Name of the Lord; "So that he who glorieth, may glory in the Lord."

56. Considering this, he addeth, "This was made unto me, because I sought out Thy righteousnesses" (ver. 56). "Thy" righteousnesses, whereby Thou dost justify the ungodly; not mine, which never make me godly, but proud. For this man was not one of those who, "ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Others have better interpreted these righteousnesses, as those whereby men are justified for nought through God's grace, though by themselves they cannot be righteous, "justifications." But what meaneth, "This was made unto me"? What is "This"? It is perhaps the law? as he had said, "and I have kept Thy law;" to which he subjoins, "This was made unto me," meaning, "This was made my law." We must therefore enquire first what was thus made unto him, next in what manner, whatever it may have been, was made unto him. "This," he saith, "was made unto me:" not "This law," for the Greek, as I have said, refuseth this sense. Perhaps then, "This night:" since the preceding sentence stands thus: "I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season:" and the next words are, "This was made unto me:" since then it is not the law, it must truly be

the night which is thus spoken of. What then meaneth, "I had the night-season: for I have sought out Thy righteousnesses"? Rather light had come unto him than night, since he sought out the righteousnesses of God. And it is thus rightly understood, "It was made unto me," as if it were said, It became night for my sake, that is, that it might profit me. For that low estate of mortality is not absurdly understood as night, where the hearts of mortals are hid to one another, so that from such darkness innumerable and heavy temptations arise. ...

Cheth.

57. Let us hear what followeth: "I have promised to keep Thy law." What meaneth, "My portion, O Lord: I have promised to keep Thy law" (ver. 57); save because the Lord will be each man's portion then, when he hath kept His law? Consider therefore what he subjoineth: "I entreated Thy face, with my whole heart:" and saying in what manner he prayed: "O be merciful," he saith, "unto me, according to Thy word" (ver. 58). And as if he had been heard and aided by Him whom he prayed unto, "I thought," he saith, "on mine own ways, and turned away my feet unto Thy testimonies" (ver. 59). That is, I turned them away from mine own ways, which displeased me, that they might follow Thy testimonies, and there might find a path. For most of the copies have not, "Because I thought," as is read in some; but only, "I thought." But what is here written, "and I turned away my feet:" some read, "Because I thought, Thou also hast turned away my feet:" that this may rather be ascribed to the grace of God, according to the Apostle's words, "For it is God who worketh in us." ...

58. Lastly, when he had received this blessing of grace, he saith, "I was ready, and was not disturbed, that I may keep Thy commandments" (ver. 60). Which some have rendered, "to keeping Thy commandments," some "that I should keep," others "to keep," the Greek being *tou fulacasqai*. 59. But in what manner he was ready to keep the divine commandments, he hath added, in these words: "The bands of the ungodly have surrounded me: but I have not forgotten Thy law" (ver. 61). "The bands of the ungodly" are the hindrances of our enemies, whether spiritual, as the devil and his angels, or carnal the children of disobedience, in whom the devil worketh. For this word *peccatorum* is not from *peccata*, "sins;" but from *peccatores*, "sinners." Therefore when they threaten evils, with which to alarm the righteous, that they may not suffer for the law of God, they, so to speak, entangle them with

bands, with a strong and tough cord of their own. For "they draw iniquity like a long rope," and thus endeavour to entangle the holy, and sometimes are allowed so to do.

60. "At midnight," he saith, "I rise to give thanks unto Thee: because of Thy righteous judgments" (ver. 62). This very fact, that the bands of the ungodly surround the righteous, is one of the righteous judgments of God. On which account the Apostle Peter saith, "The time is come when judgment must begin at the house of the Lord." For he saith this of the persecutions which the Church suffered, when the bands of the ungodly surrounded them. I suppose, therefore, that by "midnight" we should understand the heavier seasons of tribulation. In which he said, "I arose : " since He did not so afflict him, as to cast him down; but tried him, so that he arose, that is, that through this very tribulation he might advance unto a bolder confession. 61. For I imagine that what followeth, "I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and keep Thy commandments" (ver. 63), doth relate to the Head Himself, as it is in the Epistle which is inscribed to the Hebrews: "Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." ...Therefore Jesus Himself speaketh in this prophecy: some things in His Members and in the Unity of His Body, as if in one man diffused over the whole world, and growing up in succession throughout the roll of ages: and some things in Himself our Head. And on this account, that since He became the companion of His brethren, God of men, the Immortal of the mortal, for this reason the seed felt upon the earth, that by its death it might produce much fruit; he next addeth concerning this very fruit, "The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy" (ver. 64). And whence this, save when the ungodly is justified? That we may make progress in the knowledge of this grace, he addeth, "O teach me Thy righteousnesses!"

Teth.

62. "Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant: according unto Thy word;" or rather, "according unto Thine utterance" (ver. 65). The Greek word *xrhstothj* hath been variously rendered by our translators by the words "sweetness" and "goodness." But since sweetness may exist also in evil, since all unlawful and unclean things afford pleasure, and it may also exist in that carnal pleasure which is permitted; we ought to understand the word "sweetness," which the Greeks termed *krhstothj*, of spiritual blessings: for on this

account our translators have preferred to term it "goodness." I think therefore that nothing else is meant by the words, "Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant," than this, 'Thou hast made me feel delight in that which is good. For when that which is good delighteth, it is a great gift of God. But when the good work which the law commandeth is done from a fear of punishment, not from a delight in righteousness, when God is dreaded, not loved; it is the act of a slave, not of a freeman.

63. "O learn me sweetness, and understanding, and knowledge," he saith, "for I have believed Thy commandments" (ver. 66). He prayeth these things may be increased and perfected. For they who said, "Lord, increase our faith," had faith. And as long as we live in this world, these are the words of those who are making progress. But he addeth, "understanding," or, as most copies read, "discipline." Now the word discipline, for which the Greeks use *paideia*, is employed in Scripture, where instruction through tribulation is to be understood: according to the words, "Whom the Lord loveth He disciplineth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." In the literature of the Church this is usually called discipline. For this word, *paideia*, is used in the Greek in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the Latin translator saith, "No discipline for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous," etc. He therefore toward whom the Lord dealeth in sweetness, that is, he in whom He mercifully inspires delight in that which is good, ought to pray instantly, that this gift may be so increased unto him, that he may not only despise all other delights in comparison with it, but also that he may endure any amount of sufferings for its sake. Thus is discipline healthfully added to sweetness. This discipline ought not to be desired, and prayed for, for a small measure of grace and goodness, that is, holy love; but for so great, as may not be extinguished by the weight of the chastening: ...so much in fact as to enable him to endure with the utmost patience the discipline. In the third place is mentioned knowledge; since, if knowledge in its greatness outstrips the increase of love, it doth not edify, but "puffeth up." ...

64. But in that he saith, not, Give unto me; but, "O learn me;" how is the sweetness taught, if it be not given? Since many know what doth not delight them, and find no sweetness in things of which they have knowledge. For sweetness cannot be learnt, unless it please. Also discipline, which signifieth the tribulation which chasteneth, is learnt by receiving; that is, not by hearing, or reading, or thinking, but by feeling. ... 65. He addeth, "for I have be-

lieved Thy commandments," and herein we may justly enquire, why he said not, I obeyed, rather than, I believed. For commandments are one thing, promises another. We undertake to obey commandments, that we may deserve to receive promises. We therefore believe promises, obey commandments. ...Teach me therefore sweetness by inspiring charity, teach me discipline by giving patience, teach me knowledge by enlightening my understanding: "for I have believed Thy commandments." I have believed that Thou who art God, and who givest unto man whence Thou mayest cause him to do what Thou commandest, hast commanded these things.

66. "Before I was humbled, I went wrong; wherefore I have kept Thy word" (ver. 67); or, as some have it more closely, "Thy utterance," that is, lest I should be humbled again. This is better referred to that humiliation which took place in Adam, in whom the whole human creature, as it were, being corrupted at the root, as it refused to be subject to truth, "was made subject to vanity." Which it was profitable to the vessels of mercy to feel, that by throwing down pride, obedience might be loved, and misery perish, never again to return. 67. "Sweet art Thou, O Lord;" or, as many have it, "Sweet art Thou, even Thou, O Lord" (ver. 68). Some also, "Sweet art Thou," or, "Good art Thou:" as we have before treated of this word: "and in Thy sweetness teach me Thy statutes." He truly desireth to do the righteousnesses of God, since he desireth to learn them in His sweetness from Him unto whom he hath said, "Sweet art Thou, O Lord."

68. Next he saith, "The iniquity of the proud hath been multiplied upon me" (ver. 69): of those, that is, whom it profited not that human nature was humbled after it went wrong. "But I will search Thy commandments with my whole heart." Howsoever, he saith, iniquity shall abound, love shall not grow cold in me. He, as it were, saith this, who in His sweetness learneth the righteousnesses of God. For in proportion as the commandments of Him who aideth us are the more sweet, so much the more doth he who loveth Him search after them, that he may perform them when known, and may learn them by doing them; because they are more perfectly understood when they are performed. 69. "Their heart is curdled as milk" (ver. 70). Whose, save the proud, whose iniquity he hath said hath been multiplied upon him? But he wisheth it to be understood by this word, and in this passage, that their heart hath become hard. It is used also in a good sense, and is understood to mean, full of grace: for this word, some have also interpreted "curdled." ...

70. "It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me: that I might learn Thy righteousnesses" (ver. 71). He hath said something kindred to this above. For by the fruit itself he sheweth that it was a good thing for him to be humbled; but in the former passage he hath stated the cause also, in that he had felt beforehand that humiliation which resulted from his punishment, when he went wrong. But in these words, "Wherefore have I kept Thy word:" and again in these, "That I might learn Thy righteousnesses:" he seemeth to me to have signified, that to know these is the same thing as to keep them, to keep them the same thing as to know them. For Christ knew what He reproveth; and yet He reproveth sin, though it is said of Him that "He knew not sin." He knew therefore by a kind of knowledge, and again He knew not by a kind of ignorance. Thus also many learn the righteousnesses of God, and learn them not. For they know them in a certain way; and, again do not know them from a kind of ignorance, since they do them not. In this sense the Psalmist therefore is to be understood to have said, That I might learn Thy righteousnesses," meaning that kind of knowledge whereby they are performed.

71. But that this is not gained, save through love, wherein he who doeth them hath delight, on which account it is said, "In Thy sweetness teach me Thy righteousnesses:" the following verse sheweth, wherein he saith, "The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver" (ver. 72): so that love loveth the law of God more than avarice loveth thousands of gold and silver.

Tod.

72. ... "Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me" (ver. 73). The hands of God are the power of God. Or if the plural number moveth them, since it is not said, Thy hand, but, "Thy hands;" let them understand by the hands of God the power and wisdom of God, both of which titles are given to one Christ, who is also understood under the figure, Arm of the Lord. Or let them understand by the hands of God, the Son and the Holy Spirit; since the Holy Spirit worketh conjointly with the Father and the Son: whence saith the Apostle, "But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit:" he said, "one and the self-same;" lest as many spirits as works might be imagined, not that the Spirit worketh without the Father and the Son. It is easy therefore to see how the hands of God are to be understood: provided, at the same time, that He be not denied to do those things through His Word which He doth

by His hands: nor be considered not to do those things with His hands, which He doth through His word. ...But is this said in respect of Adam? from whom since all men were propagated, what man, since Adam was made, may not say that he himself also was made by reason of procreation and generation from Adam? Or may it rightly be said, in this sense, "Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me," namely, that every man is born even of his parents not without the work of God, God creating, they generating? Since, if the creative power of God be withdrawn from things, they perish: nor is anything at all, either of the world's elements, or of parents, or of seeds, produced, if God doth not create it. ...

73. The Greek version hath a more concise expression for our, "Give me understanding," sunetison me, expressing "give understanding" by the single word sunetison, which the Latin cannot do; as if one could not say, Heal me; and it were necessary to say, Give me health, as it is here said, "Give me understanding;" or, make me whole, as here it may be said, make me intelligent. This indeed an Angel could do: for he said to Daniel, "I am come to give thee understanding;" and this word is in the Greek, as it is here also, sunetisai se; as if the Latin translator were to render qerapeusai se by sanitatem dare tibi. For the Latin interpreter would not make a circumlocution by saying, to give thee understanding, if, as we say from health, "to heal thee," so one could say from intellect, "to intellectuate thee." But if an Angel could do this, what reason is there that this man should pray that this be done for him by God? Is it because God had commanded the Angel to do it? Just so: for Christ is understood to have given this command to the Angel. ...

74. "That I may learn Thy commandments." Since Thou, saith he, hast formed me, do Thou new form me; that that may be done in Christ's Body, which the Apostle speaks of, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

75. "They that fear Thee," he saith, "will see me, and be glad" (ver. 74): or, as other copies have it, "will be joyful: because I have hoped in Thy word:" that is, in the things which Thou hast promised, that they may be the sons of promise, the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations are blessed. Who are they who fear God, and whom will they see and be glad, because he hath put his trust in the word of God? Whether it be the body of Christ, that is, the Church, whose words these are through Christ, or within it, and concerning it, these are as it were the words of Christ concerning Himself; are not they themselves among those who fear God? ...The same persons, who see the

Church and are glad, are the Church. But why said he not, They who fear Thee see me, and are glad: whereas he hath written, "fear Thee," in the present tense; while the verbs "shall see," and shall "be glad," are futures? Is it because in the present state there is fear, as long as "man's life is a temptation upon earth;" but the gladness which he desired to be understood, will be then, when "the righteous shall shine in the kingdom of their Father like the sun."

76. "I know," she saith, "O Lord, that Thy judgments are righteous, and that in Thy truth Thou hast humbled me" (ver. 75). "O let Thy merciful kindness be my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy servant" (ver. 76). Mercy and truth are so spoken of in the Divine Word, that, while they are found in many passages, especially in the Psalms, it is also so read in one place, "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth." And here indeed he hath placed truth first, whereby we are humbled unto death, by the judgment of Him whose judgments are righteousness: next mercy, whereby we are renewed unto life, by the promise of Him whose blessing is His grace. For this reason he saith, "according to Thy Word unto Thy servant:" that is, according to that which Thou hast promised unto Thy servant. Whether therefore it be regeneration whereby we are here adopted among the sons of God, or faith and hope and charity, which three are built up in us, although they come from the mercy of God; nevertheless, in this stormy and troublesome life they are the consolations of the miserable, not the joys of the blessed.

77. But since those things are destined to happen after and through these, he next saith, "O let Thy loving mercies come upon me, and I shall live" (ver. 77). For then indeed I shall truly live, when I shall not be able to fear lest I die. This is styled life absolutely and without any addition; nor is any life save that which is everlasting and blessed understood, as though it; alone were to be called life, compared with which. that which we now lead ought rather to be called death than life: according to those words in the Gospel, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." ... 78. He then goeth on as follows: "Let the proud be confounded, for they have unrighteously practised iniquity against me: but I will be occupied in Thy commandments" (ver. 78). Behold, what he saith, the meditation of the law of God, or rather, his meditation the law of God.

79. "Let such as fear Thee," he saith, "and have known Thy testimonies, be turned unto me" (ver. 79). But who is he who saith this? For no mortal will venture to say this, or if he say it, should be listened to. Indeed, it is He who above also hath interposed His own words, saying, "I am a partaker with all them that fear Thee." Because He was made sharer in our mortal state, that we might also become partakers in His Divine Nature, we became sharers in One unto life, He a sharer in many unto death. He it is unto whom they that fear God turn, and who know the testimonies of God, so long before predicted of Him through the Prophets, a little before displayed in His presence through miracles. 80. "O let my heart," he saith', "be unspotted in Thy righteousnesses, that I be not ashamed" (ver. 80). He returneth to the words of His body, that is, His holy people, and now prayeth that his heart may be made unspotted, that is, the heart of His members; "in the righteousnesses of God," not in their own strength: for He hath prayed for this, not presumed upon it. In the words he hath added, "that I be not ashamed," there is a resemblance to some of the earlier verses of this Psalm. Whereas there, in the words, "O that," he signifieth a wish, he hath here expressed himself in the more open words of one praying: "O let my heart be sound:" so that in neither of these two sentences, each of which is one and the same, there is found the boldness of one who trusteth in his own free will against grace. While he saith there, "so shall I not be confounded:" he saith here, "that I be not ashamed." The heart then of the members and the body of Christ is made unspotted, through the grace of God, by means of the very Head of that Body, that is, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by the "layer of regeneration," wherein all our past sins have been blotted out; through the aid of the Spirit, whereby we lust against the flesh, that we be not overcome in our fight; through the efficacy of the Lord's Prayer, wherein we say, "Forgive us our trespasses." Thus regeneration having been given to us, our conflict having been aided, prayer having been poured forth, our heart is made unspotted, so that we be not ashamed.

Caph.

81. "My soul hath failed for Thy salvation: and I have hoped because of Thy word" (ver. 81). It is not every failing that should be supposed to be blameable or deserving punishment: there is also a failing that is laudable or desirable. ...For it is said of a good failing: "My soul hath a desire and failing to enter into the courts of the Lord." So also here he saith not, faileth away

from Thy salvation, but "faileth for Thy salvation," that is, towards Thy salvation. This losing ground is therefore good: for it cloth indicate a longing after good, not as yet indeed gained, but most eagerly and earnestly desired. But who saith this, save the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, longing for Christ from the origin of the human race even unto the end of this world, in the persons of those who, each in his own time, have lived, are living, or are to live here? ...The first seasons of the Church, therefore, had Saints, before the Virgin's delivery, who desired the advent of His Incarnation: but thesetimes, since He hath ascended into heaven, have Saints who desire His manifestation to judge the quick and the dead. ... "And I have hoped because of Thy word:" that is, of Thy promise; a hope which causeth us to await with patience that which is not seen by those who believe. Here also the Greek hath the word *ephlpisa*, which some of our translators have preferred rendering by, "hoped-more;" since beyond doubt it will be greater than can be described.

82. "Mine eyes," he saith, "have failed for Thy word, saying, O when wilt Thou comfort me?" (ver. 82). Behold that praiseworthy and blessed failing, in the eyes again, but his inner eyes, not arising from infirmity of mind, but from the strength of his longing for the promise of God: for this he saith, "for Thy word." But in what sense can such eyes say, "When wilt Thou comfort me?" save when we pray and groan with such earnestness and ardent expectation? For the tongue, not the eyes, is wont to speak: but in some sense the voice of the eyes is the longing of prayer. But in the words, "When wilt Thou comfort me?" he showeth that he endureth as it were delay. Whence is this also, "How long, Lord, wilt Thou punish me?" And this is done either that the happiness may be the sweeter when deferred, or this is the sentiment of those who long, since the space of time, which may be short to Him who cometh to their aid, is tedious to the loving. But God knoweth what He doth and when, for He "hath ordered all things in measure and number and weight."

83. But when spiritual desires burn, carnal desires without doubt cool: on this account followeth, "Since I am become like a bottle in the frost, I do not forget Thy righteousnesses" (ver. 83). Truly he desireth this mortal flesh to be understood by the bottle, the heavenly blessing by the frost, whereby the lusts of the flesh as it were by the binding of the frost become sluggish; and hence it ariseth that the righteousnesses of God do not slip from the

memory, as long as we do not meditate apart from them; since what the Apostle saith is brought to pass: "Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." "And I do not forget Thy righteousness:" that is, I forget them not, because I have become such. For the fervour of lust hath cooled, that the memory of love might glow. 84. "How many are the days of Thy servant? when wilt Thou be avenged of them that persecute me?" (ver. 84). In the Apocalypse, these are the words of the Martyrs, and long-suffering is enjoined them until the number of their brethren be fulfilled. The body of Christ then is asking concerning its days, what they are to be in this world, and that no man might suppose that the Church would cease to exist here before the end of the world came, and that some time would elapse in this world, while the Church was now no more on earth; therefore, when he had enquired concerning the days, he added also respecting the judgment, showing indeed that the Church would exist on earth until the judgment, when vengeance shall fall upon Her persecutors. But if any one wonder why he should ask that question, to which when asked by the disciples, their Master replied, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons;" why should we not believe that in this passage of the Psalm it was prophesied that they should ask this very question, and that the words of the Church, which were so long before uttered here, were fulfilled in their question?

85. In what followeth: "The wicked have told me pleasant tales: but not like Thy law, O Lord" (ver. 85): the Latin translators have endeavoured to render the Greek *adoleskai*, which cannot be expressed in one Latin word, so that some have rendered it "delights," and others "fablings," so that we must understand to be meant some kind of compositions, but in discourse of a nature to give pleasure. Both secular literature, and the Jewish book entitled *Deuterosis*, containing besides the canon of divine Scripture thousands of tales, comprise these in their different sects and professions; the vain and wandering loquacity of heretics holds them also. All these he wished to be considered as wicked, by whom he saith that *adoleskiai* were related to him, that is, compositions which gave pleasure solely in their style: "But not," he addeth, "as Thy law, O Lord;" because truth, not words, pleases me therein.

86. Lastly, he addeth, "All Thy commandments are truth: they have persecuted me unjustly; O be Thou my help" (ver. 86). And the whole sense dependeth upon the foregoing: "How many are the days of Thy servant: when wilt Thou be avenged of them that persecute me?" For that they may perse-

cute me, they have related to me these pleasant tales; but I have preferred Thy law to them, which on that account hath pleased me more, because all Thy commandments are true; not as in their discourses, where vanity aboundeth. And for this reason "they have persecuted me falsely," because in me they have persecuted nothing save the truth. Therefore help Thou me, that I may struggle for the truth even unto death; because this is at once Thy commandment, and therefore it is also the truth. 87. When the Church acted thus, She suffered what he hath added, "They had almost made an end of me upon earth" (ver. 87): a great slaughter of martyrs having been made, while they confess and preach the truth. But since it is not in vain said, "O help Thou me;" he addeth, "But I forsook not Thy commandments."

88. And that She might persevere unto the end, "O quicken me," he saith, "after Thy loving mercy: and so shall I keep the testimonies of Thy mouth" (ver. 88); where the Greek hath *Marturia*. This was not to be passed over in silence, on account of that sweetest name of Martyrs, who beyond doubt when so great cruelty of the persecutors was raging, that the Church was almost made an end of upon earth, would never have kept the testimonies of God, unless that had been vouchsafed them which is here spoken of, "O quicken me after Thy loving-kindness." For they were quickened, lest by loving life, they should deny the life, and by denying it, should lose it: and thus they who for life refused to forsake the truth, lived by dying for the truth.

Lamed.

89. The man who speaketh in this Psalm, as if he were tired of human mutability, whence this life is full of temptations, among his tribulations, on account of which he had above said, "The wicked have persecuted me;" and, "They have almost made an end of me upon earth" (ver. 89); burning with longings for the heavenly Jerusalem; looked up to the realms above, and said, "O Lord, Thy word endureth for ever in heaven;" that is, among Thy Angels who serve everlastingly in Thine armies, without desertion. 90. But the next verse, after heaven, pertaineth consequently to earth. For this is one verse of the eight which relate to this letter. For eight verses are appended to each of these Hebrew letters, until this long Psalm be ended. "Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to the other: Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth" (ver. 90). Beholding therefore the earth next after heaven with the gaze of a faithful mind, he findeth in it generations which

are not in heaven, and saith, "Thy truth remaineth from one generation to the other:" signifying all generations by this expression, from which the Truth of God was never absent in His saints, at one time fewer, at one time more in number, according as the times happened or shall happen to vary; or wishing two particular generations to be understood, one pertaining to the Law and the Prophets, another to the Gospel. ...

91. "Day continueth according to Thy ordinance" (ver. 91). For all these things are day: "and this is the day which the Lord hath made: let us rejoice and be glad in it:" and "let us walk honestly as in the day." "For all things serve Thee." He said all things of some: "all" which belong to this day "serve Thee." For the ungodly of whom it is said, "I have compared thy mother unto the night," do not serve Thee. 92. He then looketh back towards the source of this earth's deliverance, which caused it to abide when founded; and addeth, "If my delight had not been in Thy law, I should perchance have perished in my humiliation" (ver. 92). This is the law of faith, not a vain faith, but that which worketh through love. Through this grace is gained, which maketh men courageous in temporal tribulation, that they may not perish in the humiliation of mortality.

93. "I will never forget," he saith, "Thy righteousnesses, for with them Thou hast quickened me" (ver. 93). Behold how it was that he did not perish in his humiliation. For, save God quickeneth, what is man, Who can indeed kill, but cannot quicken himself? 94. He next addeth: "I am Thine: O save me, for I have sought Thy righteousnesses" (ver. 94). We must not understand lightly the words, "I am Thine." For what is not His? Why then is it that the Psalmist hath commended himself unto God somewhat in a more familiar sense, in these words, "I am Thine: O save me;" save because he wished it to be understood that he had desired to be his own only to his harm, which is the first and the greatest evil of disobedience? and as if he should say, I wished to be my own, and I lost myself: "I am Thine," he saith, "O save me, for I have sought Thy righteousnesses;" not my own inclinations, whereby I was my own, but "Thy righteousnesses," that I might now be Thine.

95. "The ungodly," he saith, "have awaited me that they might destroy me; but I have understood Thy testimonies" (ver. 95). What meaneth, "that they might destroy me"? Did he then fear that he should perish altogether at the death of his body? God forbid! and what meaneth, "have awaited me,"

save that he should consent with them unto iniquity? For then they would destroy him. And he hath said why he hath not perished: "I understood Thy testimonies." The Greek word, *Marturia*, soundeth more familiarly to the ears of the Church. For though they should slay me not consenting unto them, yet while I confessed Thy testimonies (*martyria*) I should not perish; but they who, that they might destroy me, were waiting till I should consent unto them, tortured me even when I did confess them. Yet he did not leave that which he had understood, looking on it and seeing an end without end, if only he should persevere unto the end.

96. Lastly, he next saith, "I have seen an end of all consummation: but Thy commandment is exceeding broad" (ver. 96). For he had entered into the sanctuary of God, and had understood the end) Now "all consummation" appeareth to me in this place to signify, the striving even unto death for the truth, and the endurance of every evil for the true and chief good: the end of which consummation is to excel in the kingdom of Christ, which hath no end; and there to have without death, without pain, and with great honour, life, acquired by the death of this life, and by sorrows and reproaches. But in what he hath added, "Thy commandment is exceeding broad;" I understand only love. For what would it have profited him, whatever death impended over him, in the midst of whatsoever torment, to confess those testimonies, if love were not in the confessor? ...Broad therefore is the commandment of charity, that twofold commandment, whereby we are enjoined to love God and our neighbour. But what is broader than that, "on" which "hang all the Law and the Prophets"?

Mem.

97. We have frequently admonished you, that love was to be understood by that praiseworthy breadth, by means of which, while we do the commandments of God, we feel no straitness. On this account also after saying above in this great Psalm, "Thy commandment is exceeding broad:" in the following verse he sheweth wherefore it is broad: "what love have I unto Thy law, O Lord!" (ver. 97). Love is therefore the breadth of the commandment. For how can it be that what God commandeth to be loved, be loved, and yet the commandment itself be not loved? For this itself is the law; "in all the day," he saith, "is my study in it." Behold how I have loved it, that in the whole day my study is in it; or rather, as the Greek hath it, "all the day long," which more fully expresses the continuance of meditation. Now that is to be under-

stood through all time; which is, for ever. By such love lust is driven out: lust, which repeatedly opposeth our performing the commandments of the law, when "the flesh lusteth against the spirit:" against which the spirit lusting, ought so to love the law of God, that it be its study during the whole day. ...

98. And he then addeth: "Thou hast made me to understand Thy commandment above mine enemies; for it is ever with me" (ver. 98). For "they have indeed a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge," etc. But the Psalmist, who understandeth the commandment of God above these his enemies, wishes to be found with the Apostle, "not having" his "own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ, which is of God;" not that the Law which his enemies read is not of God, but because they do not understand it, like him who understandeth it above his enemies, by clinging to the Stone upon which they stumbled. For "Christ is the end of the law," etc., "that they may be justified freely through His grace;" not like those who imagine that they obey the law of their own strength, and are therefore, though by God's law, yet still endeavouring to set up their own righteousness; but as the son of promise, who hungering and athirst after it, by seeking, by asking, by knocking, as it were begs it of the Father, that being adopted he may receive it through His only-begotten Son. ...His enemies sought from the same commandment temporal rewards; and therefore it was not unto them for ever, as it was unto this man. For they who have translated "for ever" have rendered better than they who have written "for an age," since at the end of time there can be no longer a commandment of the law. ...

99. But what meaneth the following verse, "I have more understanding than my teachers"? (ver. 99). Who is he who had more understanding than all his teachers? Who, I ask, is he, who dareth to prefer himself in understanding above all the Prophets, who not only by speaking taught with so excellent authority those who lived with them, but also their posterity by writing? ...What is here said, could not have been spoken in Solomon's person. ...I recognise plainly Him who had more understanding than His teachers, since when He was a boy of twelve years of age, Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, and was found by His parents after three days' space, "sitting in the temple among the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions." The Son Himself hath said, "As My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things." It is very difficult to understand this of the Person of the Word; unless we can comprehend that it is the same thing for the Son to be taught as to be be-

gotten of the Father. ... "He took upon Himself the form of a servant;" for when He had assumed this form, men of more advanced age might think Him fit to be taught as a boy; but He whom the Father taught, had more understanding than all His teachers. "For Thy testimonies," He saith, "are my study." For this reason He had more understanding than all His teachers, because He studied the testimonies of God, which, as concerning Himself, He knew better than they, when He spoke these words: "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man," etc.

100. But these teachers may be understood very reasonably to be those aged men, of whom he presently saith, "I am wiser than mine elders" (ver. 100). And this seemeth to me to be repeated here thus, that that age of His which is well known to us in the Gospel might be called to our remembrance; the age of boyhood, during which He was sitting among the aged, understanding more than all His teachers. For the smaller and the greater in age are wont to be termed younger and elder, although neither of them hath arrived at or approached old age; although if we are concerned to seek in the Gospel the express term, elders, more than whom He understood, we find it when the Scribes and Pharisees said unto Him, "Why do Thy disciples transgression the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread." Behold the transgression of the tradition of the elders is objected to Him. But He who was wiser than His elders, let us hear what answer He made them. "Why do ye also, He asked, "transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" ...

101. But what cometh next, doth not seem to apply to the Head, but to the Body: "I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Thy words" (ver. 101). For that Head of ours, the Saviour of the Body Himself, could not be borne by carnal lust into any evil way, so that it should be needful for Him to refrain His feet, as though they would go thither of their own accord; which we do, when we refrain our evil desires, which He had not, that they may not follow evil ways. For thus we are able to keep the word of God, if we "go not after our evil lusts," so that they attain unto the evils desired; but rather curb them with the spirit which lusteth against the flesh, that they may not drag us away, seduced and overthrown, through evil ways.

102. "I have not shrunk," he saith, "from Thy judgments: for Thou hast laid down a law for me" (ver. 102). He hath stated what made him fear, so that he refrained his feet from every evil way. ... Thou, more inward than my

inmost self, Thou hast laid down a law within my heart by Thy Spirit, as it were by Thy fingers, that I might not fear it as a slave without love, but might love it with a chaste fear as a son, and fear it with a chaste love. 103. Consider then what followeth: "O how sweet are Thy words unto my throat!" (ver. 103). Or, as it is more literally rendered from the Greek, "Thy utterances, above honey and the honeycomb unto my mouth." This is that sweetness which the Lord giveth, "So that the earth yield her increase:" that we do good truly in a good spirit, that is, not from the dread of carnal evil, but from the gladness of spiritual good. Some copies indeed do not read "honeycomb:" but the majority do. Now the open teaching of wisdom is like unto honey; but that is like the comb which is squeezed from the more recondite mysteries, as if from cells of wax, by the mouth of the teacher, as if he were chewing it: but it is sweet to the mouth of the heart, not to the mouth of the flesh.

104. But what mean the words, "Through Thy commandments I get understanding"? (ver. 104). For the expressions, I have understood Thy commandments: and, "I get understanding through Thy commandments;" are different. Something else then he signifieth that he hath understood from the commandments of God: that is, as far as I can see, he saith, that by obeying God's commandments he hath arrived at the comprehension of those things which he had longed to know. ...These then are the words of the spiritual members of Christ, "Through Thy commandments I get understanding." For the body of Christ rightly saith these words in those, to whom, while they keep the commandments, a richer knowledge of wisdom is given on account of this very keeping of the commandments. "Therefore," he addeth, "I hate all evil ways." For it is needful that the love of righteousness should hate all iniquity: that love, which is so much the stronger, in proportion as the sweetness of a higher wisdom doth inspire it, a wisdom given unto him who obeyeth God, and getteth understanding from His commandments.

Nun.

105. "Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths" (ver. 105). The word "lantern" appears in the word "light; "my feet" are also repeated in "my paths. What then meaneth "Thy Word"? Is it He who was in the beginning God with God, that is, the Word by whom all things were made? It is not thus. For that Word is a light, but is not a lantern. For a lan-

tern is a creature, not a creator; and it is lighted by participation of an unchangeable light. ...For no creature, howsoever rational and intellectual, is lighted by itself, but is lighted by participation of eternal Truth: although sometimes day is spoken of, not meaning the Lord, but that "day which the Lord hath made," and on account of which it is said, "Come unto Him, and be lightened. On account of which participation, inasmuch as the Mediator Himself became Man, He is styled lantern in the Apocalypse. But this sense is a solitary one; for it cannot be divinely spoken of any of the saints, nor in any wise lawfully said of any, "The Word was made flesh," save of the "one Mediator between God and men. Since therefore the only-begotten Word, coequal with the Father, is styled a light; and man when enlightened by the Word is also called a light, who is styled also a lantern, as John, as the Apostles; and since no man of these is the Word, and that Word by whom they were enlightened is not a lantern;

what is this word, which is thus called a light and a lantern at the same time, save we understand the word which was sent unto the Prophets, or which was preached through the Apostles; not Christ the Word, but the word of Christ, of which it is written, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"? For the Apostle Peter also, comparing the prophetic word to a lantern, saith, "where-unto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lantern, that shineth in a dark place. What, therefore, he here saith, "Thy word" is the word which is contained in all the holy Scriptures. 106. "I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed to keep Thy righteous judgments" (ver. 106): as one who walked aright in the light of that lantern, and kept to straight paths. For he calleth what he hath determined by a sacrament, an oath; because the mind ought to be so fixed in keeping the righteous judgments of God, that its determination should be in the place of an oath. Now the righteous judgments of God are kept by faith; when, under the righteous judgment of God, neither any good work is believed to be fruitless, nor any sin unpunished; but, because the body of Christ hath suffered many most grievous evils for this faith, he saith, "I was humbled above measure" (ver. 107). He doth not say, I have humbled myself, so that we must needs understand that humiliation which is commanded; but he saith, "I was humbled above-measure;" that is, suffered a very heavy persecution, because he swore and was steadfastly purposed to keep the righteous judgments of God. And, lest in such trouble faith herself might faint he addeth, "Quicken

me, O Lord, according to Thy word:" that is, according to Thy promise. For the word of the promises of God is a lantern to the feet, and a light to the paths. Thus also above, in the humiliation of persecution, he prayed that God would quicken him. ...

107. "Make the freewill offerings of my mouth well pleasing, O Lord" (ver. 108): that is, let them please Thee; do not reject, but approve them. By the freewill offerings of the mouth are well understood the sacrifices of praise, offered up in the confession of love, not from the fear of necessity; whence it is said, "a freewill offering will I offer Thee." But what doth he add? "and teach me Thy judgments"? Had he not himself said above, "From Thy judgments I have not swerved"? How could he have done thus, if he knew them not? Moreover, if he knew them, in what sense doth he here say, "and teach me Thy judgments"? Is it as in a former passage, "Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant:" presently after which we find, "teach me sweetness"? This passage we explained as the words of one who was gaining in grace, and praying that he might receive in addition to what he had received.

108. "My soul is alway in Thy hand" (ver. 109). Some copies read, "in my hand:" but most, "in Thy hand;" and this latter is indeed easy. For "the souls of the righteous are in God's hand: in whose hand are both we and our words." "And I do not forget Thy law:" as if his memory were aided to remember God's law by the hands of Him in whose hands is his soul. But how the words, "My soul is in my hands," can be understood, I know not. For these are the words of the righteous, not of the ungodly; of one who is returning to the Father, not departing from the Father? ...Is it perhaps said, "My soul is in my hands," in this sense, as if he offered it to God to be quickened? Whence in another passage it is said, "Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul." Since here too he had said above, "Quicken Thou me."

109. "The ungodly," he saith, "have laid a snare for me: but yet I swerved not from Thy commandments" (ver. 110). Whence this, unless because his soul is in the hands of God, or in his own hands is offered to God to be quickened? 110. "Thy testimonies have I gained in heritage for ever" (ver. 111). Some wishing to express in one word what is put in one word in the Greek, have translated it *hereditavi*. Which although it might be Latin, yet would rather signify one who gave an inheritance than one who received it, *hereditavi* being like *ditavi*. Better, therefore, the whole sense is conveyed in two words, whether we say, "I have possessed in heritage," or, "I have gotten in

heritage:" not gotten heritage, but "gotten in heritage." If it be asked, what he gained in heritage, he he replieth, "Thy testimonies." What doth he wish to be understood, save that he might become a witness of God, and confess His testimonies, that is, that he might become a Martyr of God, and might declare His testimonies, as the Martyrs do, was a gift bestowed upon him by the Father, of whom he is heir? ...But even their wish was prepared by the Lord. For this reason he saith he hath gained them in heritage, and this "for ever;" because they have not in them the temporal glory of men who seek vain things, but the eternal glory of those who suffer for a short season, and who reign without end. Whence the next words, "Because they are the very joy of my heart:" although the affliction of the body, yet the very joy of the heart.

111. He then addeth: "I have applied my heart to fulfil Thy righteousness for ever, for my reward" (ver. 112). He who saith, "I have applied my heart," had before said, "Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies:" so that we may understand that it is at once a divine gift, and an act of free will. But are we to fulfil the righteousnesses of God for ever? Those works which we perform in regard to the need of our neighbours, cannot be everlasting, any more than their need; but if we do not do them from love, there is no righteousness; if we do them from love, that love is everlasting, and an everlasting reward is in store for it.

Samech.

112. "I have hated the unrighteous; and Thy law have I loved" (ver. 113). He saith not, I hate the wicked, and love the righteous; or, I hate iniquity, and love Thy law; but, after saying, "I have hated the unrighteous," he explains why, by adding, "and Thy law have I loved;" to show, that he did not hate human nature in unrighteous men, but their unrighteousness whereby they are foes to the law, which he loveth. 113. He next addeth: "Thou art my helper and my taker up" (ver. 114): "my helper," to do good works: "my taker up," to escape evil ones. In the next words, "I have hoped more on Thy word," he speaketh as a son of promise. 114. But what is the meaning of the following verse: "Away from me, ye wicked, and I will search the commandments of my God"? (ver. 115). For he saith not, I will perform; but, "I will search." In order, therefore, that he may diligently and perfectly learn that law, he bids the wicked depart from him, and even forcibly driveth them away from his company. For the wicked exercise us in the fulfilment of the command-

ments, but lead us away from searching into them; not only when they persecute, or wish to litigate with us; but even when they court us, and honour us, and yet expect us to occupy ourselves in aiding their own vicious and busy desire, and to bestow our time upon them; or at least harass the weak, and compel them to bring their causes before us: to whom we dare not say, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" For the Apostle instituted ecclesiastical judges of such causes, forbidding Christians to contend in the forum. ...Certainly, on account of those who carry on law suits pertinaciously with one another, and, when they harass the good, scorn our judgments, and cause us to lose the time that should be employed upon things divine; surely, I say, on account of these men we also may exclaim in these words of the Body of Christ, "Away from me, ye wicked! and I will search the commandments of my God."

115. "O stablish me according to Thy word and I shall live: and let me not be disappointed of my hope" (ver. 116). He who had before said, "Thou art my taker up," prayeth that he may be more and more borne up, and be led unto that, for the sake of which he endureth so many troubles; trusting that he may there live in a truer sense, than in these dreams of human affairs. For it is said of the future, "and I shall live," as if we did not live in this dead body. While "we await the redemption of our body, we are saved by hope, and hoping for that we see not, we await with patience." But hope disappointeth not, if the love of God be spread abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. And, as though it were answered him in silence, Thou dost not wish to be disappointed of thy hope? Cease not to meditate upon My righteousnesses: and, feeling that this meditation is usually hindered by the weaknesses of the soul, "Help me," he saith, "and I shall be safe; yea, I will meditate in Thy righteousnesses always" (ver. 117).

116. "Thou hast scorned all," or, as it seems more closely translated from the Greek, "Thou hast brought to nought all them that depart from Thy righteousnesses: for their thought is unrighteous" (ver. 118). For this reason he exclaimed, "Help Thou me, and I shall be safe; yea, I will meditate in Thy righteousnesses always:" because God bringeth to nought all those who depart from His righteousnesses. But why do they depart? Because "their thought is," he saith, "unrighteous." They advance in that direction, while they depart from God. All deeds, good or bad, proceed from the thoughts: in his thoughts every man is innocent, in his thoughts every man is guilty. ...

117. The next words in the Psalm are, "I have counted," or "thought," or "esteemed, all the ungodly of the earth as transgressors" (ver. 119). In the Latin version many different renderings are given of the Greek *elogisamhn*, but this passage hath a deep meaning. For the following words, "Therefore have I ever loved Thy testimonies: make it far more profound. For the Apostle saith, "The law worketh wrath; and, explaining these words, he addeth, "For where no law is, there is no transgression: thereby showing that not all are transgressors. For all have not the law. That all have not the law, he declareth more explicitly in another passage, "as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law. What then meaneth, "I have held all the ungodly of the earth as transgressors"? "As transgressors; or rather "transgressing," for the Greek saith, *parabainontaj*, not *parabataj*. ... "The law entered that sin might abound. But since all sins are remitted through grace, not only those which are committed without the law, but those also which are committed in the law; he addeth, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." ...But, indeed, when the Apostle said, "As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law," he was speaking of that law which God gave to His people Israel through Moses His servant. ...For some even Catholic expositors, from a want of sufficient heedfulness, have pronounced contrary to the truth, that those who have sinned without the law perish;

and that those who have sinned in the law, are only judged, and do not perish, as if they should be considered destined to be cleansed by means of transitory punishments, as he of whom it is said, "he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." ...The Psalmist also hath subjoined: "Therefore I loved Thy testimonies. As if he should say: Since the law, whether given in paradise, or implanted by nature, or promulgated in writing, hath made all the sinners of the earth transgressors; "Therefore I loved Thy testimonies," which are in Thy laws of Thy grace; so that not my but Thy righteousness is in me. For the law profiteth unto this end, that it send us forward unto grace. For not only because it testifieth towards the manifestation of the righteousness of God, which is without the law; but also in this very point that it rendereth men transgressors, so that the letter even slayeth, it driveth us to fly unto the quickening Spirit, through whom the whole of our sins may be blotted out, and the love of righteous deeds be inspired. ...

118. The grace of God, then, being known, which alone freeth from transgression, which is committed through knowledge of the law, he saith, in prayer, "Fix with nails my flesh in Thy fear" (ver. 120). For this some Latin interpreters have literally rendered the Greek *kaqlhwson*, which that language has expressed in one word. Some have preferred to render by the word *confige*, without adding *clavis*; and while they thus desire to construe one Latin by one Greek word, have failed to express the full meaning of the Greek *kaqlhwson*, because in *confige* nails are not mentioned, but *kaqlhwson* cannot be taken but of nails, nor can "fix with nails" be expressed without using two words in Latin. ...Hath he added, "For I have feared Thy judgments"? What meaneth, "Fix me in Thy fear: for I have feared"? If he had already feared, or if he was now fearing, why did he still pray God to crucify his flesh in His fear? Did he wish so much additional fear imparted to him as would suffice for crucifying his flesh, that is, his carnal lusts and affections; as though he should say, Perfect in me the fear of Thee; for I have feared Thy judgments? But there is here even a higher sense, which must, as far as God alloweth, be derived from searching the recesses of this Scripture: that is, in the chaste fear of Thee, which abideth from age to age, let my carnal desires be quenched;

"For I have feared Thy judgments," when the law, which could not give me righteousness, threatened me punishment. ...For the inclination to sin liveth, and it then appeareth in deed, when impunity may be hoped for. But when punishment is considered sure to follow, it liveth latently: nevertheless it liveth. For it would rather it were lawful to sin, and it grieveth that what the law forbiddeth, is not lawful; because it is not spiritually delighted with the blessing of the law, but carnally feareth the evil which it threateneth. But that love, which casteth out this fear, feareth with a chaste fear to sin, although no punishment follow; because it doth not even judge that impunity will follow, since from love of righteousness it considereth the very sin itself a punishment. With such a fear the flesh is crucified; since carnal delights, which are forbidden rather than avoided by the letter of the law, are overcome by the delight in spiritual blessings, and also when the victory is perfected are destroyed.

Ain.

119. "I have dealt judgment and righteousness; O give me not over unto mine oppressors" (ver. 121). It is not wonderful that he should have dealt judgment

and righteousness, since he had above prayed for a chaste fear from God, whereby to fix with nails his flesh, that is, his carnal lusts, which are wont to hinder our judgment from being right. But although in our customary speech judgment is either right or wrong, whence it is said unto men in the Gospel, "Judge not according to the persons, but judge righteous judgment:" nevertheless in this passage judgment is used as though, if it were not righteous, it ought not to be called judgment; otherwise it would not be enough to say, "I have dealt judgment," but it would be said, I have dealt righteous judgment. ... 120. Whoso therefore in the chaste fear of God hath his flesh crucified, and corrupted by no carnal allurements, dealeth judgment and the work of righteousness, ought to pray that he may not be given up to his adversaries; that is, that he may not, through his dread of suffering evils, yield unto his adversaries to do evil. For he receiveth power of endurance, which guardeth him from being overcome with pain, from Him from whom he receiveth the victory over lust, which preventeth his being seduced by pleasure.

121. He next saith, "Take off Thy servant to that which is good, that the proud calumniate me not" (ver. 122). They drive me on, that I may fall into evil; do Thou take me off to that which is good. They who rendered these words by the Latin, *calumnientur*, have followed a Greek expression, not commonly used in Latin. Have the words, Let not the proud calumniate me, the same force, as, Let them "not succeed in calumniating me"? 122 ...To prefigure His Cross, Moses by the merciful command of God raised aloft on a pole the image of a serpent in the desert, that the likeness of sinful flesh which must be crucified in Christ might be prefigured? By gazing upon this healing Cross, we cast out all the poison of the scandals of the proud: the Cross, which the Psalmist intently looking upon, saith, "My eyes have failed for Thy salvation, and for the words of Thy righteousness" (ver. 123). For God made Christ Himself "to be sin for us, on account of the likeness of sinful flesh, that we may be made the righteousness of God in Him." For His utterance of the righteousness of God he therefore saith that his eyes have failed, from gazing ardently and eagerly, while, remembering human infirmity, he longeth for divine grace in Christ.

123. In connection with this he goes on to say, "O deal with Thy servant according to Thy loving mercy" (ver. 124); not according to my righteousness. "And teach me," he saith, "Thy righteousnesses;" those beyond doubt, whereby God rendereth men righteous, not they themselves. 124. "I am Thy

servant. O grant me understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies" (ver. 125). This petition must never be intermitted. For it sufficeth not to have received understanding, and to have learnt the testimonies of God, unless it be evermore received, and evermore in a manner quaffed from the fountain of eternal light. For the testimonies of God are the better and the better known, the more understanding a man attaineth to. 125. "It is time," he saith, "for the Lord to lay to His hand" (ver. 126). For this is the reading of most copies: not as some have, "O Lord." Now what is this, save the grace which was revealed in Christ at its own time? Of which season the Apostle saith, "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent His Son." ...But wherefore is it that, seemingly anxious to show the Lord that it was time to lay to His hand, he hath subjoined, "They have scattered Thy law;" as if it were the season for the Lord to act, because the proud scattered His law. For what meaneth this? In the wickedness of transgression, they have not guarded its integrity. It was needful therefore that the Law should be given to the proud and those presuming in the freedom of their own will, after a transgression of which whosoever were contrite and humbled, might run no longer by the Law, but by faith, to aiding grace. When the Law therefore was scattered, it was time that mercy should be sent through the only-begotten Son of God.

126. "Therefore," he saith, "I love Thy commandments above gold and topaz" (ver. 127). Grace hath this object, that the commandments, which could not be fulfilled by fear, may be fulfilled by love ...Therefore, they are above gold and topaz stones. For this is read in another Psalm also, "Above gold and exceeding precious stones." For topaz is a stone considered very precious. But they not understanding the hidden grace which was in the Old Testament, screened as it were by the veil (this was signified when they were unable to gaze upon the face of Moses), endeavoured to obey the commandments of God for the sake of an earthly and carnal reward, but could not obey them; because they did not love them, but something else. Whence these were not the works of the willing, but rather the burdens of the unwilling. But when the commandments are loved for their own sake "above gold and exceeding precious stones," all earthly reward compared with the commandments themselves is vile; nor are any other goods of man comparable in any respect with those goods whereby man himself is made good.

127. "Therefore," he saith, "was I made straight unto all Thy commandments" (ver. 128). I was made straight, doubtless, because I loved them; and I clung by love to them, which were straight, that I might also myself become straight. Then what he addeth, naturally follows: "and every unrighteous way I utterly abhor." For how could it be that he who loved the straight could do aught save abhor an unrighteous way? For as, if he loved gold and precious stones, he would abhor all that might bring loss of such property: thus, since he loved the commandments of God, he abhorred the path of iniquity, as one of the most savage rocks in the sailor's track, whereon he must needs suffer shipwreck of things so precious. That this may not be his lot, he who saileth on the wood of the Cross with the divine commandments as his freight, steereth far from thence.

Pe.

128. "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore hath my soul searched them" (ver. 129). Who counteth, even by their kinds, the testimonies of God? Heaven and earth, His visible and invisible works, declare in some manner the testimony of His goodness and greatness; and the very ordinary and accustomed course of nature, whereby the seasons are rapidly revolved, in all things after their kinds, however temporal and perishable, however held cheap through our constant experience of them, give, if a pious thinker give heed to them, a testimony to the Creator. But which of these is not wonderful, if we measure each not by its habitual presence, but by reason? But if we venture to bring all nature within the comprehensive view of one act of contemplation, doth not that take place in us which the prophet describeth, "I considered Thy works, and trembled"? Yet the Psalmist was not terrified in his wonder at creation, but rather said that this was the reason that he ought to search it, because it was wonderful. For after saying, "Thy testimonies are wonderful," he addeth, "therefore hath my soul searched them;" as if he had become more curious from the difficulty of thoroughly searching them. For the more abstruse are the causes of anything, the more wonderful it is ...

129. "When thy word goeth forth," he saith, "it giveth light, and maketh His little ones to understand" (ver. 130). What is the little one save the humble and weak? Be not proud therefore, presume not in thine own strength, which is nought; and thou wilt understand why a good law was given by a good God, though it cannot give life. For it was given for this end, that it might make thee a little one instead of great, that it might show that

thou hadst not strength to do the law of thine own power: and that thus, wanting aid and destitute, thou mightiest fly unto grace, saying, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak." ...Let all be little ones, and let all the world be guilty before Thee: because "by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified" in Thy sight; "for by the Law is the knowledge of sin," etc. These are Thy wonderful testimonies, which the soul of this little one hath searched; and hath therefore found, because he became humbled and a little one. For who doth Thy commandments as they ought to be done, that is, by "faith which worketh through love," save love itself be shed abroad in his heart through the Holy Spirit?

130. This is confessed by this little one; "I opened my mouth," he saith, "and drew in the spirit: for I longed for Thy commandments" (ver. 131). What did he long for, save to obey the divine commandments? But there was no possibility of the weak doing hard things, the little one great things: he opened his mouth, confessing that he could not do them of himself: and drew in power to do them: he opened his mouth, by seeking, asking, knocking: and athirst drank in the good Spirit, which enabled him to do what he could not do by himself, "the commandment holy and just and good." Not that they themselves who "are led by the Spirit of God," do nothing; but that they may not do nothing good, they are moved to act by the good Spirit. For so much the more is every man made a good son, in proportion as the good Spirit is given unto Him by the Father in a greater measure.

131. He still prayeth. He hath opened his mouth, and drawn in the Spirit; but he still knocketh in prayer unto the Father, and seeketh: he drinketh, but the more sweet he findeth it, the more eagerly doth he thirst. Hear the words of him in his thirst. "O look Thou upon me," he saith, "and be merciful unto me: according to the judgment of those that love Thy Name" (ver. 132): that is, according to the judgment Thou has dealt unto all who love Thy Name; since Thou hast first loved them, to cause them to love Thee. For thus saith the Apostle John, "We love God, because He first loved us." 132. See what the Psalmist next most openly saith: "Order my steps after Thy word: and so shall no wickedness have dominion over me" (ver. 133). Where what else doth he say than this, Make me upright and free according to Thy promise. But so much the more as the love of God reigneth in every man, so much the less hath wickedness dominion over him. What else then doth he seek than that by the gift of God he may love God? For by loving God he

loveth himself, so that he may healthily love his neighbour also as himself: on which commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. What then doth he pray, save that God may cause the fulfillment by His help of those commandments which He imposeth by His bidding?

133. But what meaneth this that he saith, "O deliver me from the calumnies of men: so shall I keep Thy commandments"? (ver. 134) ... Did not the holy people of God much the more gloriously keep the commandments among these very calumnies, when they were at their hottest in the midst of tribulations, when they yielded not to their persecutors to commit impieties? But, in truth, the meaning of these words is this: Do Thou, by pouring upon me Thy Spirit, guard me from being overcome by the terrors of human calumny, and from being drawn over to their evil deeds away from Thy commandments. For if Thou hast thus dealt with me, that is, if Thou hast in this manner delivered me by the gift of patience from their calumnies, so that I fear not the false charges they prefer against me; among those very calumnies I will keep Thy commandments.

134. "Show the light of Thy countenance on Thy servant, and teach me thy statutes" (ver. 135): that is, manifest Thy presence, by succouring and aiding me. "And teach me Thy righteousnesses." Teach me to work them: as it is more plainly expressed elsewhere, "Teach me to do Thy will." For they who hear, although they retain in their memories what they hear, are by no means to be considered to have learnt, unless they do. For it is the word of Truth: "Every man that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me." He therefore who obeyeth not in deed, that is, who cometh not, hath not learnt. 135. "My eyes have descended streams of waters, because they have not kept Thy law" (ver. 136): that is, my eyes. For in some copies there is this reading, "Because I have not kept Thy law, streams of waters" therefore "descended," that is, floods of tears. ...

Tadze.

136. Thus, then, as if giving a reason why he had cause to weep much, and to mourn deeply for his sin, he saith, "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and true is Thy judgment" (ver. 137). "Thou hast commanded Thy testimonies, righteousness, and Thy truth exceedingly" (ver. 138). This righteousness of God and righteous judgment and truth, is to be feared by every sinner: for thereby all who are condemned are condemned of God; nor is there one who can righteously complain against the righteous God of his own damnation.

Therefore the tears of the penitent are needful; since if his impenitent heart were condemned, he would be most justly condemned. He indeed calleth the testimonies of God righteousness: for He proveth himself righteous by giving righteous commandments. And this is truth also, that God may become known by such testimonies. 137. But what is it that followeth: "My zeal hath caused me to pine" (ver. 139); or, as other copies read, Thy zeal? Others have also, "The zeal of Thy house:" and, "hath eaten me up," instead of, "hath caused me to pine." This, as it seems to me, has been considered as an emendation to be introduced from another Psalm, where it is written, "The zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up:" a text quoted also, as we know, in the Gospel. The two words, however, "hath caused me to pine," and "hath eaten me up," are somewhat like. But the words, "my zeal," which most of the copies read, occasion no dispute: for what wonder is it if every man pineth away from his own zeal? The words read in other copies, "Thy zeal," signify a man zealous for God, not for himself: but there is no difficulty in using "my" in the same sense ... The Psalmist's jealousy is therefore also to be understood in a good sense: for he addeth the cause, and saith, "Because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words." ...

138. Then considering with himself with what a flame of love he burned for the commandments of God: "Fiery," saith he, "is Thy word exceedingly, and Thy servant hath loved it" (ver. 140). Justly jealous was he of the impenitent heart in His enemies, who had forgotten God's word; for he endeavoured to bring them unto that which he himself most ardently loved. 139. "I am young, and of no reputation; yet do I not forget Thy righteousnesses:" not as my enemies, who "have forgotten Thy words" (ver. 141). The younger seems to grieve for those older than himself who had forgotten the righteousnesses of God, while he himself had not forgotten. For what meaneth, "I am young, yet do I not forget"? save this, Those older than me have forgotten. For the Greek word is *newtero*, the same as that used in the words above, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" This is a comparative, and is therefore well understood in its relation to some one older. Let us therefore here recognize the two nations, who were striving even in Rebecca's womb; when it was said to her, not from works, but of Him that calleth, "The elder shall serve the younger." But the younger saith here that he is of no reputation: for this reason he hath become greater: since "behold, they that were first are last, and they that were last first."

140. It is no wonder that they have forgotten the words of God, who have chosen to set up their own righteousness, ignorant of the righteousness of God; but he, the younger, hath not forgotten, for he hath not wished to have a righteousness of his own, but that of God, of which he now also saith, "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth" (ver. 142). For how is not the law truth, through which came the knowledge of sin, and that which giveth testimony of the righteousness of God? For thus the Apostle saith: "The righteousness of God is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets." 141. On account of this law the younger suffered persecution from the elder, so that the younger saith what followeth: "Trouble and hardship have taken hold upon me: yet is my meditation in Thy commandments" (ver. 143). Let them rage, let them persecute; as long as the commandments of God be not abandoned, and, after those commandments, let even those who rage be loved.

142. "Thy testimonies are righteousness unto everlasting: O grant me understanding, and I shall live" (ver. 144). This younger one prayeth for understanding; which if he had not, he would not be "wiser than the aged;" but he prayeth for it in trouble and hardships, that he may thereby understand how contemptible is all that his persecuting enemies can take from him, by whom he saith he hath been despised. Therefore he hath said, "and I shall live:" because if trouble and heaviness reached such a pitch, that his life should be terminated by the hands of his persecuting enemies, he will live for ever, who preferreth to temporal things, righteousness which remaineth for evermore. This righteousness in trouble and hardship are the Martyria Dei, that is, the testimonies of God, for which Martyrs have been crowned.

Koph.

143. ...He who singeth this Psalm, mentioneth such a prayer of his own: "I have called with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord!" (ver. 145). For to what end his cry profiteth, he addeth "I will search out Thy righteousnesses." For this purpose then he hath called with his whole heart, and hath longed that this might be given him by the Lord listening unto him, that he may search out His righteousnesses ... 144. "I have called, save me" (ver. 146) or as some copies, both Greek and Latin, have it "I have called to Thee." But what is, "I have called to Thee," save that by calling I have invoked Thee? But when he had said, "save me;" what did he add? "And I will keep Thy testimonies:" that is, that I may not, through infirmity, deny Thee. For the health of the soul

canseth that to be done which it is known to be our duty to do, and thus in striving even to the death of the body, if the extremity of temptation demand this in defence of the truth of the divine testimonies: but where there is not health of the soul, weakness yieldeth, and truth is deserted ...

145. "I have prevented in midnight," he saith, "and have cried: In Thy words have I trusted" (ver. 147). If we refer this to each of the faithful, and to the literal character of the act; it oft happeneth that the love of God is awake in that hour of the night, and, the love of prayer strongly urging us, the time of prayer, which is wont to be after the crowing of the cock, is not awaited, but prevented. But if we understand night of the whole of this world's duration; we indeed cry unto God at midnight, and prevent the fulness of time in which He will restore us what He hath promised, as is elsewhere read, "Let us prevent His presence with confession." Although if we choose to understand the unripe season of this night, before the fulness of time had come, that is, the ripe season when Christ should be manifested in the flesh; neither was the Church then silent, but preventing this fulness of time, in prophecy cried out, and trusted in the words of God, who was able to do what He promised, that in the seed of Abraham all nations should be blessed.

146. The Church saith also what followeth, "Mine eyes have prevented the morning watch, that I might meditate on Thy words" (ver. 148). Let us suppose the morning to mean the season when "a light arose for them that sat in the shadow of death;" did not the eyes of the Church prevent this morning watch, in those Saints who before were on earth, because they foresaw beforehand that this would come to pass, so that they meditated on the words of God, which then were, and announced these things to be destined in the Law and the Prophets? 147. "Hear my voice, O Lord, according to Thy loving-mercy; and quicken Thou me according to Thy judgment" (ver. 149). For first God according to His loving-mercy taketh away punishment from sinners, and will give them life afterwards, when righteous, according to His judgment; for it is not without a meaning that it is said unto Him, "My song shall be of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord;" in this order of the terms: although the season of mercy itself be not without judgment, whereof the Apostle saith, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord." ...And the final season of judgment shall not be without mercy, since as the Psalm saith, "He crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kind-

ness." But "judgment shall be without mercy," but "unto those" on the left, "who have not dealt mercy."

148. "They draw nigh, that of malice persecute me:" or, as some copies read, "maliciously" (ver. 150). Then they that persecute draw nigh, when they go the length of torturing and destroying the flesh: whence the twenty-first Psalm, wherein the Lord's Passion is prophesied, saith, "O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand;" where those things are spoken of which He suffered when His Passion was not imminent upon Him, but actually realized. "And are far from Thy law." The nearer they drew to the persecuting the righteous, so much the farther were they from righteousness. But what harm did they do unto those, to whom they drew near by persecution; since the approach of their Lord is nearer unto their souls, by whom they no wise are forsaken? 149. Lastly, it followeth, "Thou art nigh at hand, O Lord, and all Thy ways are truth" (ver. 151). Even in their troubles, it hath been a wonted confession of the saints, to ascribe truth unto God, because they suffer them not undeservedly. So did Queen Esther, so did holy Daniel, so did the three men in the furnace, so do other associates in their sanctity confess. But it may be asked, in what sense it is here said, "All Thy ways are truth;" since in another Psalm it is read, "All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth." But towards the saints, All the ways of the Lord are at once mercy and truth: since He aideth them even in judgment, and thus mercy is not wanting; and in having mercy upon them, He performeth that which He hath promised, so that truth is not wanting. But towards all, both those whom He freeth, and those whom He condemneth, all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth; because where He doth not show mercy, the truth of His vengeance is displayed. For He freeth many who have not deserved, but He condemneth none who hath not deserved it.

150. "From the beginning I have known," he saith, "as concerning Thy testimonies, that Thou hast grounded them for ever" (ver. 152) ...What are these testimonies, save those wherein God hath declared that He will give an everlasting kingdom unto His sons? And since He hath declared that He will give this in His only-begotten Son, he said that the testimonies themselves were grounded for ever. For that which God hath promised through them, was everlasting. And for this reason the words, "Thou hast grounded them," are rightly thus understood, because they are shown to be true in Christ. Whence then did the Psalmist know this in the beginning, save because the

Church speaketh, which was not wanting to the earth from the commencement of the human race, the first-fruits whereof was the holy Abel, himself sacrificed in testimony of the future blood of the Mediator that should be shed by a wicked brother? For this also was at the beginning, "They two shall be one flesh:" which great mystery the Apostle Paul expounding, saith, "I speak concerning Christ and the Church."

Resch.

151. Let no man, set in Christ's body, imagine these words to be alien from himself, since in truth it is the whole body of Christ placed in this humble state that speaketh: "O consider my humiliation, and deliver me: for I forget not Thy law" (ver. 153). In this place we cannot understand any law of God so suitably, as that whereby it is immutably determined that "every one that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and every one that humbleth himself, shall be exalted." 152. "Avenge Thou," he saith, "my cause, and deliver me" (ver. 154). The former sentence is here almost repeated. And what is there said, "For I do not forget Thy law," agreeth [with what we read here, "Quicken me, according to Thy word." For these words are the law of God, which he hath not forgot, so that he hath abased himself, and will therefore be exalted. But the words, "Quicken me," pertain to this very exaltation; for the exaltation of the saints is everlasting life.

153. "Health," he saith, "is far from the ungodly: for they regard not Thy righteousnesses" (ver. 155). This separateth thee, that what they have not done, thou hast done, that is, thou hast regarded the righteousnesses of God. But "what hast thou that thou hast not received?" Art thou not he who a little before didst say, "I will keep Thy righteousnesses"? Thou therefore hast received from Him, unto whom thou didst call, the power to keep them. He therefore doth Himself separate thee from those from whom health is far, because they have not regarded the righteousnesses of God. 154. This he saw himself also. For I should not see it, save I saw it in Him, save I were in Him. For these are the words of the Body of Christ, whose members we are. He saw this, Isay, and at once added, "Great are Thy mercies, O Lord" (ver. 156). Even our seeking out Thy righteousnesses, then, cometh of Thy mercies. "Quicken me according to Thy judgment." For I know that Thy judgments will not be upon me without Thy mercy.

155. "Many there are that trouble me, and persecute me; yet do I not swerve from Thy testimonies" (ver. 157). This hath been realized: we know it,

we recollect it, we acknowledge it. The whole earth has been crimsoned by the blood of Martyrs; heaven is flowery with the crowns of Martyrs, the Churches are adorned with the memorials of Martyrs, seasons distinguished by the birthdays of Martyrs, cures more frequent by the merits of Martyrs. Whence this, save because that hath been fulfilled which was prophesied of that Man who hath been spread abroad around the whole world. We recognize this, and render thanks to the Lord our God. For thou, man, thou hast thyself said in another Psalm, "If the Lord Himself had not been on our side, they would have swallowed us up quick." Behold the reason why thou hast not swerved from His testimonies, and hast won the palm of thy heavenly calling amid the hands of the many who persecuted and troubled thee.

156. "I have seen," he saith, "the foolish, and I pined" (ver. 158): or, as other copies read, "I have seen them that keep not covenant:" this is the reading of most. But who are they who have not kept covenant, save they who have swerved from the testimonies of God, not bearing the tribulation of their many persecutors? Now this is the covenant, that he who shall have conquered shall be crowned. They who, not bearing persecution, have by denial swerved from the testimonies of God, have not kept the covenant. These then the Psalmist saw, and pined, for he loved them. For that jealousy is good, springing from love, not from envy. He addeth in what respect they had failed to keep the covenant, "Because they kept not Thy word." For this they denied in their tribulations. 157. And he commendeth himself as differing from them, and saith, "Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments" (ver. 159). He saith not, I have not denied Thy words or testimonies, as the Martyrs were urged to do, and, when they refused, suffered intolerable torments: but he said this wherein is the fruit of all sufferings; for, "if I give up my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." The Psalmist, praising this virtue, saith, "Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments." Then he asketh his reward, "O Lord, quicken me, according to Thy mercy." These put me to death, do Thou quicken me. But if a reward be asked of mercy, which justice is bound to give; how much greater is that mercy, which enabled him to gain the victory, on account of which the reward was sought for?

158. "The beginning," he saith, "of Thy words is truth; all the judgments of Thy righteousness endure for evermore" (ver. 160). From truth, he saith, Thy words do proceed, and they are therefore truthful, and deceive no man,

for in them life is announced to the righteous, punishment to the ungodly. These are the everlasting judgments of God's righteousness.

Schin.

159. We know what persecutions the body of Christ, that is, the holy Church, suffered from the kings of the earth. Let us therefore here also recognise the words of the Church: "Princes have persecuted me without a cause: and my heart hath stood in awe of Thee" (ver. 161). For how had the Christians injured the kingdoms of the earth, although their King promised them the kingdom of heaven? How, I ask, had they injured the kingdoms of earth? Did their King forbid His soldiers to pay and to render due service to the kings of the earth? Saith He not to the Jews who were striving to calumniate Him, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's"? Did He not even in His own Person pay tribute from the mouth of a fish? Did not His forerunner, when the soldiers of this kingdom were seeking what they ought to do for their everlasting salvation, instead of replying, Loose your belts, throw away your arms, desert your king, that ye may wage war for the Lord, answer, "Do violence to no man: neither accuse any falsely: and be content with your wages"? Did not one of His soldiers, His most beloved companion, say to his fellow soldiers, the provincials, so to speak, of Christ, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers"? Does he not enjoin the Church to pray for even kings themselves? How then have the Christians offended against them? What due have they not rendered?

in what have not Christians obeyed the monarchs of earth? The kings of the earth therefore have persecuted the Christians without a cause. They too had their threatening words: I banish, I proscribe, I slay, I torture with claws, I burn with fires, I expose to beasts, I tear the limbs piecemeal. But heed what he hath subjoined: "And my heart hath stood in awe of Thy word. My heart hath stood in awe of these words, "Fear not them that kill the body," etc. I have scorned man who persecuteth me, and have overcome the devil that would seduce me. 160. Then follows, "I am as glad of Thy word as one that findeth great spoils" (ver. 162). By the same words he conquered, of which he stood in awe. For spoils are stripped from the conquered; as he was overcome and despoiled of whom it is said in the Gospel, "except he first bind the strong man." But many spoils were found, when, admiring the endurance of the Martyrs, even the persecutors believed; and they who had plotted to in-

jure our King by the injury of His soldiers, were gained over by Him in addition. Whoever therefore standeth in awe of the words of God, fearing lest he be overcome in the contest, rejoiceth as conqueror in the same words. 161. "As for iniquity, I hate and abhor it; but Thy law have I loved" (ver. 163). That awe, therefore, of His word did not create hatred of those words, but maintained his love unimpaired. For the words of God are no other than the law of God. Far be it therefore that love perish through fear, where fear is chaste. Thus fathers are at once feared and loved by affectionate sons; thus doth the chaste wife at once fear her husband, lest she be forsaken by him, and loveth him, that she may enjoy his love. If then the human father and the human husband desire at once to be feared and loved; much more doth our Father who is in heaven, and that Bridegroom, "beautiful beyond the sons of men," not in the flesh, but in goodness. For by whom is the law of God loved, save by those by whom God is loved? And what that is severe hath the father's law to good sons? Let the Father's judgments therefore be praised even in the scourge, if His promises be loved in the reward.

162. Such was, assuredly, the conduct of the Psalmist, who saith, "Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments" (ver. 164). The words "seven times a day," signify "evermore." For this number is wont to be a symbol of universality; because after six days of the divine work of creation, a seventh of rest was added; and all times roll on through a revolving cycle of seven days. For no other reason it was said, "a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again:" that is, the just man perisheth not, though brought low in every way, yet not induced to transgress, otherwise he will not be just. For the words, "falleth seven times," are employed to express every kind of tribulation, whereby man is cast down in the sight of men: and the words, "riseth up again," signify that he profiteth from all these tribulations. The following sentence in this passage sufficiently illustrates the foregoing words: for it follows, "but the wicked shall fall into mischief." Not to be deprived of strength in any evils, is therefore the falling seven times, and the rising again of the just man. Justly hath the Church then praised God seven times in a day for His righteous judgments; because, when it was time that judgment should begin at the house of God, she did not faint in all her tribulations, but was glorified with the crowns of Martyrs.

163. "Great is the peace," he saith, "that they have who love Thy law: and there is no offence to them" (ver. 165). Doth this mean that the law itself is

not an offence to them that love it, or that there is no offence from any source unto them that love the law? But both senses are rightly understood. For he who loveth the law of God, honoureth in it even what he doth not understand; and what seemeth to him to sound absurd, he judgeth rather that he doth not understand, and that there is some great meaning hidden: thus the law of God is not an offence to him ... 164. "I have waited," he saith, "for Thy saving health, O Lord, and have loved Thy commandments" (ver. 166). For what would it have profited the righteous of old to have loved the commandments of God, save Christ, who is the saving health of God, had freed them; by the gift of whose Spirit also they were able to love the commandments of God? If therefore they who loved God's commandments, waited for His saving health; how much more necessary was Jesus, that is, the saving Health of God, for the salvation of those that did not love His commandments? This prophecy may suit also the Saints of the period since the revelation of grace, and the preaching of the Gospel, for they that love God's commandments look for Christ, that "when Christ, our life, shall appear, we" may then "appear with Him in glory."

165. "My soul hath kept Thy testimonies, and I have loved them exceedingly:" or, as some copies read, "hath loved them," understanding, "my soul" (ver. 167). The testimonies of God are kept, while they are not denied. This is the office of Martyrs, for testimonies are called Martyria in Greek. But since it profiteth nothing, even to be burnt with flames without charity, he addeth, "and I have loved them exceedingly." ...For he who loveth, keepeth them in the Spirit of truth and faithfulness. But generally, while the commandments of God are kept, they against whose will they are kept become our foes: then, indeed, His testimonies also must be kept courageously, lest they be denied when the enemy persecuteth. After the Psalmist, then, had declared that he had done both these things, he ascribeth unto God his having been enabled to do so, by adding, "because all my ways are in Thy sight." He saith therefore, "I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies; not because all my ways are in Thy sight" (ver. 168). As much as to say, Hadst Thou turned away Thy face from me, I should have been confounded, nor could I keep Thy commandments and testimonies. "I have kept them," then, because "all my ways are in Thy sight." With a look favouring and siding man, he meant it to be understood that God seeth his ways: according to the prayer, "O hide not Thou Thy face from me." ...

Tau.

166. Let us now hear the words of one praying: since we know who is praying, and we recognise ourselves, if we be not reprobate, among the members of this one praying. "Let my prayer come near in Thy sight, O Lord" (ver. 169): for, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart." "Give me understanding, according to Thy word." He claimeth a promise. For he saith, "according to Thy word," which is to say, according to Thy promise. For the Lord promised this when He said, "I will inform thee." 167. "Let my request come before Thy presence, O Lord: deliver me, according to Thy word" (ver. 170). He repeateth what he hath asked. For his former words, "Let my prayer come near in Thy presence, O Lord:" are like unto what he saith, "Let my request come before Thy presence, O Lord:" and the words, "Give me understanding according to Thy word," agree with these, "Deliver me according to Thy word." For by receiving understanding he is delivered, who of himself through want of understanding is deceived.

168. "My lips shall burst forth praise: when Thou hast taught me Thy righteousnesses" (ver. 171). We know how God teacheth those who are docile unto God. For every one who hath heard from the Father and hath learned, comes unto Him "who justifieth the ungodly:" so that he may keep the righteousnesses of God not only by retaining them in his memory, but also by doing them. Thus doth he who glorieth, glory not in himself, but in the Lord, and burst forth praise. 169. But as he hath now learned, and praised God his Teacher, he next wisheth to teach. "Yea, my tongue shall declare Thy word: for all Thy commandments are righteousness" (ver. 172). When he saith that he will declare these things, he becometh a minister of the word. For though God teach within, nevertheless "faith cometh from hearing: and how do they hear without a preacher?" For, because "God giveth the increase," is no reason why we need not plant and water.

170. "Let Thy hand be stretched forth (fiat, be made) to save me, for I have chosen Thy commandments" (ver. 173). That I might not fear, and that not only might my heart hold fast, but my tongue also utter Thy words: "I have chosen Thy commandments," and have stifled fear with love. Let Thy hand therefore be stretched forth, to save me from another's hand. Thus God saved the Martyrs, when He permitted them not to be slain in their souls: for "vain is the safety of man" in the flesh. The words, "Let Thy hand be made," may also be taken to mean Christ the Hand of God ...Certainly

where we read the following words, "I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord" (ver. 174): even if all our foes be reluctant, let Christ the Salvation of God occur to us: the righteous men of old confess that they longed for Him, the Church longed for His destined coming from His mother's womb, the Church longeth for His coming at His Father's right hand. Subjoined to this sentence are the words, "And Thy law is my meditation:" for the Law giveth testimony unto Christ.

171. But in this faith, though the heathen rage furiously, and the people imagine a vain thing: though the flesh be slain while it preacheth Thee: "My soul shall live, and shall praise Thee: and Thy judgments shall help me" (ver. 175). These are those judgments, which it was time should begin at the house of the Lord. But "they will help me," he saith. And who cannot see how much the blood of the Church hath aided the Church? how great a harvest hath risen in the whole world from that sowing? 172. At last he openeth himself completely, and showeth what person was speaking throughout the whole Psalm. "I have gone astray," he saith, "like a sheep that is lost: O seek Thy servant, for I do not forget Thy commandments" (ver. 176). Let the lost sheep be sought, let the lost sheep be quickened, for whose sake its Shepherd left the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and while seeking it, was torn by Jewish thorns. But it is still being sought, let it still be sought, partly found let it still be sought. For as to that company, among whom the Psalmist saith, "I do not forget Thy commandments," it hath been found; but through those who choose the commandments of God, gather them together, love them, it is still sought, and by means of the blood of its Shepherd shed and sprinkled abroad, it is found in all nations.

PSALM 120

1. The Psalm which we have just heard chanted, and have responded to with our voices, is short, and very profitable. Ye will not long toil in hearing, nor will ye toil fruitlessly in working. For it is, according to the title prefixed to it, "A song of degrees." Degrees are either of ascent or of descent. But degrees, as they are used in this Psalm, are of ascending ...There are therefore both those who ascend and those who descend on that ladder. Who are they that ascend? They who progress towards the understanding of things spiritual. Who are they that descend? They who, although, as far as men may, they enjoy the comprehension of things spiritual: nevertheless, descend unto the infants, to say to them such things as they can receive, so that, after being

nourished with milk, they may become fitted and strong enough to take spiritual meat ...

2. When therefore a man hath commenced thus to order his ascent; to speak more plainly, when a Christian hath begun to think of spiritual amendment, he beginneth to suffer the tongues of adversaries. Whoever hath not yet suffered from them, hath not yet made progress; whoever suffereth them not, doth not. even endeavour to improve. Doth he wish to know what we mean? Let him at the same time experience what is reported of us. Let him begin to improve, let him begin to wish to ascend, to wish to despise earthly, fragile, temporal objects, to hold worldly happiness for nothing, to think of God alone, not to rejoice in gain, not to pine at losses, to wish even to sell all his substance, and distribute it among the poor, and to follow Christ; let us see how he suffereth the tongues of detractors and of constant opponents, and-a still greater peril-of pretended counsellors, who lead him astray from salvation ...He then, who will ascend, first of all prayeth God against these very tongues: for he saith, "When I was in trouble, I called on the Lord; and He heard me" (ver. 1). Why did He hear him? That He might now place him at the steps of ascent.

3. "Deliver my soul, O Lord, from unrighteous lips, and from a deceitful tongue" (ver. 2). What is a deceitful tongue? A treacherous tongue, one that hath the semblance of counsel, and the bane of real mischief. Such are those who say, And wilt thou do this, that nobody doth? Wilt thou be the only Christian? ...Some deter by dissuasion, others discourage yet more by their praise. For since such is the life that hath for some time been diffused over the world, so great is the authority of Christ, that not even a pagan ventureth to blame Christ. He who cannot be censured is read. They cannot contradict Christ, they cannot contradict the Gospel, Christ cannot be censured; the deceitful tongue turneth itself to praise as an hindrance. If thou praisest, exhort. Why dost thou discourage with thy praise? ...Thou turnest thyself to another mode of dissuasion, that by false praise thou mayest turn me away from true praise; nay, that by praising Christ thou mayest keep me away from Christ, saying, What is this? Behold these men have done this: thou, perhaps, wilt not be able: thou beginnest to ascend, thou fallest. It seemeth to warn thee: it is the serpent, it is the deceitful tongue, it hath poison. Pray against it, if thou wishest to ascend.

4. And thy Lord saith unto thee, "What shall be given thee, or what shall be set before thee, against the deceitful tongue?" (ver. 3). What shall be given thee, that is, as a weapon to oppose to the deceitful tongue, to guard thyself against the deceitful tongue? "Or what shall be set before thee?" He asketh to try thee: for He will answer His own question. For He answers following up his own inquiry, "even sharp arrows of the Mighty One, with coals that desolate, or that lay waste" (ver. 4). They that desolate, or that lay waste (for it is variously written in different copies), are the same, because by laying waste, as ye may observe, they easily lead unto desolation. What are these coals? First, beloved brethren, understand what are arrows. The "sharp arrows of the Mighty One," are the words of God ...What then are the "coals that lay waste?" It is not enough to plead with words against a deceitful tongue and unrighteous lips: it is not enough to plead with words; we must plead with examples also ...The word coals, then, is used to express the examples of many sinners converted to the Lord. Thou hearest men wonder, and say, I knew that man, how addicted he was to drinking, what a villain, what a lover of the circus, or of the amphitheatre, what a cheat: now how he serveth God, how innocent he hath become! Wonder not; he is a live coal. Thou rejoicest that he is alive, whom thou wast mourning as dead. But when thou praisest the living, if thou knowest how to praise, apply him to the dead, that he may be inflamed; whosoever is still slow to follow God, apply to him the coal which was extinguished, and have the arrow of God's word, and the coal that layeth waste, that thou mayest meet the deceitful tongue and the lying lips.

5. "Alas, that my sojourning is become far off!" (ver. 5). It hath departed far from Thee: my pilgrimage hath become a far one. I have not yet reached that country, where I shall live with no wicked person; I have not yet reached that company of Angels, where I shall not fear offences. But why am I not as yet there? Because sojourning is pilgrimage. He is called a sojourner who dwells in a foreign land, not in his own country. And when is it far off? Sometimes, my brethren, when a man goeth abroad, he liveth among better persons, than he would perhaps live with in his own country: but it is not thus, when we go afar from that heavenly Jerusalem. For a man changeth his country, and this foreign sojourn is sometimes good for him; in travelling he findeth faithful friends, whom he could not find in his own country. He had enemies, so that he was driven from his country; and when he travelled, he found what he had not in his country. Such is not that country Jerusalem,

where all are good: whoever travelleth away from thence, is among the evil; nor can he depart from the wicked, save when he shall return to the company of Angels, so as to be where he was before he travelled. There all are righteous and holy, who enjoy the word of God without reading, without letters: for what is written to us through pages, they perceive there through the Face of God. What a country! A great country indeed, and wretched are the wanderers from that country.

6. But what he saith, "My pilgrimage hath been made distant," are the words of those, that is, of the Church herself, who toileth on this earth. It is her voice, which crieth out from the ends of the earth in another Psalm, saying, "From the ends of the earth have I cried unto Thee. ...Where then doth he groan, and among whom doth he dwell? "I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar." Since this is a Hebrew word, beyond doubt ye have not understood it. What meaneth, "I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar"? "Kedar," as far as we remember of the interpretation of Hebrew words, signifieth darkness. "Kedar" rendered into Latin is called *tenebrae*. Now ye know that Abraham had two sons, whom indeed the Apostle mentioneth, and declareth them to have been types of the twocovenants ...Ishmael therefore was in darkness, Isaac in light. Whoever here also seek earthly felicity in the Church, from God, shall belong to Ishmael. These are the very persons who gainsay the spiritual ones who are progressing, and detract from them, and have deceitful tongues and unrighteous lips. Against these the Psalmist, when ascending, prayed, and hotcoals that lay waste, and swift and sharp arrows of the Mighty One, were given him for his defence. For among these he still liveth, until the whole floor be winnowed: he therefore said, "I have dwelt among the tents of Kedar." The tents of Ishmael are called those of Kedar. Thus the book of Genesis hath it: thus it hath, that Kedar belongeth unto Ishmael. Isaac therefore is with Ishmael: that is, they who belong unto Isaac, live among those who belong unto Ishmael. These wish to rise above, those wish to press them downwards: these wish to fly unto God, those endeavour to pluck their wings ...

7. "My soul hath wandered much" (ver. 6). Lest thou shouldest understand bodily wandering, he hath said that the soul wandered. The body wandereth in places, the soul wandereth in its affections. If thou love the earth, thou wanderest from God: if thou lovest God, thou risest unto God. Let us be exercised in the love of God, and of our neighbour, that we may return unto

charity. If we fall towards the earth, we wither and decay. But one descended unto this one who had fallen, in order that he might arise. Speaking of the time of his wandering, he said that he wandered in the tents of Kedar. Wherefore? Because "my soul hath wandered much." He wandereth there where he ascendeth. He wandereth not in the body, he riseth not in the body. But wherein doth he ascend? "The ascent," he saith, "is in the heart." 8. "With them that hated peace, I was peaceful" (ver. 7). But howsoever ye may hear, most beloved brethren, ye will not be able to prove how truly ye sing, unless ye have begun to do that which ye sing. How much soever I say this, in whatsoever ways I may expound it, in whatsoever words I may turn it, it entereth not into the heart of him in whom its operation is not. Begin to act, and see what we speak. Then tears flow forth at each word, then the Psalm is sung, and the heart doeth what is sung in the Psalm ... Who are they who hate peace? They who tear asunder unity. For had they not hated peace, they would have abode in unity. But they separated themselves, forsooth on this account, that they might be righteous, that they might not have the ungodly mixed with them. These words are either ours or theirs: decide whose. The Catholic Church saith, Unity must not be lost, the Church of God must not be cut off. God will judge afterwards of the wicked and the good ... This we also say: Love ye peace, love ye Christ. For if they, love peace, they love Christ. When therefore we say, Love ye peace, we say this, Love ye Christ. Wherefore? For the Apostle saith of Christ, "He is our peace, who hath made both one." If Christ is therefore peace, because He hath made both one: why have ye made two of one? How then are ye peace-makers, if, when Christ maketh one of two, ye make two of one? But since we say these things, we are peace-makers with them that hate peace; and yet they who hate peace, when we spake to them, made war on us for nought.

PSALM 121

1. ...Let them "lift up their eyes to the hills whence cometh their help" (ver. 1). What meaneth, The hills have been lightened? The Son of righteousness hath already risen, the Gospel hath been already preached by the Apostles, the Scriptures have been preached, all the mysteries have been laid open, the veil hath been rent, the secret place of the temple hath been revealed: let them now at length lift their eyes up to the hills, whence their help cometh ... "Of His fulness have all we received," he saith. Thy help therefore is from Him, of whose fulness the hills received, not from the hills; towards

which, nevertheless, save thou lift thine eyes through the Scriptures, thou wilt not approach, so as to be lighted by Him. 2. Sing therefore what followeth; if thou wish to hear how thou mayest most securely set thy feet on the steps, so that thou mayest not be fatigued in that ascent, nor stumble and fall: pray in these words: "Suffer not my foot to be moved!" (ver. 3). Whereby are feet moved; whereby was the foot of him who was in Paradise moved? But first consider whereby the feet of him who was among the Angels were moved: who when his feet were moved fell, and from an Angel became a devil: for when his feet were moved he fell. Seek whereby he fell: he fell through pride. Nothing then moveth the feet, save pride: nothing moveth the feet to a fall, save pride. Charity moveth them to walk and to improve and to ascend; pride moveth them to fall ...Rightly therefore the Psalmist, hearing how he may ascend and may not fall, prayeth unto God that he may profit from the vale of misery, and may not fail in the swelling of pride, in these words, "Suffer not my feet to be moved!" And He replieth unto him, "Let him that keepeth thee not sleep." Attend, my beloved. It is as if one thought were expressed in two sentences; the man while ascending and singing "the song of degrees," saith, "Suffer not my foot to be moved:" and it is as if God answered, Thou sayest unto Me, Let not my feet be moved: say also, "Let Him that keepeth thee not sleep," and thy foot shall not be moved.

3. Choose for thyself Him, who will neither sleep nor slumber, and thy foot shall not be moved. God is never asleep: if thou dost wish to have a keeper who never sleepeth, choose God for thy keeper. "Suffer not my feet to be moved," thou sayest: well, very well: but He also saith unto thee, "Let not him that keepeth thee slumber." Thou perhaps wast about to turn thyself unto men as thy keepers, and to say, whom shall I find who will not sleep? what man will not slumber? whom do I find? whithershall I go? whither shall I return? The Psalmist telleth thee: "He that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep" (ver. 4). Dost thou wish to have a keeper who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth? Behold, "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep:" for Christ keepeth Israel. Be thou then Israel. What meaneth Israel? It is interpreted, Seeing God. And how is God seen? First by faith: afterwards by sight. If thou canst not as yet see Him by sight, see Him by faith ...Who is there, who will neither slumber nor sleep? when thou seekest among men, thou art deceived; thou wilt never find one. Trust not then in any man: every man slumbereth, and will sleep. When doth he

slumber? When he beareth the flesh of weakness. When will he sleep? When he is dead. Trust not then in man. A mortal may slumber, he sleepeth in death. Seek not a keeper among men.

4. And who, thou askest, shall help me, save He who slumbereth not, nor sleepeth? Hear what followeth: "The Lord Himself is thy keeper" (ver. 5). It is not therefore man, that slumbereth and sleepeth, but the Lord, that keepeth thee. How doth He keep thee? "The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand." ...It seemeth to me to have a hidden sense: otherwise he would have simply said, without qualification, "The Lord will keep thee," without adding, "on thy right hand." For how? Doth God keep our right hand, and not our left? Did He not create the whole of us? Did not He who made our right hand, make our left hand also? Finally, if it pleased Him to speak of the right hand alone, why said He, "on the hand of thy right hand," and not at once "upon thy right hand"? Why should He say this, unless He were keeping somewhat here hidden for us to arrive at by knocking? For He would either say, "The Lord shall keep thee," and add no more; or if He would add the right hand, "The Lord shall keep thee upon thy right hand;" or at least, as He added "hand," He would say, "The Lord shall keep thee upon thy hand, even thy right hand," not "upon the hand of thy right hand." ...

5. I ask you, how ye interpret what is said in the Gospel, "Let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth"? For if ye understand this, ye will discover what is your right hand, and what is your left: at the same time ye will also understand that God made both hands, the left and the right; yet the left ought not to know what the right doeth. By our left hand is meant all that we have in a temporal way; by our right hand is meant, whatever our Lord promiseth us that is immutable and eternal. But if He who will give everlasting life, Himself also consoleth our present life by these temporal blessings, He hath Himself made our right hand and our left ... 6. Let us now come to this verse of the Psalm: "The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand" (ver. 5). By hand he meaneth power. How do we prove this? Because the power of God also is styled the hand of God ...Whereof John saith, "He gave unto them power to become the sons of God." Whence hast thou received this power? "To them," he saith, "that believe in His Name." If then thou believest, this very power is given thee, to be among the sons of God. But to be among the sons of God, is to belong to the right hand. Thy

faith therefore is the hand of thy right hand: that is, the power that is given thee, to be among the sons of God, is the hand of thy right hand ...

7. "May the Lord shield thee upon the hand of thy right hand" (ver. 6). I have said, and I believe ye have recognised it. For had ye not recognised it, and that from the Scriptures, ye would not signify your understanding of it by your voices. Since then ye have understood, brethren, consider what followeth; wherefore the Lord shieldeth thee "upon the hand of thy right hand," that is, in thy faith, wherein we have received "power to become the sons of God," and to be on His right hand: wherefore should God shield us? On account of offences. Whence come offences? Offences are to be feared from two quarters, for there are two precepts upon which the whole Law hangeth and the Prophets, the love of God and of our neighbour. The Church is loved for the sake of our neighbour, but God for the sake of God. Of God, is understood the sun figuratively: of the Church, is understood the moon figuratively. Whoever can err, so as to think otherwise of God than he ought, believing not the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost to be of one Substance, has been deceived by the cunning of heretics, chiefly of the Arians. If he hath believed anything less in the Son or in the Holy Spirit than in the Father, he hath suffered an offence in God; he is scorched by the sun.

Whoever again believeth that the Church existeth in one province only, and not that she is diffused over the whole world, and whoso believeth them that say, "Lo here," and "Lo there, is Christ," as ye but now heard when the Gospel was being read; since He who gave so great a price, purchased the whole world: he is offended, so to speak, in his neighbour, and is burnt by the moon. Whoever therefore erreth in the very Substance of Truth, is burnt by the sun, and is burnt through the day; because he erreth in Wisdom itself ... God therefore hath made one sun, which riseth upon the good and the evil, that sun which the good and the evil see; but that Sun is another one, not created, not born, through whom all things were made; where is the intelligence of the Immutable Truth: of this the ungodly say, "the Sun rose not upon us. Whosoever erreth not in Wisdom itself, is not burnt by the sun. Whosoever erreth not in the Church, and in the Lord's Flesh, and in those things which were done for us in time, is not burnt by the moon. But every man although he believeth in Christ, erreth either in this or that respect, unless what is here prayed for, "The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy

right hand," is realized in him. He goeth on to say, "So that the sun shall not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night" (ver. 6).

Thy defence, therefore, is upon the hand of thy right hand for this reason, that the sun may not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night. Understand hence, brethren, that it is spoken figuratively. For, in truth, if we think of the visible sun, it burneth by day: doth the moon burn by night? But what is burning? Offence. Hear the Apostle's words: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" 8. "For the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil" (ver. 7). From offences in the sun, from offences in the moon, from all evil shall He preserve thee, who is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand, who will not sleep nor slumber. And for what reason? Because we are amid temptations: "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. The Lord preserve thy soul:" even thy very soul. "The Lord preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore" (ver. 8). Not thy body; for the Martyrs were consumed in the body: but "the Lord preserve thy soul;" for the Martyrs yielded not up their souls. The persecutors raged against Crispina, whose birthday we are to-day celebrating; they were raging against a rich and delicate woman: but she was strong, for the Lord was her defence upon the hand of her right hand. He was her Keeper. Is there any one in Africa, my brethren, who knoweth her not? For she was most illustrious, noble in birth, abounding in wealth: but all these things were in her left hand, beneath her head. An enemy advanced to strike her head, and the left hand was presented to him, which was under her head. Her head was above, the right hand embraced her from above. ...

PSALM 122

1. As impure love inflames the mind, and summons the soul destined to perish to lust for earthly things, and to follow what is perishable, and precipitates it into lowest places, and sinks it into the abyss; so holy love raiseth us to heavenly things, and inflames us to what is eternal, and excites the soul to those things which do not pass away nor die, and from the abyss of hell raiseth it to heaven. Yet all love hath a power of its own, nor can love in the soul of the lover be idle; it must needs draw it on. But dost thou wish to know of what sort love is? See whither it leadeth ... 2. This Psalm is a "Song of degrees;" as we have often said to you, for these degrees are not of descent, but of ascent. He therefore longeth to ascend. And whither doth he wish to ascend, save into heaven? What meaneth, into heaven? Doth he wish to ascend

that he may be with the sun, moon, and stars? Far be it! But there is in heaven the eternal Jerusalem, where are our fellow-citizens, the Angels: we are wanderers on earth from these our fellow-citizens. We sigh in our pilgrimage; we shall rejoice in the city. But we find companions in this pilgrimage, who have already seen this city herself; who summon us to run towards her. At these he also rejoiceth, who saith, "I rejoiced in them who said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord" (ver. 1) ...

3. "Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem" (ver. 2) ...Consider what thou wilt be there; and although thou art as yet on the road, place this before thine eyes, as if thou wert already standing, as if thou wert alreadyrejoicing without ceasing among the Angels; as if that which is written were realized in thee: "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be alway praising Thee." "Our feet stood in the courts of Jerusalem." What Jerusalem? This earthly Jerusalem also is wont to be called by the name: though this Jerusalem is but the shadow of that. And what great thing is it to stand in this Jerusalem, since this Jerusalem hath not been able to stand, but hath been turned into a ruin? Doth then the Holy Spirit pronounce this, out of the kindled heart of the loving Psalmist, as a great thing? Is not it that Jerusalem, unto whom the Lord said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets," etc. What great thing then did he desire; to stand among those who slew the Prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto them? God forbid that he should think of that Jerusalem, who so loveth, who so burneth, who so longeth to reach that Jerusalem, "our Mother," of which the Apostle saith, that She is "eternal in the Heavens."

4. "Jerusalem that is being built as a city" (ver. 3). Brethren, when David was uttering these words, that city had been finished, it was not being built. It is some city he speaketh of, therefore, which is now being built, unto which living stones run in faith, of whom Peter saith, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house; that is, the holy temple of God. What meaneth, ye are built up as lively stones? Thou livest, if thou believest: but if thou believest, thou art made a temple of God; for the Apostle Paul saith, "The temple of God is holy, which temple are ye. This city is therefore now in building; stones are cut down from the hills by the hands of those who preach truth, they are squared that they may enter into an everlasting structure. There are still many stones in the hands of the Builder: let them not fall from His hands, that they may be built perfect into the structure of the

temple. This, then, is the "Jerusalem that is being built as a city: Christ is its foundation. The Apostle Paul saith, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. When a foundation is laid on earth, the walls are built above, and the weight of the walls tends towards the lowest parts, because the foundation is laid at the bottom. But if our foundation be in heaven, let us be built towards heaven.

Bodies have built the edifice of this basilica, the ample size of which ye see; and since bodies have built it, they placed the foundation lowest: but since we are spiritually built, our foundation is placed at the highest point. Let us therefore run thither, where we may be built ...But what Jerusalem do I speak of? Is it that, he asketh, which ye see standing, raised on the structure of its walls? No; but the "Jerusalem which is being built as a city. Why not, a city, instead of, "as a city; save because those walls, so built in Jerusalem, were a visible city, as it is by all called a city, literally; but this is being built "as a city," for they who enter it are like living stones; for they are not literally stones? Just as they are called stones, and yet are not so: so the city styled "as a city," is not a city; for he said, "is being built. For by the word building, he meant to be understood the structure, and cohesion of bodies and walls. For a city is properly understood of the men that inhabit there. But in saying "is building," he showed us that he meant a town. And since a spiritual building hath some resemblance to a bodily building, therefore it "is building as a city."

5. But let the following words remove all doubt that we ought not to understand carnally the words, "Whose partaking is in the same." ...What meaneth, "the same"? What is ever in the same state; not what is now in one state, now in another. What then is, "the same," save that which is? What is that which is? That which is everlasting ...Behold "The Same: I Am that I Am, I Am." Thou canst not understand; it is much to understand, it is much to apprehend. Remember what He, whom thou canst not comprehend, became for thee. Remember the flesh of Christ, towards which thou wast raised when sick, and when left half dead from the wounds of robbers, that thou mightest be brought to the Inn, and there mightest be cured. Let us therefore run unto the Lord's house, and reach the city where our feet may stand; the city "that is building as a city: whose partaking is in The Same." ...

6. That city "which partaketh in the same," partaketh in its stability: justly therefore, since he is made a sharer in its stability, saith he who runneth

thither. For all things there stand where nought passeth by. Dost thou too wish to stand there and not to pass by? Run thither. Nobody hath "the same" from himself ... 7. "For thither the tribes went up" (ver. 4). We were asking whither he ascendeth who hath fallen; for we said, it is the voice of a man who is ascending, of the Church rising. Can we tell whither it ascendeth? whither it goeth? whither it is raised? "Thither," he saith, "the tribes went up." Whither? To "partaking in the Same." But what are the tribes? Many know, many know not. For if we use the word "curies" in its proper sense, we understand nothing, save the "curies" which exist in each particular city, whence the terms "curiales" and "decuriones," that is, the citizens of a curia or a decuria; and ye know that each city hath such curies. But there are, or were at one time, curies of the people in those cities, and one city hath many curies, as Rome hath thirty-five curies of the people? These are called tribes. The people of Israel had twelve of these, according to the sons of Jacob.

8. There were twelve tribes of the people of Israel: but there were good, and there were bad among them. For how evil were those tribes which crucified our Lord! How good those who recognised the Lord! Those tribes then who crucified the Lord, were tribes of the devil. When therefore he here said, "For thither the tribes go up;" that thou mightest not understand all the tribes, he added, "even the tribes of the Lord." ... What are the tribes of the Lord? "A testimony unto Israel." Hear, brethren, what this meaneth. "A testimony to Israel:" that is, whereby it may be known that it is truly Israel ... He is such in whom there is no guile. And what did the Lord say, when He saw Nathanael? "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." If therefore he is a true Israelite, in whom there is no guile, those tribes go up to Jerusalem, in whom there is no guile. ... Wherefore do they go up? "To confess unto Thy Name, O Lord.": It could not be more nobly expressed. As pride presumeth, so doth humility confess. As he is a presumer, who wishes to appear what he is not, so is he a confessor, who does not wish that to be seen which himself is, and loves That which He is. To this therefore do Israelites go up, in whom is no guile, because they are truly Israelites, because in them is the testimony of Israel.

9. "For there were seated seats for judgment" (ver. 5). This is a wonderful riddle, a wonderful question, if it be not understood. He calleth those seats, which the Greeks call thrones. The Greeks call chairs thrones, as a term of honour. Therefore, my brethren, it is not wonderful if even we should sit on

seats, or chairs; but that these seats themselves should sit, when shall we be able to understand this? As if some one should say: let stools or chairs sit here. We sit on chairs, we sit on seats, we sit on stools; the seats themselves sit not. What then meaneth this, "For there were seated seats for judgment"? ...If therefore heaven be the seat of God, and the Apostles are heaven; they themselves are become the seat of God, the throne of God. It is said in another passage: "The soul of the righteous is the throne of wisdom. A great truth, a great truth, is declared; the throne of wisdom is the soul of the righteous; that is, wisdom sitteth in the soul of the righteous as it were in her chair, in her throne, and thence judgeth whatsoever she judgeth. There were therefore thrones of wisdom, and therefore the Lord said unto them, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. So they also shall sit upon twelve seats, and they are themselves the seats of God; for of them it is said, "For there were seated seats. Who sat? "Seats. And who are the seats?

They of whom it is said, "The soul of the righteous is the seat of wisdom. Who are the seats? The heavens. Who are the heavens? Heaven. What is heaven? That of which the Lord saith, "Heaven is My seat. The righteous then themselves are the seats; and have seats; and seats shall be seated in that Jerusalem. For what purpose? "For judgment. Ye shall sit, He saith, on twelve thrones, O ye thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Judging whom? Those who are below on earth. Who will judge? They who have become heaven. But they who shall be judged, will be divided into two bodies: one will be on the right hand, the other on the left ... 10. He at once addeth, as unto the seats themselves, "Enquire ye the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem" (ver. 6). O ye seats, who now sit unto judgment, and are made the seats of the Lord who judgeth (since they who judge, enquire; they who are judged, are enquired of), "Enquire ye," he saith, "the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem." What will they find by asking? That some have done deeds of charity, that others have not. Those whom they shall find to have done deeds of charity, they will summon them unto Jerusalem; for these deeds are "for the peace of Jerusalem." Love is a powerful thing, my brethren, love is a powerful thing. Do ye wish to see how powerful a thing love is? ...If charity be destitute of means, so that it cannot find what to bestow upon the poor, let it love: let it give "one cup of cold water;" as much shall be laid to its account, as to Zaccheus who gave half his patrimony to the poor.? Wherefore this? The one gave so little, the other so much, and shall so much be imputed

to the former? Just so much. For though his resources are unequal, his charity is not unequal.

11 ...*"And plenteousness,"* he addeth, *"for them that love thee."* He addresses Jerusalem herself, *They have plenteousness who love her. Plenteousness after want: here they are destitute, there they are affluent; here they are weak, there they are strong; here they want, there they are rich. How have they become rich? Because they gave here what they received from God for a season, and received there what God will afterwards pay back for evermore. Here, my brethren, even rich men are poor. It is a good thing for a rich man to acknowledge himself poor: for if he think himself full, that is mere puffing, not plenteousness. Let him own himself empty, that he may be filled. What hath he? Gold. What hath he not yet? Everlasting life. Let him consider what he hath, and see what he hath not. Brethren, of that which he hath, let him give, that he may receive what he hath not; let him purchase out of that which he hath, that which he hath not, "and plenteousness for them that love thee."*

12. *"Peace be in thy strength"* (ver. 7). O Jerusalem, O city, who art being built as a city, whose partaking is in *"The Same:"* *"Peace be in thy strength:"* peace be in thy love; for thy strength is thy love. Hear the Song of songs: *"Love is strong as death."* A great saying that, brethren, *"Love is strong as death."* The strength of charity could not be expressed in grander terms than these, *"Love is strong as death."* For who resisteth death, my brethren? Consider, my brethren. Fire, waves, the sword, are resisted: we resist principalities, we resist kings; death cometh alone, who resisteth it? There is nought more powerful than it. Charity therefore is compared with its strength, in the words, *"Love is strong as death."* And since this love slayeth what we have been, that we may be what we were not; love createth a sort of death in us. This death he had died who said, *"The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world:"* this death they had died unto whom he said, *"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."* Love is strong as death ...

13. Thus as he was here speaking of charity, he addeth, *"For my brethren and companions' sake, I spoke peace of thee"* (ver. 8). O Jerusalem, thou city whose partaking is in *The Same*, I in this life and on this earth, I poor, he saith, I a stranger and groaning, not as yet enjoying to the full thy peace, and preaching thy peace; preach it not for my own sake, as the heretics, who seeking their own glory, say, *Peace be with you: and have not the peace*

which they preach to the people. For if they had peace, they would not tear asunder unity. "I," he saith, "spoke peace of thee." But wherefore? "For my brethren and companions' sake:" not for my own honour, not for my own money, not for my life; for, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." But, "I spoke peace of thee, for my brethren and companions' sakes." For he wished to depart, and to be with Christ: but, since he must preach these things to his companions and his brethren, to abide in the flesh, he addeth, is more needful for you.

14. "Because of the house of the Lord my God, I have sought good things for thee" (ver. 9). Not on my own account have sought good things, for then I should not seek for thee, but for myself; and so should I not have them, because I should not seek them for thee; but, "Because of the house of the Lord my God," because of the Church, because of the Saints, because of the pilgrims; because of the poor, that they may go up; because we say to them, we will go into the house of the Lord: because of the house of the Lord my God itself, I have sought good things for Thee. These long and needful words gather ye, brethren, eat them, drink them, and grow strong, run, and seize.

PSALM 123

1 ...Let this singer ascend; and let this man sing from the heart of each of you, and let each of you be this man, for when each of you saith this, since ye are all one in Christ, one man saith this; and saith not, "Unto Thee, O Lord, have" we "lift up" our "eyes;" but, "Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lift up mine eyes" (ver. 1). Ye ought indeed to imagine that every one of you is speaking; but that One in an especial sense speaketh, who is also spread abroad over the whole world ... What maketh the heart of a Christian heavy? Because he is a pilgrim, and longeth for his country. If thy heart be heavy on this score, although thou hast been prosperous in the world, still thou dost groan: and if all things combine to render thee prosperous, and this world smile upon thee on every side, thou nevertheless groanest, because thou seest that thou art set in a pilgrimage; and feelest that thou hast indeed happiness in the eyes of fools, but not as yet after the promise of Christ: this thou seekest with groans, this thou seekest with longings, and by longing ascendest, anti while thou ascendest dost sing the Song of Degrees.

2 ...Where then are the ladders? For we behold so great an interval between heaven and earth, there is so wide a separation, and so great a space of regions between: we wish to climb thither, we see no ladder; do we deceive

ourselves, because we sing the Song of Degrees, that is, the Song of ascent? We ascend unto heaven, if we think of God, who hath made ascending steps in the heart. What is to ascend in heart? To advance towards God. As every man who faileth, doth not descend, but falleth: so every one who profiteth doth ascend: but if he so profit, as to avoid pride: if he so ascend as not to fall: but if while he profiteth he become proud, in ascending he again falleth. But that he may not be proud, what ought he to do? Let him lift up his eyes unto Him who dwelleth in heaven, let him not heed himself ...

3. If, my brethren, we understand by heaven the firmament which we see with our bodily eyes, we shall indeed so err, as to imagine that we cannot ascend thither without ladders, or some scaling machines: but if we ascend spiritually, we ought to understand heaven spiritually: if the ascent be in affection, heaven is in righteousness. What is then the heaven of God? All holy souls, all righteous souls. For the Apostles also, although they were on earth in the flesh, were heaven; for the Lord, enthroned in them, traversed the whole world. He then dwelleth in heaven. How? ...How long are they the temple according to faith? As long as Christ dwelleth in them through faith; as the Apostle saith, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. But they are already heaven in whom God already dwelleth visibly, who see Him face to face; all the holy Apostles, all the holy Virtues, Powers, Thrones, Lordships, that heavenly Jerusalem, wanderers from whence we groan, and for which we pray with longing; and there God dwelleth. Thither hath the Psalmist lifted up his faith, thither he riseth in affection, with longing hopes: and this very longing causeth the soul to purge off the filth of sins, and to be cleansed from every stain, that itself also may become heaven; because it hath lifted up its eyes unto Him who dwelleth in heaven.

For if we have determined that that heaven which we see with our bodily eyes is the dwelling of God, the dwelling of God will pass away; for "heaven and earth will pass away. Then, before God created heaven and earth, where did He dwell? But some one saith: and before God made the Saints, where did He dwell? God dwelt in Himself, he dwelt with Himself, and God is with Himself. And when He deigneth to dwell in the Saints, the Saints are not the house of God in such wise, as that God should fall when it is withdrawn. For we dwell in a house in one way, in another way God dwelleth in the Saints. Thou dwellest in a house: if it be withdrawn, thou fallest: but God so dwelleth in the Saints, that if He should Himself depart, they fall ... 4. What then

followeth, since he hath said, "Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes"? (ver. 2). How hast thou lifted up thine eyes? "Behold, even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress: even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us. We are both servants, and a handmaiden: He is both our Master and our Mistress. What do these words mean? What do these similitudes mean? It is not wonderful if we are servants, and He our Master; but it is wonderful if we are a maiden, and He our Mistress. But not even our being a maiden is wonderful; for we are the Church: nor is it wonderful that He is our Mistress; for He is the Power and the Wisdom of God ...When therefore thou hearest Christ, lift up thine eyes to the hands of thy Master; when thou hearest the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, lift up thine eyes to the hands of thy Mistress; for thou art both servant and handmaiden; servant, for thou art a people; handmaiden for thou art the Church. But this maiden hath found great dignity with God; she hath been made a wife. But until she come unto those spiritual embraces, where she may without apprehension enjoy Him whom she hath loved, and for whom she hath sighed in this tedious pilgrimage, she is betrothed:

and hath received a mighty pledge, the blood of the Spouse for whom she sigheth without fear. Nor is it said unto her, Do not love; as it is sometimes said to any betrothed virgin, not as yet married: and is justly said, Do not love; when thou hast become a wife, then love: it is rightly said, because it is a precipitate and preposterous thing, and not a chaste desire, to love one whom she knoweth not whether she shall marry. For it may happen that one man may be betrothed to her, and another man marry her. But as there is no one else who can be preferred to Christ, let her love without apprehension: and before she is joined unto Him, let her love, and sigh from a distance and from her far pilgrimage ... 5. "For we have been much filled with contempt" (ver. 3). All that will live piously according to Christ, must needs suffer reproof, must needs be despised by those who do not choose to live piously, all whose happiness is earthly. They are derided who call that happiness which they cannot see with their eyes, and it is said to them, What believest thou, madman? Dost thou see what thou believest? Hath any one returned from the world below, and reported to thee what is going on there? Behold I see and enjoy what I love. Thou art scorned, because thou dost hope for what thou seest not; and he who seemeth to hold what he seeth, scorneth thee.

Consider well if he doth really hold it ...I have my house, he hath boasted himself. Thou askest, what house of his own? That which my father left me. And whence did he derive this house? My grandfather left it him. Go back even to his great grandfather, then to his great grandfather's father, and he can no longer tell their names. Art thou not rather terrified by this thought, that thou seest many have passed through this house, and that none of them hath carried it away with him to his everlasting home? Thy father left it: he passed through it: thus thou also wilt pass by. If therefore thou hast a mere passing stay in thy house, it is an inn for passing guests, not an habitation for permanent abode. Yet since we hope for those things which are to come, and sigh for future happiness, and since it hath not yet appeared what we shall be, although we are already "sons of God;" for "our life is hidden with Christ in God:" "we are utterly despised," by those who seek or enjoy happiness in this world.

6. "Our soul is filled exceedingly; a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud" (ver. 4). We were asking who were "the wealthy:" he hath expounded to thee, in that he hath said, "the proud." "Reproach" and "contempt" are the same: and "wealthy" is the same with "proud." It is a repetition of the sentence, "a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud." Why are the proud wealthy? Because they wish to be happy here. Why? since they themselves too are miserable, are they wealthy? But perhaps when they are miserable, they do not mock us. Listen, my beloved. Then perchance they mock when they are happy, when they boast themselves in the pomp of their riches! when they boast themselves in the inflated state of false honours: then they mock us, and seem to say, Behold, it is well with me: I enjoy the good things before me: let those who promise what they cannot show depart from me: what I see, I hold; what I see, I enjoy; may I fare well in this life. Be thou more secure; for Christ hath risen again, and hath taught thee what He will give in another life: be assured that He giveth it. But that man mocketh thee, because he holdeth what he hath. Bear with his mockeries, and thou wilt laugh at his groans: for afterwards there will come a season when these very persons will say, "This was he whom we had sometimes in derision."

7. To this we must add, that sometimes those also who are beneath the scourge of temporal unhappiness, mock us ...Did not the robber mock, who was crucified with our crucified Lord? If therefore they who are not wealthy

mock us, why doth the Psalm say, "A reproach to the wealthy"? If we carefully sift the matter, even these (the unfortunate) are wealthy. How are they wealthy? Yea; for if they were not wealthy, they would not be proud. For one man is wealthy in money, and proud on that score: another is wealthy in honours, and is proud on that account: another imagines himself wealthy in righteousness, and hence his pride, which is worse. They who seem not to be wealthy in money, seem to themselves to be wealthy in righteousness towards God; and when calamity overtakes them, they justify themselves, accuse God, and say, What wrong have I been guilty of, or, what have I done? Thou repliest: Look back, call to mind thy sins, see if thou hast done nothing. He is somewhat touched in conscience, and returneth to himself, and thinketh of his evil deeds; and when he hath thought of his evil deeds, not even then doth he choose to confess that he deserves his sufferings; but saith, Behold, I have clearly done many things; but I see that many have done worse, and suffer no evil. He is righteous against God. He also therefore is wealthy: he hath his breast puffed out with righteousness;

since God seemeth to him to do ill, and he seemeth to himself to suffer unjustly. And if thou gavest him a vessel to pilot, he would be shipwrecked with it: yet he wishes to deprive God of the government of this world, and himself to hold the helm of Creation, and to distribute among all men pains and pleasures, punishments and rewards. Miserable soul! yet why do ye wonder? He is wealthy, but wealthy in iniquity, wealthy in malignity; but is more wealthy in iniquity, in proportion as he seemeth to himself to be wealthy in righteousness. 8. But a Christian ought not to be wealthy, but ought to acknowledge himself poor; and if he hath riches, he ought to know that they are not true riches, so that he may desire others ...And what is the wealth of our righteousness? How much soever righteousness there may be in us, it is a sort of dew compared to that fountain: compared to that plenteousness it is as a few drops, which may soften our life, and relax our hard iniquity. Let us only desire to be filled with the full fountain of righteousness, let us long to be filled with that abundant richness, of which it is said in the Psalm, "They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy house: and Thou shalt give them drink out of the torrent of Thy pleasure. But while we are here, let us understand ourselves to be destitute and in want; not only in respect of those riches which are not the true riches, but of salvation itself. And when we are whole, let us understand that we are weak. For as long as this body hungers

and thirsts, as long as this body is weary with watching, weary with standing, weary with walking, weary with sitting, weary with eating; whithersoever it turneth itself for a relief from weariness, there it discovereth another source of fatigue: there is therefore no perfect soundness, not even in the body itself. Those riches are then not riches, but beggary;

for the more they abound, the more doth destitution and avarice increase ...Let then our whole hunger, our whole thirst, be for true riches, and true health, and true righteousness. What are true riches? That heavenly abode in Jerusalem. For who is called rich on this earth? When a rich man is praised, what is meant? He is very rich: nothing is wanting to him. That surely is the praise of him that praiseth the other: for it is not this, when it is said, He wants nothing. Consider if he really want nothing. If he desires nothing, he wants nothing: but if he still desires more than what he hath, his riches have increased in such wise, that his wants have increased also. But in that City there will be true riches, because there will be nothing wanting to us there; for we shall not be in need of anything, and there will be true health ...

PSALM 124

1. Ye already well know, dearest brethren, that a "Song of Degrees," is a song of our ascent: and that this ascent is not effected by the feet of the body, but by the affections of the heart. This we have repeatedly reminded you of: and we need not repeat it too often, that there may be room for saying what hath not yet been said. This Psalm, therefore, which ye have now heard sung for you, is inscribed, "A Song of Degrees." This is its title. They sing therefore while ascending: and sometimes as it were one man singeth, sometimes as it were many; because many are one, since Christ is One, and in Christ the members of Christ constitute one with Christ, and the Head of all these members is in heaven. But although the body toileth on earth, it is not cut off from its Head; for the Head looketh down from above, and regardeth the body. ...Whether therefore one or many sing; many men are one man, because it is unity; and Christ, as we have said, is One, and all Christians are members of Christ.

2 ...Certain members indeed of that body of which we also are, which can sing in truth, have gone before us. And this the holy Martyrs have sung: for they have already escaped, and are with Christ in joy about to receive at last incorruptible bodies, the very same which were at first corruptible, wherein

they have suffered pains; of the same there will be made for them ornaments of righteousness. Therefore whether they in reality, or we in hope, joining our affections with their crowns, and longing for such a life as we have not here, and shall never gain unless we have longed for it here, let us all sing together, and say, "If the Lord Himself had not been in us." ... 3. "If the Lord Himself had not been in us, now may Israel say" (ver. 1) ...When? "When men rose up against us" (ver. 2). Marvel not: they have been subdued: for they were men; but the Lord was in us, man was not in us: for men rose up against us. Nevertheless men would crush other men, unless in those men who could not be crushed, there were not man, but the Lord. For what could men do to you, while ye rejoiced, and sang, and securely held everlasting bliss? what could men do to you when they rose against you, if the Lord had not been on your side? what could they do? "Perchance they had swallowed us up quick" (ver. 3). "Swallowed us up: they would not first have slain us, and so have swallowed us up. O inhuman, O cruel men! The Church swalloweth not thus. To Peter it was said, "Kill and eat: not, Swallow quick. Because no man entereth into the body of the Church, save he be slain first? What he was dieth, that he may be what he was not. Otherwise, he who is not slain, and is not eaten by the Church, may be in the visible number of the people: but he cannot be in the number of the people which is known to God, whereof the Apostle saith, "The Lord knoweth who are His," save he be eaten; and eaten he cannot be, save he first be slain. The Pagan cometh, still in him idolatry liveth;

he must be grafted among the members of Christ: that he may be engrafted, he must needs be eaten; but he cannot be eaten by the Church, save first he be slain. Let him renounce the world, then is he slain; let him believe in God, then is he eaten ...But they in whom the Lord is, are slain and die not. But they who consent and live, are swallowed quick, when swallowed up they die. But they who have suffered, and have not yielded to tribulations, rejoice and say, "If the Lord had not been in us," etc. 4 ... "When their fury was enraged upon us." They are now in anger, they now openly rage: "perchance the water had drowned us" (ver. 4). By water he meaneth ungodly nations: and we shall see what sort of water in the following verses. Whoever had consented unto them, water would have overwhelmed him. For he would die by the death of the Egyptians, he would not pass through after the example of the Israelites. For ye know, brethren, that the people of Israel passed through the

water, by which the Egyptians were overwhelmed. But what sort of water is this? It is a torrent, it flows with violence, but it will pass by ...Hence He, our Head, first drinketh, of whom it is said in the Psalms, "He shall drink of the torrent in the way: therefore shall He lift up His head." For our Head is already exalted, because He drank of the torrent by the way; for our Lord hath suffered. If therefore our Head hath been already raised up, why doth the body fear the torrent? Without doubt, because the Head hath been raised, the body also will say hereafter, "Our soul hath passed over the torrent. Perhaps our soul hath passed over the water without substance" (ver. 5). Behold, what sort of water he was speaking of, "The water perchance had overwhelmed us." But what meaneth, "without substance"?

5. In the first place, what meaneth, "Perchance our soul hath passed over"? (ver. 5). Understand however the meaning to be this: "Thinkest thou our soul hath passed over?" and why do they say, "Thinkest thou"? Because the greatness of the danger maketh it hardly credible that he hath escaped. They have endured a great death: they have been in great dangers; they have been so much oppressed, that they almost gave consent while alive, and were all but swallowed up alive: now therefore that they have escaped, now that they are secure, but still remember the danger, the great danger, say, "Thinkest thou our soul hath passed over the water without substance?" 6. What is the water without substance, save the water of sins without substance? For sins have not substance: they have destitution, not substance; they have want, not substance. In that water without substance, the younger son lost the whole of his substance ...Dost thou wish to see how the water is without substance? Take away with thee to the world below what thou hast acquired: what wilt thou do? Thou hast acquired gold: thou hast lost thy faith: after a few days thou leavest this life; thou canst not take away with thee the gold thou hast acquired by the loss of thy good faith; thy heart, destitute of faith, goeth forth into punishment-thy heart, which if full of faith, would go forth unto a crown. Behold, what thou hast done is nothing: and thou hast offended God for nothing.

7. Men hear that common proverb; and the proverbs of God slumber in them. What proverb? "Better in hand than in hope." Unhappy man, what hast thou in hand? Thou sayest, "Better in hand" Hold it so as not to lose it, and then say, "Better in hand." But if thou holdest it not, why dost thou not hold fast that which thou canst not lose? What then hast thou in hand?

Gold. Keep it in hand, therefore: if thou hast it in hand, let it not be taken away without thy consent. But if through gold also thou art carried where thou wishest not, and if a more powerful robber seeketh thee, because he findeth thee a less powerful robber; if a stronger eagle pursue thee, because thou hast carried off a hare before him: the lesser was thy prey, thou wilt be a prey unto the greater. Men see not these things in human affairs: by so much avarice are they blinded ...

8. Let them escape the water without substance, and say, "Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth" (ver. 6). For the hunters were following, and had placed a bait in their trap. What bait? The sweetness of this life, so that each man for the sake of the sweetness of this life may thrust his head into iniquity, and be caught in the trap. Not they, in whom the Lord was, they who say, "If the Lord Himself had not been in us;" they have not been taken in the trap. Let the Lord be in thee, and thou wilt not be taken in the trap. 9. "Our soul is escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers" (ver. 7). Because the Lord was in the soul itself, therefore hath that soul escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. Why like a bird? Because it had fallen heedlessly, like a bird; and it could say afterwards, God will forgive me. Unstable bird, rather set thy feet firm upon the rock: go not into the trap. Thou wilt be taken, consumed, crushed. Let the Lord be in thee, and He will deliver thee from greater threats, from the snare of the fowlers. As if thou wert to see a bird about to fall into a snare, thou makest a greater noise that it may fly away from the net; so also, when perhaps some even of the Martyrs were stretching out their neck after the enjoyment of this life, the Lord, who was in them, made the noise of hell, and the bird was delivered from the snare of the fowlers. The snare was the sweetness of this life: they were not entangled in the snare, and were slain; by their slaughter the net was broken; no longer did the sweetness of this life remain, that they might again be entangled by it, but it was crushed. Was the bird also crushed? Far be it! for it was not in the snare: "The snare is broken, and we are delivered."

10 ... "Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth" (ver. 8). For if this were not our help, the snare would not indeed remain for ever; but when the bird was once taken, it would be crushed. For this life will pass away; and they who shall have been taken in by its pleasures, and through these pleasures have offended God, will pass away with this life.

For the snare will be broken; be ye assured of this: all the sweetness of this present life will no longer exist, when the lot assigned to it hath been fulfilled; but we must not be enthralled by it, so that when the net is broken, thou mayest then rejoice and say, "The snare is broken, and we are delivered." But lest thou think that thou canst do this of thy own strength, consider whose work thy deliverance is (for if thou art proud, thou fallest into the snare), and say, "Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth." ...

PSALM 125

1. This Psalm, belonging to the number of the Songs of Degrees, teacheth us, while we ascend cend raise our minds unto the Lord our God in loving charity and piety, not to fix our gaze upon men who are prosperous in this world, with a happiness that is false and unstable, and altogether seductive; where they cherish nothing save pride, and their heart freezeth up against God, and is made hard against the shower of His grace, so that it beareth not fruit. ... 2. "They that put their trust in the Lord shall be even as the mount Sion: they shall not be removed for ever" (ver. 1). 3. Who are these? "They shall stand fast for ever, who dwell in Jerusalem" (ver. 2). If we understand this earthly Jerusalem, all who dwelt therein have been excluded by wars and by the destruction of the city: thou now seekest a Jew in the city of Jerusalem, and findest him not. Why then will "they that dwell in Jerusalem not be moved for ever," save because there is another Jerusalem, of which ye are wont to hear much? She is our mother, for whom we sigh and groan in this pilgrimage, that we may return unto her. ... They then who dwell therein "shall never be moved." But they who dwelt in that earthly Jerusalem, have been moved; first in heart, afterwards by exile. When they were moved in heart and fell, then they crucified the King of the heavenly Jerusalem herself; they were already spiritually without, and shut out of doors their very King. For they cast Him out without their city, anti crucified Him without. He too cast them out of His city, that is, of the everlasting Jerusalem, the Mother of us all, who is in Heaven.

4. What is this Jerusalem? He briefly describes it. "The mountains stand around Jerusalem" (ver. 2). Is it anything great, that we are in a city surrounded by mountains? Is this the whole of our happiness, that we shall have a city which mountains surround? Do we not know what mountains are? or what are mountains save swellings of the earth? Different then from these

are those mountains that we love, lofty mountains, preachers of truth, whether Angels, or Apostles, or Prophets. They stand around Jerusalem; they surround her, and, as it were, form a wall for her. Of these lovely and delightful mountains Scripture constantly speaketh. ...They are the mountains of whom we sing: "I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence my help shall come:" because in this life we have help from the holy Scriptures. And through the mountains that receive peace, the little hills received righteousness: for what saith he of the mountains themselves? He said not, they have peace from themselves, or they make peace, or generate peace; but, they receive peace. The Lord is the source, whence they receive peace. So therefore lift up thine eyes to the mountains for the sake of peace, that thy help may come from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. Again, the Holy Spirit mentioning these mountains saith this: "Thou dost light them wonderfully from Thy everlasting mountains." He said not, the mountains light them: but, Thou lightest them from Thy everlasting mountains: through those mountains whom Thou hast willed to be everlasting, preaching the Gospel, Thou lighting them, not the mountains. Such then are the "mountains that stand around Jerusalem."

5. And that ye may know what sort of mountains these be that stand around Jerusalem; where Scripture hath mentioned good mountains, very rarely, and hardly, and perhaps never, doth it fail instantly to mention the Lord also, or allude to Him at the same moment, that our hopes rest not in the mountains. ...Lest thou again shouldest tarry in the mountains, he at once addeth, "Even so the Lord standeth round about His people:" that thy hope might not lie in the mountains, but in Him who lighteth the mountains. For when He dwelleth in the mountains, that is, in the Saints, He Himself is round about His people; and He hath Himself walled His people with a spiritual fortification, that it may not be moved for evermore. But when Scripture speaketh of evil mountains, it addeth not the Lord unto them. Such mountains, we have already told you often, signify certain mighty, but evil, souls. For ye are not to suppose, brethren, that heresies could be produced through any little souls. None save great men have been the authors of heresies; but in proportion as they were mighty, so were they evil, mountains. For they were not such mountains as would receive peace, that the hills might receive righteousness; but they received dissension from their father the devil. There were therefore mountains: beware thou fly not

to such mountains. For men will come, and say unto thee, There is a great hero, there is a great man! How great was that Donatus! How great is Maximian! and a certain Photinus, what a great man he was! And Arius too, how illustrious he was! All these I have mentioned are mountains, but mountains that cause shipwreck. ...

6. But love such mountains, in whom the Lord is. Then do those very mountains love thee, if thou hast not placed hope in them. See, brethren, what the mountains of God are. Thence they are so called in another passage: "Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God. Not their righteousness, but Thy righteousness. Hear that great mountain the Apostle. "That I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ. But they who have chosen to be mountains through their own righteousness, as certain Jews or Pharisees their rulers, are thus blamed: "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. But they who have submitted themselves are exalted in such a manner as to be humble. In that they are great, they are mountains; in that they submit themselves unto God, they are valleys: and in that they have the capacity of piety, they receive the plenteousness of peace, and transmit the copious irrigation to the hills, only beware, at present, what mountains thou lovest. If thou wish to be loved by good mountains, place not thy trust even in good mountains. For how great a mountain was Paul? where is one like him found? We speak of the greatness of men. Can any one readily be found of so great grace? Nevertheless, he feared lest that bird should place trust in him: and what doth he say:

"Was Paul crucified for you? But lift up your eyes unto the mountains, whence help may come unto you: for, "I have planted, Apollos hath watered: but, your help cometh from the Lord, who hath made Heaven and earth; for, "God gave the increase. "The mountains," therefore, "stand around Jerusalem. But as "the mountains stand around Jerusalem, even so standeth the Lord round about His people, from this time forth for evermore. If therefore the mountains stand around Jerusalem, and the Lord standeth round about His people, the Lord bindeth His people into one bond of love and peace, so that they who trust in the Lord, like the mount Sion, may not be moved for evermore: and this is, "from this time forth for evermore." 7. "For the Lord will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous, lest the

righteous put forth their hands unto wickedness" (ver. 3). At present indeed the righteous suffer in some measure, and at present the unrighteous sometimes tyrannize over the righteous. In what ways? Sometimes the unrighteous arrive at worldly honours: when they have arrived at them, and have been made either judges or kings; for God doth this for the discipline of His folk, for the discipline of His people; the honour due to their power must needs be shown them. For thus hath God ordained His Church, that every power ordained in the world may have honour, and sometimes from those who are better than those in power. For the sake of illustration I take one instance; hence calculate the grades of all powers. The primary and every day relation of authority between man and man is that between master and slave. Almost all houses have a power of this sort. There are masters, there are also slaves; these are different names, but men and men are equal names. And what saith the Apostle, teaching that slaves are subject to their masters? "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh: for there is a Master according to the Spirit. He is the true and everlasting Master; but those temporal masters are for a time only. When thou walkest in the way, when thou livest in this life, Christ doth not wish to make thee proud.

It hath been thy lot to become a Christian, and to have a man for thy master: thou wast not made a Christian, that thou mightest disdain to be a servant. For when by Christ's command thou servest a man, thou servest not the man, but Him who commanded thee. He saith this also: "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh. Behold, he hath not made men free from being servants, but good servants from bad servants. How much do the rich owe to Christ, who orders their house for them! so that if thou hast had an unbelieving servant, suppose Christ convert him, and say not to him, Leave thy master, thou hast now known Him who is thy true Master: he perhaps is ungodly and unjust, thou art now faithful and righteous: it is unworthy that a righteous and faithful man should serve an unjust and unbelieving master. He spoke not thus unto him, but rather, Serve him: and to confirm the servant, added, Serve as I served; I before thee served the unjust. ...If the Lord of heaven and earth, through whom all things were created, served the unworthy, asked mercy for His furious persecutors, and, as it were, showed Himself as their Physician at His Advent (for physicians also, better both in art and health, serve the sick): how much

more ought not a man to disdain, with his whole mind, and his whole good will, with his whole love to serve even a bad master!

Behold, a better serveth an inferior, but for a season. Understand what I have said of the master and slave, to be true also of powers and kings, of all the exalted stations of this world. For sometimes they are good powers, and fear God; sometimes they fear not God. Julian was an infidel Emperor, an apostate, a wicked man, an idolater; Christian soldiers served an infidel Emperor; when they came to the cause of Christ, they acknowledged Him only who was in heaven. If he called upon them at any time to worship idols, to offer incense; they preferred God to him: but whenever he commanded them to deploy into line, to march against this or that nation, they at once obeyed. They distinguished their everlasting from their temporal master; and yet they were, for the sake of their everlasting Master, submissive to their temporal master. 8. But will it be thus always, that the ungodly have power over the righteous? It will not be so. The rod of the ungodly is felt for a season upon the lot of the righteous; but it is not left there, it will not be there for ever. A time will come, when Christ, appearing in his glory, shall gather all nations before Him. And thou wilt see there many slaves among the sheep, and many masters among the goats; and again many masters among the sheep, many slaves among the goats. For all slaves are not good-do not infer this from the consolation we have given to servants-nor are all masters evil, because we have thus repressed the pride of masters. There are good masters who believe, and there are evil: there are good servants who believe, and there are evil. But as long as good servants serve evil masters, let them endure for a season. "For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous." Why will He not? "Lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness:" that the righteous may endure for a season the domination of the ungodly, and may understand that this is not for ever, but may prepare themselves to possess their everlasting heritage. ...

9. And he therefore addeth, "Do well, O Lord, unto those that are good and true of heart" (ver. 4). They who are fight in heart, of whom I was speaking a little before,-they who follow the will of God, not their own will,-reflect upon this. But they who wish to follow God, allow Him to go before, and themselves to follow; not themselves to go before, and Him to follow; and in all things they find Him good, whether chastening, or consoling, or exercising, or crowning, or cleansing, or enlightening; as the Apostle saith,

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." 10. Whence the Psalmist at once addeth: "As for such as turn aside, the Lord shall lead them forth unto strangling with the workers of unrighteousness" (ver. 5): that is, those whose deeds they have imitated; because they took delight in their present pleasures, and did not believe in their punishments to come. What then shall they have, who are righteous in heart, and who turn not back? Let us now come to the heritage itself, brethren, for we are sons. What shall we possess? What is our heritage? what is our country: what is it called? Peace. In this we salute you, this we announce to you, this the mountains receive, and the little hills receive as righteousness. Peace is Christ: "for He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Since we are sons, we shall have an inheritance. And what shall this inheritance be called, but peace? And consider that they who love not peace are disinherited. Now they who divide unity, love not peace. Peace is the possession of the pious, the possession of heirs. And who are heirs? Sons. ...Since then Christ the Son of God is peace, He therefore came to gather together His own, and to separate them from the wicked. From what wicked men? From those who hate Jerusalem, who hate peace, who wish to tear unity asunder, who believe not peace, who preach a false peace to the people, and have it not.

To whom answer is made, when they say, "Peace be with you," "And with thy spirit: but they speak falsely, and they hear falsely. Unto whom do they say, Peace be with you? To those whom they separate from the peace of the whole earth. And unto whom is it said, "And with thy spirit"? To those who embrace dissensions, and who hate peace. For if peace were in their spirit, would they not love unity, and leave dissensions? Speaking then false words, they hear false words. Let us speak true words, and hear true words. Let us be Israel, and let us embrace peace; for Jerusalem is a vision of peace, and we are Israel, "and peace is upon Israel."

PSALM 126

1. ...How man had come into captivity, let us ask the Apostle Paul. ...For he saith: "For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin." Behold whence we became captives; because we were sold under sin. Who sold us? We ourselves, who consented to the seducer. We could sell ourselves; we could not redeem ourselves. We sold ourselves by consent of sin, we are redeemed in the faith of righteousness. For innocent blood was given for us,

that we might be redeemed. Whatsoever blood he shed in persecuting the righteous, what kind of blood did he shed? Righteous men's blood, indeed, he shed; they were Prophets, righteous men, our fathers, and Martyrs. Whose blood he shed, yet all coming of the offspring of sin. One blood he shed of Him who was not justified, but born righteous: by shedding that blood, he lost those whom he held. For they for whom innocent blood was given were redeemed, and, turned back from their captivity, they sing this Psalm.

2. "When the Lord turned back the captivity of Sion, we became as those that are comforted" (ver. 1). He meant by this to say, we became joyful. When? "When the Lord turned back the captivity of Sion. What is Sion? Jerusalem, the same is also the eternal Sion. How is Sion eternal, how is Sion captive? In angels eternal, in men captive. For not all the citizens of that city are captives, but those who are away from thence, they are captives. Man was a citizen of Jerusalem, but sold under sin he became a pilgrim. Of his progeny was born the human race, and the captivity of Sion filled all lands. And how is this captivity of Sion a shadow of that Jerusalem? The shadow of that Sion, which was granted to the Jews, in an image, in a figure, was in captivity in Babylonia, and after seventy years that people turned back to its own city. ...But when all time is past, then we return to our country, as after seventy years that people returned from the Babylonish captivity, for Babylon is this world; since Babylon is interpreted "confusion." ...So then this whole life of human affairs is confusion, which belongeth not unto God. In this confusion, in this Babylonish land, Sion is held captive. But "the Lord hath turned back the captivity of Sion." "And we became," he saith, "as those that are comforted. That is, we rejoiced as receiving consolation.

Consolation is not save for the unhappy, consolation is not save for them that groan, that mourn. Wherefore, "as those that are comforted," except because we are still mourning? We mourn for our present lot, we are comforted in hope: when the present is passed by, of our mourning will come everlasting joy, when there will be no need of consolation, because we shall be wounded with no distress. But wherefore saith he "as" those that are comforted, and saith not comforted? This word "as," is not always put for likeness: when we say "As," it sometimes refers to the actual case, sometimes to likeness: here it is with reference to the actual case. ...Walk therefore in Christ, and sing rejoicing, sing as one that is comforted; because He went before thee who hath commanded thee to follow Him. 3. "Then was our mouth

filled with joy, and our tongue with exultation" (ver. 2). That mouth, brethren, which we have in our body, how is it "filled with joy"? It useth not to be "filled," save with meat, or drink, or some such thing put into the mouth. Sometimes our mouth is filled; and it is more that we say. to your holiness, when we have our mouth full, we cannot speak. But we have a mouth within, that is, in the heart, whence whatsoever proceedeth, if it is evil, defileth us, if it is good, cleanseth us. For concerning this very mouth ye heard when the Gospel was read. For the Jews reproached the Lord, because His disciples ate with unwashen hands. They reproached who had cleanness without; and within were full of stains. They reproached, whose righteousness was only in the eyes of men. But the Lord sought our inward cleanness, which if we have, the outside must needs be clean also. "Cleanse," He saith, "the inside," and "the outside shall be clean also." ...

4. But let us return to what was just now read from the Gospel, relating to the verse before us, "Our mouth was filled with joy, and our tongue with delight:" for we are inquiring what mouth and what tongue. Listen, beloved brethren. The Lord was scoffed at, because His disciples ate with unwashed hands. The Lord answered them as was fitting, and said unto the crowds whom He had called unto Him, "Hear ye all, and understand: not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." What is this? when He said, what goeth into the mouth, He meant only the mouth of the body. For meat goeth in, and meats defile not a man; because, "All things are clean to the clean;" and, "every creature of God is good, and none to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving." ...

5. Guard the mouth of thy heart from evil, and thou wilt be innocent: the tongue of thy body will be innocent, thy hands will be innocent; even thy feet will be innocent, thy eyes, thy ears, will be innocent; all thy members will serve under righteousness, because a righteous commander hath thy heart. "Then shall they say among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them." 6. "Yea, the Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof we rejoice" (ver. 3). Consider, my brethren, if Sion doth not at present say this among the heathen, throughout the whole world; consider if men are not running unto the Church. In the whole world our redemption is received; Amen is answered. The dwellers in Jerusalem, therefore, captive, destined to return, pilgrims, sighing for their country, speak thus among the

heathen. What do they say? "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoice." Have they done anything for themselves? They have done ill with themselves, for they have sold themselves under sin. The Redeemer came, and did the good things for them.

7. "Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the torrents in the south" (ver. 4). Consider, my brethren, what this meaneth. ...As torrents are turned in the south, so turn our captivity. In a certain passage Scripture saith, in admonishing us concerning good works, "Thy sins also shall melt away, even as the ice in fair warm weather." Our sins therefore bound us. How? As the cold bindeth the water that it run not. Bound with the frost of our sins, we have frozen. But the south wind is a warm wind: when the south wind blows, the ice melts, and the torrents are filled. Now winter streams are called torrents; for filled with sudden rains they run with great force. We had therefore become frozen in captivity; our sins bound us: the south wind the Holy Spirit hath blown: our sins are forgiven us, we are released from the frost of iniquity; as the ice in fair weather, our sins are melted. Let us run unto our country, as the torrents in the south. ...

8. For the next words are, "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy" (ver. 5). In this life, which is full of tears, let us sow. What shall we sow? Good works. Works of mercy are our seeds: of which seeds the Apostle saith, "Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. Speaking therefore of almsgiving itself, what saith he? "This I say; he that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly. He therefore who soweth plentifully, shall reap plentifully: he who soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly: and he that soweth nothing, shall reap nothing. Why do ye long for ample estates, where ye may sow plentifully? There is not a wider field on which ye can sow than Christ, who hath willed that we should sow in Himself. Your soil is the Church; sow as much as ye can. But thou hast not enough to do this. Hast thou the will? As what thou hadst would be nothing, if thou hadst not a good will; so do not despond, because thou hast not, if thou hast a good will. For what dost thou sow? Mercy. And what wilt thou reap? Peace. Said the Angels, Peace on earth unto rich men? No, but, "Peace on earth unto men of a good will. Zacchaeus had a strong will, Zacchaeus had great charity. ...Did then that widow who cast her two farthings into the treasury, sow little? Nay, as much as Zacchaeus. For she had narrower means, but an equal will.

She gave her two mites with as good a will as Zacchaeus gave the half of his patrimony. If thou consider what they gave, thou wilt find their gifts different; if thou look to the source, thou wilt find them equal; she gave whatever she had, and he gave what he had. ...But if they are beggars whose profession is asking alms, in trouble they also have what to bestow upon one another. God hath not so forsaken them, but that they have wherein they may be tried by their bestowing of alms. This man cannot walk; he who can walk, lendeth his feet to the lame; he who seeth, lendeth his eyes to the blind; and he who is young and sound, lendeth his strength to the old or the infirm, carrieth him: the one is poor, the other is rich. 9. Sometimes also the rich man is found to be poor, and something is bestowed upon him by the poor. Somebody cometh to a river, so much the more delicate as he is more rich; he cannot pass over: if he were to pass over with bare limbs, he would catch cold, would be ill, would die: a poor man more active in body cometh up: he carries the rich man over; he giveth alms unto the rich. Think not therefore those only poor, who have not money. ...Thus love ye, thus be ye affectioned unto one another. Attend not solely to yourselves: but to those who are in want around you. But because these things take place in this life with troubles and cares, faint not. Ye sow in tears, ye shall reap in joy.

10. How, my brethren? When the farmer goeth forth with the plough, carrying seed, is not the wind sometimes keen, and doth not the shower sometimes deter him? He looketh to the sky, seeth it lowering, shivers with cold, nevertheless goeth forth, and soweth. For he feareth lest while he is observing the foul weather, and awaiting sunshine, the time may pass away, and he may not find anything to reap. Put not off, my brethren; sow in wintry weather, sow good works, even while ye weep; for, "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy." They sow their seed, good will, and good works. "They went on their way and wept, casting their seed" (ver. 6). Why did they weep? Because they were among the miserable, and were themselves miserable. It is better, my brethren, that no man should be miserable, than that thou shouldest do alms. ...Nevertheless, as long as there are objects for its exercise, let us not fail amid those troubles to sow our seed. Although we sow in tears, yet shall we reap in joy. For in that resurrection of the dead, each man shall receive his own sheaves, that is, the produce of his seed, the crown of joys and of delight. Then will there be a joyous triumph, when we shall laugh at death, wherein we groaned before: then shall they say to death, "O death,

where is thy strife? O death, where is thy sting?" But why do they now rejoice? Because. "they bring their sheaves with them."

11. In this Psalm we have chiefly exhorted you to do deeds of alms, because it is thence that we ascend; and ye see that he who ascendeth, singeth the song of steps. Remember: do not love to descend, instead of to ascend, but reflect upon your ascent: because he who descended from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves. ...The Samaritan as He passed by slighted us not: He healed us, He raised us upon His beast, upon His flesh; He led us to the inn, that is, the Church; He entrusted us to the host, that is, to the Apostle; He gave two pence, whereby we might be healed, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour. The Apostle spent more; for, though it was allowed unto all the Apostles to receive, as Christ's soldiers, pay from Christ's subjects, that Apostle, nevertheless, toiled with his own hands, and excused the subjects the maintenance owing to him. All this hath already happened: if we have descended, and have been wounded; let us ascend, let us sing, and make progress, in order that we may arrive.

PSALM 127

1. Among all the Songs entitled the Song of degrees, this Psalm hath a further addition in the title, that it is "Solomon's. For thus it is entitled, "A Song of degrees of Solomon. It hath therefore aroused our attention, and caused us to enquire the reason of this addition, "of Solomon. For it is needless to repeat explanations of the other words, Song of degrees. ...Solomon was in his time David's son, a great man, through whom many holy precepts and healthful admonitions and divine mysteries have been wrought by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. Solomon himself was a lover of women, and was rejected by God: and this lust was so great a snare unto him, that he was induced by women even to sacrifice to idols, as Scripture witnesseth concerning him. But if, by his fall what was delivered through him were blotted out, it would be judged that he had himself delivered these precepts, and not that they were delivered through him. The mercy of God, therefore, and His Spirit, excellently wrought that whatever of good was declared through Solomon, might be attributed unto God; and the man's sin, unto the man. What marvel that Solomon fell among God's people? Did not Adam fall in Paradise? Did not an angel fall from heaven, and become the devil? We are thereby taught, that no hope must be placed in any among men. ...The name of Solomon is interpreted to mean peacemaker:

now Christ is the True Peacemaker, of whom the Apostle saith, "He is our Peace, who hath made both one." ...Since, therefore, He is the true Solomon; for that Solomon was the figure of this Peace maker, when he built the temple; that thou mayest not think he who built the house unto God was the true Solomon, Scripture showing unto thee another Solomon, thus commences this Psalm: "Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it" (ver. 1). The Lord, therefore, buildeth the house, the Lord Jesus Christ buildeth His own house. Many toil in building: but, except He build, "their labour is but lost that build it. Who are they who toil in building it? All who preach the word of God in the Church, the ministers of God's mysteries. We are all running, we are all toiling, we are all building now; and before us others have run, toiled, and built: but "except the Lord build, their labour is but lost. Thus the Apostles seeing some fall bewailed these men, in that they had laboured in vain for them. We, therefore, speak without, He buildeth within. We can observe with what attention ye hear us; He alone who knoweth your thoughts, knoweth what ye think. He Himself buildeth, He Himself admonisheth, He Himself openeth the understanding, He Himself kindleth your understanding unto faith; nevertheless, we also toil like workmen; but, "except the Lord build," etc.

2. But that which is the house of God is also a city. For the house of God is the people of God; for the house of God is the temple of God. ...This is Jerusalem: she hath guards: as she hath builders, labouring at her building up, so also hath she guards. To this guardianship these words of the Apostle relate: "I fear, lest by any means your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ. He was guarding the Church. He kept watch, to the utmost of his power, over those over whom he was set. The Bishops also do this. For a higher place was for this reason given the Bishops, that they might be themselves the superintendents and as it were the guardians of the people. For the Greek word *Episcopus*, and the vernacular Superintendent, are the same; for the Bishop superintends, in that he looks over. As a higher place is assigned to the vinedresser in the charge of the vineyard, so also to the Bishops a more exalted station is allotted. And a perilous account is rendered of this high station, except we stand here with a heart that causeth us to stand beneath your feet in humility, and pray for you, that He who knoweth your minds may be Himself your keeper. Since we can see you both coming in and

going out; but we are so unable to see what are the thoughts of your hearts, that we cannot even see what ye do in your houses.

How then can we guard you? As men: as far as we are able, as far as we have received power. And because we guard you like men, and cannot guard you perfectly, shall ye therefore remain without a keeper? Far be it! For where is He of whom it is said, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain?" (ver. 1). We are watchful on our guard, but vain in our watchfulness, except He who seeth your thoughts guard you. He keepeth guard while ye are awake, He keepeth guard also whilst ye are asleep. For He hath once slept on the Cross, and hath risen again; He no longer sleepeth. Be ye Israel: for "the Keeper of Israel neither sleepeth nor slumbereth. Yea, brethren, if we wish to be kept beneath the shadow of God's wings, let us be Israel. For we guard you in our office of stewards; but we wish to be guarded together with you. We are as it were shepherds unto you; but beneath that Shepherd we are fellow-sheep with you. We are as it were your teachers from this station; but beneath Him, the One Master, we are schoolfellows with you in this school.

3. If we wish to be guarded by Him who was humbled for our sakes, and who was exalted to keep us, let us be humble. Let no one assume anything unto himself. No man hath any good, except he hath received it from Him who alone is good. But he who chooseth to arrogate wisdom unto himself, is a fool. Let him be humble, that wisdom may come, and may enlighten him. But if, before wisdom cometh unto him, he imagine that he is wise; he riseth before light, and walketh in darkness. What doth he hear in this Psalm? "It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up before dawn" (ver. 2). What meaneth this? If ye arise before light ariseth, ye must needs lose your labour, because ye will be in the dark. Our light, Christ, hath arisen; it is good for thee to rise after Christ, not to rise before Christ. Who rise before Christ? They who choose to prefer themselves to Christ. And who are they who wish to prefer themselves to Christ? They who wish to be exalted here, where He was humble. Let them, therefore, be humble here, if they wish to be exalted there, where Christ is exalted. ...The Lord recalled the sons of Zebedee to humility, and said unto them, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? I came to be humble: and are ye wishing to be exalted before Me? The way I go, do ye follow, He saith.

For if ye choose to go this way where I do not go, your labour is lost, in rising before dawn. Peter too had risen before the light, when he wished to

give the Lord advice, deterring Him from suffering for us. ...But what did our Lord do? He caused him to rise after the Light: "Get thee behind Me, Satan. He was Satan, because he wished to rise before Light. "Get thee behind Me: that I may precede, thou mayest follow: where I go, there thou mayest go; and mayest not wish to lead Me, where thou wouldst go. ... 4. And as if thou shouldst say, When shall we rise? we are ordered now to sit: when will be our rising? When the Lord's was. Look unto Him, who went before thee: for if thou heedest not Him, "it is lost labour for thee to rise before dawn. When was He raised? When He had died. Hope therefore for thine uplifting after thy death: have hope in the resurrection of the dead, because He rose again and ascended. But where did He sleep? On the Cross. When He slept on the Cross, He bore a sign, yea, He fulfilled what had been signified in Adam: for when Adam was asleep, a rib was drawn from him and Eve was created; so also while the Lord slept on the Cross, His side was transfixed with a spear, and the Sacraments flowed forth, whence the Church was born. For the Church the Lord's Bride was created from His side, as Eve was created from the side of Adam. But as she was made from his side no otherwise than while sleeping, so the Church was created from His side no otherwise than while dying. If therefore He rose not from the dead save when He had died, dost thou hope for exaltation save after this life? But that this Psalm might teach thee, in case thou shouldst ask, When shall I rise? perhaps before I have sat down? he addeth, "When He hath given His beloved sleep" (ver. 3). God giveth this when His beloved have fallen asleep;

then His beloved, that is, Christ's, shall rise. For all indeed shall rise, but not as His beloved. There is a resurrection of all the dead; but what saith the Apostle? "We shall all rise, but we shall not all be changed. They rise unto punishment: we rise as our Lord rose, that we may follow our Head, if we are members of Him. ...Hope for such a resurrection; and for the sake of this be a Christian, not for the sake of this world's happiness. For if thou wish to be a Christian for the sake of this world's happiness, since He thy Light sought not worldly happiness; thou art wishing to rise before the light; thou must needs continue in darkness. Be changed, follow thy Light; rise where He rose again: first sit down, and thus rise, "when He giveth His beloved sleep." 5. As if thou shouldst ask again, who are the beloved? "Lo, children, (he reward of the fruit of the womb, are an heritage of the Lord" (ver. 3). Since he saith, "fruit of the womb," these children have been born in travail. There is a cer-

tain woman, in whom what was said unto Eve, "in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children," is shown after a spiritual manner. The Church beareth children, the Bride of Christ; and if she beareth them, she travaileth of them. In figure of her, Eve was called also "the Mother of all living." He who said, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you," was amongst the members of her who travaileth. But she travailed not in vain, nor brought forth in vain: there will be a holy seed at the resurrection of the dead: the righteous who are at present scattered over the whole world shall abound. The Church groaneth for them, the Church travaileth of them; but in that resurrection of the dead, the offspring of the Church shall appear, pain and groaning shall pass away. ...

6. "Like as the arrows in the hand of the mighty one, even so are the children of those that are shot out" (ver. 4). Whence hath sprung this heritage, brethren? Whence hath sprung so numerous a heritage? Some have been shot out from the Lord's hand, as arrows, and have gone far, and have filled the whole earth, whence the Saints spring. For this is the heritage whereof it is said, "Desire of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And how doth this possession extend and increase unto the world's uttermost parts? Because, "like as the arrows in the hand of the mighty one," etc. Arrows are shot forth from the bow, and the stronger the arm which hath sent it forth, the farther flieth the arrow. But what is stronger than the darting of the Lord? From His bow He sendeth forth His Apostles: there could not be a spot left where an arrow shot by so strong an arm would not reach; it hath reached Unto the uttermost parts of the earth. The reason it went no farther was, that there were no more of the human race beyond. For He hath such strength, that even if there were a spot beyond, whither the arrow could fly, He would dart the arrow thither. Such are the children of those who are shot forth as they that are shot forth. ...

7. Perhaps the Apostles themselves are styled the sons of those who have been shaken out, the sons of the Prophets. For the Prophets comprised closed and covered mysteries: they were shaken, that they might come forth thence manifestly. ...Except the prophecy involved were sifted with diligence, would the concealed meanings come forth unto us? All these meanings were therefore closed before the Lord's advent. The Lord came, and shook out these hidden meanings, and they were made manifest; the Prophets were shaken

out, and the Apostles were born. Since then they were born of the Prophets who had been shaken out, the Apostles are sons of those that were shaken out. They, placed as the arrows in the hand of the giant, have reached the uttermost parts of the earth. ...The Apostles the sons of the Prophets have been like as the arrows in the hand of a mighty one. If He is mighty, He hath shaken them out with a mighty hand; if He hath shaken them out with a mighty hand, they whom He hath shaken forth have arrived even at the uttermost parts of the earth.

8. "Blessed is the man who hath filled his desire from them" (ver. 5). Well, my brethren, who filleth his desire from them? Who loveth not the world. He who is filled with the desire of the world, hath no room for that to enter which they have preached. Pour forth what thou carriest, and become fit for that which thou hast not. That is, thou desirest riches: thou canst not fill thy desire from them: thou desirest honours upon earth, thou desirest those things which God hath given even unto beasts of burden, that is, temporal pleasure, bodily health, and the like; thou wilt not fulfil thy desire from them. ..."He shall not be ashamed, when he speaketh with his enemies in the gate. Brethren, let us speak in the gate, that is, let all know what we speak. For he who chooseth not to speak in the gate, wisheth what he speaketh to be hidden, and perhaps wisheth it to be hidden for this reason, that it is evil. If he be confident, let him speak in the gate; as it is said of Wisdom, "She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city. As long as they hold unto righteousness in innocency, they shall not be ashamed: this is to preach at the gate. And who is he who preacheth at the gate? He who preacheth in Christ; because Christ is the gate whereby we enter into that city. ...They, therefore, who speak against Christ, are without the gate;

because they seek their own honours, not those of Christ. But he who preacheth in the gate, seeketh Christ's honour, not his own: and, therefore, he who preacheth in the gate, saith, Trust not in me; for ye will not enter through me, but through the gate. While they who wish men to trust in themselves, wish them not to enter through the gate: it is no marvel if the gate be closed against them, and if they vainly knock for it to be opened.

PSALM 128

1. Felix the Martyr, truly Felix, i.e. "Happy" both in his name and his crown, whose birthday this is, despised the world. Was he, because he feared the Lord, thence happy, thence blessed, because his wife was as a fruitful vine

upon the earth, and his children stood around his table? All these blessings he hath perfectly, but in the Body of Him who is here described; and, because he understood them in this sense, he scorned things present, that he might receive things future. Ye are aware, brethren, that he suffered not the death that other martyrs suffered. For he confessed, and was set aside for torments; on another day his body was discovered lifeless. They had closed the prison to his body, not to his spirit. The executioners found him gone; when they were preparing to torture, they spent their rage for nought. He was lying dead, without sense to them, that he might not be tortured; with sense with God, that he might be crowned. Whence was he also happy, brethren, not only in name, but in the reward of everlasting life, if he loved these things.

2. "Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways" (ver. 1). He speaketh to many; but since these many are one in Christ, in the next words he speaketh in the singular: "For thou shall eat the labours of thy fruits." ...When I speak of Christians in the plural, I understand one in the One Christ. Ye are therefore many, and ye are one; we are many, and we are one. How are we many, and yet one? Because we cling unto Him whose members we are; and since our Head is in heaven, that His members may follow. ...Let us therefore so hear this Psalm, as considering it to be spoken of Christ: and all of us who cling unto the Body of Christ, and have been made members of Christ, walk in the ways of the Lord; and let us fear the Lord with a chaste fear, with a fear that abideth for ever. ...

3. "Thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits" (ver. 2). And ye, O thou, ye many who are One, "Thou shalt eat of the labours of thy fruits. He seemeth to speak perversely to those who understand not: for he should have said, thou shall eat the fruit of thy labours For many eat the fruit of their labours. They labour in the vineyard; they eat not the to; itself; but what ariseth from their labour they eat. They labour about trees that bear fruit who would eat labours? But the fruit of these labours, the produce of these trees; it is this that delighteth the husbandman. What meaneth, "Thou shall eat the labours of thy fruits"? At present we have toils: the fruits will come afterwards. But since their labours themselves are not without joy, on account of the hope whereof we have a little before spoken, "Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation; at present those very labours delight us, and make us joyful in hope. If therefore our toil has been what could be eaten, and could also delight us; what will be the fruit of our labour when eaten?" They who went weeping on

their way, scattering their seed," did eat their labours; with how much greater pleasure will they eat the fruits of their labours, who "shall come again with joy, bearing their sheaves with them"? ... "Blessed art thou, and well shall it be with thee. "Blessed art thou," is of the present: "well shall it be with thee," is of the future.

When thou eatest the labours of thy fruits, "blessed art thou; when thou hast reached the fruit of thy labours, "well shall it be with thee. What hath he said? For if it be well with thee, thou wilt be happy: and if thou wilt be happy, thou wilt also have all well with thee. But there is a difference between hope and attainment. If hope be so sweet, how much sweeter will reality be? 4. Let us now come to the words, "Thy wife" (ver. 3): it is said unto Christ. His wife, therefore, is the Church: His Church, His wife, we ourselves are. "As a fruitful vineyard." But in whom is the vineyard fruitful? For we see many barren ones entering those walls; we see that many intemperate, usurious persons, slave dealers, enter these walls, and such as resort to fortune-tellers, go to enchanters and enchantresses when they have a headache. Is this the fruitfulness of the vine? Is this the fecundity of the wife? It is not. These are thorns, but the vineyard is not everywhere thorny. It hath a certain fruitfulness, and is a fruitful vine; but in whom? "Upon the sides of thy house." Not all are called the sides of the house. For I ask what are the sides. What shall I say? Are they walls, strong stones, as it were? If he were speaking of this bodily tenement, we should perhaps understand this by sides. We mean by the sides of the house, those who cling unto Christ. ...

5. "Thy children." The wife and the children are the same. In these carnal marriages and wedlocks, the wife is one, the children other: in the Church, she who is the wife, is the children also. For the Apostles belonged to the Church, and were among the members of the Church. They were therefore in His wife, and were His wife according to their own portion which they held in His members. Why then is it said concerning them, "When the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, then shall the children of the Bridegroom fast"? She who is the wife, then, is the children also. I speak a wonderful thing, my brethren. In the words of the Lord, we find the Church to be both His brethren, and His sisters, and His mother. ...For Mary was among the sides of His House, and His relatives coming of the kindred of the Virgin Mary, who believed on Him, were among the sides of His House; not in respect of their carnal consanguinity, but inasmuch as they heard the Word of

God, and obeyed it. ...He added; "For whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother." "Brother," perhaps, on account of the male sex whom the Church hath: "sister," on account of the women whom Christ hath here in His members. How "mother," save that Christ Himself is in those Christians, whom the Church daily bringeth forth Christians through baptism? In those therefore in whom thou understandest the wife, in them thou understandest the mother, in them the children.

6. ...Such children ought therefore to be "around" the Lord's "table, like olive-branches." A complete Vine it is, a great bliss: who would now refuse to be there? When thou seest any blasphemer have a wife, children, grandchildren, and thyself perchance without them, envy them not; discern that the promise hath been fulfilled in thee also, but spiritually. If therefore we have, why have we? Because we fear the Lord. "Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord" (ver. 4). He is the man, who is also the men; and the men are one man; because many are one, because Christ is One. 7. "The Lord from out of Sion bless thee: and mayest thou see thee good things that are of Jerusalem" (ver. 5). Even to the birds was it said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Dost thou wish to hold as a great blessing what was given unto birds? Who can be ignorant, that it was given indeed by the voice of God? But use these goods, if thou receive them; and rather think how thou mayest nourish those who have been born, than that others may be born. For it is not happiness to have children, but to have good ones. Labour in the task of nourishing them, if they be born; but if they be not born, give thanks unto God. ...Thy children are infants: thou dost caress the infants: the infants caress thee: do they abide thus? But thou wishest they may grow, thou wishest that their age may increase. But consider that when one age cometh, another dieth. When boyhood cometh, infancy dieth; when youth cometh, boyhood dieth: when manhood cometh, youth dieth; when old age cometh, manhood dieth: when death cometh, all age dieth. As many successions of ages as thou wishest for, so many deaths of ages dost thou wish for. These things therefore "are" not. Finally, are children born unto thee to share life with thee on earth, or rather to shut thee out and to succeed thee? Rejoicest thou in those born to exclude thee? Boys when born speak somewhat like this to their parents:

"Now then, begin to think of removing hence, let us too play our parts on the stage. For the whole life of temptation in the human race is a stage play; for it is said, "Every man living is altogether vanity. Nevertheless, if we rejoice in children who will succeed us; how much must we rejoice in children with whom we shall remain, and in that Father for whom we are born, who will not die, but that we may evermore live with Him? These are the good things of Jerusalem: for they "are. And how long shall I see the good things of Jerusalem? "All thy life long. If thy life be for ever, thou wilt see the good things of Jerusalem for evermore. ... 8. For, "if in this life only," saith the Apostle, "we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." For what reason were the Martyrs condemned to beasts? What is that good? Can it be declared? by what means, or what tongue can tell it? or what ears can hear it? That indeed, "Neither ear hath heard, nor hath it entered into man's heart:" only let us love, only let us grow in grace: ye see, then, that battles are not wanting, and that we fight with our lusts. We fight outwardly with unbelieving and disobedient men; we fight inwardly with carnal suggestions and perturbations: we everywhere as yet fight. ...What sort of peace then is this? One from Jerusalem, for Jerusalem is interpreted, A vision of Peace. Thus then "mayest thou see the good things that are of Jerusalem," and that, "all thy life long-and mayest thou see," not only thy children, but, "thy children's children." What meaneth, Thy children? Thy works which thou here dost. Who are thy children's children? The fruits of thy works. Thou givest alms: these are thy children: for the sake of thine alms thou receivest everlasting life, these are thy children's children. "Mayest thou see thy children's children;" and there shall be "peace upon Israel" (ver. 6), the last words of the Psalm. ...

PSALM 129

1. The Psalm which we have sung is short: but as it is written in the Gospel of Zacchaeus that he was "little of stature," but mighty in works; as it is written of that widow who cast two mites into the treasury, little was the money, but great was her charity; thus also this Psalm, if thou count the words, is short; if thou weigh the sentiments, is great. ...Let the Spirit of God speak, let It speak to us, let It sing to us; whether we wish or wish not to dance, let It sing. For as he who danceth, moveth his limbs to the time; so they who dance according to the commandment of God, in their works obey the sound. What therefore saith the Lord in the Gospel to those who refuse to do this? "We

have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." Let Him therefore sing; we trust in God's mercy, for there will be those by whom He consoleth us. For they who are obstinate, continuing in wickedness, although they hear the Word of God, by their offences daily disturb the Church. Of such this Psalm speaketh; for thus it be-
ginneth.

2. "Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up" (ver. 1). The Church speaketh of those whom She endureth: and as if it were asked, "Is it now?" The Church is of ancient birth: since saints have been so called, the Church hath been on earth. At one time the Church was in Abel only, and he was fought against by his wicked and lost brother Cain. At one time the Church was in Enoch alone: and he was translated from the unrighteous. At one time the Church was in the house of Noah alone, and endured all who perished by the flood, and the ark alone swam upon the waves, and escaped to shore. At one time the Church was in Abraham alone, and we know what he endured from the wicked. The Church was in his brother's son, Lot, alone, and in his house, in Sodome, and he endured the iniquities and perversities of Sodom, until God freed him from amidst them. The Church also began to exist in the people of Israel: She endured Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The number of the saints began to be also in the Church, that is, in the people of Israel; Moses and the rest of the saints endured the wicked Jews, the people of Israel. We come unto our Lord Jesus Christ: the Gospel was preached in the Psalms. ...For this reason, lest the Church wonder now, or lest any one wonder in the Church, who wisheth to be a good member of the Church, let him hear the Church herself his Mother saying to him, Marvel not at these things, my son: "Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up."

3. "Now may Israel say." She now seemeth to be speaking of herself: for she seemed not to have commenced herself, but to have answered. But to whom hath she replied? To them that think and say, How great evils do we endure, how great are the scandals that every day thicken, as the wicked enter into the Church, and we have to endure them? But let the Church reply through some, that is, through the voice of the stronger, let her reply to the complaints of the weak, and let the stable confirm the unstable, and the full-grown the infant, and let the Church say, "Many a time have they vexed me from my youth up" (ver. 2). Let the Church say this: let her not fear it. For

what is the meaning of this addition, "From my youth up," after the words, "Many a time have they fought against me"? At present the old age of the Church is assailed: but let her not fear. Hath she then failed to arrive at old age, because they have not ceased to fight against her from her youth up? have they been able to blot her out? Let Israel comfort herself, let the Church console herself with past examples. Why have they fought against me? "For they could not prevail against me."

4. "Upon my back have sinners built; they have done their iniquity afar off" (ver. 3). Why have they fought against me? Because "they could not prevail upon me." What is this? They could not build upon me. I consented not with them unto sin. For every wicked man persecuteth the good on this account, because the good man consenteth not with him to evil. Suppose he do some evil, and the Bishop censure him not, the Bishop is a good man: suppose the Bishop censure him, the Bishop is a bad man. Suppose he carry off anything, let the man robbed be silent, he is a good man: let him only speak and rebuke, even though he doth not reclaim his goods, he is everything bad. He is bad then who blameth the robber, and he is good who robbeth! ...Heed not that such an one speaketh to thee: it is a wicked man through whom It speaketh to thee; but the word of God, that speaketh to thee, is not wicked. Accuse God: accuse Him, if thou canst!

5. Thou accusest a man of avarice, and he accuseth God on the ground that He made gold. Be not covetous. And God, thou repliest, should not make gold. This now remaineth, because thou canst not restrain thine evil deeds, thou accusest the good works of God: the Creator and Architect of the world displeaseth thee. He ought not to make the sun either; for many contend concerning the lights of their windows, and drag each other before courts of law. O if we could restrain our vices! for all things are good, because a good God made all things: and His works praise Him, when their goodness is considered by him who hath the spirit of considering them, the spirit of piety and wisdom. ... 6. Lend not money at interest. Thou accusest Scripture which saith, "He that hath not given his money upon usury." I wrote not this: it went not forth first from my mouth: hear God. He replieth: let not the clergy lend upon usury. Perchance he who speaketh to thee, lendeth not at interest: but if he do so lend, suppose that he doth so lend; doth He who speaketh through him lend at interest? If he doth what he enjoineth thee, and thou dost it not; thou wilt go into the flame, he into the kingdom. If he

doth not what he enjoineeth thee, and equally with thee doth evil deeds, and preaches duties which he doth not; ye will both equally go into the flames. The hay will burn; but "the word of the Lord abideth for evermore." ...

7. "The righteous Lord shall hew the necks of the sinners" (ver. 4). ...Which of us doth not fix his eyes upon the earth, like the Publican, and say, "Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner"? If therefore all are sinners, and none is found without sin; all must fear the sword that hangs above their neck, because "the righteous Lord shall hew the necks of the sinners." I do not imagine, my brethren, of all sinners; but in the member which He striketh, He marks what sinners He striketh. For it is not said, The righteous Lord will hew the hands of the sinners; or their feet; but because proud sinners were meant to be understood, and all proud men carry lofty necks, and not only do evil deeds, but even refuse to acknowledge them to be such, and when they are rebuked, justify themselves: ...as it is written in Job (he was speaking of an ungodly sinner), "he runneth against God, even upon his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers;" so he here nameth the neck, because it is thus thou exaltest thyself, and dost not fix thine eyes upon the ground, and beat thy breast. Thou shouldest cry unto Him, as it is cried in another Psalm, "I said, Lord, be merciful unto me, for I have sinned against Thee." Since thou dost not choose to say this, but justifiest thy deeds against the Word of God; what followeth in Scripture cometh upon thee: the righteous Lord shall hew the necks of sinners.

8. "Let them be confounded and turned backward, as many as have evil will at Sion" (ver. 5). They who hate Sion, hate the Church: Sion is the Church. And they who hypocritically enter into the Church, hate the Church. They who refuse to keep the Word of God, hate the Church: "Upon my back have they built:" what will the Church do, save endure the burden even unto the end? 9. But what saith he of them? The next words are, "Let them be even as the grass of the house tops: that withereth before it be plucked up" (ver. 6). The grass of the house tops is that which groweth on house tops, on a tiled roof: it is seen on high, and hath not a root. How much better would it be if it grew lower, and how much more joyfully would it bloom? As it is, it riseth higher to a quicker withering. It hath not yet been plucked up, yet hath it withered: not yet have they received sentence from the judgment of God, and already they have not the sap of bloom. Observe their works, and see that they have withered. ...The reapers will come, but

they fill not their sheaves from these. For the reapers will come, and will gather the wheat into the barn, and will bind the tares together, and cast them into the fire. Thus also is the grass of the house tops cleared off, and whatever is plucked from it, is thrown into the fire; because it had withered even before it was plucked up. The reaper filleth not his hands thence. His next words are, "Whereof the reaper filleth not his hand; neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom" (ver. 7). And, "the reapers are the angels," the Lord saith.

10. "So that they who go by say not so much as, The blessing of the Lord be upon you we have blessed you in the name of the Lord" (ver. 8). For ye know, brethren, when men pass by others at work, it is customary to address them, "The blessing of the Lord be upon you." And this was especially the custom in the Jewish nation. No one passed by and saw any one doing any work in the field, or in the vineyard, or in harvest, or anything of the sort; it was not lawful to pass by without a blessing. ...Who are the passers by? They who have already passed hence to their country through this road, that is, through this life: the Apostles were passers by in this life, the Prophets were passers by. Whom did the Prophets and Apostles bless? Those in whom they saw the root of charity? But those whom they found lifted on high on their house tops, and proud in the bosses of their bucklers, they declared against these what they were doomed to become, but they gave them no blessing. Ye therefore who read in the Scriptures, find all those wicked men whom the Church beareth, who are declared cursed, pertain unto Antichrist, pertain unto the devil, pertain to the chaff, pertain to the tares. ...But they who say, None save God sanctifieth, I nor is any man good save by the gift of God; they bless in the name of the Lord, not in their own name: because they are the friends of the bridegroom,' they refuse to be adulterers of the bride.

PSALM 130

1. "Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice" (ver. 1). Jonas cried from the deep; from the whale's belly. He was not only beneath the waves, but also in the entrails of the beast; nevertheless, those waves and that body prevented not his prayer from reaching God, and the beast's belly could not contain the voice of his prayer. It penetrated all things, it burst through all things, it reached the ears of God: if indeed we ought to say that, bursting through all things, it reached the ears of God, since the ears of God were in the heart of him who prayed. For where hath

not he God present, whose voice is faithful? Nevertheless, we also ought to understand from what deep we cry unto the Lord. For this mortal life is our deep. Whoever hath understood himself to be in the deep, crieth out, groaneth, sigheth, until he be delivered from the deep, and come unto Him who sitteth above all the deeps. ...For they are very deep in the deep, who do not even cry from the deep. The Scripture saith, "When the wicked hath reached the depth of evils, he despiseth. Now consider, brethren, what sort of deep that is, where God is despised. When each man seeth himself overwhelmed with daily sins, pressed down by heaps and weights, so to speak, of iniquities: if it be said unto him, Pray unto God, he laughs. In what manner?

He first saith, If crimes were displeasing unto God, should I live? If God regarded human affairs, considering the great crimes which I have committed, should I not only live, but be prosperous? For this is wont to happen to those who are far in the deep, and are prosperous in their iniquities: and they are the more plunged in the deep, in proportion as they seem to be more happy; for a deceitful happiness is itself a greater unhappiness. ... 2. "Lord, hear my voice. O let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint" (ver. 2). Whence doth he cry? From the deep. Who is it then who crieth? A sinner. And with what hope doth he cry? Because He who came to absolve from sins, gave hope even to the sinner down in the deep. What therefore followeth after these words: "If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is amiss, O Lord, who may abide it?" (ver. 3). So, he hath disclosed from what deep he cried out. For he crieth beneath the weights and billows of his iniquities. ...He said not, I may not abide it: but, "who may abide it?" For he saw that nigh the whole of human life on every side was ever bayed at by its sins, that all consciences were accused by their thoughts, that a clean heart trusting in its own righteousness could not be found.

3. But wherefore is there hope? "For there is propitiation with Thee" (ver. 4). And what is this propitiation, except sacrifice? And what is sacrifice, save that which hath been offered for us? The pouring forth of innocent blood blotted out all the sins of the guilty: so great a price paid down redeemed all captives from the hand of the enemy who captured them. "With Thee," then, "there is propitiation. For if there were not mercy with Thee, if Thou chocest to be Judge only, and didst refuse to be merciful, Thou wouldest mark all our iniquities, and search after them. Who could abide this? Who could stand before Thee, and say, I am innocent? Who could stand in Thy judgment?

There is therefore one hope: "for the sake of Thy law have I borne Thee, O Lord. What law? That which made men guilty. For a "law, holy, just, and good," was given to the Jews; but its effect was to make them guilty. A law was not given that could give life, but which might show his sins to the sinner. For the sinner had forgotten himself, and saw not himself; the law was given him, that he might see himself. The law made him guilty, the Law-giver freed him: for the Lawgiver is the Supreme Power. ...There is therefore a law of the mercy of God, a law of the propitiation of God. The one was a law of fear, the other is a law of love.

The law of love giveth forgiveness to sins, blotteth out the past, warneth concerning the future; forsaketh not its companion by the way, becometh a companion to him whom it leadeth on the way. But it is needful to agree with the adversary, whilst thou art with him in the way. For the Word of God is thine adversary, as long as thou dost not agree with it. But thou agreest, when it has begun to be thy delight to do what God's Word commandeth. Then he who was thine adversary becometh thy friend: so, when the way is finished, there will be none to deliver thee to the Judge. Therefore, "For the sake of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord," because thou hast condescended to bring in a law of mercy, to forgive me all my sins, to give me for the future warnings that I may not offend. ... "For the sake," therefore, "of" this "law I have waited for Thee, O Lord. I have waited until Thou mayest come and free me from all need, for in my very need Thou hast not forsaken the law of mercy. ... "My soul hath waited for Thy word." ...

4. We therefore trust without fear on the word of Him who cannot deceive. "My soul hath trusted in the Lord, from the morning watch even unto night" (ver. 5). This morning watch is the end of night. We must therefore understand it so that we may not suppose we are to trust in the Lord for one day only. What do you conceive to be the sense, then, brethren? The words mean this: that the Lord, through whom our sins have been remitted, arose from the dead at the morning watch, so that we may hope that what went before in the Lord will take place in us. For our sins have been already forgiven: but we have not yet risen again: if we have not risen again, not as yet hath that taken place in us which went before in our Head. What went before in our Head? Because the flesh of that Head rose again; did the Spirit of that Head die? What had died in Him, rose again. Now He arose on the third day; and the Lord as it were thus speaketh to us: What ye have seen in Me,

hope for in yourselves; that is, because I have risen from the dead, ye also shall rise again.

5. But there are who say, Behold, the Lord hath risen again; but must I hope on that account that I also may rise again? Certainly, on that account: for the Lord rose again in that which He assumed from thee. For He would not rise again, save He had died; and He could not have died, except He bore the flesh. What did the Lord assume from thee? The flesh. What was He that came Himself? The Word of God, who was before all things, through whom all things were made. But that He might receive something from thee, "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us." He received from thee, what He might offer for thee; as the priest receiveth from thee, what he may offer for thee, when thou wishest to appease God for thy sins. It hath already been done, it hath been done thus. Our Priest received from us what He might offer for us: for He received flesh from us, in the flesh itself He was made a victim, He was made a holocaust, He was made a sacrifice. In the Passion He was made a sacrifice; in the Resurrection He renewed that which was slain, and offered it as His first-fruits unto God, and saith unto thee, All that is thine is now consecrated: since such first-fruits have been offered unto God from thee; hope therefore that that will take place in thyself which went before in thy first-fruits.

6. Since He then rose with the morning watch, our soul began to hope from hence: and how far? "Even unto night;" until we die; for all our carnal death is as it were sleep. ... 7. And he returns to this, "From the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord." Not only "let Israel hope," but "from the morning watch let Israel hope." Do I then blame the hope of the world, when it is placed in the Lord? No; but there is another hope belonging to Israel. Let not Israel hope for riches as his highest good, not for health of body, not for abundance of earthly things: he will indeed have to suffer tribulation here, if it should be his lot to suffer any troubles for the sake of the truth. ... 8. "For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption" (ver. 7). Admirable! This could not have been better said in its own place, on account of the words, "From the morning watch." Wherefore? Because the Lord rose again from the morning watch; and the body ought to hope for that which went before in the Head. But, lest this thought should be suggested: The Head might rise again, because It was not weighed down with sins, there was no sin in Him; what shall we do? Shall we hope for such a

resurrection, as went before in the Lord, whilst we are weighed down by our sins? But see what followeth: "And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins" (ver. 8). Though therefore he was weighed down with his sins, the mercy of God is present to him. For this reason, He went before without sin, that He may blot out the sins of those that follow Him. Trust not in yourselves, but trust from the morning watch. ...

PSALM 131

1. In this Psalm, the humility of one that is a servant of God and faithful is commended unto us, by whose voice it is sung; which is the whole body of Christ. For we have often warned you, beloved, that it ought not to be received as the voice of one man singing, but of all who are in Christ's Body. And since all are in His Body, as it were one man speaketh: and he is one who also is many. ...Now he prayeth in the temple of God, who prayeth in the peace of the Church, in the unity of Christ's Body; which Body of Christ consisteth of many who believe in the whole world: and therefore he who prayeth in the temple, is heard. For he prayeth in the spirit and in truth, who prayeth in the peace of the Church; not in that temple, wherein was the figure. ...

2. "Lord, my heart is not lifted up" (ver. 1). He hath offered a sacrifice. Whence do we prove that he hath offered a sacrifice? Because humility of heart is a sacrifice. ...If there is no sacrifice, there is no Priest. But if we have a High Priest in Heaven, who intercedeth with the Father for us (for He hath entered into the Holy of Holies, within the veil), ...we are safe, for we have a Priest; let us offer our sacrifice there. Let us consider what sacrifice we ought to offer; for God is not pleased with burnt-offerings, as ye have heard in the Psalm. But in that place he next showeth what he offereth: "The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, shall Thou not despise. 3. "Lord, my heart was not lifted up, neither were mine eyes raised on high" (ver. 1); "I have not exercised myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things which are too high for me" (ver. 2). Let this be more plainly spoken and heard. I have not been proud: I have not wished to be known among men as for wondrous powers; nor have I sought anything beyond my strength, whereby I might boast myself among the ignorant. As that Simon the sorcerer wished to advance into wonders above himself, on that account the power of the Apostles more pleased him, than the righteousness of Christians. ...What is above my strength, he saith, I have not

sought; I have not stretched myself out there, I have not chosen to be magnified there. How deeply this self-exaltation in the abundance of graces is to be feared, that no man may pride himself in the gift of God, but may rather preserve humility, and may do what is written: "The greater thou art, the more humble thyself, and thou shall find favour before the Lord:" how deeply pride in God's gift should be feared, we must again and again impress upon you. ...

4. "If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul, as one taken from his mother's breast, such the reward for my soul" (ver. 2). He seemeth as it were to have bound himself by a curse: ...as though he had been going to say, Let it so happen to me. "As one taken away from his mother's breast, may be my soul's reward." Ye know that the Apostle saith to some weak brethren, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." There are weak persons who are not fit for strong meat; they wish to grasp at that which they cannot receive: and if they ever do receive, or seem to themselves to receive what they have not received, they are puffed up thereby, and become proud thereupon; they seem to themselves wise men. Now this happeneth to all heretics; who since they were animal and carnal, by defending their depraved opinions, which they could not see to be false, were shut out of the Catholic Church. ...

5. Another opinion indeed hath been entertained, and another sense in these words. ...It has been evidently explained, my brethren, where God would have us to be humble, where lofty. Humble, in order to provide against pride; lofty, to take in wisdom. Feed upon milk, that thou mayest be nourished; be nourished, so that thou mayest grow; grow, so that thou mayest eat bread. But when thou hast begun to eat bread, thou wilt be weaned, that is, thou wilt no longer have need of milk, but of solid food. This he seemeth to have meant: "If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul:" that is, if I was not an infant in mind, I was in wickedness. In this sense, he said before, "Lord, my heart was not lifted up, nor mine eyes raised on high: I do not exercise myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things above me." Behold, in wickedness I am an infant. But since I am not an infant in understanding, "If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul," may that reward be mine which is given unto the infant that is weaned from his mother, that I may at length be able to eat bread.

6. This interpretation, also, brethren, displeaseth me not, since it doth not militate against the faith. Yet I cannot but remark that it is not only said, "As one taken away from milk, such may be my soul's reward; but with this addition, "As one taken away from milk when upon his mother's breast, such may be my soul's reward. Here there is somewhat that induces me to consider it a curse. For it is not an infant, but a grown child that is taken away from milk; he who is weak in his earliest infancy, which is his true infancy, is upon his mother's breast: if perchance he hath been taken away from the milk, he perisheth. It is not without a reason then that it is added, "Upon his mother's breast. For all may be weaned by growing. He who groweth, and is thus taken away from milk, it is good for him; but hurtful for him who is still upon his mother's breast. We must therefore beware, my brethren, and be fearful, lest any one be taken away from milk before his time. ...Let him not therefore wish to lift up his soul, when perchance he is not fit to take meat, but let him fulfil the commandments of humility. He hath wherein he may exercise himself: let him believe in Christ, that he may understand Christ.

He cannot see the Word, he cannot understand the equality of the Word with the Father, he cannot as yet see the equality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Word; let him believe this, and suck it. He is safe, because, when he hath grown, he will eat, which he could not do before he grew by sucking; and he hath a point to stretch towards. Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, and search not the things that are above thy strength; that is, things which thou art not as yet fit to understand. And what am I to do? thou repliest. Shall I remain thus? "But what things the Lord hath commanded thee, think thereupon always. What hath the Lord commanded thee? Do works of mercy, part not with the peace of the Church, place not thy trust in man, tempt not God by longing for miracles. ...

7. For if ye be not exalted, if ye raise not your heart on high, if ye tread not in great matters that are too high for you, but preserve humility, God will reveal unto you what ye are otherwise minded in. But if ye choose to defend this very thing, which ye are otherwise minded about, and with pertinacity assert it, and against the peace of the Church; this curse which he hath described is entailed upon you; when ye are upon your mother's breast, and are removed away from the milk, ye shall die of hunger apart from your mother's breast. But if ye continue in Catholic peace, if perchance ye are in

anything otherwise minded than ye ought to be, God will reveal it to you, if ye be humble. Wherefore? Because "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble." 8. This Psalm therefore concludeth to this purpose: "O Israel, trust in the Lord, from this time forth and even unto eternity" (ver. 3). But the word *seculum* doth not always mean this world, but sometimes eternity; since eternity is understood in two ways; until eternity, that is, either evermore without end, or until we arrive at eternity. How then is it to be understood here? Until we arrive at eternity, let us trust in the Lord God; because when we have reached eternity, there will be no longer hope, but the thing itself will be ours.

PSALM 132

1. It was right indeed, most beloved, that we should rather hear our Brother, my colleague, when present before all of us. And just now he refused not, but put us off; for he extorted from me that he might now listen to me, on the condition that I also may listen to him, for in charity itself we are all listening unto Him, who is our One Master in heaven. Attend therefore to the Psalm, entitled *A Song of Degrees*; considerably longer than the rest under the same title. Let us not therefore linger, save where necessity shall compel us: that we may, if the Lord permit, explain the whole. For ye also ought not to hear everything as men untaught; ye ought in some degree to aid us from your past listenings, so that it may not be needful that everything should be declared to you as though new.

2. "Lord, remember David, and all his meekness" (ver. 1). David according to the truth of history was one man, king of Israel, son of Jesse. He was indeed meek, as the Divine Scriptures themselves mark and command him, and so meek that he did not even render evil for evil to his persecutor Saul. He preserved towards him so great humility, that he acknowledged him a king, and himself a dog; and answered the king not proudly nor rudely, though he was more powerful in God; but he rather endeavoured to appease him by humility, than to provoke him by pride. Saul was even given into his power, and this by the Lord God, that he might do to him what he listed: but since he was not commanded to slay him, but had it only placed in his power (now a man is permitted to use his power), he rather turned towards mercy what God gave him. ...The humility of David is therefore commended, the meekness of David is commended; and it is said to God, "Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. For what purpose? "How he sware unto

the Lord, and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob" (ver. 2). Therefore remember for this, that he may fulfil what he hath promised. David himself vowed as though he had it in his power, and he prayeth God to fulfil his vow: there is devotion in the vow, but there is humility in the prayer.

Let no one presume to think he fulfilled by his own strength what he hath vowed. He who exhorteth thee to vow, Himself aideth thee to fulfil. Let us therefore see what he vowed, and hence we comprehend how David should be understood in a figure. "David" is interpreted, "Strong of hand," for he was a great warrior. Trusting indeed in the Lord his God, he despatched all wars, he laid low all his enemies, God helping him, according to the dispensation of that kingdom; prefiguring nevertheless some One strong of hand to destroy His enemies, the devil and his angels. These enemies the Church warreth against, and conquereth. ...What then doth he mean, "How he sware," etc.? Let us see what vow is this. We can offer God nothing more pleasing than to swear. Now to swear is to promise firmly. Consider this vow, that is, with what ardour he vowed what he vowed, with what love, with what longing; nevertheless, he prayeth the Lord to fulfil it in these words, "O Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. In this temper he vowed his vow, and there should be a house of God: "I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, nor climb up into my bed" (ver. 3). "I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep, nor mine eyelids to slumber" (ver. 4). This seemeth not enough; he adds, "Neither the temples of my head to take any rest, until I find out a place for the Lord;

an habitation for the God of Jacob" (ver. 5). Where did he seek a place for the Lord? If he was meek, he sought it in himself. For how is one a place for the Lord? Hear the Prophet: "Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Even upon him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My words. Dost thou wish to be a place for the Lord? Be thou poor in spirit, and contrite, and trembling at the word of God, and thou wilt thyself be made what thou seekest. For if what thou seekest be not realized in thyself, what doth it profit thee in another. ... 3. How many thousands believed, my brethren, when they laid down the price of their possessions at the Apostles' feet! But what saith Scripture of them? Surely they are become a temple of God; not only each respectively a temple of God, but also all a temple of God together. They have therefore become a place for the Lord. And that ye may know that one place is made for the Lord in all, Scripture saith, They were of one heart and one

soul toward God. But many, so as not to make a place for the Lord, seek their own things, love their own things, delight in their own power, are greedy for their private interests. Whereas he who wisheth to make a place for the Lord, should rejoice not in his private, but the common good. ...

4. Let us therefore, brethren, abstain from the possession of private property; or from the love of it, if we may not from its possession; and we make a place for the Lord. It is too much for me, saith some one. But consider who thou art, who art about to make a place for the Lord. If any senator wished to be entertained at your house, I say not senator, the deputy of some great man of this world, and should say, something offends me in thy house; though thou shouldest love it, thou wouldest remove it, nevertheless, lest thou shouldest offend him, whose friendship thou wast courting. And what doth man's friendship profit thee? ...Desire the friendship of Christ without fear: He wishes to be entertained at thy house; make room for Him. What is, make room for Him? Love not thyself, love Him. If thou love thyself, thou shuttest the door against Him; if thou love Him, thou openest unto Him: and if thou open and He enter, thou shalt not be lost by loving thyself, but shalt find thyself with Him who loveth thee. ...

5. "Lo, we heard of the same at Ephrata" (ver. 6). What? A place for the Lord. "We heard of it at Ephrata: and found it in the plains of the forests." Did he hear it where he found it? or did he hear it in one place, find it in another? Let us therefore enquire what Ephrata is, where he heard it; let us also enquire what mean the plains of the forests, where he found it. Ephrata, a Hebrew word, is rendered in Latin by Speculum, as the translators of Hebrew words in the Scriptures have handed down to us, that we might understand them. They have translated from Hebrew into Greek, and from Greek we have versions into Latin. For there have been who watched in the Scriptures. If therefore Ephrata meaneth a mirror, that house which was found in the woodland plains, was heard of in a mirror. A mirror hath an image: all prophecy is an image of things future. The future house of God, therefore, was declared in the image of prophecy. "We have found it in the plains of the forests." What are the "plains of the forests"? Saltus is not here used in its common sense, as a plot of ground of so many hundred acres; saltus properly signifies a spot as yet untilled and woody. For some copies read, in the plains of the wood. What then were the woodland plains, save nations yet untilled? what were they, save regions yet covered with the thorns of idolatry? Thus,

though there were thorns of idolatry there, still we find a place for the Lord there, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. What was declared in the image to the Jews, was manifested in the faith of the Gentiles.

6. "We will go into His tabernacles" (ver. 7). Whose? Those of the Lord God of Jacob. They who enter to dwell therein, are the very same who enter that they may be dwelt in. Thou enterest into thy house, that thou mayest dwell therein; into the house of God, that thou mayest be dwelt in. For the Lord is better, and when He hath begun to dwell in thee, He will make thee happy. For if thou be not dwelt in by Him, thou wilt be miserable. That son who said, "Father, give me the portion of the goods," etc., wished to be his own master. It was well kept in his father's hands, that it might not be wasted with harlots. He received it, it was given into his own power; going to a far country, he squandered it all with harlots. At length he suffered hunger, he remembered his father; he returned, that he might be satisfied with bread. Enter therefore, that thou mayest be dwelt in; and mayest be not thine own, so to speak, but His: "We will go into His tabernacles. We will worship on the spot where His feet stood." Whose feet? The Lord's, or those of the house of the Lord itself? For that is the Lord's house, wherein he saith He ought to be worshipped. Beside His house, the Lord heareth not unto eternal life; for he belongeth to God's house, who hath in charity been built in with living stones. But he who hath not charity, falleth; and while he falls, the house stands. ...

7. But if ye incline to understand it of the house itself, where the feet of that house have stood; let thy feet stand in Christ. They will then stand, if thou shall persevere in Christ. For what is said of the devil? "He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth." The feet of the devil therefore stood not. Also what saith he of the proud? "O let not the foot of pride come against me; and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me down. There are they fallen, all that work wickedness: they are cast down, and were not able to stand." That then is the house of God, whose feet stand. Whence John rejoicing, saith: what? "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth him." If he stand not, he heareth him not. Justly he standeth, because "he rejoiceth on account of the bridegroom's voice." Now therefore ye see why they fell, who rejoice because of their own voice. That friend of the Bridegroom said, "The same is He which baptizeth." Some say, We baptize: rejoicing in their own voice, they

could not stand; and belong not to that house of which it is said, "where His feet stood."

8. "Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place" (ver. 8). He saith unto the Lord sleeping, "Arise." Ye know already who slept, and who rose again. ..."Thou, and the ark of Thy sanctification:" that is, Arise, that the ark of Thy sanctification, which Thou hast sanctified, may arise also. He is our Head; His ark is His Church: He arose first, the Church will arise also. The body would not dare to promise itself resurrection, save the Head arose first. The Body of Christ, that was born of Mary, hath been understood by some to be the ark of sanctification; so that the words mean, Arise with Thy Body, that they who believe not may handle. 9. "Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let Thy saints sing with joyfulness" (ver. 9). When Thou risest from the dead, and goest unto Thy Father, let that royal Priesthood be clothed with faith, since "the righteous liveth by faith;" and, receiving the pledge of the Holy Spirit, let the members rejoice in the hope of resurrection, which went before in the Head: for to them the Apostle saith, "Rejoicing in hope."

10. "For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of Thine Anointed" (ver. 10). These words are addressed unto God the Father. "For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of Thine Anointed. The Lord was crucified in Judaea; He was crucified by the Jews; harassed by them, He slept. He arose to judge those among whose savage hands He slept: and He saith elsewhere, "Raise Thou Me up again, and I shall reward them. He both hath rewarded them, and will reward them. The Jews well know themselves how great were their sufferings after the Lord's death. They were all expelled from the very city, where they slew Him. What then? have all perished even from the root of David and from the tribe of Judah? No: for some of that stock believed, and in fact many thousands of men of that stock believed, and this after the Lord's resurrection. They raged and crucified Him: and afterwards began to see miracles wrought in the Name of Him Crucified; and they trembled still more that His Name should have so much power, since when in their hands He seemed unable to work any; and pricked at heart, at length believing that there was some hidden divinity in Him whom they had believed like other men, and asking counsel of the Apostles, they were answered, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Since then Christ arose to judge those by whom He had been crucified, and turned away His Presence from the Jews, turning His Presence towards the Gentiles; God is, as it seemeth, besought in behalf of the remnant of Israel; and it is said unto Him, "For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the presence of Thine Anointed. If the chaff be condemned, let the wheat be gathered together. May the remnant be saved, as Isaiah saith, "And the remnant hath" clearly "been saved: for out of them were the twelve Apostles, out of them more than five hundred brethren, to whom the Lord showed Himself after His Resurrection: out of their number were so many thousands baptized, who laid the price of their possessions at the Apostles' feet. Thus then was fulfilled the prayer here made to God: "For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the presence of Thine Anointed."

11. "The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David, and He shall not repent" (ver. 11). What meaneth, "hath made an oath"? Hath confirmed a promise through Himself. What meaneth, "He shall not repent"? He will not change. For God suffereth not the pain of repentance, nor is He deceived in any matter, so that He would wish to correct that wherein He hath erred. But as when a man repents of anything, he wisheth to change what he hath done; thus where thou hearest that God repenteth, look for an actual change. God doth it differently from thee, although He calleth it by the name of repentance; for thou dost it, because thou hadst erred; while He doth it, because He avengeth, or freeth. He changed Saul's kingdom, when He repented, as it is said: and in the very passage where the Scripture saith, "It repented Him; it is said a little after, "for He is not a man that He should repent. When therefore He changeth His works through His immutable counsel, He is said to repent on account of this very change, not of His counsel, but of His work. But He promised this so as not to change it. Just as this passage also saith: "The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec; so also since this was promised so that it should not be changed, because it must needs happen and be permanent;

he saith, "The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David, and He shall not repent; Of the fruit of thy body shall I set upon thy seat. He might have said, "of the fruit of thy loins," wherefore did He choose to say, "Of the fruit of thy body"? Had He said that also, it would have been true; but He chose to say with a further meaning, *Ex fructu ventris*, because Christ was born of a woman without the man. 12. What then? "The Lord hath made a faithful

oath unto David, and He shall not shrink from it; Of the fruit of thy body shall I set upon thy seat. If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimonies that I shall learn them, their children also shall sit upon thy seat for evermore" (ver. 12). If thy children keep My covenant, their children also shall sit for evermore. The parents establish a desert on behalf of their children. What if his children should keep the covenant, and their children should not keep it? Why is the happiness of the children promised in relation to their parents' deservings? For what saith He, "If thy children will keep My covenant, their children also shall sit for evermore"-He saith not, if thy children keep My covenant, they shall sit upon thy seat; and if their children keep My covenant, they also shall sit upon thy seat: but he saith, "If thy children keep My covenant, their children also shall sit upon thy seat for evermore"-except because He here wished their fruit to be understood by their children? "If thy children," He saith, "will keep My covenant, and if thy children shall keep My testimonies that I shall learn them; their children also shall sit upon thy seat: that is, this will be their fruit, that they sit upon thy seat.

For in this life, brethren, do all of us who labour in Christ, all of us who tremble at His words, who in any way endeavour to execute His will, and groan while we pray His help that we may fulfil what He commandeth; do we already sit in those seats of bliss which are promised us? No: but holding His commandments, we hope this will come to pass. This hope is spoken of under the figure of sons; because sons are the hope of man living in this life, sons are his fruit. For this reason also men, when excusing their avarice, allege that they are reserving for their children what they hoard up; and, unwilling to give to the destitute, excuse themselves under the name of piety, because their children are their hope. For all men who live according to this world, declare it to be their hope, to be fathers of children they may leave behind them. Thus then He describes hope generally under the name of children, and saith, "If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimonies that I shall learn them, their children also shall sit upon thy seat for evermore: that is, they shall have such fruits, that their hope shall not deceive them, that they may come there where they hope to come. At present therefore they are as fathers, men of hope for the future; but when they have attained what they hope, they are children; because they have brought forth and produced in their works that which they gain.

And this is preserved unto them for the future, because futurity itself commonly signifieth children. 13. Or if thou understand actual men to be meant by children, the words, "If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimonies that I shall teach them," may mean, "If thy children will keep My covenant and testimonies that I shall teach them, and their children also; that is, if they too keep My covenant; so that here thou must make a slight pause, and then infer that "they shall sit upon thy seat for evermore; that is, both thy children and their children, but all if they keep My covenant. What then, if they keep it not? Hath the promise of God failed? No: but it is said and promised for this reason, that God foresaw: what, save that they would believe? But that no man should as it were threaten God's promises, and prefer to place in his own power the fulfilment of what God promised: for this reason he saith, "He made an oath: whereby he showeth that it will without doubt take place. How then hath He said here, "If they will keep My covenant"? Glory not in the promises, and leave out thy failing to keep the covenant. Then wilt thou be the son of David, if thou shalt keep the covenant; but if thou dost not keep it, thou wilt not be David's son. God promised to the sons of David. Say not, I am David's son if thou degenerate.

If the Jews, who were born of this very stock, say not this (nay, they say it, but they are under a delusion. For the Lord saith openly, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. He thereby denied them to be children, because they did not the works), how do we call ourselves David's children, who are not of his race according to the flesh? It follows then that we are not children, save by imitating his faith, save by worshipping God, as he worshipped. If therefore what thou hopest not through descent, thou wilt not endeavour to obtain by works; how shall the sitting upon David's seat be fulfilled in thee? And if it shall not be fulfilled in thee, thinkest thou that it shall not be fulfilled at all? And how hath He found it in the woodland tracts? and how did His feet stand? Whatsoever then thou mayest be, that house will stand.

14. "For the Lord hath chosen Sion to be an habitation for Himself" (ver. 13). Sion is the Church Herself; She is also that Jerusalem unto whose peace we are running, who is in pilgrimage not in the Angels, but in us, who in her better part waiteth for the part that will return; whence letters have come unto us, which are every day read. This city is that very Sion, whom the Lord hath chosen. 15. "This shall be My rest for ever" (ver. 14). These are the words

of God. "My rest:" I rest there. How greatly doth God love us, brethren, since, because we rest, He saith that He also resteth! For He is not sometimes Himself disturbed, nor doth He rest as we do; but He saith that He resteth there, because we shall have rest in Him. "Here will I dwell: for I have a delight therein."

16. "I will bless her widow with blessings, and will satisfy her poor with bread" (ver. 15). Every soul that is aware that it is bereft of all help, save of God alone, is widowed. For how doth the Apostle describe a widow? "She that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God. He was speaking of those whom we all call Widows in the Church. He saith, "She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth; and he numbereth her not among the widows. But in describing true widows, what saith he? "She that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. Here he addeth, "but she that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth. What then makes a widow? That she hath no aid from any other source, save from God alone. They that have husbands, take pride in the protection of their husbands: widows seem desolate, and their aid is a stronger one. The whole Church therefore is one widow, whether in men or in women, in married men or married women, in young men or in old, or in virgins: the whole Church is one widow, desolate in this world, if she feel this, if she is aware of her widowhood: for then is help at hand for her. Do ye not recognise this widow in the Gospel, my brethren, when the Lord declared "that men ought always to pray and not to faint"?

"There was in a city a judge," He said, "which feared not God, neither regarded man. And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him day by day, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. The widow, by daily importunity, prevailed with him: for the judge said within himself, "Though I fear not God; neither regard man, yet because this woman troubleth me, I will avenge her. If the wicked judge heard the widow, that he might not be molested; heareth not God His Church, whom He exhorteth to pray? 17. Also, "I will satisfy her poor with bread; what meaneth this, brethren? Let us be poor, and we shall then be satisfied. Many who trust in the world, and are proud, are Christians; they worship Christ, but are not satisfied; for they have been satisfied, and abound in their pride. Of such it is said, "Our soul is filled with the scornful reproof of the wealthy, and with the despitefulness of the proud: these have abundance, and therefore eat, but are not satisfied. And what is

said of them in the Psalm? "All such as be fat upon the earth have eaten and worshipped. They worship Christ, they venerate Christ, they pray unto Christ; but they are not satisfied with His wisdom and righteousness. Wherefore? Because they are not poor. For the poor, that is the humble in heart, the more they hunger, the more they eat; and the more empty they are of the world, the more hungry they are. He who is full refuseth whatsoever thou wilt give him, because he is full. Give me one who hungereth; give me one of whom it is said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled: and these will be the poor of whom he hath just said, "And will satisfy her poor with bread. For in the very Psalm where it is said, "All such as be fat upon the earth have eaten and worshipped;

this is said of the poor also, and exactly in the same manner as in this Psalm, "The poor shall eat, and be satisfied: they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him. Where it is said, "All such as be fat upon earth have eaten and worshipped: it is said, "the poor shall eat, and be satisfied. Why, when the rich are said to have worshipped, are they not said to be satisfied; yet when the poor are mentioned, they are said to be satisfied? And whence are they satisfied? What is the nature, brethren, of this satisfying? God Himself is their bread. The bread came down upon the earth, that He might become milk unto us; and said to His own, "I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven. Hence these words in the Psalm, "The poor shall eat, and be satisfied. From what source shall they be satisfied? Hear what followeth: "And they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him."

18. Be ye therefore poor, be ye among the members of that widow, let your help be solely in God alone. Money is nought; not thence will ye have aid. Many have been cast headlong down for money's sake, many have perished on account of money; many for the sake of their riches have been marked out by plunderers; they would have been safe, had they not had what made men hunt for them. Many have presumed in their more powerful friends: they in whom they presumed have fallen, and have involved in their ruin those who trusted in them. Look back upon the instances to be seen in the human race. Is it anything singular that I am telling you? We speak these things not only from these Scriptures; read them in the whole world. Take heed that ye presume not in money, in a friend, in the honour and the boasting of the world. Take away all these things: but if thou hast them, thank God if thou despisest them. But if thou art puffed up by them; think

not when thou wilt be the prey of men; already art thou the Devil's prey. But if thou hast not trusted in these things, thou wilt be among the members of that widow, who is the Church, of whom it is said, "I will bless her widow with blessings;" thou wilt also be poor, and one of those of whom it is said, "And will-satisfy her poor with bread."

19. Sometimes, however, and we must not pass over this without mention, thou findest a poor man proud, and a rich man humble: we daily endure such persons. Thou hearest a poor man groaning beneath a rich man, and when the more powerful rich man presseth upon him, then thou seest him humble: sometimes not even then, but even then proud; whence thou seest what he would have been, had he any property. God's poor one is therefore poor in spirit, not in his purse. Sometimes a man goeth forth having a full house, rich lands, many estates, much gold and silver; he knoweth that he must not trust in these, he humbleth himself before God, he doth good with them; thus his heart is raised unto God, so that he is aware that not only do riches themselves profit him nothing, but that they even impede his feet, save He rule them, and aid them: and he is counted among the poor who are satisfied with bread. Thou findest another a proud beggar, or not proud only because he hath nothing, nevertheless seeking whereby he may be puffed up. God doth not heed the means a man hath, but the wish he hath, and judgeth him according to his wish for temporal blessings, not according to the means which it is not his lot to have.

Whence the Apostle saith of the rich, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. What therefore should they do with their riches? He goeth on to say: "That they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. And see that they are poor in this world: "Laying up in store for themselves," he addeth, "a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. When they have laid hold of eternal life, then will they be rich; but since they have it not as yet, they should know that they are poor. Thus it is that God counteth among His poor all the humble in heart, who are established in that twofold charity, whatever they may have in this world-among His poor, whom He satisfieth with bread.

20. "I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice and sing" (ver. 16). We are now at the end of the Psalm; attend for a short space,

Beloved. "I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice and sing." Who is our salvation, save our Christ? What meaneth, therefore, "I will clothe her priests with salvation"? "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." "And her saints shall rejoice and sing." Whence shall they rejoice and sing? Because they have been clothed with salvation: not in themselves. For they have become light, but in the Lord; for they were darkness before. Therefore he hath added, "There will I raise up the horn of David" (ver. 17): this will be David's height, that trust be put in Christ. For horn signifieth height: and what sort of height? Not carnal. Therefore, while all the bones are wrapped up in flesh, the horn goeth beyond the flesh. Spiritual altitude is a horn. But what is spiritual loftiness, save to trust in Christ? not to say, It is my work, I baptize; but, "He it is who baptizeth." There is the horn of David: and that ye may know that there is the horn of David, heed what followeth: "I have ordained a lantern for mine Anointed." What is a lantern? Ye already know the Lord's words concerning John: "He was a burning and a shining light." And what saith John? "He it is who baptizeth." Herein therefore shall the saints rejoice, herein the priests shall rejoice: because all that is good in themselves, is not of themselves, but of Him who hath the power of baptizing. Fearlessly therefore doth every one who hath received baptism come unto His temple; because it is not man's, but His who made the horn of David to flourish.

21. "Upon Him shall My sanctification flourish" (ver. 18). Upon whom? Upon Mine Anointed. For when He saith, "Mine anointed," it is the voice of the Father, who saith, "I will bless her widow with blessings, and will satisfy her poor with bread. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice and sing." He who saith, "There will I raise up the horn of David," is God. He Himself saith, "I have ordained a lantern for Mine Anointed," because Christ is both ours and the Father's: He is our Christ, when He saveth us and ruleth us, as He is also our Lord: He is the Son of the Father, but both our Christ and the Father's. For if He were not the Father's Christ, it would not be said above, "For Thy servant David's sake, turn not Thou away the presence of Thine Anointed." "Upon Him shall My sanctification flourish." It flourisheth upon Christ. Let none of men assume this to himself, that he himself sanctifieth: otherwise it will not be true, "Upon Him shall My sanctification flourish." The glory of sanctification shall flourish. The sanctification of Christ therefore in Christ Himself, is the power of the sanctifica-

tion of God in Christ. In that he saith, "shall flourish," he refers to His glory: for when trees flourish, then are they beautiful. Sanctification therefore is in Baptism: thence it flourisheth, and is brightened. Why hath the world yielded to this beauty? Because it flourisheth in Christ; for, put it in man's power, and how doth it then flourish? since "all flesh in grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the grass."

PSALM 133

1. This is a short Psalm, but one well known and quoted. "Behold, how good and how pleasant is it, that brethren should dwell together in unity" (ver. 1). So sweet is that sound, that even they who know not the Psalter, sing that verse. ... 2. For these same words of the Psalter, this sweet sound, that honeyed melody, as well of the mind as of the hymn, did even beget the Monasteries. By this sound were stirred up the brethren who longed to dwell together. This verse was their trumpet. It sounded through the whole earth, and they who had been divided, were gathered together. The summons of God, the summons of the Holy Spirit, the summons of the Prophets, were not heard in Judah, yet were heard through the whole world. They were deaf to that sound, amid whom it was sung; they were found with their ears open, of whom it was said, "They shall see him, who were not told of him; they shall understand who heard not. Yet, most beloved, if we reflect, the very blessing hath sprung from that wall of circumcision. For have all the Jews perished? and whence were the Apostles, the sons of the Prophets, the sons of the exiles? He speaks as to them who know. Whence those five hundred, who saw the Lord after His resurrection, whom the Apostle Paul commemorates? Whence those hundred and twenty, who were together in one place after the resurrection of the Lord, and His ascension into heaven, on whom when gathered into one place the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost, sent down from heaven, sent, even as He was promised? All were from thence, and they first dwelt together in unity;

who sold all they had, and laid the price of their goods at the Apostles' feet, as is read in the Acts of the Apostles. And distribution was made to eachone as he had need, and none called anything his own, but they had all things common. And what is "together in unity"? They had, he says, one mind and one heart God-wards. So they were the first who heard, Behold how good and how pleasant is it, that brethren dwell together. They were the first to hear, but heard it not alone. ... 3. From the words of this Psalm

was taken the name of Monks, that no one may reproach you who are Catholics by reason of the name. When you with justice reproach heretics by reason of the Circelliones, that they may be saved by shame, they reproach you on the score of the Monks. ... 4. Moreover, beloved, there are they who are false Monks, and we know men of this kind; but the pious brotherhood is not annulled, because of them who profess to be what they are not. There are false Monks, as there are false men among the Clergy, and among the faithful. ... 5. Since the Psalm says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant is it, that brethren should dwell together in one," why then should we not call Monks so? for Monos is one. Not one in anymanner, for a man in a crowd is one, but though he can be called one along with others, he cannot be Monos, that is, alone, for Monos means "one alone." They then who thus live together as to make one man, so that they really possess what is written, "one mind and one heart," many bodies, but not many minds; many bodies, but not many hearts; can rightly be called Monos, that is, one alone. ...

6. Let the Psalm tell us what they are like. "As the ointment on the head, which descended to the beard, to Aaron's beard, which descended to the fringe of his garment" (ver. 2). What was Aaron? A priest. Who is a priest, except that one Priest, who entered into the Holy of Holies? Who is that priest, save Him, who was at once Victim and Priest? save Him who when he found nothing clean in the world to offer, offered Himself? The ointment is on his head, because Christ is one whole with the Church, but the ointment comes from the head. Our Head is Christ crucified and buried; He rose again, and ascended into heaven; and the Holy Spirit came from the head. Whither? To the beard. The beard signifies the courageous; the beard distinguishes the grown men, the earnest, the active, the vigorous. So that when we describe such, we say, he is a bearded man. Thus that ointment descended first upon the Apostles, descended upon those who bore the first assaults of the world, and therefore the Holy Spirit descended on them. For they who first began to dwell together in unity, suffered persecution. but because the ointment descended to the beard, they suffered, but were not conquered. ...

7. "As the dew of Hermon, which fell upon the hills of Sion" (ver. 3). He would have it understood, my brethren, that it is of God's grace that brethren dwell together in unity. ... 8. But ye should know what Hermon is. It is a mountain far distant from Jerusalem, that is, from Sion. And so it is strange that he says thus: As the dew of Hermon, which fell upon the moun-

tains of Sion, since mount Hermon is far distant from Jerusalem, for it is said to be over Jordan. Let us then seek out some interpretation of Hermon. The word is Hebrew, and we learn its meaning from them who know that language. Hermon is said to mean, a light set on a high place. For from Christ comes the dew. No light is set on a high place, save Christ. How is He set on high? First on the cross, afterwards in heaven. Set on high on the cross when He was humbled; humbled, but His humiliation could not but be high. The ministry of man grew less and less, as was signified in John; the ministry of God in our Lord Jesus Christ increased, as was shown at their birth. The former was born, as the tradition of the Church shows, on the 24th of June, when the days begin to shorten. The Lord was born on the 25th of December, when the days begin to lengthen. Here John himself confessing, "He must increase, but I must decrease. And the passion of each shows this. The Lord was exalted on the cross; John was diminished by beheading.

Thus the light set on high is Christ, whence is the dew of Hermon. ...But if he have the dew of Hermon, which fell on the hill of Sion, he is quiet, peaceable, humble, submissive, pouring forth prayer in place of murmuring. For murmurers are admirably described in a certain passage of the Scriptures, "The heart of a fool is as the wheel of a cart. What is the meaning of "the heart of a fool is as the wheel of a cart"? It carries hay, and creaks. The wheel of a cart cannot cease from creaking. Thus there are many brethren, who do not dwell together, save in the body. But who are they who dwell together? They of whom it is said, "And they had one mind and one heart towards God." 9. "Because there the Lord commanded blessing." Where did He command it? Among the brethren who dwell together. There He enjoined blessing, there they who dwell with one heart bless God. For thou blessest not God in division of heart. ...Art thou straitened on earth? Depart, have thy habitation in heaven. How shall I, a man clothed in flesh, enslaved to the flesh, thou wilt say, have my habitation in heaven. First go in heart, whither thou wouldest follow in the body. Do not hear, "Lift up your hearts," with a deaf ear. Keep thy heart lifted up, and no one will straiten thee in heaven.

PSALM 134

1. "Behold, now, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord" (ver. 1), "who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God" (ver. 2). Why has he added, "in the courts"? Courts mean the wider spaces of a house. He who stands in the courts is not straitened, is not confined, in some

fashion is enlarged. Remain in this enlargement, and thou canst love thy enemy, because thou lovest not things in which an enemy could straiten thee. How canst thou be understood to stand in the courts? Stand in charity, and thou standest in the courts. Breadth lies in charity, straitness in hatred. 2. "Lift up your hands by night in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord" (ver. 2). It is easy to bless by day. What is "by day"? In prosperity. For night is a sad thing, day a cheerful. When it is well with thee, thou dost bless the Lord. Thy son was sick, and he is made whole, thou dost bless the Lord. Thy son was sick, perchance thou hast sought an astrologer, a soothsayer, perchance a curse against the Lord has come, not from thy tongue, but from thy deeds, from thy deeds and thy life. Boast not, because thou blessest with thy tongue, if thou cursest with thy life. Wherefore bless ye the Lord. When? By night. When did Job bless? When it was a sad night. All was taken away which he possessed; the children for whom his goods were stored were taken away. How sad was his night! Let us however see whether he blesseth not in the night. "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; it is as the Lord willed; blessed be the name of the Lord." And black was the night. ...

3. "The Lord out of Zion bless thee, who made heaven and earth" (ver. 3). He exhorts many to bless, and Himself blesseth one, because He maketh one out of many, since "it is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in one." It is a plural number, brethren, and yet singular, to dwell together in one. Let none of you say, It cometh not to me. Knowest thou of whom he speaks, "the Lord bless thee out of Zion." He blessed one. Be one, and the blessing cometh to thee.

PSALM 135

1. Very pleasant ought it be to us, and we should rejoice because it is pleasant, to which this Psalm exhorteth us. For it says, "Praise the name of the Lord" (ver. 1). And it forthwith appends the reason, why it is just to praise the name of the Lord. "Praise the Lord, ye servants." What more just? what more worthy? what more thankful? ...For if He teaches His own servants who have deserved well of Him, the preachers of His Word, the rulers of His Church, the worshippers of His name, the obeyers of His command, that in their own conscience they should possess the sweetness of their life, lest they be corrupted by the praise or disheartened by the reproach of men; how much the more is He above all, the unchangeable One, who teacheth these things, neither the greater if thou praisest, or the less if thou reproachest. ...For ye

will do nothing out of place, by praising your Lord, as servants. And if ye were to be for ever only servants, ye ought to praise the Lord; how much more ought ye servants to praise the Lord, that ye may hereafter gain the privilege of sons?

2. ...Therefore, "Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, praise the Lord" (ver. 2). Be thankful; ye were without, and ye stand within. Since then ye stand, is it a small thing for you to think where He should be praised, who raised you when you were cast down, and caused you to stand in His house, to know Him, and to praise Him? Is it a small boon, that we stand in the house of the Lord? ...If one thinks of this, and is not unthankful, he will utterly despise himself in comparison with the love of his Lord, who hath done so great things for him. And since he hath nothing wherewith to repay God for so great benefits, what remains for him but to give Him thanks, not to repay Him? It belongs to the very act of thanksgiving, to "receive the cup of the Lord, and to call upon His name." For what can the servant repay the Lord for all that He hath given him?

3. What reason shall I give why you should praise Him? "Because the Lord is good" (ver. 3). Briefly in one word is here explained the praise of the Lord our God. "The Lord is good;" good, not in the same manner as the things which He here made are good. For God made all things very good; not only good, but also very good. He made the sky and earth, and all things which are in them good, and He made them very good. If He made all these things good, of what sort is He who made them? ... 4. How far can we speak of His goodness? Who can conceive in his heart, or apprehend how good the Lord is? Let us however return to ourselves, and in us recognise Him, and praise the Maker in His works, because we are not fit to contemplate Him Himself. And in hope that we may be able to contemplate Him, when our heart hath been purified by faith, that hereafter it may rejoice in the Truth; now as He cannot be seen by us, let us look at His works, that we may not live without praising Him. So I have said, "Praise the Lord, for He is good; sing praises unto His Name, for He is sweet. ...He is Mediator, and thereupon is sweet. What is sweeter than angels' food? How can God not be sweet, since man ate angels' food? For men and angels live not on different meat. That is truth, that is wisdom, that is the goodness of God, but thou canst not enjoy it in like wise with the angels. ...That man might eat angels' food, the Creator of the angels was made man. If ye taste, sing praises; if ye have tasted how sweet

the Lord is, sing praises; if that which ye have tasted has a good savour, praise it; who is so unthankful to cook or purveyor, as not to return thanks by praising what he tastes, if he be pleased by any food. If we are not silent on such occasions, shall we be silent concerning Him, who has given us all things? ...

5. "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob to Himself, Israel for His own possession" (ver. 4). ...Let not Jacob therefore extol himself, let him not boast himself, or ascribe it to his own merits. He was known before, predestinated before, elected before, not elected for his own merits, but found out, and gifted with life by the grace of God. So with all the Gentiles; for how did the wild-olive deserve, that it should be grafted in, from the bitterness of its berries, the barrenness of its wildness? It was the wood of the wilderness, not of the Lord's field, and yet He of His mercy grafted the wild-olive into the (true) olive. But up to this time the wild-olive was not grafted in. 6. ... "Because," says he, "I know that the Lord is great, and our God is above all gods" (ver. 5). If we should say to him, we ask thee, explain to us His greatness; would he not perchance answer us, He whom I see is not so very great, if He be able to be expounded by me. Let him then return to His works, and tell us. Let him hold in his conscience the greatness of God, which he has seen, which he has committed to our faith, whither he could not lead our eyes, and enumerate some of the things which the Lord hath done here; that unto us, who cannot see His greatness as he can, He may become sweet through the works of His which we can comprehend. ...

7. "All whatsoever the Lord willed, He made in the heaven, and in the earth, in the sea, and in all its deep places" (ver. 6). Who can comprehend these things? Who can enumerate the works of the Lord in the heaven and earth, in the sea, and in all deep places? Yet if we cannot comprehend them all, we should believe and hold them without question, because whatever creature is in heaven, whatever is in earth, whatever is in the sea and in all deep places, has been made by the Lord. ... 8. "Raising the clouds from the ends of the earth" (ver. 7). We see these works of God in His creation. For the clouds come from the ends of the earth to the midst thereof, and rain; thou scannest not whence they arise. Hence the prophet signifies this, from "the ends of the earth," whether it be from the bottom, or from the circumference of the ends of the earth, whencesoever He wills He raises the clouds. only from the earth. "He hath made lightnings into rain." For lightnings

without rain would frighten thee, and bestow nothing on thee. "He maketh lightnings unto rain." It lightens, and thou tremblest; it rains, thou rejoicest. "He hath made lightnings unto rain." He who terrified thee, Himself causeth that thou shouldest rejoice. "Who bringeth the winds out of His treasures," their causes are hidden, thou knowest not whence they come. When the wind blows, thou feelest it; why it blows, or from what treasure of His wisdom it is brought forth, thou knowest not; yet thou owest to God the worship of faith, for it would not blow unless He had bidden who made it, unless He had brought it forth who created it.

9. We see therefore these things in that work of His; we praise, we marvel at, we bless God; let us see what He has done among men for His people. "Who smote the first-born of Egypt" (ver. 8). But withal those divine doings are told which thou mightest love, those are not told which thou mightest fear. Attend, and see that also when He is angry, He doeth what He willeth. "From man even unto beast. He sent signs and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt!" (ver. 9). Ye know, ye have read what the hand of the Lord did by Moses in Egypt, to crush and cast down the proud Egyptians, "on Pharaoh and on all his servants." Little did He in Egypt: what did He after His people was led out thence? "Who smote many nations" (ver. 10), who possessed that land, which God willed to give His people. "And slew mighty kings, Sehon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan" (ver. 11). All these things which the Psalm records simply, do we read likewise in others of the Lord's books, and there the hand of the Lord is great. When thou seest what has been done to the wicked, take heed lest it be done to thee. ...But when the good man sees what the wicked has suffered, let him cleanse himself from all iniquity, lest he fall into a like punishment, a like chastisement. Then ye have thoroughly understood these things. What did God then? He drove out the wicked, "And he gave their land for an inheritance, even an inheritance to Israel His servant" (ver. 12).

10. Then follows the loud cry of His praise. "Thy Name, O Lord, is for ever and ever" (ver. 13), after all these things which Thou hast done. For what do I see that Thou hast done? I behold Thy creation which Thou hast made in heaven, I behold this lower part, where we dwell, and here I see Thy gifts of clouds, and winds, and rain. I regard Thy people; Thou leddest them from the house of bondage, and didst signs and wonders upon their enemies. Thou punishedst those who caused them trouble, Thou dravest the wicked from

their land, Thou killedst their kings, Thou gavest their land to Thy people: I have seen all these things, and filled with joy have said, "Lord, Thy Name is for ever and ever." ... 11. All these things then did God overthrow, in the body at that time, when our fathers were led out of the land of Egypt, in the spirit now. Nor does His Hand cease until the end. Therefore deem not that these mighty deeds of God were then finished and have ceased. "Thy Name, O Lord," he says, "is for ever." That is, Thy loving-kindness ceaseth not, Thy hand ceaseth not for ever from doing these things, which then Thou didst afore declare in a figure. "But they are written for our admonition, on whom the end of the ages is come." One generation and another generation; the generation by which we are made the faithful, and are born again by baptism; the generation by which we shall rise again from the dead, and shall live with the Angels for ever. Thy Memorial, O Lord, is above this generation, and above that; for neither doth He now forget to call us, nor then will He forget to crown us.

12. "The Lord hath judged His people, and will be called upon among His servants" (ver. 14). Already hath He judged the people. Save the final judgment, the people of the Jews is judged. What is "judged"? The just are taken away, the unjust are left. But if I lie, or am thought to lie, because I have said, it is already judged, hear the Lord saying, "I have come for judgment into this world, that they who see not may see, and they who see may be made blind. The proud are made blind, the lowly are enlightened. Therefore, "He hath judged His people. Isaiah spake the judgment. "And now, thou house of Jacob, come ye, let us walk in the light of the Lord. This is a small matter; but what follows? "For He hath put away His people, the house of Israel. The house of Jacob is the house of Israel; for he who is Jacob, the same is Israel. ...Therefore God had judged His people, by separating the evil and the good; that is to say, "He shall be called upon among His servants. By whom? By the Gentiles. For how vast are the nations who have come in by faith. How many farms and desert places now come in to us? They come thence no one can tell how numerously; they would believe. We say to them, What will ye? They answer, To know the glory of God. Believe, my brethren, that we wonder and rejoice at such a claim of these rustic people.

They come I know not whither, roused up by I know not whom. How shall I say, I know not by whom? I know indeed by whom, because He says, "No one cometh to Me, save whom the Father draweth. They come suddenly

from the woods, the desert, the most distant and lofty mountains, to the Church; and many of them, nay, near all hold this language, so that we see of a truth that God teacheth them within. The prophecy of Scripture is fulfilled, when it says, "And they shall all be taught of God. We say to them, What do ye long for? And they answer, To see the glory of God. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. They believe, they are sanctified, they will to have clergy ordained for them. Is it not fulfilled, "and He will be called upon among His servants"?

13. Lastly, after all that arrangement and dispensation, the Spirit of God turns itself to reproaching and ridiculing those idols, which are now ridiculed by their very worshippers. "The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold" (ver. 15). As God made all these things, who made whatever He would in heaven and earth, what can anything that man maketh be, but an object of ridicule, not adoration? Was He perchance about to speak of "the idols of the Gentiles," that we might despise them all? was He about to speak of the idols of the heathen, stones and wood, plaster and pottery? I say not these, they are mean materials. I speak of that which they specially love, that which they specially honour. "The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold, the work of men's hands." Surely it is gold, surely it is silver: because silver glitters, and gold glitters, have they therefore eyes, or do they see? ...But as these things are senseless, why make ye men of silver and gold to be gods? See ye not that the gods which ye make see not? "They have a mouth, and will not speak; they have eyes, and will not see" (ver. 16); "they have ears, and will not hear; neither is there any breath in their mouth" (ver. 17); "they have nostrils, and will not smell; they have hands, and will not work; they have feet, and will not walk." All these things could the carpenter, the silversmith, the goldsmith make, both eyes, and ears, and nostrils, and mouth, and hands, and feet, but he could give neither sight to the eyes, nor hearing to the ears, nor speech to the mouth, nor smell to the nostrils, nor motion to the hands, or going to the feet.

14. And man, thou laughest doubtless at what thou hast made, if thou knowest by whom thou art made. But of them who know not, what is said? "All they who make them, and all they who trust in them, are like them" (ver. 18). And ye believe, brethren, that there is a likeness to these idols expressed not in their flesh, but in their inner man. For "they have ears, and hear not." God calls to them indeed, "He who hath ears to hear, let him

hear." They have eyes, and see not, for they have the eyes of the body, and not the eyes of faith. Lastly, this prophecy is fulfilled among all the nations. ...Is it not fulfilled? Is it not seen, as it is written? And they who remain have eyes, and see not; have nostrils, and smell not. They perceive not that savour. "We are a good savour of Christ," as the apostle says everywhere. What profiteth it, that they have nostrils, and smell not that so sweet savour of Christ? Truly it is done in them, and truly it is said of them, "All they who make them," etc.

15. But daily do men believe through the miracles of Christ our Lord; daily the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf are opened, the nostrils of the senseless are breathed into, the tongues of the dumb are loosed, the hands of the palsied are strengthened, the feet of the lame are guided; sons of Abraham are raised up of these stones, to all of whom be it said, "Bless the Lord, ye house of Israel" (ver. 19). All are sons of Abraham; and if sons of Abraham are raised up from these stones, it is plain that they are rather the house of Israel who belong to the house of Israel, the seed of Abraham, not by the flesh, but by faith. But even granting that it is said of that house, and the people of Israel is meant, from thence did the Apostles and thousands of the circumcised believe? "Bless the Lord, ye house of Aaron. Bless the Lord, ye house of Levi" (ver. 20). Bless the Lord, ye nations, this is, the "house of Israel" generally; bless Him, ye leaders, this is, the "house of Aaron;" bless Him, ye servants, this is, the "house of Levi." What of the other nations? "Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord."

16. Let us also with one voice say what follows: "Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, who dwelleth in Jerusalem" (ver. 21). Out of Zion is Jerusalem too. Zion is "watching," Jerusalem the "vision of peace." In what Jerusalem will He dwell now? In that which has fallen? Nay, but in that which is our mother, which is in the heavens, of which it is said, "The desolate hath more children than she which hath a husband." For now the Lord is from Zion, because we watch when He will come; now as long as we live in hope, we are in Zion. When our way is ended, we shall dwell in that city which will never fall, because the Lord dwelleth in her, and keepeth her, which is the vision of peace, the eternal Jerusalem; for the praise of which, my brethren, language sufficeth not; where we shall find no enemy, either within the Church or without the Church, neither in our flesh, nor in our thoughts. For "death

shall be swallowed up in victory," and we shall be free to see God in eternal peace, being made citizens of Jerusalem, the city of God.

PSALM 136

1. "Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever" (ver. 1). This Psalm contains the praise of God, and all its verses finish in the same way. Wherefore although many things are related here in praise of God, yet His mercy is most commended; for without this plain commendation, he, whom the Holy Spirit used to utter this Psalm, would have no verse be ended. Although after the judgment, by which at the end of the world the quick and the dead must be judged, the just being sent into life eternal, the unjust into everlasting fire, there will not afterwards be those, whom God will have mercy on, yet rightly may His future mercy be understood to be for ever, which He bestows on His saints and faithful ones, not because they will be miserable for ever, and therefore will need His mercy for ever, but because that very blessedness, which He mercifully bestows on the miserable, that they cease to be miserable, and begin to be happy, will have no end, and therefore "His mercy is for ever." For that we shall be just from being unjust, whole from being unsound, alive from being dead, immortal from being mortal, happy from being wretched, is of His mercy. But this that we shall be, will be for ever, and therefore "His mercy is for ever." Wherefore, "give thanks to the Lord;" that is, praise the Lord by giving thanks, "for He is good:" nor is it any temporal good you will gain from this confession, for, "His mercy endureth for ever;" that is, the benefit which He bestows mercifully upon you, is for ever.

2. Then follows, "Give thanks to the God of gods, for His mercy endureth for ever" (ver. 2). "Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for His mercy endureth for ever" (ver. 3). We may well enquire, Who are these gods and lords, of whom He who is the true God is God and Lord? And we find written in another Psalm, that even men are called gods. The Lord even takes note of this testimony in the Gospel, saying, "Is it not written in your Law, I have said, Ye are gods?" ...It is not therefore because they are all good, but because "the word of God came to them," that they were called gods. For were it because they are all good, He would not thus distinguish between them. He saith, "He judgeth between the gods." Then follows, "How long do ye judge iniquity!" and the rest, which He says certainly not to all, but to some, be-

cause He saith it in distinguishing, and yet He distinguisheth between the gods.

3. But it is asked, If men are called gods to whom the word of the Lord came, are the Angels to be called gods, when the greatest reward which is promised to just and holy men is the being equal to Angels? In the Scriptures I know not whether it can, at least easily, be found, that the Angels are openly called gods; but when it had been said of the Lord God, "He is terrible, above all gods," he adds, as by way of exposition Thy he says this, "for the gods of the heathen are devils," that we might understand what had been expressed in the Hebrew, "the gods of the Gentiles are idols," meaning rather the devils which dwell in the idols. For as regards images, which in Greek are called idols, a name we now use in Latin, they have eyes and see not, and all the other things which are said of them, because they are utterly without sense; wherefore they cannot be frightened, for nothing which has no sense can be frightened. How then can it be said of the Lord, "He is terrible above all gods, because the gods of the Gentiles are idols," if the devils which may be terrified are not understood to be in these images. Whence also the Apostle says, "We know that an idol is nothing. This refers to its earthy senseless material.

But that no one may think, that there is no living and sentient nature, which delights in the Gentile sacrifices, he adds, "But what the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: I would not have you partaken with devils. If therefore we never find in the divine words that the holy Angels are called gods, I think the best reason is, that men may not be induced by the name to pay that ministry and service of religion (which in Greek is called *leitourgia* or *latria*) to the holy Angels, which neither would they have paid by man at all, save to that God, who is the God of themselves and men. Hence they are much more correctly called Angels, which in Latin is *Nuntii*, that by the name of their function, not their substance, we may plainly understand that they would have us worship the God, whom they announce. The whole then of that question the Apostle has briefly expounded, when he says, "For though there be who are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there are gods many and lords many; yet we have one God the Father, from whom are all, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him."

4. Let us therefore "give thanks to the God of gods, and the Lord of lords, for His mercy," etc. "Who alone did wonderful things" (ver. 4). As at the last part of every verse, it is written, "For His mercy endureth for ever," so we must understand at the beginning of each, though it be not written, "Give thanks. Which indeed in the Greek is very plain. It would be so in Latin, if our translators had been able to make use of that expression. Which indeed they could have done in this verse, if they had said, "To Him who doeth wonderful things. For where we have, "who did wonderful things," the Greek has *tp poiḥqanti*, where we must necessarily understand, "give thanks. And I would they had added the pronoun, and said to Him, "who did," or to Him "who doeth," or to Him "who made sure; because then one might easily understand, "let us give thanks. For now it is so obscurely rendered, that he who either knows not or cares not to examine a Greek manuscript may think, "who made the heavens, who made sure the earth, who made the luminaries, for His mercy endureth for ever," has been so said, because He did these things for this reason, "because His mercy endureth for ever: whereas they, whom He has freed from misery, belong to His Mercy: but not that we should believe that He makes sky, earth, and luminaries, of His Mercy; since they are marks of His Goodness, who created all things very good.

For He created all things, that they might have their being; but it is the work of His Mercy, to cleanse us from our sins, and deliver us from everlasting misery. And so the Psalm thus addresses us, "Give thanks unto the God of gods, give thanks unto the Lord of lords. Give thanks to Him, "who alone doeth great wonders; give thanks to Him, "who by His wisdom made the heavens; give thanks to Him, "who stretched out the earth above the waters; give thanks to Him, "who alone made great lights. But why we are to praise, he setteth down at the end of all the verses, "for His mercy endureth for ever." 5. But what meaneth, "who alone doeth great wonders"? Is it because many wonderful things He hath done by means of angels and men? Some wonderful things there are which God doeth alone, and these he enumerates, saying, "who by His wisdom made the heavens" (ver. 5), "who stretched out the earth above the waters" (ver. 6), "who alone made great lights" (ver. 7). For this reason did he add "alone" in this verse also, because the other wonders which he is about to tell of, God did by means of man. For having said, "who alone made great lights," he goes on to explain what these are, "the sun to rule the day" (ver. 8), "the moon and stars to govern the

night" (ver. 9); then he begins to tell the wonders which He did by means of angels and men: "who smote Egypt with their first-born" (ver. 10), and the rest. The whole creation then God manifestly made, not by means of any creature, but "alone;" and of this creation he hath mentioned certain more eminent parts, that they might make us think on the whole; the heavens we can understand, and the earth we see. And as there are visible heavens too, by mentioning the lights in them, he has bid us look on the whole body of the heavens as made by Him.

6. However, whether by what he saith, "who made the heavens in understanding," or, as others have rendered it, "in intelligence," he meant to signify, the heavens we can understand, or that He in His understanding or intelligence, that is, in His wisdom made the heavens (as it is elsewhere written, "in wisdom hast Thou made them all"), implying thereby the only-begotten Word, may be a question. But if it be so, that we are to understand that "God by His wisdom made the heavens," why saith He this only of the heavens, whereas God made all things by the same wisdom? It is that it needed only to be expressed there, so that in the rest it might be understood without being written. How then could it be "alone," if "in understanding" or "in intelligence" means "by His wisdom," that is, by the only-begotten Word? Is it that, inasmuch as the Trinity is not three Gods, but one God, he states that God made these things alone, because He made not creation by means of any creature?

7. But what is, "who laid out the earth above the waters"? For it is a difficult question, because the earth seemeth to be the heavier, so that it should be believed not so much to be borne on the waters, as to bear the waters. And that we may not seem contentiously to maintain our Scriptures against those who think that they have discovered these matters on sure principles, we have a second interpretation to give, that the earth which is inhabited by men, and contains the living creatures of the earth, is "laid out above the waters" because it stands out above the waters which surround it. For when we speak of a city on the sea being built "above the waters," it is not meant that the sea is under it in the same way as the waters are under the chambers of caverns, or under ships sailing over them; but it is said to be "above" the sea, because it stands up above the sea below it.

8. But if these words further signify something else which more closely concerns us, God "by His wisdom made the heavens," that is, His saints, spir-

itual men, to whom He has given not only to believe, but also to understand things divine; those who cannot yet attain to this, and only hold their faith firmly, as being beneath the heavens, are figured by the name of earth. And because they abide with unshaken belief upon the baptism they have received, therefore it is said, "He laid out the earth above the waters. Further, since it is written of our Lord Jesus Christ, that "in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," and that these two, wisdom and knowledge, differ somewhat from one another is testified by other utterances of Scripture, especially in the words of holy Job, where both are in a manner defined; not unsuitably then do we understand wisdom to consist in the knowledge and love of That which ever is and abideth unchangeable, which is God. For where he saith, "piety is wisdom," in Greek is *qeosebeia*, and to express the whole of this in Latin, we may call it worship of God. But to depart from evil, which he calls knowledge, what else is it but to walk cautiously and heedfully "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation," in the night, as it were, of this world, that each one by keeping himself from iniquity may avoid being confounded with the darkness, distinguished by the light of his proper gift. ...9.

"Who brought out Israel from the midst of them" (ver. 11). He brought out also His saints and faithful ones from the midst of the wicked. "With a mighty Hand and stretched-out Arm" (ver. 12). What more powerful, what more out-stretched, than that of which is said "To whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed? "Who divided the Red Sea in two parts" (ver. 13). He divided also in such wise, that the same baptism should be to some unto life, to others unto death. "And brought out Israel through the midst of it" (ver. 14). So too He brings out His renewed people through the layer of regeneration. "And overthrew Pharaoh and his power in the Red Sea" (ver. 15). He quickly destroyeth both the sin of His people and the guilt thereof by baptism. "Who led His people through the wilderness" (ver. 16). Us too He leadeth through the drought and barrenness of this world, that we perish not therein. "Who smote great kings" (ver. 17), "and slew famous kings" (ver. 18). From us too He smites and slays the deadly powers of the devil. "Sehon king of the Amorites" (ver. 19), an "useless shoot," or "fiery temptation," for so is Sehon interpreted: the king of "them who cause bitterness," for such is the meaning of Amorites. "And Og, the king of Basan" (ver. 20). The "heaper-together," such

is the meaning of Og, and, king of "confusion," which Basan signifies. For what else doth the devil heap together but confusion?

"And gave away their land for an heritage" (ver. 21), "even an heritage unto Israel His servant" (ver. 22). For He giveth them, whom once the devil owned, for an heritage to the seed of Abraham, that is, Christ. "Who remembered us in our low estate" (ver. 23), "and redeemed us from our enemies" (ver. 24) by the Blood of His only-begotten Son. "Who giveth food to all flesh" (ver. 25), that is, to the whole race of mankind, not Israelites only, but Gentiles too; and of this Food is said, "My Flesh is meat indeed. "Give thanks unto the God of Heaven" (ver. 26). "Give thanks unto the Lord of lords" (ver. 27). For what he here says, "the God of Heaven," I suppose that he meant to express in other words what He had before said, "the God of gods. For what there he subjoined, he has here also repeated. "Give thanks unto the Lord of lords. "But to us there is but one God," etc., "and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him; to whom we confess that "His mercy endureth for ever."

PSALM 137

1. ...But to-day we have sung, "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Sion" (ver. 1). ... 2. Observe "the waters of Babylon." "The waters of Babylon" are all things which here are loved, and pass away. One man, for example, loveth to practise husbandry, to grow rich thereby, to employ his mind therein, thence to gain pleasure: let him observe the issue, and see that what he hath loved is not a foundation of Jerusalem, but a stream of Babylon. Another saith, It is a grand thing to be a soldier: all husbandmen fear those who are soldiers. ... 3. But then other citizens of the holy Jerusalem, understanding their captivity, mark how the natural wishes and the various lusts of men hurry and drag them hither and thither, and drive them into the sea; they see this, and they throw not themselves into the waters of Babylon, but "sit down and weep," either for those who are being carried away by them, or themselves whose deserts have placed them in Babylon, but sitting, that is, humbling themselves. O holy Sion, where all stands firm and nothing flows! Who hath thrown us headlong into this? Why have we left thy Founder and thy society? Behold, placed where all things are flowing and gliding away, scarce one, if he can grasp the tree, shall be snatched from the stream and escape. Humbling ourselves then in our captivity, let us "sit by the waters of Babylon," let us not dare to plunge

ourselves in those streams, nor to be proud and lifted up in the evil and sadness of our captivity, but let us sit, and so weep. Let us sit "by" the waters, not beneath the waters, of Babylon; such be our humility, that it overwhelm us not. Sit "by" the waters, not "in" the waters, not "under" the waters; but yet sit, in humble fashion, talk not as thou wouldest in Jerusalem. ...

4. For many weep with the weeping of Babylon, because they rejoice also with the joy of Babylon. When men rejoice at gains and weep at losses, both are of Babylon. Thou oughtest to weep, but in the remembrance of Sion. If thou weepest in the remembrance of Sion, thou oughtest to weep even when it is well with thee in Babylon. ... 5. "On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments of music" (ver. 2). The citizens of Jerusalem have their "instruments of music," God's Scriptures, God's commands, God's promises, meditation on the life to come; but while they are dwelling "in Babylon," they "hang up their instruments." Willows are unfruitful trees, and here so placed, that no good whatever can be understood of them: elsewhere perhaps there may. Here understand barren trees, growing by the waters of Babylon. These trees are watered by the waters of Babylon, and bring forth no fruit; just as there are men greedy, covetous, barren in good works, citizens of Babylon in such wise, that they are even trees of that region; they are fed there by these pleasures of transitory things, as though watered by "the waters of Babylon." Thou seekest fruit of them, and nowhere findest it. ... Therefore by deferring to apply the Scriptures to them, "we hang up our instruments of music upon the willows." For we hold them not worthy to carry our instruments. We do not therefore insert our instruments into them and bind them to them, but defer to use them, and so hang them up. For the willows are the unfruitful trees of Babylon, fed by temporal pleasures, as by the "waters of Babylon."

6. "For there they that led us captive demanded of us words of songs, and they that led us away, an hymn" (ver. 3). They demanded of us words of songs and an hymn, who led us captive. ... We are tempted by the delights of earthly things, and we struggle daily with the suggestions of unlawful pleasures; scarce do we breathe freely even in prayer: we understand that we are captives. But who led us captive? what men? what race? what king? If we are redeemed, we once were captives. Who hath redeemed us? Christ. From whom hath He redeemed us? From the devil. The devil then and his angels led us captive: and they would not lead us, unless we consented. ... 7. "Those" then "who

have led us captive," the devil and his angels, when have they spoken unto us: "Sing us one of the songs of Sion"? What answer we? Babylon beareth thee, Babylon containeth thee, Babylon nourisheth thee, Babylon speaks by thy mouth, thou knowest not to take in save what glitters for the present, thou knowest not how to meditate on things of eternity, thou takest not in what thou askest. "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (ver. 4). Truly, brethren, so it is. Begin to wish to preach the truth in such measure as ye know it, and see how needful it is for you to endure such mockers, persecutors of the truth, full of falsehood. Reply to them, when they ask of you what they cannot take in, and say in full confidence of your holy song, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land!"

8. But take heed how thou dwellest among them, O people of God, O body of Christ, O high-born band of wanderers (for thy home is not here, but elsewhere), lest when thou lovest them, strivest for their friendship, and fearest to displease such men, Babylon begin to delight thee and thou forget Jerusalem. In fear then of this, see what the Psalmist subjoins, see what follows. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem" (ver. 5), amid the speeches of those who hold me captive, amid the speeches of treacherous men, amid the speeches of men who ask with ill intent, asking, yet unwilling to learn. ...What then? "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget me." 9. "Let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I remember not thee" (ver. 6). That is, let me be dumb, he saith, if I remember not thee. For what word, what sound doth he utter, who uttereth not songs of Sion? That is our tongue, the song of Jerusalem. The song of the love of this world is a strange tongue, a barbarous tongue, which we have learnt in our captivity. Dumb then will he be to God, who forgetteth Jerusalem. And it is not enough to remember: for her enemies too remember her, desiring to overthrow her. "What is that city?" say they; "who are the Christians? what sort of men are the Christians? would they were not Christians." Now the captive band hath conquered its capturers; still they murmur, and rage, and desire to slay the holy city that dwells as a stranger among them. Not enough then is it to remember: take heed how thou rememberest. For some things we remember in hate, some in love. And so, when he had said, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem," etc., he added at once, "if I prefer not Jerusalem in the height of my joy." For there is the height of joy where we enjoy God, where we are safe of united brotherhood, and the union of citizenship. There no tempter shall assail us, no one be able so much as

to urge us on to any allurements: there nought will delight us but good: there all want will die, there perfect bliss will dawn on us.

10. Then he turneth to God in prayer against the enemies of that city. "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom" (ver. 7). Edom is the same who is also called Esau: for ye heard just now the words of the Apostle read, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." ...Esau then signifieth all the carnal, Jacob all the spiritual. ...All carnal persons are enemies to spiritual persons, for all such, desiring present things, persecute those whom they see to long for things eternal. Against these the Psalmist, looking back to Jerusalem, and beseeching God that he may be delivered from captivity, saith-what? "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom." Deliver us from carnal men, from those who imitate Esau, who are elder brethren, yet enemies. They were first-born, but the last-born have won the pre-eminence, for the lust of the flesh hath cast down the former, the contempt of lust hath lifted up the latter. The other live, and envy, and persecute. "In the day of Jerusalem." The day of Jerusalem, wherein it was tried, wherein it was held captive, or the day of Jerusalem's happiness, wherein it is freed, wherein it reaches its goal, wherein it is made partaker of eternity? "Remember," saith he, "O Lord," forget not those "who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof." Remember then, it means, that day wherein they willed to overthrow Jerusalem. For how great persecutions hath the Church suffered! How did the children of Edom, that is, carnal men, servants of the devil and his angels, who worshipped stocks and stones, and followed the lusts of the flesh, how did they say, "Extirpate the Christians, destroy the Christians, let not one remain, overthrow them even to the foundation!" Have not these things been said? And when they were said, the persecutors were rejected, the martyrs crowned. ...

11. Then he turneth himself to her, "O daughter of Babylon, unhappy;" unhappy in thy very exulting, thy presumption, thine enmity; "unhappy daughter of Babylon!" (ver. 8). The city is called both Babylon, and daughter of Babylon: just as they speak of "Jerusalem" and "the daughter of Jerusalem," "Sion" and "the daughter of Sion," "the Church" and "the daughter of the Church." As it succeedeth the other, it is called "daughter;" as it is preferred before the other, it is called "mother." There was a former Babylon; did the people remain in it? Because it succeedeth to Babylon, it is called daughter of Babylon. O daughter of Babylon, "unhappy" thou! ... 12. "Happy shall he be

that repayeth thee, as thou hast served us." What repayment meaneth he? Herewith the Psalm closeth, "Happy, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the rock" (ver. 9). Her he calleth unhappy, but him happy who payeth her as she hath served us. Do we ask, what reward? This is the repayment. For what hath that Babylon done to us? We have already sung in another Psalm, "The words of the wicked have prevailed against us." For when we were born, the confusion of this world found us, and choked us while yet infants with the empty notions of divers errors. The infant that is born destined to be a citizen of Jerusalem, and in God's predestination already a citizen, but meanwhile a prisoner for a time, when learneth he to love ought, save what his parents have whispered into his ears? They teach him and train him in avarice, robbery, daily lying, the worship of divers idols and devils, the unlawful remedies of enchantments and amulets. What shall one yet an infant do, a tender soul, observing what its elders do, save follow that which it seeth them doing. Babylon then has persecuted us when little, but God hath given us when grown up knowledge of ourselves, that we should not follow the errors of our parents. ...How shall they repay her? As she hath served us. Let her little ones be choked in turn: yea let her little ones in turn be dashed, and die. What are the little ones of Babylon? Evil desires at their birth. For there are, who have to fight with inveterate lusts. When lust is born, before evil habit giveth it strength against thee, when lust is little, by no means let it gain the strength of evil habit; when it is little, dash it. But thou fearest, lest though dashed it die not; "Dash it against the Rock; and that Rock is Christ."

13. Brethren, let not your instruments of music rest in your work: sing one to another songs of Sion. Readily have ye heard; the more readily do what ye have heard, if ye wish not to be willows of Babylon fed by its streams, and bringing no fruit. But sigh for the everlasting Jerusalem: whither your hope goeth before, let your life follow; there we shall be with Christ. Christ now is our Head; now He ruleth us from above; in that city He will fold us to Himself; we shall be equal to the Angels of God. We should not dare to imagine this of ourselves, did not the Truth promise it. This then desire, brethren, this day and night think on. Howsoever the world shine happily on you, presume not, parley not willingly with your lusts. Is it a grown-up enemy? let it be slain upon the Rock. Is it a little enemy? let it be dashed against the Rock. Slay the grown-up ones on the Rock, and dash the little

ones against the Rock. Let the Rock conquer. Be built upon the Rock, if ye desire not to be swept away either by the stream, or the winds, or the rain. If ye wish to be armed against temptations in this world, let longing for the everlasting Jerusalem grow and be strengthened in your hearts. Your captivity will pass away, your happiness will come; the last enemy shall be destroyed, and we shall triumph with our King, without death.

PSALM 138

1. The title of this Psalm is brief and simple, and need not detain us; since we know whose resemblance David wore, and since in him we recognise ourselves also, for we too are members of that Body. The whole title is, "To David himself. Let us see then, what is to David himself. The title of the Psalm is wont to tell us what is treated of within it: but in this, since the title informs us not of this, but tells us only to Whom it is chanted, the first verse tells us what is treated of in the whole Psalm, "I will confess to Thee. This confession then let us hear. But first I remind you, that the term confession in Scripture, when we speak of confession to God, is used in two senses, of sin, and of praise. But confession of sin all know, confession of praise few attend to. So well known is confession of sin, that, wherever in Scripture we hear the words, "I will confess to Thee, O Lord," or, "we will confess to Thee," forthwith, through habitually understanding in this way, our hands hurry to beating our breast: so entirely are men wont not to understand confession to be of aught, save of sin. But was then our Lord Jesus Christ Himself too a sinner, who saith in the Gospel, "I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth"?

He goeth on to say what He confesseth, that we might understand His confession to be of praise, not of sin, "I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. He praised the Father, he praised God, because He despiseth not the humble, but the proud. And such confession are we now going to hear, of praise of God, of thanksgiving. "With my whole heart. My whole heart I lay upon the altar of Thy praise, an whole burnt-offering of praise I offer to Thee. ..."I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: for Thou hast heard the words of my mouth" (ver. 1). What mouth, save my heart? For there have we the voice which God heareth, which ear of man knoweth not at all. We have then a mouth within, there do we ask, thence do we ask, and if we have prepared a

lodging or an house for God, there do we speak, there are we heard. "For He is not far from every one of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. Nought maketh thee far off from God, save sin only. Cast down the middle wall of sin, and thou art with Him whom thou askest.

2. "And before the Angels will I sing unto Thee." Not before men will I sing, but before the Angels. My song is my joy; but my joy in things below is before men, my joy in things above before the Angels. For the wicked knoweth not the joy of the just: "There is no joy. saith my God, to the wicked." The wicked rejoiceth in his tavern, the martyr in his chain. In what did that holy Crispina rejoice, whose festival is kept to-day? She rejoiced when she was being seized, when she was being carried before the judge, when she was being put into prison, when she was being brought forth bound, when she was being lifted up on the scaffold, when she was being heard, when she was being condemned: in all these things she rejoiced; and the wretches thought her wretched, when she was rejoicing before the Angels.

3. "I will worship toward Thy holy Temple" (ver. 2). What holy Temple? That where we shall dwell, where we shall worship. For we hasten that we may adore. Our heart is pregnant and cometh to the birth, and seeketh where it may bring forth. What is the place where God is to be worshipped? ..."The Temple of God is holy," saith the Apostle, "which Temple ye are." But assuredly, as is manifest, God dwelleth in the Angels. Therefore when our joy, being in spiritual things, not in earthly, taketh up a song to God, to sing before the Angels, that very assembly of Angels is the Temple of God, we worship toward God's Temple. There is a Church below, there is a Church above also; the Church below, in all the faithful; the Church above, in all the Angels. But the God of Angels came down to the Church below, and Angels ministered to Him on earth, while He ministered to us; for, "I came not," saith He, "to be ministered unto, but to minister." ...The Lord of Angels died for man. Therefore, "I will worship toward Thy holy Temple;" I mean, not the temple made with hands, but that which Thou hast made for Thyself.

4. "And I will confess to Thy Name in Thy mercy and Thy truth." ...These also which Thou hast given to me, do I according to my power give to Thee in return: mercy, in siding others; truth, in judging. By these God aideth us, by these we win God's favour. Rightly, therefore, "All the ways of the Lord

are mercy and truth." No other ways are there whereby He can come to us, no other whereby we can come to Him. "For Thou hast magnified Thy holy Name over everything." What sort of thanksgiving is this, brethren? He hath magnified His holy Name over Abraham. Of Abraham was born Isaac; over that house God was magnified; then Jacob; God was magnified, who said, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then came his twelve sons. The name of the Lord was magnified over Israel. Then came the Virgin Mary. Then Christ our Lord, "dying for our sins, rising again for our justification," filling the faithful with His Holy Spirit, sending forth men to proclaim throughout the Gentiles, "Repent ye," etc. Behold, "He hath magnified His holy Name above all things."

5. "In what day soever I call upon Thee, do Thou quickly hear me" (ver. 3). Wherefore, "quickly"? Because Thou hast said, "While yet thou art speaking I will say, Lo, here I am." Wherefore, "quickly"? Because now I seek not earthly happiness, I have learnt holy longings from the New Testament. I seek not earth, nor earthly abundance, nor temporal health, nor the overthrow of my enemies, nor riches, nor rank: nought of these do I seek: therefore "quickly hear me." Since Thou hast taught me what to seek, grant what I seek. ... 6. Let us see then what he seeketh, with what right he hath said, "quickly hear me." For what seekest thou, that thou shouldest quickly be heard? "Thou shalt multiply me." In many ways may multiplication be understood. ... For men are multiplied in their soul with cares: a man seemeth to be multiplied in soul, in whom vices even are multiplied. That is the multiplication of want, not of fulness. What then dost thou desire, thou who hast said, "quickly hear me," and hast withdrawn thyself entirely from the body, from every earthly thing, from every earthly desire, so as to say to God, "Thou shalt multiply me in my soul"? Explain yet further what thou desirest. Thou shalt multiply me, saith he, in my soul "with virtue." ...

7. "Let all the kings of the earth confess to Thee, O Lord" (ver. 4). So shall it be, and so it is, and that daily; and it is shown that it was not said in vain, save that it was future. But neither let them, when they confess to Thee, when they praise Thee, desire earthly things of Thee. For what shall the kings of the earth desire? Have they not already sovereignty? Whatever more a man desire on earth, sovereignty is the highest point of his desire. What more can he desire? It must needs be some loftier eminence. But perhaps the loftier it is, the more dangerous. And therefore the more exalted kings are in

earthly eminence, the more ought they to humble themselves before God. What do they do? "Because they have heard all the words of Thy mouth." In a certain nation were hidden the Law and the Prophets, "all the words of Thy mouth:" in the Jewish nation alone were "all the words of Thy mouth," the nation which the Apostle praiseth, saying, "What advantage hath the Jew? Much every way; chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." These were the words of God. ...What meant Gideon's fleece? It is like the nation of the Jews in the midst of the world, which had the grace of sacraments, not indeed openly manifested, but hidden in a cloud, or in a veil, like the dew in the fleece. The time came when the dew was to be manifested in the floor; it was manifested, no longer hidden. Christ alone is the sweetness of dew: Him alone thou recognisest not in Scripture, for whom Scripture was written. But yet, "they have heard all the words of thy mouth."

8. "And let them sing in the paths of the Lord, that great is the glory of the Lord" (ver. 5). Let all the kings of the earth sing in the paths of the Lord. In what paths? Those that are spoken of above, "in Thy mercy and Thy truth." Let not then the kings of the earth be proud, let them be humble. Then let them sing in the ways of the Lord, if they be humble: let them love, and they shall sing. We know travellers that sing; they sing, and hasten to reach the end of their journey. There are evil songs, such as belong to the old man; to the new man belongeth a new song. Let then the kings of the earth too walk in Thy paths, let them walk and sing in Thy paths, Sing what? that "great is the glory of the Lord," not of kings.

9. See how he willed that kings should sing on their way, humbly bearing the Lord, not lifting themselves up against the Lord. For if they lift themselves up, what follows? "For the Lord is high, and hath respect unto the lowly" (ver. 6). Do kings then desire that He have respect unto them? Let them be humble. What then? if they lift themselves up to pride, can they escape His eyes? Lest perchance, because thou hast heard, "He hath respect unto the lowly," thou choose to be proud, and say in thy soul, God hath respect unto the lowly, He hath not respect unto me, I will do what I will. O foolish one! wouldest thou say this, if thou knewest what thou oughtest to love? Behold, even if God willeth not to see thee, dost thou not fear this very thing, that He willeth not to see thee? ...The lofty then, it seemeth, He hath not respect unto, for it is the lowly He respecteth. "The lofty"-what? "He considereth from afar." What then gaineth the proud? To be seen from afar, not

to escape being seen. And think not that thou must needs be safe on that account, for that He seeth less clearly, who seeth thee from afar. For thou indeed seest not clearly, what thou seest from afar; God, although He see thee from afar, seeth thee perfectly, yet is He not with thee. This thou gainest, not that thou art less perfectly seen, but that thou art not with Him by whom thou art seen. But what doth the lowly gain? "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart." Let the proud then lift himself up as much as he will, certainly God dwelleth on high, God is in heaven: wishest thou that He come nigh to thee? Humble thyself. For the higher will He be above thee, the more thou liftest thyself up.

10. "If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me" (ver. 7). True it is: whatsoever tribulation thou art in, confess, call on Him; He freeth thee, He reviveth thee. ...Love the other life, and thou shalt see that this life is tribulation, whatever prosperity it shine with, whatever delights it abound and overflow with; since not yet have we that joy most safe and free from all temptation, which God reserveth for us in the end, without doubt it is tribulation. Let us understand then what tribulation he meaneth here too, brethren. Not as though he said, "If perchance there shall any tribulation have befallen me, Thou shalt free me therefrom." But how saith he? "If I walk," etc.; that is, otherwise Thou wilt not revive me, unless I walk in the midst of tribulation. 11. "Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand hath made me safe." Let mine enemies rage: what can they do? They can take my money, strip, proscribe, banish me; afflict me with grief and tortures; at last, if they be allowed, even kill me: can they do aught more? But over that which mine enemies can do, Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand. For mine enemies cannot separate me from Thee: but Thou avengest me the more, the more Thou as yet delayest. ...Yet not to make me despair; for it follows, "and Thy right hand hath made me safe."

12. "Thou, Lord, shalt recompense for me" (ver. 8). I recompense not: Thou shalt recompense. Let mine enemies rage their full: Thou shalt recompense what I cannot. ..."Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves," saith the Apostle, "but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." There is here another sense not to be neglected, perhaps even to be preferred. "Lord" Christ, "Thou shalt repay for me." For I, if I repay, have seized; Thou hast paid what Thou hast not seized. Lord,

Thou shalt "repay for me." Behold Him repaying for us. They came to Him, who exacted tribute: they used to demand as tribute a didrachma, that is, two drachmas for one man; they came to the Lord to pay tribute; or rather, not to Him, but to His disciples, and they said to them, "Doth not your Master pay tribute?" They came and told Him. He saith unto Peter, "lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up: and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a staler: that take, and give for Me and thee." The first that riseth from the sea, is the First-begotten from the dead. In His mouth we find two didrachmas, that is, four drachmas: in His mouth we find the four Gospels. By those four drachmas we are free from the claims of this world, by the four Evangelists we remain no longer debtors; for there the debt of all our sins is paid. He then hath repaid for us, thanks to His mercy. He owed nothing: He repaid not for Himself: He repaid for us. ...

13. "Lord, Thy mercy is for everlasting." ...Not for a time only do I desire to be freed. "Thy mercy is for everlasting," wherewith Thou hast freed the martyrs, and so hast quickly taken them from this life. "Despise not Thou the works of Thine own hands." I say not, Lord, "despise not the works of my hands:" of mine own works I boast not. "I sought," indeed, "the Lord with my hands in the night season before Him, and have not been deceived;" but yet I praise not the works of mine own hands; I fear lest, when Thou shalt look into them, Thou find more sins in them than deserts. Behold in me Thy Work, not mine: for mine if Thou seest, Thou condemnest; Thine, if Thou seest, Thou crow nest. For whatever good works there be of mine, from Thee are they to me; and so they are more. Thine than mine. Therefore whether in regard that we are men, or in regard that we have been changed and justified from our iniquity, Lord, "despise not Thou the works of Thine own hands."

PSALM 139

1. ...Our Lord Jesus Christ speaketh in the Prophets, sometimes in His own Name, sometimes in ours, because He maketh Himself one with us; as it is said, "they twain shall be one flesh." Wherefore also the Lord saith in the Gospel, speaking of marriage, "therefore they are no more twain, but one flesh." One flesh, because of our mortality He took flesh; not one divinity, for He is the Creator, we the creature. Whatsoever then our Lord speaketh! in the person of the Flesh He took upon Him, belongeth both to that Head

which hath already ascended into heaven, and to those members which still toil in their earthly wandering. Let us hear then our Lord Jesus Christ speaking in prophecy. For the Psalms were sung long before the Lord was born of Mary, yet not before He was Lord: for from everlasting He was the Creator of all things, but in time He was born of His creature. Let us believe that Godhead, and, so far as we can, understand Him to be equal to the Father. But that Godhead equal to the Father. was made partaker of our mortal nature, not of His own store, but of ours; that we too might be made partakers of His Divine Nature, not of our store, but of His.

2. "Lord, Thou hast tried me, and known me" (ver. 1). Let the Lord Jesus Christ Himself say this; let Him too say, "Lord," to the Father. For His Father is not His Lord, save because He hath deigned to be born according to the flesh. He is Father of the God, Lord of the Man. Wouldest thou know to whom He is Father? To the coequal Son. The Apostle saith, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." To this "Form" God is Father, the "Form" equal to Himself, the only-begotten Son, begotten of His Substance. But forasmuch as for our sakes, that we might be re-made, and made partakers of His Divine Nature, being renewed unto life eternal, He was made partaker of our mortal nature, what saith the Apostle of Him? He saith, "yet He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man." He was in the Form of God, equal to the Father; He took upon Him the form of a servant, so as therein to be less than the Father. ...

3. "Thou hast known My down-sitting and Mine up-rising" (ver. 2). What here is "down-sitting," what "up-rising"? He who sitteth, humbleth himself. The Lord then "sat" in His Passion, "up-rose" in His Resurrection. "Thou," he saith, hast known this; that is, Thou hast willed, Thou hast approved; according to Thy will was it done. But if thou chooseth to take the words of the Head in the person of the Body: man sitteth when he humbleth himself in penitence, he riseth up when his sins are forgiven, and he is lifted up to the hope of everlasting life. Lift not up yourselves, unless ye have first been humbled. For many wish to rise before they have sat down, they wish to appear righteous, before they have confessed that they are sinners. ... 4. "Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar; Thou hast tracked out my path and may limit" (ver. 3); "and all my ways Thou hast seen beforehand" (ver. 4). What is, "from afar"? While I am yet in my pilgrimage, before I reach that,

my true country, Thou hast known my thoughts. ...The younger son went into a far country. After his toil and suffering and tribulation and want, he thought on his father, and desired to return, and said, "I will arise, and go to my father. "I will arise," said he, for before he had sat. Here then thou mayest recognise him saying, "Thou hast known my down-sitting and up-rising. I sat, in want; I arose, in longing for Thy Bread. "Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar. For far indeed had I gone; but where is not He whom I had left? Wherefore the Lord saith in the Gospel, that his father met him as he was coming. Truly; for "he had understood his thoughts from afar. "My path," he saith; what, but a bad path, the path he had walked to leave his father? ...What is, "my path"? that by which I have gone. What is, "my limit"? that whereunto I have reached. "Thou hast tracked out my path and my limit. That limit of mine, far distant as it was, was not far from Thine eyes. Far had I gone, and yet Thou wast there. "And all my ways Thou hast seen beforehand. He said not, "hast seen," but, "hast seen beforehand.

Before I went by them, before I walked in them, Thou didst see them beforehand; and Thou didst permit me in toil to go my own ways, that, if I desired not to toil, I might return into Thy ways. "For there is no deceit in my tongue. What meant he by this? Lo, I confess to Thee, I have walked in my own way, I am become far from Thee, I have departed from Thee, with whom it was well with me, and to my good it was ill with me without Thee. ... 5. "Behold Thou, Lord, hast known all my last doings, and the ancient ones" (ver. 5). Thou hast known my latest doings, when I fed swine; Thou hast known my ancient doings, when I asked of Thee my portion of goods. Ancient doings were the beginnings to me of latest ills: ancient sin, when we fell; latest punishment, when we came into this toilsome and dangerous mortality. And would that this may be "latest" to us; it will be, if now we will to return. For there is another "latest" for certain wicked ones, to whom it shall be said, "Go ye into everlasting fire." ... "Thou hast fashioned me, and hast laid Thine hand upon me." "Fashioned me," where? In this mortality; now, to the toils whereunto we all are born. For none is born, but God has fashioned him in his mother's womb; nor is there any creature, whereof God is not the Fashioner. But "Thou hast fashioned me" in this toil, "and laid Thine hand upon me," Thine avenging hand, putting down the proud. For thus healthfully hath He cast down the proud, that He may lift him up humble.

6. "Thy skill hath displayed itself wonderfully in me: it hath waxed mighty: I shall not be able to attain unto it" (ver. 6). Listen now and hear somewhat, which is obscure indeed, yet bringeth no small pleasure in the understanding thereon. Moses, the holy servant of God, with whom God spake by a cloud, for, speaking after human fashion, He must needs speak to His servant through some work of His hands which He assumed, ...longed and desired to see the true appearance of God, and said to God, who was conversing with him, "If now I have found grace in Thy sight, show me Thyself. When this he desired vehemently, and would extort from God in that sort of friendly familiarity, if we may so speak, wherewith God deigned to treat him, that he might see His Glory and His Face, in such wise as we can speak of God's Face, He said unto him, "Thou canst not see My Face; for no one hath seen My Face, and lived; but I will place thee in a clift of the rock, and will pass by, and will set My hand upon thee; and when I have passed by, thou shalt see My back parts. And from these words there ariseth another enigma, that is, an obscure figure of the truth. "When I have passed by," saith God, "thou shalt see My back parts; as though He hath on one side His face, on another His back.

Far be it from us to have any such thoughts of that Majesty! For whoso hath such thoughts of God, what advantageth it him that the temples are closed? He is building an idol in his own heart. In these words then are mighty mysteries. ...They who raged against the Lord, whom they saw, now seek counsel how they may be saved; and it is said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, and your sins shall be forgiven you. Behold, they saw the back parts of Him, whose face they could not see. For His Hand was upon their eyes, not for ever, but while He passed by. After He had passed He took away His Hand from their eyes. When the hand was taken from their eyes, they say to the disciples, "What shall we do? At first they are fierce, afterwards loving; at first angry, afterwards fearful; at first hard, then pleasant; at first blind, then enlightened. ...

7. Behold thou findest that the runaway in a far country cannot escape His eyes, from whom he fleeth. And whither can he go now, whose "limit is tracked out"? Behold, what saith he? "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?" (ver. 7). Who can in the world flee from that Spirit, with whom the world is filled? "And whither shall I flee from Thy Face?" He seeketh a place whither to flee from the wrath of God. What place will shelter God's run-

away? Men who shelter runaways, ask them from whom they have fled; and when they find any one a slave of some master less powerful than themselves, him they shelter as it were without any fear, saying in their hearts, "he hath not a master by whom he can be tracked out." But when they are told of a powerful master, they either shelter not, or they shelter with great fear, because even a powerful man can be deceived. Where is God not? Who can deceive God? Whom doth not God see? From whom doth not God demand His runaway? Whither then shall that runaway go from the Face of God? He turneth him hither and thither, as though seeking a spot to flee to.

8. "If I go up," saith he, "to heaven, Thou art there: if I go down to Hades, Thou art present" (ver. 8). At length, miserable runaway, thou hast learnt, that by no means canst thou make thyself far from Him, from whom thou hast wished to remove far away. Behold, He is everywhere; thou, whither wilt thou go? He hath found counsel, and that inspired by Him, who now deigneth to recall him. ...If by sinning I go down to the depths of wickednesses, and spurn to confess, saying, "Who seeth me" (for "in Hades who shall confess to Thee?") there also Thou art present, to punish. Whither then shall I go that I may flee from Thy presence, that is, not find Thee angry? This plan he found: So will I flee, saith he, from Thy Face, so will I flee from Thy Spirit; from Thy avenging Spirit, Thy avenging Face thus will I flee. How? "If I take again my wings right forward, and abide in the utmost parts of the sea" (ver. 9). So can I flee from Thy Face. If he will flee to the utmost part of the sea from the Face of God, will not He from whom he fleeth be there? ...For what are "the utmost parts of the sea," but the end of the world? Thither let us now flee in hope and longing, with the wings of twofold love; let us have no rest, save in "the utmost parts of the sea." For if elsewhere we wish for rest, we shall be hurled headlong into the sea. Let us fly even to the ends of the sea, let us bear ourselves aloft on the wings of twofold love; meanwhile let us flee to God in hope, and in faithful hope let us meditate on that "end of the sea."

9. Now listen who may bring us thither. The very same One whose face in wrath we wish to flee from. For what followeth? "Even thither shall Thy hand conduct me, and Thy right hand lead me" (ver. 10). This let us meditate on, beloved brethren, let this be our hope, this our consolation. Let us take again through love the wings we lost through lust. For lust was the lime of our wings, it clashed us down from the freedom of our sky, that is, the free

breezes of the Spirit of God. Thence dashed down we lost our wings, and were, so to speak, imprisoned in the power of the fowler; thence "He" redeemed us with His Blood, whom we fled from to be caught. He maketh us wings of His commandments; we raise them aloft now free from lime. ...Needs then must we have wings, and needs must He conduct us, for He is our Helper. We have free-will; but even with that free-will what can we do, unless He help us who commandeth us?

10. And considering the length of the way, what said he to himself? "And I said, Peradventure the darkness shall overwhelm me" (ver. 11). Lo, now I have believed in Christ, now am I wafted aloft on the wings of twofold love. ...Regarding the length of the way, i said to myself, "And the night was light in my delight." The night was made to me light, because in the night I despaired of being able to cross so great a sea, to surmount so long a journey, to reach the utmost parts by persevering to the end Thanks to Him who sought me when a runaway, who smote my back with strokes of the scourge, who by calling me recalled me from destruction, who made my night light. For it is night so long as we are passing through this life. How was the night made light? Because Christ came down into the night. ...

11. "For darkness shall not be darkened by Thee" (ver. 12). Do not thou then darken thy darkness; God darkeneth it not, but enlighteneth it yet more; for to Him is said in another Psalm, "Thou, Lord, shalt light my candle: my God shall enlighten my darkness." But who are they who "darken their darkness," which God darkeneth not? Evil men, perverse men; when they sin, verily they are darkness; when they confess not their sins which they have committed but go on to defend them, they "darken their darkness." Wherefore now if thou hast sinned thou art in darkness, but by confessing thy darkness thou shall obtain to have thy darkness lightened; by defending thy darkness, thou shall "darken thy darkness." And where wilt thou escape from double darkness, who wast in difficulty in single darkness? ...Let us not "darken our darkness" by defending our sins, and "the night shall be light in our delight."

12. "And night shall be lightened as the day." "Night, as the day." "Day" to us is worldly prosperity, night adversity in this world: but, if we learn that it is by the desert of our sins that we suffer adversities, and our Father's scourges are sweet to us, that the Judge's sentence may not be bitter to us, so shall we find the darkness of this night to be, as it were, the light of this night. ...But

when Christ our Lord has come, and has dwelt in the soul by faith, and promised other light, and inspired and given patience, and warned a man not to delight in prosperity or to be crushed by adversity, the man, being faithful, begins to treat this world with indifference; not to be lifted up when prosperity befalls him, nor crushed when adversity, but in all things to praise God, not only when he aboundeth, but also when he loseth; not only when he is in health, but also when he is sick. ..."As is His darkness, so is also His light." His darkness overwhelms me not, because His light lifts me not up.

13. "For Thou, O Lord, hast possessed my reins" (ver. 13). The Possessor is within; He occupieth not only the heart, but also the reins; not only the thoughts, but also the delights: He then possesseth that whence I should feel delight at any light in this world: He occupieth my reins: I know not delight, save from the inward light of His Wisdom. What then? Dost thou not delight that thy affairs are very prosperous, times fortunate to thee? dost thou not delight in honour, in riches, in thy family? "I do not," saith he. Wherefore? Because "Thou hast possessed my reins, O Lord; Thou hast taken me up from my mother's womb." While I was in my mother's womb, I did not regard with indifference the darkness of that night and the light of that night. ...Now, having been taken up from the womb of that our mother, we look on them with indifference, and say, "As is His darkness, so is also His light." Neither doth earthly prosperity make us happy, nor earthly adversity wretched. We must maintain righteousness, love faith, hope in God, love God, love our neighbours also. After these toils we shall have unfailing light, day without setting. Fleeting is all the light and darkness of this night.

14. "I will confess to Thee, O Lord, for terribly hast Thou been made wonderful: wondrous are Thy works, and my soul knoweth it right well" (ver. 14). Aforetime "Thy knowledge was made wonderful from me, it had waxed great, nor could I attain unto it." From me then "it had waxed great." Whence doth "my soul" now "know right well," save because the "night is light in my delight?" save because Thy grace hath come unto me, and enlightened my darkness? save because Thou hast possessed my reins? save because Thou hast taken me up from my mother's womb? 15. "My bone is not hid from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret" (ver. 15). "His bone," he saith. What the people call ossum, is in Latin called os. This is the word in the Greek. For we might think the word os is here the one which makes in the plural ora, not os (short), which makes ossa. He saith then, I have a cer-

tain bone (ossum) in secret. For this word let us prefer to use; better is it that scholars find fault with us, than that the people understand us not. "There is then," saith he, "a certain bone of mine, within, hidden; Thou hast made within a bone for me in secret, yet is it not hidden from Thee. In secret hast Thou made it, but hast Thou therefore hidden it from Thyself? This my bone made by Thee in secret men see not, men know not: Thou knowest, who hast made. What "bone" then meaneth he, brethren? Let us seek it, it is "in secret. But because as Christians we are speaking in the Name of the Lord to Christians, now we find what bone is of this kind. It is a sort of inward strength; for strength and fortitude are understood to be in the bones. There is then a sort of inward strength of the soul, wherein it is not broken. Whatever tortures, whatever tribulations, whatever adversities rage around, that which God hath made strong in secret in us, cannot be broken, yieldeth not.

For by God is made a certain strength of patience, of which is said in another Psalm, "But my soul shall be subjected to God, for of Him is my patience." ...Wherein dost thou glory? "In tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience. See how that strength is fashioned within in his heart: "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. So is fashioned and made strong that hidden bone, that it maketh us even to glory in tribulations. But to men we seem wretched, because that which we have within is hidden from them. "And my substance is in the lower parts of the earth. Behold, in flesh is my substance, yet have I a bone within, which Thou hast fashioned, such as to cause me never to yield to any persecutions of this lower region, where still my substance is. For what great matter is it, if an Angel be brave? This is a great matter, if flesh is brave. And whence is flesh brave, whence is an earthen vessel brave, save because in it is made a bone in secret?

16. ..."Thine eyes did see Mine imperfect one, and in Thy book shall all be written" (ver. 16), not only the perfect, but also the imperfect. Let not the imperfect fear, only let them advance. Nor yet, because I have said, "let them not fear," let them love their imperfection, and remain there, where they are found. Let them advance, as far as in them lieth. Daily let them add, daily let them approach; yet let them not fall back from the Body of the Lord: that, compacted in one Body and among these members, they may be counted worthy to have that said of them. "By day shall they wander, and none

among them." "The Day" was yet on earth, even our Lord Jesus Christ. Whence He said, "Walk while ye have the day." But "by day shall" His imperfect ones "wander." They too thought that our Lord Jesus Christ was only man, that He had not within Him the hidden Godhead, that He was not secretly God, but that He was that only which was seen: this they too thought. ...But what is, "In the day they shall wander"? Shall they perish? Where then is, "In Thy book shall all be written"? When then did they "wander in the day"? When they understood not the Lord set upon earth. And what followeth? "But to me Thy friends are made very honourable, O God" (ver. 17); those very ones, who "wandered in the day, and none was in them," became Thy friends, and were made very honourable to me. That bone was made in them in secret after the resurrection of the Lord, and they suffered for His Name, at whose death they had been amazed. "Mightily strengthened were their chieftainships." They became Apostles, they became leaders of the Church, they became rams leading their flocks, "mightily strengthened."

17. "I will number them, and they shall be multiplied above the sand" (ver. 18). By means of them, who "wandered in the day," lo! there has been born all this great multitude, which now is like the sand innumerable, save by God. For He said, "they shall be multiplied above the sand," and yet He had said, "I will number them." The very same who are numbered, "shall be multiplied above the sand." For by Him is the sand numbered, by whom "the very hairs of our head are numbered." "I have risen, and yet am I with Thee." Already have I suffered, saith He, already have I been buried; lo! I have risen, and not yet do they understand that I am with them. "Yet am I with Thee," that is, not yet with them, for not yet do they recognise Me. For thus do we read in the Gospel, that after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He appeared to them, they did not at once know Him. There is another meaning also: "I have risen, and yet am I with Thee," as though He would signify this present time, wherein He is as yet hidden at the right hand of the Father, before He is revealed in the brightness, wherein He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

18. And then He telleth what meanwhile, during this whole time when He already has risen, and remaineth still with the Father, He suffereth by the intermixture of sinners in His Body, the Church, and by the separation of heretics. "If Thou, O God, shalt slay the sinners (since Thou shalt say in Thy

thought, Depart from Me, ye men of blood), they shall receive in vanity their cities" (ver. 19, 20). The words seem to be connected in this order; "If Thou, O God, shall slay the sinners, they shall receive in vanity their cities. Thus are sinners slain, because, "having their understandings darkened, they are alienated from the life of God. For on account of elation they lose confession, and so they are slain, and in them is fulfilled what Scripture saith, "Confession perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not. And so "they receive in vanity their cities," that is, their vain peoples, who follow their vanity; when, puffed up by the name of righteousness, they persuade men to burst the bond of unity, and blindly and ignorantly follow them, as being more righteous. ...But now the Body of Christ, the Church, saith, Why do the proud speak falsely against me, as though I were stained by other men's sins, and so, by separating themselves, "receive in vanity their cities"? "Have not I hated those who hated Thee, Lord? (ver. 21).

Why do those who are worse themselves require of me to separate myself in body as well as spirit from the wicked, so as to root up the wheat, together with the tares, before the time of harvest, that before the time of winnowing I lose my power of enduring the chaff; that before all the different sorts of fishes are brought to the end of the world, as to the shore, to be separated, I tear the nets of peace and unity? Are the sacraments which I receive, those of evil men? Do I; by consent, communicate in their life and deeds? ...But where is, "Love your enemies"? Is it because He said "yours," not "God's"? "Do good to them that hate you. He saith not, "who hate God. So he followeth the pattern, and saith, "Have not I hated those who hated Thee; Lord? He saith not, "Who have hated me. "And at Thine enemies did I waste away. "Thine," he said, not "mine. But those who hate us and are enemies unto us, only because we serve Him, what else do they but hate Him, and are His enemies. Ought we then to love such enemies as these? Or do not they suffer persecution for God's sake, to whom it is said, "Pray for them that persecute you"? Observe then what followeth. "With a perfect hatred did I hate them" (ver. 22). What is, "with a perfect hatred"? I hated in them their iniquities, I loved Thy creation.

This it is to hate with a perfect hatred, that neither on account of the vices thou hate the men, nor on account of the men love the vices. For see what he addeth, "They became mine enemies. Not only as God's enemies, but as his own too doth he now describe them. How then will he fulfil in

them both his own saying, "Have not I hated those that hated Thee, Lord," and the Lord's command, "Love your enemies"? How will he fulfil this, save with that "perfect hatred," that he hate in them that they are wicked, and love that they are men? For in the time even of the Old Testament, when the carnal people was restrained by visible punishments, how did Moses, the servant of God, who by understanding belonged to the New Testament, how did he hate sinners when he prayed for them, or how did he not hate them when he slew them, save that he "hated them with a perfect hatred"? For with such perfection did he hate the iniquity which he punished, as to love the manhood for which he prayed.

19. Since then the Body of Christ is in the end to be severed in body also from the unholy and wicked, but now meanwhile groaneth among them, what doeth the "love of Christ among the daughters, as the lily among thorns"? What are her words? what her conscience? what is the "appearance of the king's daughter within"? Lo, hear what she saith. "Prove me, O God, and know my heart" (ver. 23). Do Thou, O God, Thou prove me, Thou know; not man, not an heretic, who neither knoweth how to prove, nor can know my heart, whereas Thou provest, and knowest that I consent not to the deeds of the wicked, while they think that I can be defiled by the sins of others; so that, while I in my long wandering do what I mourn in another Psalm, that is, while I "labour for peace among them that hate peace," until I come to that Vision of peace, which is called Jerusalem, "which is the mother of us all," the city "eternal in the heavens;" they, contending, and falsely accusing and separating themselves, may "receive," not, evidently, in eternity, but "in vanity, their cities." Why this? Observe what followeth.

20. "And see," saith he, "if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (ver. 24). "Search," he saith, "my paths," that is, my counsels and thoughts. What else saith he, but "lead me in Christ"? For who is "the way everlasting," save He that is the life everlasting? For everlasting is He who said, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." If then thou findest anything in my way which displeaseth Thine eyes, since my way is mortal, do Thou "lead me in the way everlasting," wherein is no iniquity; for even "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins;" He is "the Way everlasting" without sin; He is the Life everlasting without punishment. 21. These are great mysteries, brethren. How doth the Spirit of God speak with us? how

doth it make us delights in this night.? What is this, we ask you, brethren, whence are they sweeter, the darker they are? He mixeth us our potion after His love, in certain wondrous ways. He maketh His own sayings wondrous, so that while we were speaking what ye already knew, yet forasmuch as it was dug out of passages which seemed obscure, the knowledge itself seemed to be made new. Did ye not know, brethren, that the wicked are to be tolerated in the Church, and schisms not to be made? Did ye not already know, that within those nets which hold both good and bad fishes, we must abide even to the shore, nor must the nets be burst, because on the shore the good shall be separated into vessels, and the bad thrown away? Ye know this already; but these verses of this Psalm ye did not understand; that which ye did not understand is explained; that which ye knew has been renewed.

PSALM 140

1. Our Lords have bidden me, brethren, and in them the Lord of all, to bring this Psalm to your understanding, so far as God giveth me to. May He help your prayers, that I may say those things which I ought to say, ye to hear, that to all of us the Word of God may be profitable. For all it doth not profit, for "all have not faith." ... 2. What this Psalm containeth, I believe that ye perceived when it was being chanted; for therein the Church of Christ, set in the midst of the wicked, complaineth and groaneth, and poureth out prayer to God. For her voice is in every such prophecy the voice of one in need and want, not yet satisfied, "hungering and thirsting after righteousness," for whom a certain fulness in the end hath been promised, and is reserved. ... 3. "To the end, a Psalm to David himself." No other end mayest thou look to, than is laid down for thee by the Apostle himself. For "Christ is the end." ... He was of the seed of David, not after His Godhead, whereby He is the Creator of David, but after the flesh; therefore He deigned to be called David in prophecy: look to this "end," for the Psalm is chanted "to David Himself;" hear the voice of His Body; be in His Body. Let the voice which thou hast heard be thine, and pray, and say what followeth.

4. "Deliver me, O Lord, from the wicked man" (ver. 1). Not from one only, but from the class; not from the vessels only, but from their prince himself, that is, the devil. Why "from man," if he meaneth from the devil? Because he too is called a man in a figure. ... Now then being made light, not in ourselves, but in the Lord, let us pray not only against darkness, that is, against sinners, whom still the devil possesseth, but also against their prince,

the devil himself, who worketh in the children of disobedience. "Deliver me from the unrighteous man. The same as "from the wicked man. For he called him wicked because unrighteous, lest perchance thou shouldest think that any unrighteous man could be a good man. For many unrighteous men seem to be harmless; they are not fierce, are not savage, do not persecute nor oppress; yet are they unrighteous, because, following some other habit, they are luxurious, drunkards, given to pleasure. ...Wicked then is every unrighteous man, who must needs be harmful, whether he be gentle or fierce. Whoever falls in his way, whoever is taken by his snares, will find how harmful is that which he thought harmless. For, brethren, even thorns prick not with their roots. Pull up thorns from the ground, handle their roots, and see whether thou feelest pain. Yet that in the upgrowth which causeth thee pain, proceeded from that root.

Let not then men please you who seem gentle and kind, yet are lovers of carnal pleasure, followers of polluted lusts, let them not please you. Though as yet they seem gentle, they are roots of thorns. ...And so, my brethren, body of Christ, members of Christ groaning among such wicked men, whomsoever ye find hurrying headlong into evil lusts and deadly pleasures, at once chide, at once punish, at once burn. Let the root be burnt, and there remaineth not whence the thorn may grow up. If ye cannot, be sure that ye will have them as enemies. They may be silent, they may hide their enmity, but they cannot love you. But since they cannot love you, and since they who hate you must needs seek your harm, let not your tongue and heart be slow to say to God, "Deliver me, O Lord, from the unrighteous man."

5. "Who have imagined unrighteousnesses in their heart" (ver. 2). ...From them free me, from them let Thy hand be most powerful to deliver me. For easy is it to avoid open enmities, easy is it to turn aside from an enemy declared and manifest, while iniquity is in his lips as well as his heart; he is a troublesome enemy, he is secret, he is with difficulty avoided, who beareth good things in his lips, while in his heart he concealeth evil things. "All the day long did they make war." What is, "war"? They made for me what I was to fight against all the day. For from thence, from such hearts as these, ariseth all that the Christian fighteth against. Be it sedition, be it schism, be it heresy, be it turbulent opposition, it springeth not save from these imaginings which were concealed, and while they spake good words with their lips, "all the day long did they make war." Ye hear words of peace, yet making war

departeth not from their thoughts. For the words, "all the day long," signify without intermission, throughout the whole time. "They have sharpened their tongues like serpents" (ver. 3). If still thou seekest to make out the man, behold a comparison. In the serpent above all beasts is there cunning and craft to hurt; for therefore does it creep. It hath not even feet, so that its footsteps when it cometh may be heard. In its progress it draweth itself, as it were, gently along, yet not straightly. Thus then do they creep and crawl to hurt, having poison hidden even under a gentle touch. And so it followeth, "the poison of asps is under their lips." Behold, it is "under" their lips, that we may perceive one thing under their lips, another in their lips. ...

6. "Preserve me, O Lord, from the hand of the sinner, from unrighteous men deliver me" (ver. 4). Here they wear their real colours, they are known; here we have no need to understand, but to act: we have need to pray, not to ask who they are. But how thou shouldest pray against such men, he explaineth in what followeth. For many pray unskilfully against wicked men. "Who have imagined," saith he, "to trip up my steps. Thus far it may be understood carnally. Every one has enemies, who seek to cheat him in trade, to rob him of money, where they are engaged together in business; every one has some neighbour his enemy, who deviseth how to bring mischief upon his family, to injure in some way his property and surely he deviseth this by deceit, by fraud, by devilish devices he endeavoureth to accomplish this: no one can doubt it. Yet not for these reasons are they to be guarded against, but lest they lay in wait for thee and draw thee to themselves, that is, separate thee from the Body of Christ, and make thee of their body. For as Christ is the Head of the good, so is the devil their head. What is, "to trip up my steps"? Not as though thou shouldest be deceived in the business thou hast with him, or he cheat thee in a case which thou hast with him in the law courts. He hath "tripped up thy steps," if he have hindered thee in the way of God;

so that what thou didst direct aright may stumble, or fall from the way, or fall in the way, or draw back from the way, or stop on the way, or go back to the place from whence it had come. Whatsoever hath done this to thee, hath tripped thee up, hath deceived thee. Against such snares as these pray thou, lest thou lose thy heavenly inheritance, lest thou lose Christ thy Joint-heir, for thou art destined to live for ever with Him, who hath made thee an heir. For thou art made an heir, not by one whom thou art to succeed after

his death, but One together with whom thou art to live for ever. 7. "The proud have hidden a trap for me" (ver. 5). He hath briefly described the whole body of the devil, when he saith, "the proud." Hence is it that for the most part they call themselves righteous when they are unrighteous. Hence is it that nothing is so grievous to them as to confess their sins. They are men who, being falsely righteous, must needs envy the truly righteous. For none envieth another in that which he wisheth not either to be or to seem. ...Hence come all allurings and trippings up of others. This the devil first wished, when falling himself he envied man who stood. ...

8. But those "proud ones have hidden a trap for me;" they have sought to trip up my steps. And what have they done? "And have stretched out cords as traps." What cords? The word is well known in holy Scripture, and elsewhere we find what "cords" signify. For "each one is holden with the cords of his sins," saith Scripture. And Esaias saith openly, "Woe to them that draw sin like a long rope." And why is it called a "cord"? Because every sinner who persevereth in his sins, addeth sin to sin; and when he ought by accusing his sins to amend, by defending he doubleth what by confession he might have removed, and often seeketh to fortify himself by other sins, on account of the sins he hath already committed. ...But these their sins they "spread" for the righteous, when they persuade them to do the evils which they themselves do. Therefore he said, "they spread cords and traps;" that is, by their sins they desired to overthrow me. And where did they this? "Beside the paths have they laid a stumbling-block for me:" not in the paths, but, "beside the paths." Thy "paths" are the commandments of God. They have "laid stumbling-blocks beside the paths;" do not thou withdraw out of the paths, and thou wilt not rush upon stumbling-blocks. Yet will I not that thou shouldest say, "God should prevent them from laying stumbling-blocks beside my paths, and then they would not lay them." Nay, rather, God permitted them to "lay stumbling-blocks beside thy paths," that thou shouldest not leave the paths.

9. And what remaineth? what remedy amid such ills, in such temptations, such dangers? "I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God" (ver. 6). Loud is the voice of prayer, it exciteth confidence. Is He not the God of the others? Of whom is not He God, who is the true God? Yet is He specially theirs, who enjoy Him, who serve Him, who willingly submit to Him. For the wicked too, though unwillingly, are subject to Him. ..."Hear with Thine ears the voice of my prayer." He did not say, "Hear with Thine ears my prayer;" but, as though

expressing more plainly the affection of his heart, "the voice of my prayer," the life of my prayer, the soul of my prayer, not that which soundeth in my words, but that which giveth life to my words. For all other noises without life may be called sounds, but not words. Words belong to those that have souls, to the living. But how many pray to God, yet have neither perception of God, nor right thoughts concerning God! These may have the sound of prayer, the voice they cannot, for there is no life in them. This was the voice of the prayer of one who was alive, forasmuch as he understood that God was his God, saw by Whom he was freed, perceived from whom he was freed.

10. Commending this to the ears of God, let him say, "Lord, Lord." Thou Lord-Lord, that is, most truly Lord, not like unto the lords-men, not like the lords who buy with money-bags, but the Lord who buyeth with His Blood. "Lord, Lord, Thou strength of my health" (ver. 7), that is, who givest strength to my health. What is the meaning of "strength of my health"? He complained of the stumbling-blocks and snares of sinners, of wicked men, vessels of the devil, that barked around him and laid snares around him, of the proud that envy the righteous. But He forthwith added a comfort, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." This he observed and feared, and, distressed at the abundance of iniquities, turned himself to hope. Verily I shall be saved, if I endure unto the end: but endurance, so as to win salvation, pertaineth unto strength; Thou art "the strength of my salvation;" Thou makest me to endure, that I may attain salvation. ...Toiling then in this warfare, he looked back to the grace of God; and because already he had begun to be heated and parched, he found, as it were, a shade, whereunder to live. "Thou hast overshadowed my head in the day of battle:" that is, in the heat, lest I be heated, lest I be parched.

11. "Deliver me not over, O Lord, by my own longing to the sinner" (ver. 8). Behold to what end Thy overshadowing shall avail for me, that I suffer not heat from myself. And what could that "sinner" do to me, rage as he would? For wicked men raged against the martyrs, dragged them away, bound them with chains, shut them up in prisons, slew them with the sword, exposed them to wild beasts, consumed them with fire: all this they did; yet did not God deliver them over to the sinners, because they were not delivered over by their own longing. This then pray with all thy might, that God "delivered thee not over by thine own longing to the sinner." For thou by thine own longing givest place to the devil. For lo, the devil hath set be-

fore thee gain, invited thee to dishonesty; thou canst not have the gain, unless thou commit the dishonesty: the gain is the bait, dishonesty the snare: do thou so look on the bait, that thou see the snare also; for thou canst not obtain the gain, unless thou commit the dishonesty; and if thou commit the dishonesty, thou wilt be caught. ...Hence is thine head overshadowed in the day of battle. For longing causeth heat, but the overshadowing of the Lord tempers longing, that we may be able to bridle that whereby we were being hurried away, that we be not so heated as to be drawn to the snare. "They have thought against me; leave me not, lest perchance they be exalted." Thou hast in another place, "They that oppress me will exult if I be moved." Such are they, because such is the devil also himself. ...

12. "The head of their going about, the toil of their own lips shall cover them" (ver. 9). Me, he saith, the shadow of Thy wings shall cover: for, "Thou hast covered me in the day of battle." Them what shall cover? "The head of their going about;" that is, pride. What is, "their going about"? How they go about and stand not, how they go in the circle of error, where is journeying without end. He who goeth in a straight line, beginneth from some point, endeth at some point: he who goeth in a circle, never endeth. That is the toil of the wicked, which is set forth yet more plainly in another Psalm, "The wicked walk in a circle." But "the head of their going about" is pride, for pride is the beginning of every sin. But whence is pride "the toil of their own lips"? Every proud man is false, and every false man is a liar. Men toil in speaking falsehood; for truth they could speak with entire facility. For he toileth, who maketh what he saith: he who wisheth to speak the truth, toileth not, for truth herself speaketh without toil. ...

13. "Coals of fire shall fall upon them upon earth, and Thou shalt cast them down" (ver. 10). What is, "upon earth"? Here, even in this life, here "coals of fire shall fall upon them." What are, "coals of fire"? We know these coals. Are they different from those of which we are about to speak? For these I see avail for punishment, those that I am about to speak of, for salvation. For we have spoken of certain coals, when man was seeking aid against a treacherous tongue. ...The examples of the "coals" are added to the wound of the arrows (for I need not fear to say "the wound," when the Spouse herself saith, "I am wounded with love"), and then the hay is consumed, and so they are called "devouring coals." The hay is devoured, but the gold is purified, and the man exchanges death for life, and begins to be himself too a burning

coal; such a coal as was the Apostle, "who before was a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious," a coal black and extinguished; but when he had obtained mercy, he was set on fire from heaven, the voice of Christ set him on fire, all the blackness in him perished, he began to be fervent in spirit, to set others on fire with that wherewith he was set on fire himself. ...

14. "A man full of words shall not be guided upon earth" (ver. 11). "A man full of words" loveth lies. For what pleasure hath he, save in speaking? He careth not what he speaketh, so long as he speaks. It cannot be that he will be guided. What then ought the servant of God to do, who is kindled with these "coals," and himself made a coal of salvation, what should he do? He should wish rather to hear than to speak; as it is written, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak." And if it may be so, let him desire this, not to be obliged to speak and talk and teach. ...I can quickly tell you wherein each one may prove himself, not by never speaking, but by requiring a case where it is his duty to speak; let him be glad to be silent, in will, let him speak to teach, when he must. For when must thou needs speak and teach? When thou meetest with one ignorant, when thou meetest with one unlearned. If it delight thee always to teach, thou wishest always to have some ignorant one to teach. ..."Evil shall hunt the unrighteous man to destruction." Evils come, and he standeth not; therefore said he, "they shall hunt him to destruction." For many good men, many righteous men evils have befallen, evils have, as it were, found them. Therefore when the evil pursued the good, that is, our martyrs, when they seized them, they "hunted" them, but not "to destruction." For the flesh was pressed down, the spirit was crowned; the spirit was cast out from the body, yet was nought done to the flesh which might hinder it for the future. Let the flesh be burned, scourged, mangled; is it therefore withdrawn from its Creator, because it is given into the hands of its persecutor? Will not He who created it from nothing, remake it better than it was?

15. "I know that the Lord will maintain the right of the needy" (ver. 12). This "needy" one is not "full of words;" for he that is full of words, wisheth to abound, knoweth not to hunger. He is "needy" of whom it is said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." They groan among the stumbling-blocks of the wicked, they pray to their Head, "to be delivered from the wicked man." And the cause of the poor." These then are they whose cause the Lord will not neglect; although

now they suffer hardships, their glory shall appear, when their Head appeareth. For to such while placed here it is said, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." So then we are poor, our life is hid; let us cry to Him that is our Bread. ...

16. "But the just shall confess to Thy Name" (ver. 13). Both when Thou shalt plead their cause, and when Thou shalt maintain their right, they "shall confess to Thy Name;" nought shall they attribute to their own merits, all they shall attribute to nought save to Thy mercy. ...Therefore see what followeth, see wherewith he concludeth. "The upright shall dwell with Thy Countenance." For ill was it with them in their own countenance; well will it be with them with Thy Countenance. For when they loved their own countenance, "In the sweat of their countenance did they eat bread." Thy Countenance shall come to them with abundance to satisfy them. Nought more shall they seek, for nought better have they; no more shall they abandon Thee, nor be abandoned by Thee. For after His Resurrection, what was said of the Lord? "Thou shalt fill me with joy with Thy Countenance." Without His Countenance He would not give us joy. For this do we cleanse our countenance, that we may rejoice in His Countenance. ...Because too, "blessed are the poor in heart, for they shall see God;" He gave the Form of Man both to good and evil, the Form of God He preserved for the pure and good, that we may rejoice in Him, and it may be well with us for ever with His Countenance.

PSALM 141

1. ...The Psalm which we have just sung is in many parts somewhat obscure. When by the help of the Lord what has been said shall begin to be expounded and explained, ye will see that ye are hearing things which ye knew already. But for this cause are they said in manifold ways, that variety of expression may remove all weariness of the truth. ... 2. "Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hear Thou me" (ver. 1). This we all can say. This not I alone say: whole Christ saith it. But it is said rather in the name of the Body: for He too, when He was here and bore our flesh, prayed; and when He prayed, drops of blood streamed down from His whole Body. So is it written in the Gospel: "Jesus prayed earnestly, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood." What is this flowing of sweat from His whole Body, but the suffering of martyrs from the whole Church? "Listen unto the voice of my prayer, while I cry unto Thee." Thou thoughtest the business of crying already finished, when thou

saidst, "I have cried unto Thee." Thou hast cried; yet think not thyself safe. If tribulation be finished, crying is finished: but if tribulation remain for the Church, for the Body of Christ, even to the end of the world, let it not only say, "I have cried unto Thee," but also, "Listen unto the voice of my prayer."

3. "Let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight as incense, and the lifting up of my hands an evening sacrifice" (ver. 2). That this is wont to be understood of the Head Himself, every Christian acknowledgeth. For when the day was now sinking towards evening, the Lord upon the Cross "laid down His life to take it again," did not lose it against His will. Still we too are figured there. For what of Him hung upon the tree, save what He took of us? And how can it be that the Father should leave and abandon His only begotten Son, especially when He is one God with Him? Yet, fixing our weakness upon the Cross, where, as the Apostle saith, "our old man is crucified with Him," He cried out in the voice of that our "old man," "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" That then is the "evening sacrifice," the Passion of the Lord, the Cross of the Lord, the offering of a salutary Victim, the whole burnt offering acceptable to God. That "evening sacrifice" produced, in His Resurrection, a morning offering. Prayer then, purely directed from a faithful heart, riseth like incense from a hallowed altar. Nought is more delightful than the odour of the Lord: such odour let all have who believe.

4. ... "Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of restraint around my lips" (ver. 3). He said not a barrier of restraint, but "a door of restraint." A door is opened as well as shut. If then it be a "door," let it be both opened and shut; opened, to confession of sin; closed, to excusing sin. So will it be a "door of restraint," not of ruin. For what doth this "door of restraint" profit us? What doth Christ pray in the name of His Body? "That Thou turn not aside My heart to wicked words" (ver. 4). What is, "My heart"? The heart of My Church; the heart, that is, of My Body. ... 5. But when thine heart hath not been turned aside, O member of Christ, when thy heart hath not been turned aside "to wicked words, to making excuses in sins, with men that work in iniquity," thou shalt also not unite with their elect. For this followeth, "And I will not unite with their elect." Who are "their elect"? Those who justify themselves. Who are their elect? Those "who trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others," as the Pharisee said in the temple, "Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are." Who are their elect? "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know what manner of woman

this is that touched His feet." Here thou recognisest the words of that other Pharisee, who invited our Lord to his house; when the woman of that city, who was a sinner, came and approached His Feet. ...

For even this woman herself, "if her heart had turned aside to wicked words," would not have lacked wherewith to defend her sins. Do not women daily, her equals in defilement, but not her equals in confession, harlots, adulteresses, doers of shameful deeds, defend their sins? If they have not been seen, they deny them: if they have been caught and convicted, or have done their deeds openly, they defend them. And how easy is their defence, how ready, yet how headlong; how common, yet how blasphemous! "Had God not willed it, I had not done it: God willed it: fortune willed it: fate willed it." ...These are the defences of "the elect" of this world. But 'let the members of Christ, the Body of Christ, say, let Christ say in the name of His Body, "Turn not Thou aside, My Heart, to wicked words," etc., "and I will not unite with their elect." ...

6. "With men that work wickedness." What wickedness? Let me mention some sinful wickedness of theirs. Let me tell you one open sinful wickedness, which they acknowledge. They say, it is better for a man to be an usurer than a husbandman. Thou askest the reason, and they assign one. ...He vexeth the members of Christ, who cleanseth the earth with a furrow: he vexeth the members of Christ, who pulleth grass from the earth: he vexeth the members of Christ, who plucketh an apple from a tree. To avoid committing their imaginary murders in the farm, he committeth real murders in usury. He dealeth no bread to the needy. See whether there can be greater unrighteousness than this righteousness. He dealeth not bread to the hungry. Thou askest, wherefore? Lest the beggar receive the life which is in the bread, which they call a member of God, the substance of God, and bind it in flesh. What then do ye? why do ye eat? Have ye not flesh? Yes; but we, they say, forasmuch as we are enlightened by faith in Manes, by our prayers and our Psalms, forasmuch as we are elect, we cleanse thereby that bread, and transmit it into the treasure-house of the heavens. Such are the elect, that they are not to be saved by God, but saviours of God. And this is Christ, they say, crucified in the whole universe. I received in the Gospel Christ a Saviour, but ye are in your books the saviours of Christ. Plainly ye are blasphemers of Christ, and therefore not to be saved by Christ. Therefore lest a crumb be given to the hungry, and in the crumb a member of Christ suffer, is the hungry to die

of hunger? False mercy to a crumb causeth true murder of a man. But who are their elect? "Turn not thou aside, my heart, to wicked words, and I will not unite with their elect."

7. "The righteous One shall amend me in mercy, and convict me" (ver. 5). Behold the sinner confessing. He desireth to be amended in mercy, rather than praised deceitfully. ... "Shall convict me," but "in mercy:" shall convict, yet hateth not: yea, shall all the more convict, because He hateth not. And why doth he therefore give thanks? Because, "rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee." "The righteous One shall amend me." Because He persecuteth thee? God forbid. He requireth rather amending himself, who amendeth in hate. Wherefore then doth He amend? "In mercy. And shall convict me." Wherein? "In mercy. For the oil of a sinner shall not enrich my head." My head shall not grow by flattery. Undue praise is flattery: undue praise of a flatterer is "the oil of a sinner." Therefore men too, when they have mocked any one with false praise, say, "I have anointed his head." Love then to be "convicted by the righteous One in mercy;" love not to be praised by a sinner in mockery. Have oil in yourselves, and ye shall not seek the "oil of a sinner." ...

8. Thou sayest to me, What am I doing? I am beset with flatterers; they cease not to besiege me; they praise in me what I would not, that praise in me what I hold in little esteem; what I hold dear they blame in me; flatterers, treacherous, deceivers. For instance, "Gaiuseius is a great man, great, learned, wise; but why is he a Christian? For great is his learning, great his reading, great his wisdom. If great is his wisdom, approve of his being a Christian; if great his learning, learnedly hath he chosen. In fine, what thou revilest, that pleaseth him whom thou praisest. But what? That praise sweeteneth not: it is "the oil of a sinner. Yet ceaseth be not to speak so. Let him not therewith "fatten thy head; that is, rejoice not in such things; agree not to such things; consent not to such things; rejoice not in such things; and then, if he have applied to thee the oil of flattery, yet hath thy head remained as it was, it has not been puffed up, it hath not swollen. ..." For still shall My word be well-pleasing to them. Wait awhile: now they revile Me, saith Christ. In the early times of the Christians, the Christians were blamed on all sides. Wait as yet; and "My word shall be well-pleasing to them. The time shall come when they shall conquer thousands of men, who shall beat their breasts, and say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Even now, how many remain who blush to beat their breasts? Let them then blame us: let us bear it. Let them blame; let them hate, accuse, detract; "still shall My word be well-pleasing to them; the time shall come when My word shall please them. ...O wordy defence of iniquity! Verily now whole nations say this, and the thunder of nations beating their breasts ceaseth not. Rightly do the clouds thunder, wherein now God dwelleth. Where is now that wordiness, where that boasting, "I am righteous; nought of ill have I done"? Verily, when thou hast contemplated in Holy Scripture the law of righteousness, how far soever thou hast advanced, thou shall find thyself a sinner. ...What sort of man am I now speaking of, brethren? I speak of him who worshippeth God alone, who confesseth Christ, who knoweth the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost to be one God; who committeth not fornication against Him; who worshippeth not devils; who seeketh him not aid from the devil; who holdeth the Catholic Church; whom no one complaineth of as cheating; under whose oppression no weak neighbour groaneth; who assaileth not another's wife; who is content with his own, or even without his own, in such wise as is lawful, and as Apostolical discipline permitteth, with consent of both, or when she is not yet married. Even he who is such as this, is yet overtaken in such things as I have mentioned.

For all these daily sins then what is our hope, save to say with humble heart in the Lord's Prayer, while we defend not our sins, but confess them, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and to "have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," that He may be "the propitiation for our sins"? See what followeth: "their judges have been swallowed up beside the Rock" (ver. 6). What is, "swallowed up beside the Rock? That Rock was Christ. They have been swallowed up beside the Rock. "Beside," that is, compared, as judges, as mighty, powerful, learned: they are called "their judges," as judging about morals, and laying down their opinions. This Aristotle said. Set him beside the Rock, and he is swallowed up. Who is Aristotle? let him hear, "Christ hath said," and he trembleth among the dead. This Pythagoras said, that Plato said. Set them beside the Rock, compare their authority to the authority of the Gospel, compare the proud to the Crucified. Say we to them "Ye have written your words in the hearts of the proud; He hath planted His Cross in the hearts of kings: finally, He died, and rose again; ye are dead, and I will not ask how ye rise again. So "their judges have been swallowed up beside" that "Rock. So long do their words seem somewhat, till

they are compared with the Rock. Therefore if any of them be found to have said what Christ too hath said, we congratulate him, but we follow him not.

But he came before Christ. If any man speak what is true, is he therefore before the Truth itself? Regard Christ, O man, not when He came to thee, but when He made thee. The sick man too might say, "But I took to my bed before the physician came to me. Why, for that very reason has He come last, because thou first has sickened. 9. "They shall hear My Words, for they have prevailed." My Words have prevailed over their words. They have spoken clever things, I true things. To praise one who talketh well is one thing, to praise One who speaketh truth is another. "They shall hear My Words, for they have prevailed." How have they prevailed? Who of them has been taken offering sacrifice, when such things were forbidden by the law, and has not denied it? Who of them has been taken worshipping an idol, and has not exclaimed, "I did it not," and feared lest he should be convicted? Such servants hath the devil. But how have the Words of the Lord prevailed? "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Fear not those who kill the body," etc. He gave them fear, He suggested hope, He kindled love. "Fear not death," He saith. Do ye fear death? I die first. Fear ye, lest a hair of your head perish? I first rise again in the flesh uninjured. Rightly have ye heard His Words, for they have prevailed. They spake, and were slain; they fell, and yet stood. And what was the result of so many deaths of martyrs, save that those words prevailed, and the earth being, so to speak, watered by the blood of Christ's witnesses, the cross of the Church shot up everywhere? How have they "prevailed"? We have said already, when they were preached by men who feared not. Feared not what? Neither banishment, nor losses, nor death, nor crucifixion: for it was not death alone that they did not fear; but even crucifixion, a death than which none was thought more accursed. If the Lord endured, that His disciples might not only not fear death, but not even that kind of death. When then these things are said by men that fear not, they have prevailed.

10. What then have all those deaths of the martyrs accomplished? Listen: "As the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth, our bones have been scattered beside the pit" (ver. 7). "The bones" of the martyrs, that is, the bodies of the witnesses of Christ. The martyrs were slain, and they who slew them seemed to prevail. They prevailed by persecution, that the words of Christ might prevail by preaching. And what was the result of the deaths of

the saints? What meaneth, "the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth"? We know that everything that is refuse is the fatness of the earth. The things which are, as it were, contemptible to men, enrich the earth. ..."Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." As it is contemptible to the world, so is it precious to the husbandman. For he knoweth the use thereof, and its rich juice; he knoweth what he desireth, what he seeketh, whence the fertile crop ariseth; but this world despiseth it. Know ye not that "God hath chosen the contemptible things of the world, and those which are not, like as those which are, that the things which are may be brought to nought"? From the dunghill was Peter lifted up, and Paul; when they were put to death, they were despised: now, the earth having been enriched by them, and the cross of the Church springing up, behold, all that is noble and chief in the world, even the emperor himself, cometh to Rome, and whither does he hasten? to the temple of the emperor, or the memorial of the fisherman?

11. "For unto Thee, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I hoped, take not Thou away my life" (ver. 8). For they were tortured in persecutions, and many failed. It occurreth to him that many have failed, many have been in hazard, and as it were in the midst of the tribulation of persecution is sent forth the voice of one praying; "For unto Thee, Lord, are mine eyes:" I care not what they threaten who stand around, "unto Thee, Lord, are mine eyes." More do I fix mine eye on Thy promises than on their threats. I know what Thou hast suffered for me, what Thou hast promised me. 12. "Keep me from the trap which they have laid for me" (ver. 9). What was the trap? "If thou consentest, I spare thee." In the trap was set the bait of the present life; if the bird love this bait, it falleth into the trap: but if the bird be able to say, "The day of man have I not desired: Thou knowest:" "He shall pluck his feet out of the net," etc. Two things he hath mentioned to be distinguished the one from the other: the trap he said was set by persecutors; the stumbling-blocks came from those who have consented and apostatised: and from both he desires to be guarded. On the one side they threaten and rage, on the other consent and fall: I fear lest the one be such, that I fear him; the other such, that I imitate him. "This I do to thee, if thou consent not." "Keep me from the trap," etc. "Behold, thy brother hath already consented." "And from the stumbling-blocks," etc.

13. "Sinners shall fall into his nets" (ver. 10). Not all sinners, certain sinners, who are so great sinners, as to love this life to such a degree as to prefer

it to everlasting life, "shall fall into his trap." But what sayest thou? Shall they that are such, thinkest thou, fall into his nets? what of Thy disciples, O Christ? Behold, when persecution was raging, when they all "left Thee alone, and went every one to his own:" lo! they who were closest to Thee, in Thy trial and persecution, when Thine enemies demanded Thee to be crucified, abandoned Thee. And that bold one, who had promised Thee that he would go with Thee even unto death, heard from the Physician what was being done in him, the sick man. For being in a fever, he had said he was whole; but the Lord touched the vein of his heart. Then came the trial; then came the test; then came the accusation; and now, questioned not by some great power, but by a humble slave, and that a woman, questioned by a handmaid, he yielded; he denied thrice. ..."He wept bitterly," it saith. Not yet was he fitted to suffer. To him was said, "Thou shall follow Me afterwards." Hereafter he was to be firm, having been strengthened by the Lord's Resurrection. Not yet then was it time that those "bones" should be "scattered beside the pit." For see how many failed, even to those who first hung on His mouth; even they failed. Wherefore? "I am alone, until I pass over:" for this followeth in the Psalm. ...

14. Pascha, as they say who know, and who have explained to us what to read, meaneth "Passover. When then the Lord's Passion was about to come, the Evangelist, as though he would use this very word, saith, "When the hour was come that Jesus should pass over to the Father. We hear then of Pascha in this verse, "I am alone, until I pass over. After Pascha I shall no longer be alone, after passing-over I shall no longer be alone. Many shall imitate Me, many shall follow Me. And if afterward they shall follow, what shall be the case now? "I am alone, until I pass over. What is it that the Lord saith in this Psalm, "I am alone, until I pass over"? What is it that we have expounded? If we have understood it, listen to His own words in the Gospel. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit." ...Therefore He was alone before He was put to death. ...So far was any from dying for the Name, that is, for confessing the Name of Christ, before that Corn of wheat fell into the ground, that even John, who was slain just before Him, being given by a wicked king to a dancing woman, was not put to death because he confessed Christ. Of course he might have been put to death for this, and that by many.

If for another reason he was put to death by one man, how much more might he have been put to death by those very men, who put Christ to death? For John gave testimony to Christ. They who heard Christ, wished to slay Him; the man who gave testimony to Him they slew not. ...He is not slain by the Jews who gave free testimony to Christ, whom the Jews slew; he is slain by Herod, because he said to him, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. For his brother had not died without issue. For the law of truth, for equity, for righteousness' sake, he did die: therefore is he a saint, therefore a martyr; but yet he died not for that Name whereby we are Christians, wherefore, save that the saying might be fulfilled, "I am alone, until I pass over."

PSALM 142

1. ...*"With my voice have I cried unto the Lord"* (ver. 1). It were enough to say, *"with voice:"* not for nothing perhaps has *"my"* been added. For many cry unto the Lord, not with their own voice, but with the voice of their body. Let the *"inner man"* then, in whom *"Christ"* hath begun to *"dwell by faith,"* cry unto the Lord, not with the din of his lips, but with the affection of his heart. God heareth not, where man heareth: unless thou criest with the voice of lungs and side and tongue, man heareth thee not: thy thought is thy cry to the Lord. *"With my voice have I prayed unto the Lord."* What he meant by, *"I have cried,"* he explained when he said, *"I have prayed."* For they too who blaspheme, cry unto the Lord. In the former part he set down his crying, in the latter he explained what it was. As though it were demanded, *With what cry hast thou cried unto the Lord? Unto the Lord, saith he, I have prayed. My cry is my prayer, not reviling, not murmuring, not blaspheming.*

2. *"I will pour out before Him my prayer"* (ver. 2). What is, *"before Him"*? In His sight. What is, in His sight? Where He seeth. But where doth He not see? For so do we say, *'where He seeth,'* as though somewhere He seeth not. But in this assemblage of bodily substances men too see, animals too see: He seeth where man seeth not. For thy thoughts no man seeth, but God seeth. There then pour out thy prayer, where He alone seeth, who rewardeth. For the Lord Jesus Christ bade thee pray in secret: but if thou knowest what *"thy closet"* is, and cleanse it, there thou prayest to God. *"But thou,"* saith He, *"when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and shut the door, and pray to thy Father in secret, and He who seeth in secret shall reward thee."* If men are to reward thee, pour out thy prayer before men: if God is to reward thee, pour out thy prayer before Him; and close the door, lest the tempter enter. There-

fore the Apostle, because it is in our power to shut the door, the door of our hearts, not of our walls, for in it is our "closet,"-because it is in our power to shut this door, saith, "neither give place to the devil." But what is to "shut the door"? This door hath as it were two leaves, desire and fear. Either thou desireth something earthly, and he enters by this; or thou fearest something earthly, and he enters by that. Close then the door of fear and desire against the devil, open it to Christ. How dost thou open these folding doors to Christ? By desiring the kingdom of heaven, by fearing the fire of hell. By desire of this world the devil entereth, by desire of eternal life Christ entereth; by fear of temporal punishment the devil entereth, by fear of everlasting fire Christ entereth. ...

3. "My tribulation I will proclaim in His sight. There is a repetition, both in the two preceding sentences, and in these which follow: the sentiments are two, but both twice expressed. ...For, "in His sight," is the same as "before Him; "I will proclaim my tribulation," is the same as, "I will pour out my prayer. When doest thou this? Being set in the midst of persecution, he saith, "while my spirit failed from me" (ver. 3). Wherefore hath thy spirit failed, O martyr, set in tribulation? That I may not claim my strength as mine own, that I may know that Another worketh in me the goodness I have. And men perhaps have heard that my spirit hath failed within me, and have despaired of me, and have said, "we have taken him captive, we have overpowered him; "and Thou hast known my paths. They thought me cast down, Thou didst see me standing upright. They who persecuted me and had seized me, thought my feet entangled, "but their feet were entangled, and they fell, but we are risen, and stand upright. For mine eyes are ever unto the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. I have persevered in walking, for "lie that shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved. They thought me overpowered, but I continued walking. Where did I walk?

In paths which they saw not, who thought me prisoner, in the paths of Thy righteousness, in the paths of Thy commandments. ...For every path is a way, but not every way is a path. Why then are those ways called paths, save because they are narrow? Broad is the way of the wicked, narrow the way of the righteous. That which is "the way" is also "the ways," just as "the Church" is also "the Churches," the "heaven" also the "heavens: they are spoken of in the plural, they are spoken of also in the singular. On account of the unity of the Church it is one Church; "My dove is one, she is the only one of her

mother. On account of the congregation of brethren in various places there are many Churches. "The Churches of Judaea which are in Christ rejoiced," saith Paul, "and they glorified God in me. Thus he spake of Churches; and of one Church he thus speaketh, "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God." ...

4. "In this way, wherein I was walking, they hid a trap for me. This "way wherein I was walking," is Christ; there have they laid a trap for me, who persecute me in Christ, for Christ's Name's sake. There then "have they hid for me a trap. What in me do they hate, what in me do they persecute? That I am a Christian. ...For the heretics too wish to hide a stumbling-block for us in the Name of Christ, and are themselves deceived. What they think that they put in the way, they put outside the way, for they themselves are outside the way. They cannot set a trap where themselves are not. ...The Pagan thinketh to put a stumbling-block in the way, when he saith to me, "Thou worshippest a crucified God. He findeth fault with the Cross of Christ, which he understandeth not. He thinketh that he setteth in Christ, what he setteth near the way. I will not depart from Christ, so shall I not fall from the way into the trap. Let him mock at Christ crucified, let me see the Cross of Christ on the foreheads of kings. What he laugheth at, therein am I saved. Nought is prouder than a sick man, who laugheth at his own medicine. If he laughed not at it, he would take it, and be healed. The Cross is the sign of humility, but he through excess of pride acknowledgeth not that whereby may be healed the swelling of his soul.

But if I acknowledge, I am walking in the way. So far am I from blushing at the Cross, that in no secret place do I keep the Cross of Christ, but bear it on my forehead. Many sacraments we receive, one in one way another in another: some as ye know we receive with the mouth, some we receive over the whole body. But because the forehead is the seat of the blush of shame, He who said, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My Father which is in heaven," set, so to speak, that very ignominy which the Pagans mock at, in the seat of our shame. Thou hearest a man assail a shameless man and say, "He hath no forehead. What is, "He hath no forehead"? He hath no shame. Let me not have a bare forehead, let the Cross of my Lord cover it. ...

5. "I considered upon the right hand, and saw" (ver. 4). He considered upon the right hand, and saw: whoso considereth upon the left hand, is

blinded. What is to consider on the right hand? Where they will be to whom shall be said, "Come, ye blessed of My Father," etc., ...He goeth on to say, "and there was none that knew me. For when thou fearest all things, who knoweth what thou regardest, whether thou directest thine eyes to the right hand or to the left? If, in bearing, thou seekest the praise of men, thou hast regarded the left: if, in bearing, thou seekest the promises of God, thou hast regarded the right hand. Hast thou regarded the right hand, thou shalt see: hast thou regarded the left hand, thou shalt be blinded. But even when thou seest on the right hand, there will be none to know thee. For who comforteth thee save the Lord? "Flight hath perished from me. He speaketh as though he were hemmed in. Let the persecutors rejoice over him; he is overpowered, he is taken, he is hemmed in, he is conquered. "Flight hath perished" from him who fleeth not. But he who fleeth not, suffereth whatever he can for Christ: that is, he fleeth not in soul. For in body it is lawful to flee; it is allowed, it is permitted; for the Lord saith, "When they persecute you in one city, flee to another. He then who fleeth not in soul, from him "flight hath perished.

But it maketh a difference why he fleeth not; whether because he is hemmed in, because he is caught, or because he is brave. For both from him that is caught flight hath perished, and from him that is brave flight hath perished. What flight then is to be avoided? what flight shall we allow to perish from us? That whereof the Lord speaketh in the Gospel, "The Good Shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, when he seeth the wolf coming, fleeth. When he seeth the ravager, why fleeth he? "Because he careth not for the sheep." ...In two ways a man's life is sought, either by his persecutors or by his lovers. So then "there is none to seek my life," he said of them; verily they persecute my life, and they seek not my life. But if they seek my life, they will find it clinging to Thee: and if they know to seek it, they know also to imitate it.

6. "Unto thee have I cried, O Lord: I have said, Thou art my hope" (ver. 5). When I endured, when I was in tribulation, "I said, Thou art my hope." My hope here, therefore I endure. But "my portion," not here, but "in the land of the living." God giveth a portion in the land of the living; but not something from Himself without Himself. What will He give to one that loveth Him, save Himself? 7. "Give heed unto my prayer, for much have I been humbled" (ver. 6). Humbled by persecutors, humbled in confession. He

humbleth himself out of the sight of man: he is humbled by enemies in their sight. Therefore is he lifted up by Him both visibly and invisibly. Invisibly are the martyrs already lifted up; visibly shall they be lifted up, "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption" in the resurrection of the dead; when this very part of him, against which alone her persecutors could rage, shall be renewed. "Fear not them that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. And what perisheth? what kill they? ...Why then art thou anxious about the rest of thy members, when thou shall not lose even a hair?" "Deliver me from them that persecute me. From whom thinkest thou that he prayeth to be delivered? From men who persecuted him? Is it so? are merely men our enemies? We have other enemies, invisible, who persecute us in another way. Man persecuteth, that he may slay the body; another persecuteth, that he ensnare the soul. ...There are then other enemies of ours too, from whom we ought to pray God to deliver us, lest they lead us astray, either by crushing us with troubles of this world, or alluring us by its enticements. Who are these enemies? Let us see whether they are plainly described by any servant of the Lord, by any soldier, now perfected, who hath engaged with them.

Hear the Apostle saying, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood: as though he would say, Turn not your hatred against men; think not them your enemies; think not that it is by their hostility you are being bruised; these men whom ye fear are flesh and blood. ..."For they are strengthened over me. Who said, "they are strengthened over me"? The Body of Christ crieth out; it is the voice of the Church; the members of Christ cry out, "Much hath the number of sinners increased. "Because iniquity hath abounded, the love of many waxeth cold." 8. "Bring forth my soul out of prison, that it may confess to Thy Name" (ver. 7). This "prison" has been variously understood by former writers. And perhaps it is the prison which is called in the title, "the cave. For the title of this Psalm runneth thus: "Of understanding to David himself, a prayer when he was in the cave. That which is the cave, the same is also the prison. Two things have we set before us to understand, but when we have understood one, both will be understood. A man's deserts make a prison. For in one dwelling place one man finds a house, another a prison. ...To some then it has seemed that the "cave" and "prison" are this world; and this the Church prayeth, that it may be brought out of prison, that is, from this world, from under the sun, where all is vanity. Beyond this world then God promiseth that we shall be in some sort of rest; therefore perhaps do we cry

concerning this place, "Bring my soul out of prison. Our soul by faith and hope is in Christ; "Your life is hid with Christ in God. But our body is in this prison, in this world. ...But some have said, that this prison and cave is this body, so that this is the meaning of, "Bring my soul out of prison. But this interpretation too is somewhat at fault. For what great thing is it to say, "Bring my soul out of prison," bring my soul out of the body?

Do not the souls of robbers and wicked men go forth from the body, and go into worse punishment than here they have endured? What great request then is this, "Bring my soul out of prison," when, sooner or later, it must needs come forth? Perhaps the righteous saith, "Let me die now; bring forth my soul from this prison of the body. If he be too hasty, he hath not love. He ought indeed to long for and desire, as the Apostle saith, "having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, which is far better. But where is love? Therefore it followeth, "but to abide in the flesh is needful for you. Let God then lead us forth from the body, when He will. Our body too might be said to be a prison, not because that is a prison which God hath made, but because it is under punishment and liable to death. For there are two things to be considered in our body, God's workmanship, and the punishment it has deserved. ...Perhaps then he meant by, "Bring my soul out of prison," bring my soul out of corruption. If thus we understand it, it is no blasphemy, the meaning is consistent. Lastly, brethren, as I think, he meant this; "Bring my soul out of prison," bring it out of straitness. For to one who rejoiceth, even a prison is wide; to one in sorrow, a field is strait. Therefore prayeth he to be brought out of straitness.

For though in hope he have enlargement, yet in reality at at present he is straitened. ...It is not the body that weigheth down the soul, but the corruptible body. It is not the body then that maketh the prison, but the corruption. "Bring my soul out of prison, that it may give thanks to Thy Name. Now the words which follow seem to come from the Head, our Lord Jesus Christ. And they are the same as yesterday's last words. Yesterday's last words, if ye remember, were, "I am alone, until I pass over. And here what are the last words? "The righteous shall sustain me, until thou recompense me."

PSALM 143

1. ...The title of the Psalm is, "To David himself, when his son was pursuing him." We know from the Books of Kings that this happened: ...but we must recognise here another David, truly "strong in hand," which is the explana-

tion of David, even our Lord Jesus Christ. For all those events of past time were figures of things to come. Let us seek then in this Psalm our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, announcing Himself beforehand in His prophecy, and foretelling what should happen at this time by things which were done long ago. For He Himself foretold Himself in the Prophets: for He is the Word of God. Nor did they say ought of this kind, save when filled with the Word of God. They announced then Christ, being filled with Christ, they went before Him about to come, and He deserted not them going before. ... 2. Let then our Lord speak; let Christ with us, whole Christ, speak. "Lord, hear my prayer, receive with Thine ears my entreaty" (ver. 1). "Hear" and "receive with ears" are the same thing. It is repetition, it is confirmation. "In Thy truth hear me, in Thy righteousness." Take it not without emphasis when it is said, "in Thy righteousness." For it is a commendation of grace, that none of us think his righteousness his own. For this is the righteousness of God, which God hath given thee to possess. For what saith the Apostle of them, who would boast of their own righteousness? Speaking of the Jews, he saith, "they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." ...Thou art perverse, because thou imputest what thou hast done ill to God, what well to thyself: thou wilt be right, when thou imputest what thou hast done ill to thyself, what well to God. ...Behold, "in Thy righteousness hear me." For when I look upon myself, nought else do I find mine own, save sin.

3. "And enter not into judgment with Thy servant" (ver. 2). Who are willing to enter into judgment with Him, save they who, "being ignorant of the righteousness of God, go about to establish their own?" Wherefore have we fasted, and Thou hast not seen; wherefore have we afflicted our souls, and Thou takest no knowledge? As though they would say, "We have done what Thou hast commanded, wherefore dost Thou not render to us what Thou hast promised? God answereth thee: I will give to thee to receive what I have promised: I have given thee that thou shouldest do that whereby thou mayest receive. Finally, to such proud ones the Prophet speaketh; "Wherefore will ye plead with Me? ye have all transgressed against Me, saith the Lord. Why will ye enter into judgment with Me, and recount your own righteousnesses? ..."For before Thee every one living shall not be justified. "Every one living; living, that is, here, living in the flesh, living in expectation of death; born a man; deriving his life of man; sprung from Adam, a living Adam; every one thus living may perhaps be justified before himself, but not before

Thee. How before himself? By pleasing himself, displeasing Thee. Enter not then into judgment with me, O Lord my God. How straight soever I seem to myself, Thou bringest forth a standard from Thy store-house, Thou fittest me to it, and I am found crooked. Well is it said, "with Thy servant.

It is unworthy of Thee to enter into judgment with Thy servant, or even with Thy friend. ...What of the Apostles themselves? ...That ye may perceive it at once, they learnt to pray what we pray: to them was given the pattern of prayer by the heavenly Counsellor. "After this manner," saith He, "pray ye. And having set down certain things first, He laid down this too to be said by the leaders of the sheep, the chief members of the Shepherd and Gatherer of the one flock; even they learnt to say, "Forgive us our debts. They said not, "Thanks be to Thee, who hast forgiven us our debts, as we too forgive our debtors," but, "Forgive, as we forgive. But surely the faithful prayed then, surely the Apostles prayed then, for this Lord's Prayer was given rather to the faithful. If those debts only were meant which are forgiven by Baptism, it would befit catechumens rather to say, "Forgive us our debts. Let the Apostles then say, yea let them say, "Forgive us our debts. And when it is said to them, "Wherefore say ye this? what are your debts? let them answer, "for in Thy sight every one living shall not be justified."

4. "For the enemy hath persecuted my soul: he hath humbled my life on the earth" (ver. 3). Here we speak, here our Head speaketh for us. Manifestly both the devil persecuted the Soul of Christ and Judas the Soul of his Master: and now too the same devil remaineth to persecute the Body of Christ, and one Judas succeedeth another. There lacketh not then of whom the Body too may say, "For the enemy hath persecuted my soul." For what doth each one who persecuteth us endeavour save to make us abandon our heavenly hope, and savour of the earth, yield to our persecutor, and love earthly things? "They have laid me in dark places, as the dead of the world." This ye hear more readily from the Head; this ye perceive more readily in the Head. For He died indeed for us, yet was He not one of the "dead of the world." For who are the "dead of the world"? And how was not He one of the "dead of the world"? "The dead of the world" are those who have died of their own desert, receiving the reward of iniquity, deriving death from the sin transmitted to them; according as it is said, "For I was conceived in iniquity." ...In dying, saith He, I do the will of My Father, but I am not deserving of death. Nought have I done wherefore I should die, yet is it Mine own doing that I die, that

by the death of an innocent One, they may be freed who had wherefore they should die. "They set me in places," as though in Hades, as though in the tomb, as though in His very Passion, "as the dead of the world."

5. "And My Spirit within me," saith He, "suffered weariness" (ver. 4). Remember, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Here we see one voice. Do we not see plainly the transition from the Head to the members, from the members to the Head? ... 6. But we too were there. He goes to the members. "I have called to mind the days of old" (ver. 5). Did He "call to mind the days of old," by whom every day was made? No, but the body speaketh, each one who has been justified by His grace, who dwelleth in Him in love and devout humility, speaketh and saith, "I have meditated upon all Thy works: plainly because Thou hast made all things good, and nothing would have stood fast, which was not established by Thee. Thy creation is made a spectacle unto me: I have sought in the work the Artificer, in all that is made the Maker. Wherefore this, to what purpose this, save that he might understand, that whatever there was of good in himself was made by Him. ... Look back then upon the Framer of thy life, the Author of thy substance, of thy righteousness, and of thy salvation: "meditate upon the works of His hands," for the righteousness too which is in thee, thou wilt find to pertain to His hand. Hear the Apostle teaching thee this, "not of works," he saith, "lest any should boast. Have we no good works? Plainly we have: but see what follows; "for we are His workmanship," saith he. "We are His workmanship: perhaps in thus speaking of workmanship, he meant to mention the nature whereby we are men? Evidently not: he was speaking of works. But let us not make conjectures;

let the text go on, "for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Think not then that thou thyself doest anything, save in so far as thou art evil. ..." "Work out your own salvation," saith the Apostle, "with fear and trembling. If we do work out our own salvation, wherefore with fear, wherefore with trembling, when what we work is in our own power? Hear wherefore with fear and trembling: "for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of His good pleasure. Therefore "with fear and trembling," that it may delight our Maker to work in the lowly valley. ... 7. "I stretched forth," saith he, "my hands to Thee: my soul is as a land without water to Thee" (ver. 6). Rain upon me, saith he, to bring forth from me good fruit. "For the Lord shall give sweetness, that our land may give her fruit." "I

have stretched forth my hands to Thee; my soul is as a land without water," not to me, but "to Thee." I can thirst for Thee, I cannot water myself. 8. "Speedily hear me, Lord" (ver. 7). For what need of delay to inflame my thirst, when already I thirst so eagerly? Thou didst delay the rain, that I might drink and imbibe, not reject, Thy inflowing. If then Thou didst for this cause delay, now give; for "my spirit hath failed." Let Thy Spirit fill me. This is the reason why Thou shouldest speedily hear me. I am now become "poor in spirit," make Thou me "blessed in the kingdom of heaven." For he in whom his own spirit liveth, is proud, is puffed up with his own spirit against God. ...

9. "Turn not Thou away Thy Face from me." Thou didst turn it away from me when proud. For once I was full, and in my fulness I was puffed up. Once "in my fulness I said, I shall never be moved." "I said in my fulness, I shall not be moved," knowing not Thy Righteousness, and establishing mine own; but "Thou, Lord, in Thy Will hast afforded strength to my beauty." "I said in my fulness, I shall not be moved," but from Thee came whatever) fulness I had. And to prove to me that it was from Thee, "Thou didst turn away Thy Face from me, and I was troubled." After this trouble, where into I was cast, because Thou didst turn away Thy Face, after the weariness of my spirit, after my heart was troubled within me, because Thou didst turn away Thy Face, then became I "like a land without water to Thee: turn not Thou away Thy Face." Thou turnedst it away from me when proud; give it back to me now I am humble. Because, if Thou turn it away, "I shall be like to them that go down into the pit. What is, that go down into the pit"? When the sinner has come into the depth of sins, he will show contempt. They "go down into the pit," who lose even confession; against which is said, "Let not the pit close her mouth over me." This depth Scripture calleth mostly "a pit," into which depth when a sinner hath come, "he showeth contempt" What is, "he showeth contempt"? He no longer believeth in Providence, or if he do believe, he thinketh that he has no longer aught to do with it. ...

10. "Make me to hear in the morning Thy mercy, for in Thee have I hoped" (ver. 8). Behold, I am in the night, yet "in Thee have I hoped," until the iniquity of the night pass away. "For we have," as Peter saith, "a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts." "Morning" then he calleth the time after the end of the world, when

we shall see what in this world we believe. But what here, until the morning come? For it is not enough to hope for the morning; we must do somewhat. Why do somewhat? God is to be sought with the hands in the night. What is, "with the hands"? By good works. Since then we must thus hope for the morning, and bear this night, and persevere in this patience until the day dawn, what meanwhile must we do here? lest perchance thou think that thou wilt do aught of thyself, whereby thou mayest earn to be brought to the morning. "Make known to me, O Lord, the way wherein I must walk." Therefore did He kindle the lamp of prophecy, therefore did He send the Lord in the vessel, as it were, of the flesh, who should even say, "My strength is dried up like a potsherd." Walk by prophecy, walk by the lamp of future things predicted, walk by the word of God. ...

11. "Deliver me from mine enemies, O Lord, for unto Thee have I fled for refuge" (ver. 9). I who once fled from Thee, now flee to Thee. For Adam fled from the Face of God, and hid himself among the trees of Paradise, so that of him was said in the Book of Job, "As a servant that fleeth from his Lord, and findeth a shadow." He fled from the Face of his Lord, and found a shadow. Woe to him, if he continue in the shade, lest it be said afterward, "All things are passed away like a shadow." The rulers of this world, of this darkness, the rulers of the wicked; against these ye wrestle. Great is your conflict, not to see your enemies, and yet to conquer. Against the rulers of this world, of this darkness, the devil, that is, and his angels not the rulers of that world, whereof is said, "the world was made by Him," but that world whereof is said, "the world knew Him not." "For unto Thee have I fled for refuge." ...Whither should I flee? "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?"

12. "Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God" (ver. 10). Glorious confession! glorious rule! "For Thou," saith he, "art my God." To another will I hasten to be re-made, if by another I was made. Thou art my all, "for Thou art my God." Shall I seek a father to get an inheritance? "Thou art my God," not only the Giver of mine inheritance, but mine Inheritance itself. "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance." Shall I seek a patron, to obtain redemption? "Thou art my God." Lastly, having been created, do I desire to be re-created? "Thou art my God," my Creator, who hast created me by Thy Word, and re-created me by Thy Word. "Teach Thou me :'" for it cannot be that Thou art my God, and yet I am to' be mine own master. See how grace is commended to us. This hold fast, this drink in, this let none drive out of

your hearts, lest ye have "a zeal, of God, but not according to knowledge." Say then this: "Thy good Spirit," not my bad one, "Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the right land." For my bad spirit hath led me into a crooked land. And what have I deserved? What can be reckoned as my good works without Thy aid, through which I might obtain and be worthy to be led by Thy Spirit into the right land?

13. Listen, then, with all your power, to the commendation of Grace, whereby ye are saved without price. "For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, Thou shalt quicken me in Thy righteousness" (ver. 11); not in mine own: not because I have deserved, but because Thou hast mercy. For were I to show mine own desert, nought should I deserve of Thee, save punishment. Thou hast pruned off from me mine own merits; Thou hast grafted in Thine own gifts. "Thou shalt bring forth my soul out of tribulation." "And in thy mercy shalt bring mine enemies to destruction: and thou shalt destroy all them that afflict my soul; for I am Thy servant" (ver. 12).

PSALM 144

1. The title of this Psalm is brief in number of words, but heavy in the weight of its mysteries. "To David himself against Goliath." This battle was fought in the time of our fathers, and ye, beloved, remember it with me from Holy Scripture. ...David put five stones in his scrip, he hurled but one. The five Books were chosen, but unity conquered. Then, having smitten and overthrown him, he took the enemy's sword, and with it cut off his head. This our David also did, He overthrew the devil with his own weapons: and when his great ones, whom he had in his power, by means of whom he slew other souls, believe, they turn their tongues against the devil, and so Goliath's head is cut off with his own sword. 2. "Blessed be the Lord my God, who teacheth my hands for battle, my fingers for war" (ver. 1). These are our words, if we be the Body of Christ. It seems a repetition of sentiment; "our hands for battle," and "our fingers for war," are the same. Or is there some difference between "hands" and "fingers"? Certainly both hands and fingers work. Not then without reason do we take "fingers" as put for "hands." But still in the "fingers" we recognise the division of operation, yet still a sort of unity. Behold that grace! the Apostle saith, To one, this; to another, that; "there are diversities of operations; all these worketh one and the self-same Spirit;" there is the root of unity. With these "fingers" then the Body of Christ fighteth, going forth to "war," going forth to "battle." ...By works of Mercy our enemy

is conquered, and we could not have works of mercy unless we had charity, and charity we could have none unless we received it by the Holy Ghost; He then "teacheth our hands for battle, and our fingers for war:" to Him right-fully do we say, "My Mercy," from whom we have also that we are merciful: "for he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy."

3. My Mercy and my Refuge, my Upholder and my Deliverer" (ver. 2). Much toileth this combatant, having his flesh lusting against his spirit. Keep what thou hast. Then shalt thou have in full what thou wishest, when "death shall have been swallowed up in victory;" when this mortal body has been raised, and is changed into the condition of the angels, and rises aloft to a heavenly quality. ...There is life, there are good days, where nought lusteth against the spirit, where it is not said, "Fight," but "Rejoice." But who is he that lusteth for these days? Every man certainly saith, "I do." Hear what followeth. I see that thou art toiling, I see that thou art engaged in battle, and in danger; hear what followeth: ..."Depart from evil, and do good:" let not the poor first weep under thee, that the poor may rejoice through thee. For what reward, since now thou art fighting? "Seek peace, and ensue it." Learn and say, "My Mercy and my Refuge, mine Upholder and my Deliverer, my Protector:" "mine Upholder," lest I fall; "my Deliverer," lest I stick; "my Protector," lest I be stricken. In all these things, in all my toil, in all my battles, in all my difficulties, in Him have I hoped, "who subdueth my people under me." Behold, our Head speaketh together with us.

4. "Lord, what is man, that Thou hast become known unto him?" (ver. 3). All is included in "that Thou hast become known unto him." "Or the son of man, that Thou valuest him?" Thou valuest him, that is, Thou makest him of such importance, Thou countest him of such price, Thou knowest under what Thou placest him, over what Thou placest him. For valuing is considering the price of a thing. How greatly did He value man, who for him shed the blood of His only-begotten Son! For God valueth not man in the same way as one man valueth another he, when he findeth a slave for sale, giveth a higher price for a horse than for a man. Consider how greatly He valued thee, that thou mayest be able to say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" And how greatly did He value thee, "who spared not His own Son"? "How shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?" He who giveth this food to the combatant, what keepeth He in store for the conqueror? ...

5. "Man is made like unto vanity: his days pass away like a shadow" (ver. 4). What vanity? Time, which passeth on, and floweth by. For this "vanity" is said in comparison of the Truth, which ever abideth, and never faileth: for it too is a work of His Hand, in its degree. "For," as it is written, "God filled the earth with His good things." What is "His"? That accord with Him. But all these things, being earthly, fleeting, transitory, if they be compared to that Truth, where it is said, "I Am That I Am,"⁽³⁾ all this which passeth away is called "vanity." For through time it vanisheth, like stroke into the air. And why should I say more than that which the Apostle James said, willing to bring down proud men to humility, "What is," saith he, "your life? It is even a vapour, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." ...Work then, though it be in the night, with thine hands, that is, by good works seek God, before the day come which shall gladden thee, lest the day come which shall sadden thee. For see how safely thou workest, who art not left by Him whom thou seekest; "that thy Father which seeth in secret may reward thee openly." ...

6. "Lord, bow Thy heavens, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke" (ver. 5). "Flash Thy lightning, and Thou shall scatter them; send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shall confound them" (ver. 6). "Send forth Thy Hand from above, and deliver me, and draw me out of many waters" (ver. 7). The Body of Christ, the humble David, full of grace, relying on God, fighting in this world, calleth for the help of God. What are "heavens bowed down"? Apostles humbled. For those "heavens declare the glory of God;" and of these heavens declaring the glory of God it is presently said, "There is neither speech nor language, but their voices are heard among them," etc. When then these heavens sent forth their voices through all lands, and did wonderful things, while the Lord flashed and thundered from them by miracles and commandments, the gods were thought to have come down from heaven to men. For certain of the Gentiles, thinking this, desired even to sacrifice to them. ...But they commended to these the Lord Jesus Christ, humbling themselves, that God might be praised; because "the heavens" were "bowed," that "God" might "come down." ... "Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke." So long as they are not touched, they seem to themselves great: they are now about to say, "Great art Thou, O Lord:" the mountains also are about to say, "Thou only art the Most Highest over all the earth."

7. But there are some that conspire, that "gather themselves together against the Lord, and against His Christ. They have come together, they have conspired. "Flash forth Thy lightnings, and Thou shall scatter them. Abound with Thy miracles, and their conspiracy shall be broken. ..."Send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shall confound them. Let the unsound be wounded, that, being well wounded, they may be made sound; and let them say, being set now in the Church, in the Body of Christ, let them say with the Church, "I am wounded with Love. "Send forth Thine Hand from on high. What afterward? What in the end? How conquereth the Body of Christ? By heavenly aid. "For the Lord Himself shall come with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God shall He descend from heaven," Himself the Saviour of the body, the Hand of God. What is, "Out of many waters"? From many peoples. What peoples? Aliens, unbelievers, whether assailing us from without, or laying snares within. Take me out of many waters, in which Thou didst discipline me, in which Thou didst roll me, to free me from my filth. This is the "water of contradiction." ..."From the hand of strange children. Hear, brethren, among whom we are, among whom we live, from whom we long to be delivered. "Whose mouth hath spoken vanity" (ver. 8).

All of you to-day, if ye had not gathered yourselves together to these divine shows of the word of God, and were not at this hour engaged in them, how great vanities would ye be hearing! "whose mouth hath spoken vanity: when, in short, would they, speaking vanity, hear you speaking vanity? "And their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. What doest thou among them with thy pastoral scrip with five stones in it? Say it to me in another form: that same law which thou hast signified by five stones, signify in some other way also. "I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God" (ver. 9). "A new song" is of grace; "a new song" is of the new man; "a new song" is of the New Testament. But lest thou shouldest think that grace departeth from the law, whereas rather by grace the law is fulfilled, "upon a psaltery of ten strings will I sing unto Thee. Upon the law of ten commandments: therein may I sing to Thee; therein may I rejoice to Thee; therein may "I sing to Thee a new song; for, "Love is the fulfilling of the law. But they who have not love may carry the psaltery, sing they cannot. Contradiction cannot make my psaltery to be silent.

8. "Who giveth salvation to kings, who redeemeth David His servant" (ver. 10). Ye know who David is; be yourselves David. Whence "redeemeth He David His servant"? Whence redeemeth He Christ? Whence redeemeth He the Body of Christ? "From the sword of ill intent deliver me." "From the sword" is not sufficient; he addeth, "of ill intent." Without doubt there is a sword of good intent. What is the sword of good intent? That whereof the Lord saith, "I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword." For He was about to separate believers from unbelievers, sons from parents, and to sever all other ties, while the sword cut off what was diseased, but healed the members of Christ. Of good intent then is the sword twice sharpened, powerful with both edges, the Old and New Testaments, with the narration of the past and the promise of the future. That then is the sword of good intent: but the other is of ill intent, wherewith they talk vanity, for that is of good intent, wherewith God speaketh verity. For truly "the sons of men have teeth which are spears and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword." "From" this "sword deliver me" (ver. 11). "And. take me out of the hand of strange children, whose mouth hath spoken vanity:" just as before. And that which followeth, "their right hand is a right hand of iniquity," the same he had set down before also, when he called them "many waters." For lest thou shouldst think that the "many waters" were good waters, he explained them by the "sword of ill intent."

9. "Whose sons are like young vines firmly planted in their youth" (ver. 12). He wisheth to recount their happiness. Observe, ye sons of light, sons of peace: observe, ye sons of the Church, members of Christ; observe whom he calleth "strangers," whom he calleth "strange children," whom he calleth "waters of contradiction," whom he calleth a "sword of ill intent. Observe, I beseech you, for among them ye are in peril, among their tongues ye fight against the desires of your flesh, among their tongues, set in the hand of the devil wherewith he fighteth. ...What vanity hath their mouth spoken, and how is their right hand a right hand of iniquity? "Their daughters are fitted and adorned after the similitude of a temple. "Their garners are full, bursting out from one store to another: their sheep are fruitful, multiplying in their streets" (ver. 13): "their oxen are fat: their hedge is not broken down, nor their road, nor is their crying in their streets" (ver. 14). Is not this then happiness? I ask the sons of the kingdom of heaven, I ask the offspring of everlasting resurrection, I ask the body of Christ, the members of Christ, the

temple of God. Is not this then happiness, to have sons safe, daughters beautiful, garners full, cattle abundant, no downfall, I say not of a wall, but not even of a hedge, no tumult and clamour in the streets, but quiet, peace, abundance, plenty of all things in their houses and in their cities? Is not this then happiness?

or ought the righteous to shun it? or findest thou not the house of the righteous too abounding with all these things, full of this happiness? Did not Abraham's house abound with gold, silver, children, servants, cattle? What say we? is not this happiness? Be it so, still it is on the left hand. What is, on the left hand? Temporal, mortal, bodily. I desire not that thou shun it, but that thou think it not to be on the right hand. ...For what ought they to have set on the right hand? God, eternity, the years of God which fail not, whereof is said, "and Thy years shall not fail. There should be the right hand, there should be our longing. Let us use the left for the time, let us long for the fight for eternity. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." 10. "They have called the people blessed who have these things" (ver. 15). O men that speak vanity! They have lost the true right hand, wicked and perverse, they have put on the benefits of God inversely. O wicked ones, O speakers of vanity, O strange children! What was on the left hand, they have set on the right. What dost thou, David? What dost thou, Body of Christ? What do ye, members of Christ? What do ye, not strange children, but children of God? ...What say ye? Say ye with us, "Blessed is the people whose Lord is their God."

PSALM 145

1. ...The title is, "Praise, to David himself. Praise to Christ Himself. And since He is called David, who came to us of the seed of David, yet He was our King, ruling us, and bringing us into His kingdom, therefore "Praise to David himself" is understood to mean, Praise to Christ Himself. Christ according to the flesh is David, because He is the Son of David: but according to His Divine Nature He is the Creator of David, and Lord of David. "I will exalt Thee, my God, my King; and I will bless Thy Name for the age, and age upon age" (ver. 1). Ye see that the praise of God is here begun, and this praise is carried on even to the end of the Psalm. ...Now then begin to praise, if thou intendest to praise for ever. He who will not praise in this transitory "age," will be silent when "age upon age" has come. But lest any one should in any otherwise also understand what he saith, "I will praise Thy Name for the

age," and should seek another age, wherein to praise, he saith, "Every day will I bless Thee" (ver. 2). Praise then and bless the Lord thy God every day, that when single days have passed, and there has come one day without end, thou mayest go from praise to praise, as "from strength to strength. No day shall pass by, wherein I bless Thee not. And it is no wonder, if in thy day of joy thou bless the Lord.

What if perchance some day of sorrow hath dawned on thee, as is natural in the circumstances of our mortal nature, as there is abundance of offences, as temptations are multiplied; what, if something sad befall thee, a man; wilt thou cease to praise God? wilt thou cease to bless thy Creator? If thou cease, thou hast lied in saying, "every day," etc. But if thou cease not, although it scent to thee to be ill with thee in the day of thy sorrow, yet in thy God it shall be well with thee. ... 2. "Great is the Lord, and very much to be praised" (ver. 3). How much was he about to say? what terms was he about to seek? How vast a conception hath he included in the one word, "very much"? Imagine what thou wilt, for how can that be imagined, which cannot be contained? "He is very much to be praised. And of His Greatness there is no end;" therefore said he "very much:" lest perchance thou begin to wish to praise, and think that thou canst reach the end of His praises, whose Greatness can have no end. Think not then that He, whose Greatness has no end, can ever be enough praised by thee. Is it not then better that as He has no end, so neither should thy praise have end? His Greatness is without end; let thy praise also be without end. ...

3. For how great things besides has His boundless Goodness and illimitable Greatness made, which we do not know! When we lift the gaze of our eyes even to the heaven, and then recall it from sun, moon, and stars to the earth, and there is all this space where our sight can wander; beyond the heavens who can extend the eyesight of his mind, not to say of his flesh? So far then as His works are known to us, let us praise Him through His works. "Generation and generation shall praise Thy works" (ver. 4). Every generation shall praise Thy works. For perhaps every generation is meant by "generation and generation." ...Did he perchance mean to imply two generations by that repetition? For we are in this generation sons of God, we shall be in another generation sons of the Resurrection. Scripture hath called us "sons of the Resurrection; the Resurrection itself it hath called Regeneration. "In the regeneration," it saith, "when the Son of Man shall be seated in His Majesty.

So also in another place; "For they shall not marry, nor be given in marriage, for they are the sons of the Resurrection. Therefore "generation and generation shall praise Thy works. ...And they shall tell out Thine excellence. For neither shall they praise Thy works, save in order to "tell out Thine excellence. Boys at school are set to praise, and all such things are set before them to be praised, as God hath wrought:

a mortal is set to praise the sun, the sky, the earth; to come to even lesser things, to praise a rose., or a laurel; all these are works of God: they are set, they are undertaken, they are praised: the works are lauded, of the Worker they are silent. I desire in the works to praise the Creator: I love not a thankless praiser. Dost thou praise what He hath made, and art silent of Him who made? In that which thou seest, what is it that thou praisest? The form, the usefulness, some virtue, some power in the things. If beauty delight thee, what is more beautiful than the Maker? If usefulness be praised, what more useful than He who made all things? If excellence be praised, what more excellent than He by whom all things were made? ... 4. "They shall speak of the magnificence of the glory of Thy Holiness, and shall record Thy wondrous deeds" (ver. 5). "And the excellence of Thy fearful works shall they speak of: and Thy greatness, they shall relate it" (ver. 6). "The remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth" (ver. 7): none but Thine. See whether this man, meditating on Thy works, hath turned aside from the Worker to the work: see whether he hath sunk from Him who made, to the things which He made. Of the things which He hath made, he hath made a step up to Him, not a descent from Him to them. For if thou love. these more than Him, thou wilt not have Him. And what profit is it to thee to overflow with the works, if the Worker leave thee? Truly thou shouldest love them; but love Him more, and love them for His sake. For He doth not hold out promises, without holding out threats also: if He held out no promises, there would be no encouragement; if He held out no threats, there would be no correction. They that praise Thee therefore shall "speak" also "of the excellence of Thy terrible deeds; the excellence of that work of Thy hands which punisheth and administereth discipline, they shall speak of, they shall not be silent: for they shall not proclaim Thine everlasting kingdom, and be silent about Thine everlasting fire.

For the praise of God, setting thee in the way, ought to show thee both what thou shouldest love, and what thou shouldest fear; what thou shouldest

seek, and what thou shouldest shun; what thou shouldest choose, and what thou shouldest avoid. The time of choice is now, the time of receiving will be hereafter. Let then the excellence of Thy terrible things be told. Unlimited as it is, though "of Thy greatness there is no end," they shall not be silent about it. How shall they recount it, if there is no end of it? They shall recount it when they praise it; and because there is no end of it, so of His praise also there shall be no end. 5. "The remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth." O happy feasts! What shall they eat, who thus shall "pour forth"! ...So eat, that thou mayest pour forth again; so receive, that thou mayest give. Thou eatest, when thou learnest; thou pourest forth again, when thou teachest: thou eatest, when thou hearest; thou pourest forth again, when thou preacheest; but that thou pourest forth, which thou hast first eaten. Finally, that most eager feaster John, to whom the very table of the Lord sufficed not, unless he leaned on the Lord's breast, and of his inmost heart drank in divine secrets; what did he pour forth? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." How is it that it sufficeth not to say, "Thy remembrance;" or, "the remembrance of Thine abundance"? Because, what availeth it if it be abundant, yet not sweet? So also it is annoying if it be sweet but too little.

6. ...By "pouring forth" this, His preachers "shall exult in His righteousness" not in their own. What then hast Thou done unto us, O Lord, whom we praise, that we should be, that we should praise, that we should "exult in Thy righteousness," that we should "utter forth the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness"? Let us tell it, and, as we tell, let us praise. 7. "Merciful and pitiful is the Lord long-suffering, and very merciful" (ver. 8). "Sweet is the Lord to all, and His compassions reach into all His works" (ver. 9). Were. He not such as this, there would be no seeking to recover us. Consider thyself: what didst thou deserve, O sinner? Despiser of God, what didst thou deserve? See if aught occur to thee but penalty, if aught occur to thee but punishment. Thou seest then what was due to thee, and what He hath given, who gave gratis. There was given pardon to the sinner; there was given the spirit of justification; there was given charity and love, wherein thou mayest do all good works; and beyond this, He will give thee also life everlasting, and fellowship with the angels: all of His mercy. ...Hear the Scripture: "I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn, and live." By these words of God, he is brought back to hope; but there is another snare to

be feared, lest through this very hope he sin the more. What then didst thou also say, thou who through hope sinnest yet more? "Whensoever I turn, God will forgive me all; I will do whatsoever I will." Say not then, "To-morrow I will turn, to-morrow I will please God; and all to-day's and yesterday's deeds shall be forgiven me." Thou sayest true: God hath promised pardon to thy conversion; He hath not promised a to-morrow to thy delay.

8. "Sweet is the Lord to all, and His compassions are over all His works." Why then doth He condemn? why doth He scourge? Are not they whom He condemneth, whom He scourgeth, His works? Plainly they are. And wilt thou know how "His compassions are over all His works"? Thence is that long-suffering, whereby "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good." Are not "His compassions over all His works, who sendeth rain upon the just and upon the unjust"? In His long-suffering He waiteth for the sinner, saying, "Turn ye to Me, and I will turn to you." Are not "His compassions over all His works"? And when He saith, "Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," this is not His compassion, but His severity. His compassion is given to His works: His severity is not over His works, but over thy works. Lastly, if thou remove thine own evil works, and there remain in thee nought but His work, His compassion will not leave thee: but if thou leavest not thy works, there will be severity over thy works, not over His works.

9. "Let all Thy works, O Lord, confess to Thee, and let Thy saints bless Thee" (ver. 10). How so? Is not the earth His work? Are not the trees His work? Cattle, beasts, fish, fowl, are not they His works? Plainly they too are. And how shall these too confess to Him? I see indeed in the angels that His works confess to Him, for the angels are His works: and men are His works; and when men confess to Him, His works confess to Him; but have trees and stones the voice of confession? Yes, verily; "let all" His "works confess to" Him. What sayest thou? even the earth and the trees? ...But there ariseth the same question in regard of praise, as in regard of confession. For if earth and all things devoid of sensation therefore cannot confess, because they have no voice to confess with; neither will they be able to praise, because they have no voice to proclaim with. But do not those Three Children enumerate all things, as they walked amid the harmless flames, who had leisure not only not to fear, but even to praise God? They say to all things, heavenly and earthly, "Bless ye the Lord, praise Him and magnify Him for ever. Behold

how they praise. Let none think that the dumb stone or dumb animal hath reason wherewith to comprehend God. They who have thought this, have erred far from the truth. God hath ordered everything, and made everything:

to some He hath given sense and understanding and immortality, as to the angels; to some He hath given sense and understanding with mortality, as to man; to some He hath given bodily sense, yet gave them not understanding, or immortality, as to cattle: to some He hath given neither sense, nor understanding, nor immortality, as to herbs, trees, stones: yet even these cannot be wanting in their kind, and by certain degrees He hath ordered His creation, from earth up to heaven, from visible to invisible, from mortal to immortal. This framework of creation, this most perfectly ordered beauty, ascending from lowest to highest, descending from highest to lowest, never broken, but tempered together of things unlike, all praiseth God. Wherefore then doth all praise God? Because when thou considerest it, and seest its beauty, thou in it praisest God. The beauty of the earth is a kind of voice of the dumb earth. ...And this which thou hast found in it, is the very voice of its confession, that thou praise the Creator. When thou hast thought on the universal beauty of this world, doth not its very beauty as it were with one voice answer thee, "I made not myself, God made me"?

10. For when Thy saints bless Thee, what say they? "They shall tell the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy Power" (ver. 11). How powerful is God, who hath made the earth! how powerful is God, who hath filled the earth with good things! how powerful is God, who hath given to the animals each its own life! how powerful is God, who hath given different seeds to the womb of the earth, that they might make to spring up such various shoots, such beautiful trees! how powerful, how great is God! Do thou ask, creation answereth, and by its answer, as by the confession of the creature, thou, O saint of God, blestest God, and "talkest of His power." 11. "That they may make known to the sons of men Thy power, and the glory of the greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom" (ver. 12). Thy saints then commend "the glory of the greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom," the glory of the greatness of its beauty. There is a certain "greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom:" that is, Thy kingdom hath beauty, and great beauty. Since whatever hath beauty, hath beauty from Thee, how great beauty hath Thy whole kingdom! Let not the kingdom frighten us: it hath beauty also, wherewith to delight us. For

what is that beauty, which the saints shall hereafter enjoy, to whom it shall be said, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, enjoy the kingdom"? Whence shall they come? whither shall they come? Behold, brethren, and, if ye can, as far as ye can, think of the beauty of that kingdom which is to come; whence our prayer saith, "Thy kingdom come." For that kingdom we desire may come, that kingdom the saints proclaim to be coming. Observe this world: it is beautiful. How beautiful are earth, sea, air, heavens, stars. Do not all these frighten him who considereth them? Is not the beauty of them so conspicuous, that it seemeth as though nothing more beautiful could be found? And here, in this beauty, in this fairness almost unspeakable, here worm and mice and all creeping things of the earth live with thee, they live with thee in all this beauty. How great is the beauty of that kingdom where none but angels live with Thee! There is a greatness of a certain beauty; let it be loved before it is seen, that when it is seen, it may be retained.

12. "Thy kingdom. What kingdom mean I? "a kingdom of all ages. For the kingdom of this age too hath its own beauty, but there is not in it that greatness of beauty, such as in the "kingdom of all ages. "And Thy dominion is in every generation and generation" (ver. 13). This is the repetition we noticed, signifying either every generation, or the generation which will be after this generation. "Faithful is the Lord in His words, and holy in all His works. "Faithful is the Lord in His words: for what hath He promised that He hath not given? "Faithful is the Lord in His words. Hereto there are certain things which He hath promised, and hath not given; but let Him be believed from the things which He hath given. We might well believe Him, if He only spake: He willed not that we should believe Him speaking, but that we should have His Scriptures in our hands: ...as though a kind of bond of God's, which all who pass by might read, and might keep to the path of its promise. And how great things hath He already paid in accordance with that bond! Do men hesitate to believe Him concerning the Resurrection of the dead and the Life to come, which alone now remaineth to be paid, when, if He come to reckon with the unbelievers, the unbelievers must blush? If God say to thee, "Thou hast My bond:

I have promised judgment, the separation of good and bad, everlasting life for the faithful, and wilt thou not believe? There in My bond read all that I have promised, reckon with me: verily even by counting up what I have paid, thou canst believe that I shall pay what still I owe. In that bond

thou hast My only-begotten Son promised, "Whom I spared not, but gave Him up for you all: reckon this then among what is paid. Read the bond: I promised therein that I would give by My Son the earnest of the Holy Spirit: reckon that as paid. I promised therein the blood and the crowns of the glorious Martyrs; let the White Mass remind you that My debt has been paid. ...He setteth before the eyes of all His payment of His debts: some He hath paid in the time of our ancestors, which we saw not: some He hath paid in our times, which they saw not; throughout all generations He hath paid what was written. And what remaineth? Do men not believe Him, when He hath paid all this? What remaineth? Behold thou hast reckoned: all this He hath paid: is He become unfaithful for the few things which remain? God forbid! Wherefore? Because "the Lord is faithful in His words, and holy in all His works."

13. "The Lord strengtheneth all that are falling" (ver. 14). But who are "all that are falling"? All indeed fall in a general sense, but he meaneth those who fall in a particular way. For many fall from Him, many also fall from their own imaginations. If they had evil imaginations, they fall from them, and "God strengthened all that are falling." They who lose anything in this world, yet are holy, are as it were dishonoured in this world, from rich become poor, from honoured of low estate, yet are they God's saints; they are, as it were, falling. But "God strengtheneth." For "the just falleth seven times, and riseth again; but the wicked shall be weakened in evils." When evils befall the wicked, they are weakened thereby; when evils befall the righteous, "the Lord strengtheneth all that are falling." ..."And lifteth up all those that have been cast down:" all, that is, who belong to him; for "God resisteth the proud."

14. "The eyes of all hope upon Thee, and Thou givest them food in due season" (ver. 15). Just as when thou refreshest a sick man in due season, when he ought to receive, then Thou givest, and what he ought to receive, that Thou givest. Sometimes then men long, and he giveth not: he who tendeth, knoweth the time to give. Wherefore say I this, brethren? Lest any one be faint, if perchance he hath not been heard, when making some righteous request of God. For when he maketh any unrighteous request, he is heard to his punishment: but when making some righteous request of God, if perchance he have not been heard, let him not be down-hearted, let him not faint, let his eyes wait for the food, which He giveth in due season. When He

giveth not, He therefore giveth not, lest that which He giveth do harm. ..."Thou givest them meat in due season."

15. "Thou openest Thine Hand, and fillest every living thing with blessing" (ver. 16). Though sometimes Thou givest not, yet "in due season" Thou givest: Thou delayest, not deniest, and that in due season." "Righteous is the Lord in all His ways, and holy in all His works" (ver. 17). Both when He smiteth and when He healeth, He is righteous, and in Him unrighteousness is not. Finally, all His saints, when set in the midst of tribulation, have first praised His righteousness, and so sought His blessings. They first have said, "What Thou doest is righteous." So did Daniel ask, and other holy men: "Righteous are Thy judgments: rightly have we suffered: deservedly have we suffered." They laid not unrighteousness to God, they laid not to Him injustice and folly. First they praised Him scourging, and so they felt Him feeding. 16. "The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him" (ver. 18). Where then is that, "Then shall they call upon Me, and I will not hear them"? See then what follows: "all who call upon Him in truth." For many call upon Him, but not in truth. They seek something else from Him, but seek not Himself. Why lovest thou God? "Because He hath made me whole." That is clear: it was He that made thee so. For from none else cometh health, save Him. "Because He gave me," saith another, "a rich wife, whereas I before had nothing, and one that obeyeth me." This too He gave: thou sayest true. "He gave me," saith another, "sons many and good, He gave me a household, He gave me all good things." Dost thou love Him for this? ...Therefore if God is good, who hath given thee what thou hast, how much more blessed wilt thou be when He hath given thee Himself! Thou hast desired all these things of Him: I beseech thee desire of Him Himself also. For these things are not truly sweeter than He is, nor in any way are they to be compared to Him. He then who preferreth God Himself to all the things which he has received, whereat he rejoiceth, to the things he has received, he "callest upon God in truth." ...

17. "He will perform the will of them that fear Him" (ver. 19). He will perform it, He will perform it: though He perform it not at once, yet He will perform it. Certainly if therefore thou fearest God, that thou mayest do His will, behold even He in a manner ministereth to thee; He doeth thy will. "And He shall hear their prayer, and save them." Thou seem that for this purpose the Physician hears, that He may save. When? Hear the Apostle telling thee. "For we are saved in hope: but hope which is seen is not hope: but if

what we see not we hope for, then do we with patience wait for it: "the salvation," that is, which Peter calleth "ready to be revealed in the last time." 18. "The Lord guardeth all that love Him, and all sinners He will destroy" (ver. 20). Thou seest that there is severity with Him, with whom is so great sweetness. He will save all that hope in Him, all the faithful, all that fear Him, all that call upon Him in truth: "and all sinners He will destroy." What "all sinners," save those who persevere in sin; who dare to blame God, not themselves; who daily argue against God; who despair of pardon for their sins, and from this very despair heap up their gins; or who perversely promise themselves pardon, and through this very promise depart not from their sins and impiety? The time will come for all these to be separated, and for the two divisions to be made of them, one on the right hand, the other on the left; and for the righteous to receive the everlasting Kingdom, the wicked to go into everlasting fire. Since this is so, and we have heard the blessing of the Lord, the works of the Lord, the wondrous things of the Lord, the mercies of the Lord, the severity of the Lord, His Providence over all His works, the confession of all His works; observe how He concludeth in His praise, "My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless His holy Name for ever and ever" (ver. 21).

PSALM 146

1. ...Behold the Psalm soundeth; it is the voice of some one (and that some one are ye, if ye will), of some one encouraging his soul to praise God, and saying to himself, "Praise the Lord, O my soul" (ver. 1). For sometimes in the tribulations and temptations of this present life, whether we will or no, our soul is troubled; of which troubling he speaketh in another Psalm. But to remove this troubling, he suggesteth joy; not as yet in reality, but in hope; and saith to it when troubled and anxious, sad and sorrowing, "Hope in God, for I will yet confess to Him." ... 2. But who saith it, and to whom saith he it? What shall we say, brethren? Is it the flesh that saith, "Praise thou the Lord, O my soul"? And can the flesh suggest good counsel to the soul? However much the flesh be conquered, and subjected as a servant to us through strength which the Lord imparteth, that it serve us entirely as a bond slave, enough for us that it hinder us not. ...For the body, inasmuch as it is the body, is even beneath the soul; and every soul, however vile, is found more excellent than the most excellent body. And let not this seem to you to be wonderful, that even any vile and sinful soul is better than any great and

most surpassing body. It is better, not in deserts, but in nature. The soul indeed is sinful, is stained with certain defilements of lusts; yet gold, though rusted, is better than the most polished lead. Let your mind then run over every part of creation, and ye will see that what we are saying is not incredible, that a soul, however blameable, is yet more praiseworthy than a praiseworthy body. There are two things, a soul and a body. The soul I chide, the body I praise: the soul I chide, because it is sinful; the body I praise, because it is sound. Yet it is in its own kind that I praise the soul, and in its own kind that I blame the soul:

and so in its own kind I praise the body, or blame it. If you ask me which is better, what I have blamed or what I have praised, wondrous is the answer thou wilt receive. ...So you speak of the best horse and the worst man: yet thou preferrest the man thou findest fault with to the horse thou praisest. ...The nature of the soul is more excellent than the nature of the body: it surpasseth it by far, it is a thing spiritual, incorporeal, akin to the substance of God. It is somewhat invisible, it ruleth the body, moveth the limbs, guideth the senses, prepareth thoughts, putteth forth actions, taketh in images of countless things; who is there, in short, beloved brethren, who may suffice for the praises of the soul? And yet such is the grace given to it, that this man saith, "Praise the Lord, O my soul." ...It is not the flesh that saith it. Let the body be angel-like, still it is inferior to the soul, it cannot give advice to its superior. The flesh when duly obedient is the handmaid of the soul: the soul rules, the body obeys; the soul commands, the body performs; how then can the flesh give this advice to the soul? Is it then perchance the soul herself, who saith to herself, and in a manner commandeth herself, and exhorteth and asketh herself? For through certain passions in one part of her nature she wavered;

but in another part, which they call the reasonable mind, the wisdom whereby she thinks, clinging to God, and now sighing towards Him, she perceives that certain inferior parts of her are troubled by worldly emotions, and by a certain excitement of earthly desires, betake them to outward things, leaving God who is within; so she recalleth herself from things outward to inward, from lower to higher, and says, "Praise the Lord, O my soul." ...The soul itself giveth itself counsel from the light of God by the reasonable mind, whereby it conceiveth the wisdom fixed in the everlasting nature of its Author. It readeth there of somewhat to be feared, to be praised,

to be loved, to be longed for, and sought after: as yet it graspeth it not, it comprehendeth it not; it is, as it were, dazzled with brightness; it has not strength to abide there. Therefore it gathers itself, as it were, into a sound state, and saith, "Praise the Lord, O my soul." ...And then the soul, weighed down, as it were, and unable to stand up as is fitting, answereth the mind, "I will praise the Lord in my life" (ver. 2). What is, "in my life"? Because now I am in my death. Therefore first encourage thyself, and say, "Praise the Lord, O my soul. Thy soul answereth thee, I do praise so far as I can, slightly, poorly, weakly. Wherefore? Because, "while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord." ...

3. "In my life." Now what has it? It might answer thee, "My death." Whence, "My death"? because I am absent from the Lord. For if to cling to Him is life, to depart from Him is death. But what comforteth thee? Hope. Now thou livest in hope: in hope praise, in hope sing. Thy death is from the sadness of this life, thou livest in hope of a future life. And how wilt thou praise thy Lord? "I will sing unto my God, as long as I have my being." What sort of praise is this, "I will sing unto my God as long as I have being"? Behold, my brethren, what sort of being this will be; where there will be everlasting praise, there will be also everlasting being. Behold, now thou hast being: dost thou sing unto God as long as thou hast being? Behold, thou wast singing, and hast turned thyself away to some business, thou singest no longer, yet thou hast being: thou hast being, yet thou singest not. It may be also thy desire turneth thee to somewhat; not only dost thou not sing, but thou even offendest His ears, yet thou hast being. What praise will that be, when thou praisest as long as thou hast being? But what meaneth, "as long as I have being"? Will there be any time when he will not be? Nay, rather, that "long" will be everlasting, and therefore it will be truly "long." For whatever hath end in time, however prolonged it is, is yet not "long." ...

4. "Put not your trust in princes" (ver. 3). Brethren, here we receive a mighty task; it is a voice from heaven, from above it soundeth to us. For now through some kind of weakness the soul of man, whensoever it is in tribulation here, despaireth of God, and chooseth to rely on man. Let it be said to one when set in some affliction, "There is a great man, by whom thou mayest be set free;" he smileth, he rejoiceth, he is lifted up. But if it is said to him, "God freeth thee," he is chilled, so to speak, by despair. The aid of a mortal is promised, and thou rejoicest; the aid of the Immortal is promised, and art

thou sad? It is promised thee that thou shalt be freed by one who needeth to be freed with thee, and thou exultest, as at some great aid: thou art promised that Liberator, who needeth none to free Him, and thou despairst, as though it were but a fable. Woe to such thoughts: they wander far; truly there is sad and great death in them. Approach, begin to long, begin to seek and to know Him by whom thou wast made. For He will not leave His work, if He be not left by His work.

5. ... "His breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth: in that day shall all his thoughts perish" (ver. 4). Where is swelling? where is pride? where is boasting? But perhaps he will have passed to a good place, if indeed he have passed. For I know not whither he who spake thus hath passed. For he spake in pride; and I know not whither such men pass, save that I look into another Psalm, and see that their passage is an evil one. "I beheld the wicked lifted up above the cedars of Libanus, and I passed by, and, lo, he was not; and I sought him, and his place was not found." The good man, who passed by, and found not the wicked, reached a place where the wicked is not. Wherefore, brethren, let us all listen: brethren, beloved of God, let us all listen; in whatsoever tribulation, in whatsoever longing for the heavenly gift, "let us not trust in princes, nor in sons of men, in whom is no salvation." All this is mortal, fleeting, perishable.

What then must we do, if we are not to hope in sons of men, nor in princes? What must we do? "Blessed is he whose Helper is the God of Jacob" (ver. 5): not this man or that man; not this angel or that angel; but, "blessed is he whose Helper is the God of Jacob: for to Jacob also so great an Helper was He, that of Jacob He made him Israel. O mighty help! now he is Israel, "seeing God. While then thou art placed here, and a wanderer not yet seeing God, if thou hast the God of Jacob for thy Helper, from Jacob thou wilt become Israel, and wilt be "seeing God," and all toil and all groans shall come to an end, gnawing cares shall cease, happy praises shall succeed. "Blessed is he whose Helper is the God of Jacob; of this Jacob. Wherefore is he happy? Meanwhile, while yet groaning in this life, "his hope is in the Lord his God." ...Who is this, "Lord his God"? ... "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things. Therefore let Him be thy hope, even the Lord thy God; in Him let thy hope be. His hope too is in the lord his god, who worshippeth Saturn; his

hope is in the lord his god, who worshippeth Neptune or Mercury; yea more, I add, who worshippeth his belly, of whom is said, "whose god is their belly.

The one is the god of the one, the other of the other. Who is this "blessed" one? for "his hope is in the Lord his God. But who is He? "Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them" (ver. 6). My brethren, we have a great God; let us bless His holy Name, that He hath deigned to make us His possession. As yet thou seest not God; thou canst not fully love what as yet thou seest not. All that thou seest, He hath made. Thou admirest the world; why not the Maker of the world? Thou lookest up to the heavens, and art amazed: thou considerest the whole earth, and tremblest; when canst thou contain in thy thought the vastness of the sea? Look at the countless number of the stars, look at all the many kind of seeds, all the different sorts of animals, all that swimmeth in the water, creepeth on the earth, flieth in the sky, hovereth in the air; how great are all these, how beautiful, how fair, how amazing! Behold, He who made all these, is thy God. Put thy hope in Him, that thou mayest be happy. "His hope is in the Lord his God. Observe, my brethren, the mighty God, the good God, who maketh all these things. ...If he mentioned these things only, perhaps thou wouldest answer me, "God, who made heaven and earth and sea, is a great God: but doth He think of me? It would be said to thee, "He made thee.

How so? am I heaven, or am I earth, or am I sea? Surely it is plain; I am neither heaven, nor earth, nor sea: yet I am on earth. At least thou grantest me this, that thou art on earth. Hear then, that God made not only heaven and earth and sea: for He "made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them. If then He made all that is in them, He made thee also. It is too little to say, thee; the sparrow, the locust, the worm, none of these did He not make, and He careth for all. His care refers not to His commandment, for this commandment He gave to man alone. ...As regards then the tenor of the commandment, "God doth not take care for oxen: as regards His providential care of the universe, whereby He created all things, and ruleth the world, "Thou, Lord, shall save both man and beast. Here perhaps some one may say to me, "God careth not for oxen," comes from the New Testament: "Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast," is from the Old Testament. There are some who find fault and say, that these two Testaments agree not with one another. ...Let us hear the Lord Himself, the Chief and Master of the

Apostles: "Consider," saith He, "the fowls of the air; they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them.

Therefore even beside men, these animals are objects of care to God, to be fed, not to receive a law. As far then as regards giving a law, "God careth not for oxen: as regards creating, feeding, governing, ruling, all things have to do with God." Are not two sparrows sold for one farthing? saith our Lord Jesus Christ, "and one of them shall not fall to the ground without the will of your Father: how much better are ye than they. Perhaps thou sayest, God counteth me not in this great multitude. There follows here a wondrous passage in the Gospel: "the hairs of your head are all numbered." 6. Who keepeth truth for ever." What "truth for ever"? what "truth" doth He "keep," and wherein doth "He keep it for ever"? "Who executeth judgment for them that suffer wrong" (ver. 7). He avengeth them that suffer wrong. There cometh at once to thee the voice of the Apostle: "now therefore there is altogether a fault among you, that ye go to law one with another: why do ye not rather suffer wrong?" He urged thee not to suffer annoyance, but to suffer wrong: for not every annoyance is wrong. For whatever thou sufferest lawfully is not a wrong; lest perchance thou shouldest say, I also am among those who have suffered wrong, for I have suffered such a thing in such a place, and such a thing for such a reason. Consider whether thou hast suffered a wrong. Robbers suffer many things, but they suffer no wrong. Wicked men, evil doers, house-breakers, adulterers, seducers, all these suffer many evils, yet is there no wrong. It is one thing to suffer wrong; it is another to suffer tribulation, or penalty, or annoyance, or punishment. Consider where thou art; see what thou hast done; see why thou art suffering; and then thou seest what thou art suffering. Right and wrong are contraries. Right is what is just. For not all that is called right, is right. What if a man lay down for you unjust right? nor indeed is it to be called right, if it is unjust. That is true right, which is also just. Consider what thou hast done, not what thou art suffering. If thou hast done right, thou art suffering wrong; if thou hast done wrong, thou art suffering right. ...

7. "Who giveth food to the hungry. Behold, from thee I look for nothing: "God giveth food to the hungry. Who are "the hungry"? All. What is, all? To all things that have life, to all men He giveth food: doth He not reserve some food for His beloved? If they have another kind of hunger, they have also another kind of food. Let us first enquire what their hunger is, and then we

shall find their food. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. We ought to be God's hungry ones. ..."The Lord looseth them that are lettered; the Lord lifteth up them that are dashed down; the Lord maketh wise them that are blind" (ver. 8). Perfectly hath he by this last sentence explained to us all the preceding ones: lest perchance, when he had said, "the Lord looseth them that are fettered," we should refer it to those fettered ones, who for some crime are bound in irons by their masters: and in that he said, "He lifteth up them that are dashed down," there should occur to our minds some one stumbling or falling, or thrown from a horse. There is another kind of fall, there are other kinds of fetters, just as there is other darkness and other light. Whereas he said, "He maketh the blind wise;

he would not say, He enlightened the blind, lest thou shouldest understand this also in reference to the flesh, as the man was enlightened by the Lord, when He anointed his eyes with clay made with spittle, and so healed him: that thou mightest not look for anything of this sort, when He is speaking of spiritual things, he pointeth to a sort of light of wisdom, where-with the blind are enlightened. Therefore in the same way as the blind are enlightened with the light of wisdom, so are the fettered set free, and those who are dashed down are lifted up. Whereby then have we been fettered? whereby dashed down? Our body was once an ornament to us: now, we have sinned, and thereby have had fetters put on us. What are our fetters? Our mortality. ..."The Lord loveth the righteous. And who are the "righteous"? How far are they righteous now? Just as thou hast; "the Lord, guardeth proselytes" (ver. 9). "Proselytes" are strangers. Every Church of the Gentiles is a stranger. For it cometh in to the Fathers, not sprung of their flesh, but their daughter by imitating them. Yet the Lord, not any man, guardeth them. "The orphan and widow He will take up. Let none think that He taketh up the orphan for his inheritance, or the widow for any business of hers. True, God doth help them; and in all the duties of the human race, he doeth a good work, who taketh care of an orphan, who abandoneth not a widow:

but in a certain way we are all orphans, not because our Father is dead, but because He is absent. . . . 8. "And the way of sinners He shall root out. What is, "the way of sinners"? To mock at these things which we say. "Who is an orphan, who a widow? What kingdom of heaven, what punishment of hell is there? These are fables of the Christians. To what I see, to that will I live: "let

us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. Beware lest such men persuade you of aught: let them not enter through your ears into your heart; let them find thorns in your ears: let him, who seeketh to enter thus, go away pierced: for "evil communications corrupt good manners. But here perhaps thou wilt say, "Wherefore then are they prosperous? Behold, they worship not God, and commit every kind of evil daily: yet they abound in those things, through want of which I toil. Be not envious against sinners. What they receive, thou seest; what is in store for them, seest thou not? ...Wilt thou not believe even the Lord thy God, who saith, "Broad and spacious is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that walk by it"? This "way the Lord will root out. And, when "the way of sinners" has been "rooted out," what remaineth for us? "Come, ye blessed of My father, enjoy the Kingdom; "The Lord shall reign for ever" (ver. 10). "O Sion, thy God" shall reign for ever; surely thy God will not reign without thee. "For generation and generation. He hath said it twice, because he could not say it for ever.

And think not that eternity is bounded by finite words. The word eternity consists of four syllables; in itself it is without end. It could not be commended to thee, save thus, "for generation and generation. Too little hath he said: if he spoke it all day long, it were too narrow: if he spoke it all his life, must he not at length hold his peace? Love eternity: without end shalt thou reign, if Christ be thine End, with whom thou shalt reign for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 147

1. It is said to us, "Praise the Lord" (ver. 1). This is said to all nations, not to us alone. And these words, sounded forth through separate places by the Readers, each Church heareth separately; but the one same Voice of God proclaimeth unto all, that we praise Him. And as though we asked wherefore we ought to praise the Lord, behold what reason he hath brought forward: "Praise the Lord," he saith, "for a Psalm is good." Is this all the reward of them that praise? ...The "Psalm" is praise of God. This then he saith, "Praise the Lord, for it is good to praise the Lord." Let us not thus pass over the praise of the Lord. It is spoken, and hath passed: it is done, and we are silent: we have praised, and then rested; we have sung, and then rested. We go forth to some business which awaits us, and when other employments have found us, shall the praise of God cease in us? Not so: thy tongue praiseth but for a while, let thy life ever praise. Thus then "a Psalm is good."

2. For a "Psalm" is a song, not any kind of song, but a song to a psaltery. A psaltery is a kind of instrument of music, like the lyre and the harp, and such kinds of instruments, which were invented for music. He therefore who singeth Psalms, not only singeth with his voice, but with a certain instrument besides, which is called a psaltery, he accompanieth his voice with his hands. Wilt thou then sing a Psalm? Let not thy voice alone sound the praises of God; but let thy works also be in harmony with thy voice. ...To please then the ear, sing with thy voice; but with thy heart be not silent, with thy life be not still. Thou devisest no fraud in thy heart: thou singest a Psalm to God. When thou eatest and drinkest, sing a Psalm: not by intermingling sweet sounds suited to the ear, but by eating and drinking moderately, frugally, temperarely: for thus saith the Apostle, "whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." ...If by immoderate voracity thou exceedest the due bounds of nature, and gluttest thyself in excess of wine, however great praises of God thy tongue sound, yet thy life blasphemeth Him. After food and drink thou liest down to sleep: in thy bed neither commit any pollution, nor go beyond the license given by the law of God: let thy marriage bed be kept chaste with thy wife: and if thou desire to beget children, yet let there not be unbridled sensuality of lust: in thy bed give honour to thy wife, for ye are both members of Christ, both made by Him, both renewed by His Blood: so doing thou praisest God, nor will thy praise be altogether silent. What, when sleep has come over thee? Let not an evil conscience rouse thee from rest: so doth the innocence of thy sleep praise God. ...

3. "Let praises be pleasant to our God." How? If He be praised by our good lives. Hear that then praise will be pleasant to Him. In another place it is said, "Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner." If then in the mouth of a sinner praise is not seemly, neither is it pleasant, for that only is pleasant which is seemly. ...For praise may be pleasant to a man, when he heareth one praising with neat and clever sentiments, and with a sweet voice; but "let praise be pleasant to our God," whose ears are open not to the mouth, but to the heart; not to the tongue, but to the life of him that praiseth. 4. Who is "our God," that praise should be pleasant to Him? He maketh Himself sweet to us, He commendeth Himself to us; thanks to His condescension. ... "But God commendeth His love to us" ... "in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." ...Let us see whether it be the commendation which the Apostle speaketh of, that Christ died for the sinners and ungodly: "the Lord who

buildeth up Jerusalem, and gathereth the dispersions of Israel" (ver. 2). For the people of Jerusalem are the people of Israel. It is Jerusalem "eternal in the heavens," whereof the Angels are citizens also. ...All the citizens then of that city, through "seeing God," rejoice in that great and wide and heavenly city; they gaze upon God Himself. But we are wanderers from that city, driven out by sin, that we should not remain there; weighed down by mortality, that we should not return thither. God looked back on our wandering, and He who "buildeth up Jerusalem," restored the part that had fallen. How restored He the part that had fallen? ...He sent then to our captive estate His Son as a Redeemer. Take with Thee, said He, a bag, bear therein the price of the captives. For He put on Him our mortal flesh, and therein was the Blood, by the shedding of which we were to be redeemed. With that Blood He "gathered the dispersions of Israel." And if He gathered them that before were dispersed, how must we strive that they be gathered who now are dispersed? If the dispersed have been gathered, that in the Hand of the Builder they might be fashioned into the building, how should they be gathered who through disquiet have fallen from the Hand of the Builder? Behold whom we praise; behold to whom we owe praise all our life long.

5. How doth He gather? What doeth He in order to gather? "Who healeth the bruised in heart" (ver. 3). Behold the way in which the dispersions of Israel are gathered, by the healing of the bruised in heart. They who are not of a bruised heart, are not healed. What is to bruise the heart? Let it be known, brethren, let it be done, that ye may be able to be healed. For it is told in many other places of Scripture; ..."the sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit, a bruised and contrite heart God will not despise." He healeth then the bruised in heart, for He draweth nigh unto them to heal them; as is said in another place, "the Lord is nigh unto them who have bruised their heart." Who are they that have "bruised their heart"? The humble. Who are they that have not "bruised their heart"? The proud. The bruised heart shall be healed, the puffed up heart shall be dashed down. For for this purpose perhaps it is dashed down, that being bruised it may be healed. Let not our heart then, brethren, desire to be set upright, before it be upright. It is ill for that to be uplifted which is not first corrected. ...

6. What are the means whereby He "bindeth up their bruises"? Just as physicians bind up fractures. For sometimes (observe this, beloved; it is well known to those who have observed it, or have heard it from physicians),

sometimes when limbs are sound, but are crooked and distorted, physicians break them in order to set them straight, and make a new wound, because the soundness which was distorted was amiss. ... 7. What are these means whereby He bindeth? The sacraments of this present life, whereby in the mean time we obtain our comfort: and all the words we speak to you, words which sound and pass away, all that is done in the Church in this present time, are the means whereby "He bindeth up our bruises." For just as, when the limb has become perfectly sound, the physician taketh off the bandage; so in our own city Jerusalem, when we shall have been made equal to the Angels, think ye that we shall receive there, what we have received here? Will it be needful then that the Gospel be read to us, that our faith may abide? or that hands be laid upon us by any Bishop? All these are means of binding up fractures; when we have attained perfect soundness, they will be taken off; but we should never attain it, if they were not bound up.

8. "Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names" (ver. 4). What great matter is it for God to "tell the number of the stars"? Men even have endeavoured to do this; whether they have been able to achieve it, is their concern; they would not however attempt it, did they not think that they should achieve it. Let us leave alone what they can do, and how far they have attained; for God I think it no great matter to count all the stars. Or doth He perhaps go over the number, lest He should forget it? Is it any great thing for God to number the stars, by whom "the very hairs of your head are numbered"? The stars are certain lights in the Church comforting our night; all of whom the Apostle saith, "In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding the Word of life. These stars God counteth; all who shall reign with Him, all who are to be gathered into the Body of His only-begotten Son, He hath counted, and still counteth them. Whoso is unworthy, is not even counted. Many too have believed, or rather may, with a kind of shadowy appearance of faith, have attached themselves to His people: yet He knoweth what He counteth, what He winnoweth away. For so great is the height of the Gospel, that it hath come to pass as was said, "I have declared, and have spoken: they are multiplied above number:

there are then among the people certain supernumeraries, so to speak. What do I mean by supernumeraries? More than will be there. Within these walls are more than will be in the kingdom of God, in the heavenly Jerus-

alem; these are above the number. Let each one of you consider whether he shineth in darkness, whether he refuseth to be led astray by the dark iniquity of the world; if he be not led astray, nor conquered, he will be, as it were, a star, which God already humbereth. "And calling them all by their names," he saith. Herein is our whole reward. We may have certain names with God, that God know our names, this we ought to wish, for this to act, for this to busy ourselves, as far as we are able; not to rejoice in other things, not even in certain spiritual gifts. ...When the disciples returned from their mission exulting, and saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in Thy Name" -then He (knowing that many would say, "have we not in Thy Name cast out devils? to whom He should say, "I know you not") said, "In this rejoice not, that the devils are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

9. "Great is our Lord" (ver. 5). The Psalmist is filled with joy, he hath poured out his words wonderfully: yet somewhat he was unable to speak, and how availed he to think on it? "And great is His power, and of His understanding is no numbering" He who "numbereth the stars," Himself cannot be numbered. Who can expound this? who can worthily even imagine what is meant by, "and of His understanding is no number"? ...Whatsoever then that is infinite this world containeth, though it be infinite to man, yet is not to God: too little is it to say, to God: even by the angels it is numbered. His understanding surpasses all calculators; it cannot be counted by us. Numbers themselves who numbereth? What than is there with God? wherewith made He all things, and where made He all things, to whom it is said, "Thou hast arrayed all things in measure, number, and weight"? Or who can number, or measure, or weigh, measure and number and weight themselves, wherein God hath ordered all things? Therefore, "of His understanding is no number. Let human voices be hushed, human thoughts still: let them not stretch themselves out to incomprehensible things, as though they could comprehend them, but as though they were to partake of them, for partakers we shall be. ...Partakers then we shall be: let none doubt it: Scripture saith it. And of what shall we be partakers, as though these were parts in God, as though God were divided into parts?

Who then can explain how many become partakers of one single substance? Require not then that which I think ye see cannot fitly be said: but return to the healing of the Saviour, bruise your heart. He will guide it, He

will bind it up where it is broken, He will make it perfectly sound; and then those things will not be impossible with us, which now are impossible. For it is good that he confess weakness, who desireth to attain to the divine nature. 10. "The Lord taketh up the gentle" (ver. 6). For example; thou understandest not, thou failest to understand, canst not attain: honour God's Scripture, honour God's Word, though it be not plain: in reverence wait for understanding. Be not wanton to accuse either the obscurity or seeming contradiction of Scripture. There is nothing in it contradictory: somewhat there is which is obscure, not in order that it may be denied thee, but that it may exercise him that shall afterward receive it. When then it is obscure, that is the Physician's doing, that thou mayest knock. He willed that thou shouldest be exercised in knocking; He willed it, that He might open to thee when thou knockest. By knocking thou shalt be exercised; exercised, thou shalt be enlarged; enlarged, thou shalt contain what is given. Be not then indignant for that it is shut; be mild, be gentle. Kick not against what is dark, nor say, It were better said, if it were said thus. For how canst thou thus say, or judge how it is expedient it be said? It is said as it is expedient it be said. Let not the sick man seek to amend his remedies: the Physician knoweth how to temper them: believe Him who careth for thee. Therefore what cometh next? ..."The Lord taketh up the gentle, but humbleth the sinners even to the ground," he intended a certain sort of sinners to be understood, from the gentleness mentioned first. By sinners then in this place, we understand the fierce, and those who are not gentle. Wherefore doth He "humble them even to the earth"? They carp at objects of understanding, they shall perceive only things earthly.

11. "Begin to the Lord in confession" (ver. 7). Begin with this, if thou wouldest arrive at a clear understanding of the truth. If thou wilt be brought from the road of faith to the profession of the reality, "begin in confession." First accuse thyself: accuse thyself, praise God. What after confession? Let good works follow. "Sing unto our God upon the harp." What is, "Upon the harp"? As I have already explained, just like the Psalm upon the psaltery, so also is the "harp:" not with voice only, but with works. 12. ..."Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth" (ver. 8). Now thou art alarmed, because thou canst not see the heaven: when it hath rained thou shalt gather fruit, and shalt see clear sky. Perhaps our God hath done this. For had we not the obscurity of Scripture as an occasion, we should not say to

you those things wherein ye rejoice. This then perhaps is the rain whereat ye rejoice. It would not be possible for it to be expressed to you by our tongue, were it not that God covereth with clouds of figures the heaven of the Scriptures. For this purpose willed He that the words of the Prophets should be obscure, that the servants of God might afterwards have that by interpreting which they might flow over the ears and hearts of men, that they might receive from the clouds of God the fatness of spiritual joy. "Who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the service of men. Behold the fruit of the rain. "Who maketh," saith he, "grass to grow upon the mountains. Doth it not also grow upon the low ground? Yes, but it is a great thing that it groweth "on the mountains." ...For nothing could be more barren than the hard mountains. "And herb for the service of men. What "service"? Listen to Paul himself. "And ourselves," saith he, "your servants for Jesus Christ's sake.

He who said, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things? yet said, that he was a "servant. For we are your servants, brethren. Let none of us speak of himself, as though he were greater than you. We shall be greater if we are more humble. "But whosoever will be great among you" (it is the Lord's saying), "shall be your servant. Paul the Apostle, indeed, living by his own labour, refused even to receive "the grass of the mountains; he chose to want; nevertheless, the mountains gave "grass. Because he chose not to receive, ought the mountains therefore not to give, and so to remain barren? Fruit is due to the rain, food is due to the servant, as the Lord saith, "Eat such things as they give you: and that they should not think that they gave aught of their own, He added, "for the labourer is worthy of his hire."

13. ...Just now has been read, "Give to every one that asketh of thee;" and in another place Scripture saith, "Let alms sweat in thy hand, till thou findest a righteous man to whom to give it." One there is who seeketh thee, another thou oughtest to seek. Leave not indeed him who seeketh thee empty, for, "give to every one that asketh of thee;" yet still there is another whom thou oughtest to seek; "find a righteous man to whom to give it." Ye will never do this, unless ye have somewhat set aside from your substance, each what pleaseth him according to the needs of his family, as a sort of debt to be paid to the treasury. If Christ have not a state of His own, neither hath He a treasury? ...Cut off then and prune off some fixed sum either from thy yearly

profits or thy daily gains, else thou seemest as it were to give of thy capital, and thy hand must needs hesitate, when thou putttest it forth to that which thou hast not vowed. Cut off some part of thy income; a tenth if thou choosest, though that is but little. For it is said that the Pharisees gave a tenth; "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." And what saith the Lord? "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." He whose righteousness thou oughtest to exceed, giveth a tenth: thou givest not even a thousandth. How wilt thou surpass him whom thou matchest not? "Who prepareth rain for the earth."

14. "And giveth unto the cattle their food" (ver. 9). These are the cattle he meaneth, even God's flocks. God defraudeth not His flock of their food through men, for whose "service He maketh the grass to grow." "And to the young of the ravens that call upon Him." Shall we perchance think this, that the ravens call upon God to give them their food? Think not that the unreasoning creature calls upon God: no creature knows how to call upon God, save the reasonable alone. Consider it as spoken in a figure, lest thou think, as some evil men say, that the souls of men migrate into cattle, dogs, swine, ravens. Give this no place in your hearts or in your faith. The soul of man is made after the image of God: He will not give His image to dog or swine. Who are "the young of the , ravens"? The Israelites used to say that they alone were righteous, because to them the Law had been given: all other men of every nation they used to call sinners. And in truth all nations were given up to sin, to idolatry, to the worship of stones and stocks: but did they continue so? Although the ravens themselves, our fathers, did not, yet we, "the young of the ravens," do call upon God. ...For "the young of the ravens," who seemed to worship the images of their forefathers, have advanced, and turned to God. And now thou hearest "the young of the ravens" calling upon the one God. What then? Sayest thou to "the young of the ravens," "hast thou left thy father?" Plainly I have, saith he; for he is a raven who calls not upon God. I, "the young of the raven," do call upon God.

15. "In the power of an horse He will not take pleasure" (ver. 10). The power "of an horse" is pride. For the horse seemeth adapted as it were to bear a man aloft, that he may be more uplifted as he goes. And in truth he has a neck which typifieth a sort of pride. Let not men exalt themselves upon their worth, let them not think themselves uplifted by their distinctions; let them

beware lest they be thrown by an untamed horse. ... "Nor in the tabernacle of a man will He delight." For the tabernacle of the Lord is the Holy Church spread throughout the whole world. Heretics, separating themselves from the Church's tabernacles, have set up tabernacles for themselves. For if perchance it be the lot of any, who is good and pious, who confesseth his own weakness, who is "the young of a raven that calleth on God," not to enjoy worldly distinction, he goeth not out of the Church, he setteth not up for himself a tent outside the Church, wherein God will not delight. But what saith he? "I have chosen to be cast away in the house of God, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners."

16. But what addeth he? "The Lord will delight in them that fear Him, and in them that hope in His mercy" (ver. 11). A robber is feared, and a wild beast is feared, and an unjust and powerful man is much feared. "The Lord will delight in them that hope in His mercy." Behold, Judas, who betrayed our Lord, feared, but he did not hope in His mercy. ... It is well indeed that thou hast feared, but only if thou trustedst in His mercy, whom thou hast feared. He in despair "went and hanged himself." In such wise then fear the Lord, that thou trust in His mercy. ... 17. "Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God" (ver. 12). Abiding yet in captivity, they behold those flocks, or rather, the one flock of all its citizens, gathered from all sides into that city; they see the joy of the mass, now after threshings and winnowings placed in the garner, fearing nothing, suffering no toil nor trouble; and, as yet abiding here, in the midst of the threshing they send forward their joy of hope, and pant for it, joining as it were their hearts to the Angels of God, and to that people which shall abide with them in joy for ever. For what wilt thou then do, O Jerusalem? Surely toil and groaning will pass away. What wilt thou do? wilt thou plough, or sow, or plant vines, or make voyages, or trade? What wilt thou do? Will it still be thy duty to be engaged in the works thou now doest, good though they are, and spring from mercy? Consider thy numbers, consider on all sides thy company: see whether any hunger, for thee to give bread to; see whether any thirsts, for thee to give a cup of cold water to; see whether any is a stranger, for thee to take in; see whether any is sick, for thee to visit; see whether any is at strife, for thee to reconcile him; see whether any is dying, for thee to bury him. What then wilt thou do? "Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God." Behold, this is thy business. As is wont to be said in inscriptions, "Use it and be happy."

18. Be ye Jerusalem; remember of whom it is said, "Lord, in Thy city their image Thou shall bring to nought. These are they who now rejoice in such pomps; among them are they who have not come hither to-day because there is a show. To whom is it a gift? to whom is it a loss? or why is it a gift? why is it a loss? For not they only who exhibit such shows are smitten with loss, but with much greater loss are they smitten who delight in gazing on them. The former have their chest drained of its gold, the latter have their breast robbed of the riches of righteousness. Most of the exhibitors of shows have to mourn for selling their estates; how ought the sinners to mourn, for losing their souls: Was it then for this that the Lord cried out on the Lord's Day, "Watch ye," that to-day men should watch in this way. I beseech you, ye citizens of Jerusalem, I beseech you by the peace of Jerusalem, by the Redeemer, the Builder, the Ruler of Jerusalem, that ye address your prayers to God for them. May they see, may they feel, that they are trifling; and, intent as they are on the sights which please them, may at length look on themselves, and be displeased. For in many we rejoice that this has already been done: and once we too sat there and were mad:

and how many think we now sit there, who shall yet be, not only Christians, but also Bishops! From what is past, we conjecture what is to be: from what has already been done, we announce beforehand what God will do. Let your prayers be wakeful, ye groan not for nothing. Certainly they who have already escaped, praying for those who are still in danger, because they too having been among those in danger, are heard; and God shall drag His people out of the captivity of Babylon; by all means He shall redeem and deliver them, and the number of the saints who bear the image of God shall be perfected. ..."Praise in unison," because thou consistest of many: "praise," because thou hast been made one. "We being many," saith the Apostle, "are one in Christ. As then we are many, "we praise in unison; as we are one, we "praise. The same are many and one, because He in whom they are one is ever One.

19. Wherefore, saith this Jerusalem, do I praise in unison the Lord, and, as Sion, praise my God? Jerusalem is the same as Sion. For different reasons has it the two names. Jerusalem meaneth "visions of peace; Sion meaneth "watching. See whether these words do not sound like sights; that the Gentiles may not think that they have sights and we haste none. Sometimes after the theatre or amphitheatre breaks up, when the crowd of lost ones begins to

be vomited forth from that den, sometimes, retaining in their minds images of their vain amusements, and feeding their memory with things not only useless but even hurtful, rejoicing in them as if they were sweet, while they are really deadly; they see often, it may be, the servants of God pass by, they recognise them by their garb or headdress, or they know them by sight, and they say to one another, or inwardly, "Wretched people, how much they lose! Brethren, let us return their good will (for they do mean it well) with prayers to the Lord. They wish us well; but "he that loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul. If he hateth his own soul, how shall he love my soul? Yet with a perverse, and empty, and vain good will, if indeed it may be called good will, they grieve that we lose what they love: let us pray that they lose not what we love. Behold of what character that Jerusalem is to be which he exhorteth to praise, or rather foreseeeth will praise.

For the praises of that city, when we shall see and love and praise, will not need to be urged on and stirred up by the voice of prophecy; but the Prophets now say this, to drink in as far as while they remain in this flesh they can, the future joys of the blessed, and then giving them forth into our ears, to arouse in us love of that city. Let us burn with longing, let us not be slothful in spirit. "Praise thy God, O Sion." 20. He saith, "He hath made strong the bars of thy gates" (ver. 13). The making bars strong is not for open gates, but shut ones, wherefore most manuscripts read, "He hath made strong the bolts of thy gates." Observe, beloved. He biddeth Jerusalem when closed in to praise the Lord. We praise in unison now, we praise now; but it is amid offences. Many where we wish not, enter in: many though we wish it not, go out: therefore offences are frequent. "And because iniquity hath abounded," saith the Truth, "the love of many waxeth cold:" because men come in whom we cannot discern, because men go out whom we cannot retain. Wherefore is this? Because not yet is there perfection, not yet is there the bliss that shall be. Wherefore is this? Because as yet it is the threshing-floor, not yet the garner. What therefore will be then, save no fear that aught of this kind will happen? He said not only, He hath set, but, "He hath made strong the bars of thy gates." Let none. go out, let none come in. Let none go out, we rejoice: let none come in, we fear. Nay, fear not this: when thou hast entered it will be said: only be thou in the number of virgins, who carried their oil with them. ...

21. "He hath blessed thy children within thee." Who? He "who hath set peace as thy borders." How ye all exult! Love peace, my brethren. Greatly are we delighted, when the love of peace crieth from your hearts. How greatly doth it delight you! I had said nothing: I had explained nothing: I but read the verse, and ye shouted. What was it that shouted in you? The love of peace. ...children of the kingdom, O citizens of Jerusalem, in Jerusalem is the vision of peace: and all who love peace are blest in her, and they enter in, when the doors are being shut, and the bars made strong. This, which when but named ye so love and esteem, this follow after, this long for: this love in your home, in your business, in your wives, in your sons, in your slaves, in your friends, in your enemies. ... 22. What ye cried out a while ago at the very mention of peace, ye cried from longing: your cry was from thirst, not from fulness; for there will be perfect righteousness where will be perfect peace. Now we hunger and thirst after righteousness. "They shall be filled." How shall they be filled? When we have arrived at peace. Therefore when he had said, "Who hath set peace for thy borders," because there is fulness and no want, he added at once, "and filleth thee with the fat of wheat" (ver. 14). ...

23. "Who sendeth forth His Word to the earth" (ver. 15). Behold, on earth we toil, weary, fainting, sluggish, cold: when should we be raised up to the fat of wheat that satisfieth, did not He send His Word to the earth, whereby we were weighed down, to the earth, whereby we were hindered from returning? He sent. His Word, He deserted us not even in the wilderness, He rained manna from heaven. "Who sendeth forth His Word to the earth," and to earth His Word came. How? or what is His Word? "Even unto swiftness His Word runneth." He said not, "His Word is swift," but, "His Word runneth even unto swiftness." Let us understand, my brethren: He could not have chosen a better word. He who is hot grows hot by heat, he who is cold grows cold by cold, he who is swift becometh swift by swiftness. ...To what degree then doth it run? "Even to swiftness." Increase as much as you will the swiftness of the Word, and say, It is as swift as this or that, as birds, as the winds, as the Angels; is any of these as great as swiftness itself, "even unto swiftness"? What is swiftness itself, brethren? It is everywhere; it is not in part. This belongeth to the Word of God, not to be in part, to be everywhere by Himself the Word, whereby He is "the Power of God and the Wisdom of God," before He had taken flesh upon Him. If we think of God in the Form of God, the Word equal to the Father, this is the Wisdom of God, of which is said, "It

reacheth from one end to the other mightily." What mighty speed! "It reacheth from one end to the other mightily." ...

24. We then are burdened by the sluggishness of this cold body, and the bonds of this earthly and corruptible life; have we no hope of receiving "the Word," which "runneth even unto swiftness"? or hath abandoned us, though by the body we are depressed to the lowest depths? Did not He predestinate us, before we were born in this mortal and sluggish body? He then, who predestinated us, gave snow to the earth, even ourselves. For now let us come to those somewhat obscure verses of the Psalm, let those entanglements begin to be unrolled. Behold, we are sluggish on this earth, and are as it were frozen here. And just as happens to the flakes of snow, for they freeze above, then fall down; so as love groweth cold, human nature falleth down to this earth, and involved in a sluggish body becometh like snow. But in that snow are predestined sons of God. For, "He giveth snow like wool" (ver. 16). What is "like wool"? It meaneth, of the snow which He hath given, of these, who are as yet slow in spirit and cold, whom He hath predestinated, He is about to make somewhat. For wool is the material of a garment: when we see wool, we look on it as a sort of preparation for a garment.

Therefore since He hath predestinated these, who at present are cold and creep on earth, and as yet glow not with the spirit of love (for as yet He speaketh of predestination), God hath given these as a sort of wool: He is about to make of them a garment. Rightly did the "raiment" of Christ "shine" on the mountain, "like snow. The raiment of Christ did shine like snow, as though of that snow a garment had already been made: of which wool, that is, of the snow which He gave like wool, they being as yet predestined, were sluggish: but wait, see what followeth. Since He gave them as wool, a garment is made of them. For as the Church is called the Body of Christ, so is the Church also called the garment of Christ: hence cometh that which is said by the Apostle, "that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle. Let Him then present unto Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle; let Him make Himself a garment of that wool, which He had predestinated in the snow. While men are yet unbelieving. and cold, and sluggish, let Him make a garment of this wool. That it may be washed from spots, let it be cleansed by faith: that it may have no wrinkle, let it be stretched out upon the cross. ...

25. "He scattereth mist like ashes." "He scattereth," saith the Psalmist, "mist like ashes." Who? He "who giveth snow like wool." For whom He predestined, He calleth to repentance; for "whom He predestined, them He also called." But "ashes" are connected with repentance. Hear Him calling to repentance, when He upbraided certain cities, saying, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which have been done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they had long ago repented in dust and ashes." Therefore, "He scattereth mist like ashes." What is, "He scattereth mist like ashes"? When a man is called to learn about God, and it is said to him, "Receive the truth;" he beginneth to wish to receive the Truth, but is not able; he seeth that He is under a sort of darkness, which before he saw not. ...Wander not in the mist, follow in faith. But forasmuch as thou endeavourest to see and art not able, repent of thy sins, for mist is scattered like ashes. Repent thee now of having been obstinate against God, repent of having followed thine own evil ways. Thou hast come into this state where it is difficult for thee to see the vision of bliss, and the mist will be healthful to thee, which God scattereth like ashes. Thou thyself art as yet a mist, but like ashes. For they that are penitent, as yet roll themselves in ashes, my brethren, testifying, as it were, that they are like it, saying unto God, "I am ashes." For a certain Scripture saith, "I have despised myself, and wasted away, I have reckoned myself earth and ashes." This is the humility of the penitent. When Abraham speaketh to his God, and wisheth the burning of Sodome to be disclosed to him, he saith, "I am but earth and ashes." How hath this humility ever been found in great and holy men!

26. "Who sendeth His crystal like morsels of bread" (ver. 17). We need not spend our toil again in saying what crystal is. We have already said it, and I do not think that ye, beloved, have forgotten it. What is then, "He sendeth His crystal like morsels of bread"? What is "crystal"? It is very hard, it is very tightly congealed; it can not, like snow, be easily melted. Snow, hardened by many years' duration, and by the succession of ages, is called "crystal," and this "He sendeth like morsels of bread. What meaneth this? They were too hard, no longer fit to be compared to snow, but to crystal; but they too are predestinated and called, and some of them even so as to feed others, to be useful to others also. And what need is there to enumerate many, whom we happen to know, this one and that one? Every one when he thinks can recall to mind how hardened and obstinate some of those whom he knows have

been, how they have struggled against the truth; yet now they preach the truth, they have been made morsels of bread. Who is that one Bread? "We being many," saith the Apostle, "are one Body in Christ; he saith also, "we being many are one Bread and one Body. If then the whole Body of Christ is one Bread, the members of Christ are morsels of Bread.

Of some that are hard He maketh members of Himself, and useful for feeding others. ...Behold, the Apostle Paul was a crystal, hard, resisting the truth, crying out against the Gospel, hardening himself, as it were, against the sun. ...Since then he was crystal, he appeared clear and white, but he was hard and very cold. How was he bright and white? "An Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee. Behold the brightness of crystal. Now hear the hardness of crystal." As touching zeal, persecuting the Church" of Christ. Among the stoners of the holy martyr Stephen, was he, hard, perhaps harder than all. "For he kept the raiment of all who were stoning," so that he stoned by the hands of all. 27. Thus then we see "the snow, the mist, the crystal: it is good that He blow and thaw them. For if He blow not, if He Himself thaw not the hardness of this ice, "in the face of His cold who shall stand? He abandoneth a sinner, behold, He calleth him not; behold, He openeth not his perception; behold, He poureth not in grace; let the man thaw himself, if he can, from the ice of folly. He cannot. Wherefore can he not? "In the face of His cold who shall stand? Behold him then growing harder, and saying, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Behold, I am growing cold, behold, I am growing hard, what heat shall thaw me that I may run? "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?. ...In the face of His cold who shall stand? And who shall free himself, if God abandon him? Who is it that freeth? "The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Are we then to despair? God forbid. For it goeth on, "He shall send out His Word, and melt them" (ver. 18). Let not then the snow despair, nor the mist, nor the crystal. For of the snow, as of wool, a garment is being made. That mist findeth safety in repentance: for, "whom He predestinated, them He also called.

But even though they be the very hardest among the predestinated, though they have been for a long time hardening, and are become crystal, they will not be hard to the mercy of God. "He shall send out His Word, and melt them. What is "melt"? Understand not "melt" in an ill sense: it meaneth, He shall liquefy, He shall thaw them. For they are hard through

pride. Rightly is pride called also dulness: for whatever is dull, is also cold. ...Despair not even of the crystal. Hear a saying of the crystal. "Who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. But whereof ore doth God melt the crystal? That the snow despair not of itself. For he saith, "For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them that hereafter should believe on Him unto eternal life. God then calleth unto the Gentiles, "Be melted, O crystal; come, ye snows. "His Spirit shall blow, and the waters shall flow. Lo, the "crystal" and the "snows" are melted, they turn into water, "let them that thirst, come and drink. Saul, hard as crystal, persecuted Stephen unto death; Paul, now in the living water, calleth the Gentiles to the Fount. ...

28. "Announcing His Word unto Jacob, His Righteousnesses and Judgments unto Israel" (ver. 19). What "Righteousnesses," what "Judgments"? Because whatever mankind had suffered here before, when it was "snow" and "mist" and "crystal," it suffered for the deserts of its pride and uplifting against God. Let us go back to the origin of our fall, and see that most truly is it sung in the Psalm, "Before I was troubled I went wrong." But he who says, "Before I was troubled I went wrong," saith also, "It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I may learn Thy Righteousnesses." These righteousnesses Jacob learnt from God, who made him to wrestle with an Angel; under the guise of which Angel, God Himself wrestled with him He held Him, he exerted violence to hold Him he prevailed to hold Him: He caused Himself to be held, in mercy, not in weakness. Jacob therefore wrestled, and prevailed: he held Him and when he seemed to have conquered Him asked to be blessed of Him? How did he understand with Whom he had wrestled, Whom he had held? Wherefore did he wrestle violently, and hold Him? Because "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Wherefore then did he wrestle? Because it is with toil. Wherefore do we with difficulty hold, what we so easily lose? Lest, easily getting back what we have lost, we learn to lose that which we hold. Let man have toil to hold: he will hold firmly, what he has only held after toil. These His judgments therefore God manifested to Jacob and Israel. ...

29. "He hath not done so to the whole race" (ver. 20). Let none deceive you: it is not announced to any nation, this judgment of God; namely, how the righteous and the unrighteous suffer, how all suffer for their deserts, how the righteous themselves are freed by the grace of God, not in their own

merits. This is not announced to the whole race, but only to Jacob, only to Israel. What then do we, if He hath not announced it to the whole race, but only to Jacob, only to Israel? Where will we be? In Jacob. "He hath not manifested His judgments to them." To whom? To all nations. How then are the "snows" called, when the crystal is melted? How are the nations called, now Paul is justified? How, save to be in Jacob? The wild olive is cut off from its stock, to be grafted into the olive: now they belong to the olive, no longer ought they to be called nations, but one nation in Christ, the nation of Jacob, the nation of Israel ...What is Israel? "Seeing God." Where shall he see God? In peace. What peace? The peace of Jerusalem; for, saith he, "He hath set peace for thy borders." There shall we praise: there shall we all be one, in One, unto One: for then, though many, we shall not be scattered.

PSALM 148

1. The subject of our meditation in this present life should be the praises of God; for the everlasting exaltation of our life hereafter will be the praise of God, and none can become fit for the life hereafter, who hath not practised himself for it now. So then now we praise God, but we pray to Him too. Our praise is marked by joy, our prayer by groans. ...On account of these two seasons, one, that which now is in the temptations and tribulations of this life, the other, that which is to be hereafter in everlasting rest and exultation; we have established also the celebration of two seasons, that before Easter and that after Easter. That which is before Easter signifieth tribulation, in which we now are; that which we are now keeping after Easter, signifieth the bliss in which we shall hereafter be. The celebration then which we keep before Easter is what we do now: by that which we keep after Easter we signify what as yet we have not. Therefore we employ that time in fastings and prayer, this present time we spend in praises, and relax our fast. This is the Halleluia which we sing, which, as you know, meaneth (in Latin), Praise ye the Lord. Therefore that period is before the Lord's Resurrection, this, after His Resurrection: by which time is signified the future hope which as yet we have not: for what we represent after the Lord's Resurrection, we shall have after our own.

For in our Head both are figured, both are set forth. The Baptism of the Lord setteth forth to us this present life of trial, for in it we must toil, be harassed, and, at last, die; but the Resurrection and Glorification of the Lord setteth forth to us the life which we are to have hereafter, when He shall

come to recompense due rewards, evil to the evil, good to the good. And now indeed all the evil men sing with us, Halleluia; but, if they persevere in their wickedness, they may utter with their lips the song of our life hereafter; but the life itself, which will then be in the reality which now is typified, they cannot obtain, because they would not practise it before it came, and lay hold on what was to come. 2. "Halleluia." "Praise the Lord," thou sayest to thy neighbour, he to thee: when all are exhorting each other, all are doing what they exhort others to do. But praise with your whole selves: that is, let not your tongue and voice alone praise God, but your conscience also, your life, your deeds. For now, when we are gathered together in the Church, we praise: when we go forth each to his own business, we seem to cease to praise God. Let a man not cease to live well, and then he ever praiseth God. ...It is impossible for a man's acts to be evil, whose thoughts are good. For acts issue from thought: nor can a man do anything or move his limbs to do aught, unless the bidding of his thought precede: just as in all things which ye see done throughout the provinces, whatsoever the Emperor biddeth goeth forth from the inner part of his palace throughout the whole Roman Empire. How great commotion is caused at one bidding by the Emperor as he sits in his palace! He but moveth his lips, when he speaketh: the whole province is moved, when what he speaketh is being executed. So in each single man too, the Emperor is within, his seat is in the heart. If he be good and biddeth good things, good things are done: if he be bad and biddeth evil things, evil things are done. When Christ sitteth there, what can He bid, but what is good? When the devil is the occupant, what can he bid, but evil? But God hath willed that it should be in thy choice for whom thou wilt prepare room, for God, or for the devil: when thou hast prepared it, he who is occupant will also rule. Therefore, brethren, attend not only to the sound; when ye praise God, praise with your whole selves: let your voice, your life, your deeds, all sing.

3. "Praise ye the Lord from heaven" (ver. 1). As though he had found things in heaven holding their peace in the praise of the Lord, he exhorteth them to arise and praise. Never have things in heaven held their peace in the praises of their Creator, never have things on earth ceased to praise God. But it is manifest that there are certain things which have breath to praise God in that disposition wherein God pleaseth them. For no one praiseth aught, save what pleaseth him. And there are other things which have not breath of

life and understanding to praise God, but yet, because they also are good, and duly arranged in their proper order, and form part of the beauty of the universe, which God created, though they themselves with voice and heart praise not God, yet when they are considered by those who have understanding, God is praised in them; and, as God is praised in them, they themselves too in a manner praise God. ...

4. "Praise ye the Lord from heaven: praise Him in the high places." First he saith, "from heaven," then from earth; for it is God that is praised, who made heaven and earth. All in heaven is calm and peaceful; there is ever joy, no death, no sickness, no vexation; there the blessed ever praise God; but we are still below: yet, when we think how God is praised there, let us have our heart there, and let us not hear to no purpose, "Lift up your hearts." Let us lift up our heart above, that it become not corrupted on earth: for we take pleasure in what the Angels do there. We do it now in hope: hereafter we shall in reality, when we have come thither. "Praise Him" then "in the high places." 5. "Praise Him, all ye angels of His, praise Him, all His powers" (ver. 2). ". Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all ye stars and light" (ver. 3). "Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens, and waters that are above the heavens" (ver. 4). "Let them praise the Name of the Lord" (ver. 5). When can he unfold all in his enumeration? Yet he hath in a manner touched upon them all summarily, and included all things in heaven praising their Creator. And as though it were said to him, "Why do they praise Him? what hath He conferred on them, that they should praise Him?" he goeth on, "for He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created." No wonder if the works praise the Worker, no wonder if the things that are made praise the Maker, no wonder if creation praise its Creator. In this Christ also is mentioned, though we seem not to have heard His Name. ...By what were they made? By the Word? How doth he show in this Psalm, that all things were made by the Word? "He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created." No one speaketh, no one commandeth, save by word.

6. "He hath established them for the age, and for age upon age" (ver. 6). All things in heaven, all things above, all powers and angels, a certain city on high, good, holy, blessed; from whence because we are wanderers, we are wretched; whither because we are to return, we are blessed in hope; whither when we shall have returned, we shall be blessed indeed; "He hath given them a law which shall not pass away." What sort of command, think ye,

have things in heaven and the holy angels received? What sort of command hath God given them? What, but that they praise Him? Blessed are they whose business is to praise God! They plough not, they sow not, they grind not, they cook not; for these are works of necessity, and there is no necessity there. They steal not, they plunder not, they commit no adultery; for these are works of iniquity, and there is no iniquity there. They break not bread for the hungry, they clothe not the naked, they take not in the stranger, they visit not the sick, they set not at one the contentious, they bury not the dead; for these are works of mercy, and there there is no misery, for mercy to be shown to. O blessed they! Think we that we too shall be like this? Ah! let us sigh, let us groan in sighing. And what are we, that we should be there? mortal, outcast, abject, earth and ashes! But He, who hath promised, is almighty. ...

7. Let him then turn himself to things on earth too, since he hath already spoken the praises of things in heaven. "Praise ye the Lord from the earth" ever. 7). For wherewith began he before? "Praise ye the Lord from heaven: and he went through things in heaven: now hear of things on earth. "Dragons and all abysses. "Abysses" are depths of water: all the seas, and this atmosphere of clouds, pertain to the "abyss. Where there are clouds, where there are storms, where there is rain, lightning, thunder, hail, snow, and all that God willeth should be done above the earth, by this moist and misty atmosphere, all this he hath mentioned under the name of earth, because it is very changeable and mortal; unless ye think that it raineth from above the stars. All these things happen here, close to the earth. Sometimes even men are on the tops of mountains, and see the clouds beneath them, and often it raineth: and all commotions which arise from the disturbance of the atmosphere, those who watch carefully see that they happen here, in this lower part of the universe. ...Thou seest then what kind all these things are, changeable, troublous, fearful, corruptible: yet they have their place, they have their rank, they too in their degree fill up the beauty of the universe, and so they praise the Lord. He turns then to them, as though He would exhort them too, or us, that by considering them we may praise the Lord.

"Dragons" live about the water, come out from caverns, fly through the air; the air is set in motion by them: "dragons" are a huge kind of living creatures, greater there are not upon the earth. Therefore with them he be-ginneth, "Dragons and all abysses. There are caves of hidden waters, whence

springs and streams come forth: some come forth to flow over the earth, some flow secretly beneath; and all this kind, all this damp nature of waters, together with the sea and this lower air, are called abyss, or "abysses," where dragons live and praise God. What? Think we that the dragons form choirs, and praise God? Far from it. But do ye, when ye consider the dragons, regard the Maker of the dragon, the Creator of the dragon: then, when ye admire the dragons, and say, "Great is the Lord who made these," then the dragons praise God by your voices.

8. "Fire, hail, snow, ice, wind of storms, which do His word" (ver. 8). Wherefore added he here, "which do His word"? Many foolish men, unable to contemplate and discern creation, in its several places and rank, performing its movements at the nod and commandment of God think that God doth indeed rule all things above, but things below He despiseth, casteth aside, abandoneth, so that He neither careth for them, nor guideth, nor ruleth them; but that they are ruled by chance, how they can, as they can: and they are influenced by what they say sometimes to one another: e.g. "If it were God that gave rain, would He rain into the sea? What sort of providence," they say, "is this? Getulia is thirsty, and it rains into the sea. They think that they handle the matter cleverly. One should say to them, "Getulia does at all events thirst, thou dost not even thirst. For good were it for thee to say to God, "My soul hath thirsted for Thee. For he that thus argueth is already satisfied; he thinketh himself learned, he is not willing to learn, therefore he thirsteth not. For if he thirsted, he would be willing to learn, and he would find that everything happeneth upon earth by God's Providence, and he would wonder at the arrangement of even the limbs of a flea. Attend, beloved. Who hath arranged the limbs of a flea and a gnat, that they should have their proper order, life, motion?"

Consider one little creature, even the very smallest, whatever thou wilt. If thou considerest the order of its limbs, and the animation of life whereby it moveth; how doth it shun death, love life, seek pleasures, avoid pain, exert divers senses, vigorously use movements suitable to itself! Who gave its sting to the gnat, for it to suck blood with? How narrow is the pipe whereby it sucketh! Who arranged all this? who made all this? Thou art amazed at the smallest things; praise Him that is great. Hold then this, my brethren, let none shake you from your faith or from sound doctrine. He who made the Angel in heaven, the Same also made the worm upon earth: the Angel in

heaven to dwell in heaven, the worm upon earth to abide on earth. He made not the Angel to creep in the mud, nor the worm to move in heaven. He hath assigned dwellers to their different abodes; incorruption He assigned to incorruptible abodes, corruptible things to corruptible abodes. Observe the whole, praise the whole. He then who ordered the limbs of the worm, doth He not govern the clouds? And wherefore raineth He into the sea? As though there are not in the sea things which are nourished by rain; as though He made not fishes therein, as though He made not living creatures therein. Observe how the fishes run to sweet water. And wherefore, saith he, doth He give rain to the fishes, and sometimes giveth not rain to me?

That thou mayest consider that thou art in a desert region, and in a pilgrimage of life; that so this present life may grow bitter to thee, that thou mayest long for the life to come: or else that thou mayest be scourged, punished, amended. And how well doth He assign their properties to regions. Behold, since we have spoken of Getulia, He raineth here nearly every year, and giveth corn every year; here the corn cannot be kept, it soon rotteth, because it is given every year; there, because it is given seldom, both much is given, and it can be kept for long. But dost thou perchance think that God there deserteth man, or that they do not there after their own manner of rejoicing both praise and glorify God? Take a Getulian from his country, and set him amid our pleasant trees; he will wish to flee away, and return to his bare Getulia. To all places then, regions, seasons, God hath assigned and arranged what fits them. Who could unfold it? Yet they who have eyes see many things therein: when seen, they please; pleasing, they are praised; not they really, but He who made them; thus shall all things praise God.

9. It was in thought of this that the spirit of the Prophet added the words, "which do His word. Think not then that these things are moved by chance, which in every motion of theirs obey God. Whither God willeth, thither the fire spreads, thither the cloud hurries, whether it carry in it rain, or snow, or hail. And wherefore cloth the lightning sometimes strike the mountain, yet strikes not the robber? ...Perhaps He yet seeketh the robber's conversion, and therefore is the mountain which feareth not smitten, that the man who feareth may be changed. Thou also sometimes, when maintaining discipline, smitest the ground to terrify a child. Sometimes too He smiteth a man, whom He will. But thou sayest to me, Behold, He smiteth the more innocent, and passeth over the more guilty. Wonder not; death, whencesoever it

come, is good to the good man. And whence dost thou know what punishment is reserved in secret for that more guilty man, if he be unwilling to be converted? Would not they rather be scorched by lightning, to whom it shall be said in the end, "Depart into everlasting fire"? The needful thing is, that thou be guileless. Why so? Is it an evil thing to die by shipwreck, and a good thing to die by fever? Whether he die in this way or in that, ask what sort of man he is who dieth;

ask whither he will go after death, not how he is to depart from life. ...Whatever then happeneth here contrary to our wish, thou wilt know that it happeneth not, save by the will of God, by His providence, by His ordering, by His nod, by His laws: and if we understand not why anything is done, let us grant to His providence that it is not done without reason: so shall we not be blasphemers. For when we begin to argue concerning the works of God, "why is this? "why is that? and, "He ought not to have done this," "He did this ill; where is the praise of God? Thou hast lost thy Halleluia. Regard all things in such wise as to please God and praise the Creator. For if thou wert to happen to enter the workshop of a smith, thou wouldest not dare to find fault with his bellows, his anvils, his hammers. But take an ignorant man, who knows not for what purpose each thing is, and he findeth fault with all. But if he have not the skill of the workman, and have but the reasoning power of a man, what saith he to himself? Not without reason are the bellows placed here: the workman knoweth wherefore, though I know not. In the shop he dareth not to find fault with the smith, yet in the universe he dareth to find fault with God.

Therefore just as "fire, hail, snow, ice, wind of storms, which do His word," so all things in nature, which seem to foolish persons to be made at random, simply "do His word," because they are not made save by His command. 10. Then he mentioneth, that they may praise the Lord, "mountains and hills, fruitful trees and all cedars" (ver. 9): "beasts and all cattle, creeping things, and winged fowls" (ver. 10). Then he goeth to men; "kings of the earth and all people, princes and all judges of the earth" (ver. 11): "young men and maidens, old men and young, let them praise the Name of the Lord" (ver. 12). Ended is the praise from heaven, ended is the praise from earth. "For His Name only is exalted" (ver. 13). Let no man seek to exalt his own name. Wilt thou be exalted? Subject thyself to Him who cannot be humbled. "His confession is in earth and heaven" (ver. 14). What is "His con-

fession"? Is it the confession wherewith He confesseth? No, but that whereby all things confess Him, all things cry aloud: the beauty of all things is in a manner their voice, whereby they praise God. The heaven crieth out to God, "Thou madest me, not I myself. Earth crieth out, "Thou createdst me, not I myself. How do they cry out? When thou regardest them, and findest this out, they cry out by thy voice, they cry out by thy regard. Regard the heavens, it is beautiful: observe the earth, it is beautiful: both together are very beautiful. He made them, He ruleth them, by His nod they are swayed, He ordereth their seasons, He reneweth their movements, by Himself He reneweth them.

All these things then praise Him, whether in stillness or in motion, whether from earth below or from heaven above, whether in their old state or in their renewal. When thou seest all these things, and rejoicest, and art lifted up to the Maker, and gazest on "His invisible things understood by the things which are made," "His confession is in earth and heaven: that is, thou confesseth to Him from things on earth, thou confesseth to Him from things in heaven. And since He made all things, and nought is better than He, whatsoever He made is less than He, and whatsoever in these things pleaseth thee, is less than He. Let not then what He hath made so please thee, as to withdraw thee from Him who made: if thou lovest what He made, love much more Him who made. If the things which He hath made are beautiful, how much more beautiful is He who made them. "And He shall exalt the horn of His people. Behold what Haggai and Zachariah prophesied. Now the "horn of His people" is humble in afflictions, in tribulations, in temptations, in beating of the breast; when will He "exalt the horn of His people"? When the Lord hath come, and our Sun is risen, not the sun which is seen with the eye, and "riseth upon the good and the evil," but That whereof is said, To you that hear God, "the Sun of Righteousness shall rise, and healing in His wings;

and of whom the proud and wicked shall hereafter say, "The light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us. This shall be our summer. Now during the winter weather the fruits appear not on the stock; thou observest, so to say, dead trees during the winter. He who cannot see truly, thinketh the vine dead; perhaps there is one near it which is really dead; both are alike during winter; the one is alive, the other is dead, but both the life and death are hidden: summer advanceth;

then the life of the one shineth brightly, the death of the other is manifested: the splendour of leaves, the abundance of fruit, cometh forth, the vine is clothed in outward appearance from what it hath in its stock. Therefore, brethren, now we are the same as other men: just as they are born, eat, drink, are clothed, pass their life, so also do the saints. Sometimes the very truth deceiveth men, and they say, "Lo, he hath begun to be a Christian: hath he lost his headache? or, "because he is a Christian, what gaineth he from me? O dead vine, thou observest near thee a vine that is bare indeed in winter, yet not dead. Summer will come, the Lord will come, our Splendour, that was hidden in the stock, and then "He shall exalt the horn of His people," after the captivity wherein we live in this mortal life. ...

11. "An hymn to all His Saints." Know ye what an hymn is? It is a song with praise of God. If thou praisest God and singest not, thou utterest no hymn: if thou singest and praisest not God, thou utterest no hymn: if thou praisest aught else, which pertaineth not to the praise of God, although thou singest and praisest, thou utterest no hymn. An hymn then containeth these three things, song, and praise, and that of God. Praise then of God in song is called an hymn. What then meaneth, "An hymn to all His Saints"? Let His Saints receive an hymn: let His hints utter an hymn: for this is what they are to receive in the end, an everlasting hymn. ...

PSALM 149

1. Let us praise the Lord both in voice, and in understanding, and in good works; and, as this Psalm exhorteth, let us sing unto Him a new song. It beginneth: "Sing ye to the Lord a new song. His praise is in the Church of the Saints" (ver. 1). The old man hath an old song, the new man a new song. The Old Testament is an old song, the New Testament a new song. In the Old Testament are temporal and earthly promises. Whoso loveth earthly things singeth an old song: let him that desireth to sing a new song, love the things of eternity. Love itself is new and eternal; therefore is it ever new, because it never groweth old. ... And this song is of peace, this song is of charity. Whoso severeth himself from the union of the saints, singeth not a new song; for he hath followed old strife, not new charity. In new charity what is there? Peace, the bond of an holy society, a spiritual union, a building of living stones. Where is this? Not in one place, but throughout the whole world. This is said in another Psalm, "Sing unto the Lord, all the earth. From this is understood, that he who singeth not with the whole earth, singeth an old song,

whatever words proceed out of his mouth. ...We have already said, brethren, that all the earth singeth a new song.

He who singeth not with the whole earth a new song, let him sing what he will, let his tongue sound forth Halleluia, let him utter it all day and all night, my ears are not so much bent to hear the voice of the singer, but I seek the deeds of the doer. For I ask, and say, "What is it that thou singest? He answereth, "Halleluia. What is "Halleluia"? "Praise ye the Lord. Come, let us praise the Lord together. If thou praisest the Lord, and I praise the Lord, why are we at variance? Charity praiseth the Lord, discord blasphemeth the Lord." ... 2. The field of the Lord is the world, not Africa. It is not with the Lord's field, as it is without these fields of ours, where Getulia bears sixty or an hundred fold, Numidia only ten fold: everywhere fruit is borne to Him, both an hundred fold, and sixty fold, and thirty fold: only do thou choose what thou wilt be, if thou thinkest to belong to the Lord's Cross. "The Church" then "of the saints" is the Catholic Church. The Church of the saints is not the Church of heretics. The Church of the saints is that which God first prefigured before it was seen, and then set forth that it might be seen. The Church of the saints was heretofore in writings, now it is in nations: the Church of the saints was heretofore only read of, now it is both read of and seen. When it was only read of, it was believed; now it is seen, and is spoken against. His praise is in the "children of the kingdom," that is, "the Church of the saints."

3. "Let Israel rejoice in Him who made Him" (ver. 2). What is, "Israel"? "Seeing God. He who seeth God, rejoiceth in Him by whom he was made. What is it then, brethren? we have said that we belong to the Church of the saints: do we already see God? and how are we Israel, if we see not? There is one kind of sight belonging to this present time; there will be another belonging to the time hereafter: the sight which now is, is by faith; the sight which is to be will be in reality. If we believe, we see; if we love, we see: see what? God. Ask John: "God is love; let us bless His holy Name, and rejoice in God by rejoicing in love. Whoso hath love, why send we him afar to see God? Let him regard his own conscience, and there he seeth God. ..." And let the sons of Sion exult in their King. The sons of the Church are Israel. For Sion indeed was one city, which fell: amid its ruins certain saints dwelt after the flesh: but the true Sion, the true Jerusalem (for Sion and Jerusalem are one), is "eternal in the heavens," and is "our mother. She it is that hath given us

birth, she is the Church of the saints, she hath nourished us, she, who is in part a pilgrim, in part abiding in the heavens.

In the part which abideth in heaven is the bliss of angels, in the part which wandereth in this world is the hope of the righteous. Of the former is said, "Glory to God in the highest; of the latter, "and on earth peace to men of good will. Let those then who, being in this life, groan, and long for their country, run by love, not by bodily feet; let them seek not ships but wings, let them lay hold on the two wings of love. What are the two wings of love? The love of God, and of our neighbour. For now we are pilgrims, we sigh, we groan. There has come to us a letter from our country: we read it to you. "And the sons of Sion shall exult in their King. The Son of God, who made us, was made one of us: and He rules us as our King, because He is our Creator, who made us. But He by whom we were made is the same as He by whom we are ruled, and we are Christians because He is Christ. He is called Christ from Chrism, that is, Anointing. ...Give to the Priest somewhat to offer. What could man find which he could give as a clean victim? What victim? what clean thing can a sinner offer? O unrighteous, O sinful man, whatever thou offerest is unclean, and somewhat that is clean must be offered for thee. ...Let then the Priest that is clean offer Himself, and cleanse thee.

This is what Christ did. He found in man nothing clean for Him to offer for than: He offered Himself as a clean Victim. Happy Victim, true Victim, spotless Offering. He offered not then what we gave Him; yea rather, He offered what He took of us, and offered it clean. For of us He took flesh, and this He offered. But where took He it? In the womb of the Virgin Mary, that He might offer it clean for us unclean. He is our King, He is our Priest, in Him let us rejoice. 4. "Let them praise His Name in chorus" (ver. 3). What meaneth "chorus"? Many know what a "chorus" is: nay, as we are speaking in a town, almost all know. A "chorus" is the union of singers. If we sing "in chorus," let us sing in concord. If any one's voice is out of harmony in a chorus of singers, it offendeth the ear, and throweth the chorus into confusion. If the voice of one echoing discordantly troubleth the harmony of them who sing, how doth the discord of heresy throw into confusion the harmony of them who praise. The whole world is now the chorus of Christ. The chorus of Christ soundeth harmoniously from east to west. "Let them sing a psalm unto Him with timbrel and psaltery. Wherefore taketh he to him the "timbrel and psalter"? That not the voice alone may praise, but the works too.

When timbrel and psaltery are taken, the hands harmonize with the voice. So too do thou, whensoever thou singest "Halleluia," deal forth thy bread to the hungry, clothe the naked, take in the stranger: then doth not only thy voice sound, but thy hand soundeth in harmony with it, for thy deeds agree with thy words. Thou hast taken to thee an instrument, and thy fingers agree with thy tongue. Nor must we keep back the mystical meaning of the "timbrel and psaltery. On the timbrel leather is stretched, on the psaltery gut is stretched; on either instrument the flesh is crucified.

How well did he "sing a psalm on timbrel and psaltery," who said, "the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"? This psaltery or timbrel He wishes thee to take up, who loveth a new song, who teacheth thee, saying to thee, "Whosoever willeth to be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. Let him not set down his psaltery, let him not set down his timbrel, let him stretch himself out on the wood, and be dried from the lust of the flesh. The more the strings are stretched, the more sharply do they sound. The Apostle Paul then, in order that his psaltery might sound sharply, what said he? "Stretching forth unto those things which are before," etc. He stretched himself: Christ touched him; and the sweetness of truth sounded. 5. "For the Lord hath dealt kindly among His people" (ver. 4). What dealing so kindly, as to die for the ungodly? What dealing so kindly, as with righteous Blood to blot out the handwriting against the sinner? What dealing so kindly, as to say, "I regard not what ye were, be ye now what ye were not"? He dealeth kindly in converting him that was turned away, in aiding him that is fighting, in crowning the conqueror. "And the meek He shall lift up in salvation." For the proud too are lifted up, but not in salvation: the meek are lifted in salvation, the proud in death: that is, the proud lift up themselves, and God humbleth them: the meek humble themselves, and God lifteth them up.

6. "The saints shall exult in glory" (ver. 5). I would say somewhat important about the glory of the saints. For there is no one who loveth not glory. But the glory of fools, popular glory as it is called, hath snares to deceive, so that a man, influenced by the praises of vain men, shall be willing to live in such fashion as to be spoken of by men, whosoever they be, in whatsoever way. Hence it is that men, rendered mad, and puffed up with pride, empty within, without swollen, are willing ever to ruin their fortunes by bestowing them on stage-players, actors, men who fight with wild beasts, charioteers.

What sums they give, what sums they spend! They lavish the powers not only of their patrimony, but of their minds too. They scorn the poor, because the people shouteth not that the poor should be given to, but the people to shout that the fighter with wild beasts be given to. When then no shout is raised to them, they refuse to spend; when madmen shout to them, they are mad too: nay, all are mad, both performer, and spectator, and the giver. This mad glory is blamed by the Lord, is offensive in the eyes of the Almighty. ...Thou choosest to clothe the fighter with wild beasts, who may be beaten, and make thee blush: Christ is never conquered; He hath conquered the devil, He hath conquered for thee, and to thee, and in thee; such a conqueror as this thou choosest not to clothe. Wherefore? Because there is less shouting, less madness about it. They then who delight in such glory, have an empty conscience. Just as they drain their chests, to send garments as presents, so do they empty their conscience, so as to have nothing precious therein.

7. But the saints who "exult in glory," no need is there for us to say how they exult: just hear the verse of the Psalm which followeth: "The saints shall exult in glory, they shall rejoice in their beds:" not in theatres, or amphitheatres, or circuses, or follies, or market places, but "in their chambers." What is, "in their chambers"? In their hearts. Hear the Apostle Paul exulting in his closet: "For this is our glory, the testimony of our conscience." On the other hand, there is reason to fear lest any be pleasing to himself, and so seem to be proud, and boast of his conscience. For every one ought to exult with fear, for that wherein he exulteth is God's gift, not his own desert. For there be many that please themselves, and think themselves righteous; and there is another passage which goeth against them, which saith, "Who shall boast that he hath a clean heart, and that he is pure from sin?" There is then, so to speak, a limit to glorying in our conscience, namely, to know that thy faith is sincere, thy hope sure, thy love without dissimulation. "The exultations of God are in their mouths" (ver. 6). In such wise shall they "rejoice in their closets," as not to attribute to themselves that they are good, but praise Him from whom they have what they are, by whom they are called to attain to what they are not, and from whom they hope for perfection, to whom they give thanks, because He hath begun.

8. "And swords sharpened on both sides in their hands. This sort of weapon contains a great mystical meaning, in that it is sharp on both sides. By "swords sharpened on both sides," we understand the Word of the Lord: it

is one sword, but therefore are they called many, because there are many mouths and many tongues of the saints. How is it two edged? It speaks of things temporal, it speaks also of things eternal. In both cases it proveth what it saith, and him whom it strikes, it severeth from the world. Is not this the sword whereof the Lord said, "I am not come to send peace upon earth, but a sword"? Observe how He came to divide, how He came to sever. He divideth the saints, He divideth the ungodly, He severeth from thee that which hindereth thee. The son willeth to serve God, the father willeth not: the sword cometh, the Word of God cometh, and severeth the son from the father. ...Wherefore then is it in their hands, not in their tongues? "And swords," it saith, "sharpened on both sides in their hands. By "in their hands," he meaneth in power. They received then the word of God in power, to speak where they would, to whom they would, neither to fear power, nor to despise poverty. For they had in their hands a sword; where they would they brandished it, handled it, smote with it: and all this was in the power of the preachers.

For if the Word be not in their hands, why is it written, "The Word of the Lord was put in the hand of the Prophet Haggai"? Surely, brethren, God set not His Word in His fingers. What is meant by, "was put in his hand"? It was put into his power to preach the Word of the Lord. Lastly, we can understand these "hands" in another way also. For they who spake had the word of God in their tongues, they who wrote, in their hands. 9. Now, brethren, ye see the saints armed: observe the slaughter, observe their glorious battles. For if there be a commander, there must be soldiers; if soldiers, an enemy; if a warfare, a victory. What have these done who had in their hands swords sharpened on both sides? "To do vengeance on the nations." See whether vengeance have not been done on the nations. Daily is it done: we do it ourselves by speaking. Observe how the nations of Babylon are slain. She is repaid twofold: for so is it written of her, "repay her double for what she hath done." How is she repaid double? The saints wage war, they draw their "swords twice sharpened;" thence come defeats, slaughters, severances: how is she repaid double? When she had power to persecute the Christians, she slew the flesh indeed, but she crushed not God: now she is repaid double, for the Pagans are extinguished and the idols are broken. ...And lest thou shouldst think that men are really smitten with the sword, blood really shed, wounds made in the flesh, he goeth on and explaineth, "upbraidings among the peoples."

What is "upbraidings"? Reproof. Let the "sword twice sharpened" go forth from you, delay not. Say to thy friend, if yet thou hast one left to whom to say it, "What kind of man art thou, who hast abandoned Him by whom thou wast made, and worshippest what He made? Better is the Workman, than that which He worketh." When he beginneth to blush, when he beginneth to feel compunction, thou hast made a wound with thy sword, it hath reached the heart, he is about to die, that he may live.

10. "That they may bind their kings in fetters, and their nobles in bonds of iron" (ver. 8). "To execute upon them the judgment written" (ver. 9). The kings of the Gentiles are to be bound in fetters, "and their nobles in fetters," and that "of iron." ...For these verses which we are beginning to explain are obscure. For for this purpose God willed to set down some of His verses obscurely, not that anything new should be dug out of them, but that what was already well known, might be made new by being obscurely set forth. We know that kings have been made Christians; we know that the nobles of the Gentiles have been made Christians. They are being made so at this day; they have been, they shall be; the "swords twice sharpened" are not idle in the hands of the saints. How then do we understand their being bound in fetters and chains of iron?

Ye know, beloved and learned brethren (learned I call you, for ye have been nourished in the Church, and are accustomed to hear God's Word read), that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and the foolish things of the world hath God chosen to confound the wise, and things which are not, just as things which are, that the things which are may be brought to nought." ...It is said by the Lord, "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me, and thou shall have treasure in heaven. Many of the nobles did this, but they ceased to be nobles of the Gentiles, they chose rather to be poor in this world, noble in Christ. But many retain their former nobility, retain their royal powers, and yet are Christians. These are, as it were, "in fetters and in bonds of iron. How so? they received fetters, to keep them from going to things unlawful, the "fetters of wisdom," the fetters of the Word of God. Wherefore then are they bonds of iron and not bonds of gold? They are iron so long as they fear: let them love, and they shall be golden. Observe, beloved, what I say. Ye have heard just now the Apostle John, "There is no fear

in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. This is the bond of iron.

And yet unless a man begin through fear to worship God, he will not attain to love. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The beginning then is bonds of iron, the end a collar of gold. For it is said of wisdom, "a collar of gold around thy neck." ...There cometh to us a man powerful in this world, his wife offendeth him, and perhaps he hath desired another man's wife who is more beautiful, or another woman who is richer, he wisheth to put away the one he hath, yet he doeth it not. He heareth the words of the servant of God, he heareth the Prophet, he heareth the Apostle, and he doeth it not; he is told by one in whose hands is a "sword twice sharpened," "Thou shalt not do it: it is not lawful for thee: God alloweth thee not to put away thy wife, "save for the cause of fornication. He heareth this, he feareth, and doeth it not. ...Listen, young men; the bonds are of iron, seek not to set your feet within them; if ye do, ye shall be bound more tightly with fetters. Such fetters the hands of the Bishop make strong for you. Do not men who are thus fettered fly to the Church, and are here loosed? Men do fly hither, desiring to be rid of their wives: here they are more tightly bound: no man looseth these fetters. "What God joined together, let not man put asunder. But these bonds are hard.

Who but knows it? This hardness the Apostles grieved at, and said, "If this be the case with a wife, it is not good to marry. If the bonds be of iron, it is not good to set our feet within them. And the Lord said, "All men cannot receive this saying, but let him that can receive it, receive it. "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be freed," for thou art bound with bonds of iron. "Art thou free from a wife, seek not a wife; bind not thyself with bonds of iron. 11. "To do in them the judgment that is written." This is the judgment which the saints rio throughout all nations. Wherefore "written"? Because these things were before written, and now are fulfilled. Behold now they are being done: erst they were read, and were not done. And he hath concluded thus, "this glory have all His saints." Throughout the whole world, throughout entire nations, this the saints do, thus are they glorified, thus do they "exalt God with their mouths," thus do they "rejoice in their beds," thus do they "exult in their glory," thus are they "lifted up in salvation," thus do they "sing a new song," thus in heart and voice and life they say Halleluia. Amen.

PSALM 150

1. Although the arrangement of the Psalms, which seems to me to contain the secret of a mighty mystery, hath not yet been revealed unto me, yet, by the fact that they in all amount to one hundred and fifty, they suggest somewhat even to us, who have not as yet pierced with the eye of our mind the depth of their entire arrangement, whereon we may without being overbold, so far as God giveth, be able to speak. Firstly, the number fifteen, whereof it is a multiple this number fifteen, I say, signifieth the agreement of the two Testaments. For in the former is observed the Sabbath, which signifieth rest; in the latter the Lord's Day, which signifieth resurrection. The Sabbath is the seventh day, but the Lord's Day, coming after the seventh, must needs be the eighth, and is also to be reckoned the first. For it is called the first day of the week, and so from it are reckoned the second, third, fourth, and so on to the seventh day of the week, which is the Sabbath. But from Lord's Day to Lord's Day is eight days, wherein is declared the revelation of the New Testament, which in the Old was as it were veiled under earthly promises. Further, seven and eight make fifteen. Of the same number too are the Psalms which are called "of the steps," because that was the number of the steps of the Temple. Further too, the number fifty in itself also containeth a great mystery.

For it consisteth of a week of weeks, with the addition of one as an eighth to complete the number of fifty. For seven times seven make forty-nine, whereto one is added to make fifty. And this number fifty is of so great meaning, that it was after the completion of that number of days from the Lord's Resurrection, that, on the fiftieth day exactly, the Holy Spirit came upon those who were gathered together in Christ. And this Holy Spirit is in Scripture especially spoken of by the number seven, whether in Isaiah or in the Apocalypse, where the seven Spirits of God are most directly mentioned, on account of the sevenfold operation of one and the self-same Spirit. And this sevenfold operation is mentioned in Isaiah. ...Hence also the Holy Spirit is spoken of under the number seven. But this period of fifty the Lord divided into forty and ten: for on the fortieth day after His Resurrection He ascended into heaven, and then after ten days were completed He sent the Holy Spirit: under the number forty setting forth to us the period of temporal sojourn in this world. For the number four prevaieth in forty; and the world and the year have each four parts; and by the addition of the number ten, as

a sort of reward added for the fulfilment of the law in good works, eternity itself is figured. This fifty the number one hundred and fifty containeth three times, as though it were multiplied by the Trinity.

Wherefore for this reason too we make out that this number of the Psalm is not unsuitable. 2. Now in that some have believed that the Balms are divided into five books, they have been led by the fact, that so often at the end of Psalms are the words, "so be it, so be it. But when I endeavoured to make out the principle of this division, I was not able; for neither are the five parts equal one to another, neither in quantity of contents, nor yet even in number of Psalms, so as for each to contain thirty. And if each book end with, "so be it, so be it," we may reasonably ask, why the fifth and last book hath not the same conclusion. We however, following the authority of canonical Scripture, where it is said, "For it is written in the book of Psalms," know that there is but one book of Psalms. And I see indeed how this can be true, and yet the other be true also, without contravening it. For it may be that there was some custom in Hebrew literature, whereby that is called one book which yet consists of more than one, just as of many churches one church consisteth, and of many heavens one heaven, ...and one land of many lands. For it is our everyday habit to say, "the globe of the earth," and "the globe of the lands.

And when it is said, "It is written in the book of Psalms," though the customary way of speaking is such that he seem to have wished to suggest that there is but one book, yet to this it may be answered, that the words mean "in a book of the Psalms," that is, "in any one of those five books. And this is in common language so unprecedented, or at least so rare, that we are only convinced that the twelve Prophets made one book, because we read in like manner, "As it is written in the book of the Prophets. There are some too who call all the canonical Scriptures together one book, because they agree in a very wondrous and divine unity. ... 3. Whichever then of these is understood, this book, in its parts of fifty Psalms each, gives an answer important and very worthy of consideration. For it seems to me not without significance, that the fiftieth is of penitence, the hundredth of mercy and judgment, the hundred and fiftieth of the praise of God in His saints. For thus do we advance to an everlasting life of happiness, first by condemning our own sins, then by living aright, that, having condemned our ill life, and lived a good life, we may attain to everlasting life. Our predestination is not

wrought in ourselves, but in secret with Him, in His foreknowledge. But we are called by the preaching of repentance. We are justified in the calling of mercy and fear of judgment. He feareth not judgment, who hath previously attained salvation. Being called, we renounce the devil by repentance, that we may not continue under his yoke: being justified, we are healed by mercy, that we may not fear judgment: being glorified, we pass into everlasting life, where we praise God without end. ...The verse wherewith this Psalm concludeth is the voice of life everlasting.

4. "Praise the Lord in His saints," that is, in those whom He hath glorified: "praise Him in the firmament of His power" (ver. 1). "Praise Him in His deeds of strength;" or, as others have explained it, "in His deeds of power: praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness" (ver. 2). All these His saints are; as the Apostle saith, "But we may be the righteousness of God in Him." If then they be the righteousness of God, which He hath wrought in them, why are they not also the strength of Christ which He hath wrought in them, that they should rise again from the dead? For in Christ's resurrection, "strength" is especially set forth to us, for in His Passion was weakness, as the Apostle saith. And well doth it say, "the firmament of His power." For it is the "firmament of His power" that He "dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over Him." Why should not they also be called "the works of" God's "strength," which He hath done in them: yea rather, they themselves are the works of His strength; just as it is said, "We are the righteousness of God in Him." For what more powerful than that He should reign for ever, with all His enemies put under His feet? Why should not they also be "the multitude of His greatness"? not that whereby He is great, but whereby He hath made them great, many as they are, that is, thousands of thousands. Just as righteousness too is understood in two ways, that whereby He is righteous, and that which He worketh in us, so as to make us His righteousness. These same saints are signified by all the musical instruments in succession, to praise God in. For what the Psalmist began with, saying, "Praise the Lord in His saints," that he carrieth out, signifying in various ways these same saints of His.

5. "Praise Him in the sound of the trumpet" (ver. 3): on account of the surpassing clearness of note of their praise. "Praise Him in the psaltery and harp. The psaltery praiseth God from things above, the harp praiseth God from things below; I mean, from things in heaven, and things in earth, as He who

made heaven and earth. We have already in another Psalm, explained that the psaltery hath that board, whereon the series of strings rests that it may give a better sound, above, whereas the harp has it below. "Praise Him in the timbrel and choir" (ver. 4). The "timbrel" praiseth God when the flesh is now changed, so that there is in it no weakness of earthly corruption. For the timbrel is made of leather dried and strengthened. The "choir" praiseth God when society made peaceful praiseth Him. "Praise Him on the strings and organ. Both psaltery and harp, which have been mentioned above, have strings. But "organ" is a general name for all instruments of music, although usage has now obtained that those are specially called organ which are inflated with bellows: but I do not think that this kind is meant here. For since organ is a Greek word, applied generally, as I have said, to all musical instruments, this instrument, to which bellows are applied, is called by the Greeks by another name: but it being called organ is rather a Latin and conversational usage.

When then he saith, "on the strings and organ," he seemeth to me to have intended to signify some instrument which hath strings. For it is not psalteries and harps only that have strings: but, because in the psaltery, and harp, on account of the sound from things below and things above, somewhat has been found which can be understood after this distinction, he hath suggested to us to seek some other meaning in the strings themselves: for they too are flesh, but flesh now set free from corruption. And to those, it may be, he added the organ, to signify that they sound not each separately, but sound together in most harmonious diversity, just as they are arranged in a musical instrument. For even then the saints of God will have their differences, accordant, not discordant, that is, agreeing, not disagreeing, just as sweetest harmony arises from sounds differing indeed, but not opposed to one another.

6. "Praise Him on the well-sounding cymbals, praise Him on cymbals of jubilation" (ver. 5). Cymbals touch one another in order to sound, and therefore are by some compared to our lips. But I think it better to understand that God is in a manner praised on the cymbal, when each is honoured by his neighbour, not by himself, and then honouring one another, they give praise to God. But lest any should understand such cymbals as sound without life, therefore I think he added, "on cymbals of jubilation." For "jubilation" that is, unspeakable praise, proceedeth not, save from life. Nor do I think

that I should pass over what musicians say, that there are three kinds of sounds, by voice, by breath, by striking: by voice, uttered by throat and wind-pipe, when man singeth without any instrument; by breath, as by pipe, or anything of that sort: by striking, as by harp, or anything of that kind. None then of these kinds is omitted here: for there is voice in the choir, breath in the trumpet, striking in the harp, representing mind, spirit, body, but by similitudes, not in the proper sense of the words. When then he proposed, "Praise God in His saints," to whom said he this, save to themselves? And in whom are they to praise God, save in themselves? For ye, saith he, are "His saints;" ye are "His strength," but that which He wrought in you; ye are "His mighty works, and the multitude of His greatness," which He hath wrought and set forth in you. Ye are "trumpet, psaltery, harp, timbrel, choir, strings, and organ, cymbals of jubilation sounding well," because sounding in harmony. All these are ye: let nought that is vile, nought that is transitory, nought that is ludicrous, be here thought of. And since to savour of the flesh is death, "let every spirit praise the Lord" (ver. 6).

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